**Mgr Paul Guérin**

# LES PETITS BOLLANDISTES: LIVES OF THE SAINTS, VOLUME IX

*24 July – 17 August*

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*English translation*

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## About this translation

Translated from Mgr Paul Guérin, *Les Petits Bollandistes. Vies des saints de l'Ancien et du Nouveau Testament, des martyrs, des pères, des auteurs sacrés et ecclésiastiques, des vénérables et autres personnes mortes en odeur de sainteté*, seventh edition (Paris: Bloud et Barral), volume IX, which covers 24 July – 17 August.

Guérin's work grew out of his re-edition, in 1858, of Father François Giry's seventeenth-century *Vies des saints*, enlarged from the *Acta Sanctorum* of the Bollandists — whence its name — and from the histories and propers of the French dioceses. Each day opens with the martyrologies: the Roman Martyrology, the Martyrology of France, the martyrologies of the religious orders, and additions from the Bollandists and other hagiographers. The lives of the saints of the day follow, each with its dates, its epigraph, and, at the end, the cult and relics of the saint and the sources Guérin used. His footnotes are kept.

The fourteen volumes run through the calendar from 1 January to 31 December. Here each day is one section.

Words and notes that the translation first left illegible or doubtful have been read from the printed volume and supplied.

# 24 July

## Martyrologies

### Roman Martyrology

The vigil of Saint James, apostle. — At Tyr, in Tuscany, on the lake of Bolsena, Saint Christine, virgin and martyr, who, having embraced the Christian faith, and distributed to the poor the gold and silver idols of her father after breaking them, was by his order torn with blows of the scourge, horribly tormented by other punishments, then thrown into the lake, bound to a great stone: but an angel delivered her. Afterwards she suffered, with invincible constancy, still more atrocious torments under another judge, successor of her father; lastly, the president Julien threw her into a burning furnace where she remained five days without being hurt by the flames; at last, after having been exposed to serpents against which the power of Jesus Christ preserved her, she had her tongue cut off as well, and her body pierced with arrows, and thus accomplished the course of her martyrdom. 300. — At Rome, on the Tiburtine Way, Saint Vincent, martyr. — At Amiterne, in the Abruzzo Ulteriore, the punishment of eighty-three blessed soldiers. — At Mérida, in Spain, Saint Victor, man-at-arms, who, with his two brothers Stercace and Antinogène, completed his martyrdom by various torments in the persecution of Diocletian. 3rd century. — In Lycia, the holy martyrs Nicète and Aquiline, who, having been converted by the preaching of the blessed Christophe or Christophore, martyr, were beheaded and themselves won the palm of victory. 3rd century. — Also the holy martyrs Menée and Capiton. — At Sens, Saint Ursin or Ursicin, archbishop of that see and confessor. 4th century. — At Lima, in Peru, Saint François Solano, confessor, of the Order of Friars Minor, who by his preaching, his miracles and his virtues has made himself famous in the West Indies. He passed to the rest of the Lord on the 14th of this month, and was placed in the rank of the Saints by Pope Benedict XIII. 1610.

### Martyrology of France, Revised and Augmented

In the dioceses of Bayeux and Séez, the holy Raven, priest, and Rasiphe, deacon, both martyrs, and already cited yesterday in the martyrology of France. About 470. — In the diocese of Saint-Brieuc, Saint Magloire, regionary bishop of Breton origin, whose life we shall give on 24 October, the day under which he is named in the Roman martyrology. — In the diocese of Angers, Saint Henri II, king of Germany, emperor of the Romans and confessor, whose life we have given on 15 July. — In the dioceses of Angers, Cologne,

Saint-Dié, Verdun, Sens, Marseille, Perpignan, Metz, Laval, Saint-Flour and Le Mans, commemoration of the vigil of Saint James, apostle, and of Saint Christine, virgin and martyr. — In the diocese of Carcassonne, Saint Cucuphas, martyr, cited in the Roman martyrology of the following day, where some details of his life may be read. — In the dioceses of Cologne, Fréjus, Perpignan and Marseille, Saint Apollinaire, bishop and martyr, whose life we have given on the preceding day. — In the dioceses of Rouen, Verdun and Viviers, Saint Vandrille or Vandrégisile, abbot, whose life we have given on 22 July. — In the diocese of Saint-Dié, Saint Arnoul, bishop and confessor, whose life we have given on 18 July. — In the dioceses of Laval and Le Mans, Saint Pavace, bishop of the latter see and confessor. Uncertain epoch. — In the dioceses of Albi and Metz, Saint Ségoulène or Sigouleine, widow, abbess of Troclar (*Troclarense monasterium*), a double abbey founded about the year 770 on the Tarn, by Chramlic, father of Sigouleine, or by our Saint herself. Sprung from an illustrious family of Aquitaine, she was born at Albi toward the end of the 7th century, and was married to a lord of the country, named Gislufe, who left her the liberty of following her taste for retreat. Having become a widow, she broke off all commerce with the world and was ordained deaconess by her bishop. Having become abbess of Troclar, her life was no more than a tissue of exercises of charity, penances and all kinds of good works. Buried first in a church near her monastery, her body is kept today in the cathedral of Albi, and she is honoured among the titular patrons of that city. 8th century. — In the diocese of Chambéry, the Blessed Louise de Savoie, widow, religious of the Order of Saint Francis. 1503. — At Mayence, Saint Liboire, whose life we have given on the preceding day. — At Strasbourg, the Blessed Bernard de Bade, confessor, whose life we have given on 15 July. — At Nice (Alpes-Maritimes), Saint Valère or Valérien, bishop of that see and confessor. 5th century. — In the ancient monastery of Mouzon (*Mozomum*), in the Ardennes, translation of the relics of Saint Arnoulf, martyr. 901. — In the diocese of Liège, Saint Christine the Admirable, virgin.[1]

## Martyrologies of the Religious Orders

*Martyrology of the Camaldolese.* — The vigil of Saint James, apostle. — On the same day, Saint Jérôme Emiliani, of whom mention is made on 20 July.[2] 1537.

*Martyrology of the Cistercians.* — The vigil of Saint James, apostle. — Saint Alexis, confessor, whose birth into heaven is celebrated on 27 July.

*Martyrology of the Dominicans.* — At Rome, Saint Camille de Lellis, confessor, Founder of the Clerks Regular for the service of the sick, illustrious by his virtues as by his miracles, and placed among the Saints by the sovereign pontiff Benedict XIV.[3] 1614.

*Martyrology of the Discalced Carmelites.* — Saint Apollinaire, bishop and martyr, of whom mention is made on the eve of this day. 79. — The vigil of Saint James, apostle.

*Martyrology of the Hermits of Saint Augustine.* — The vigil of Saint James, apostle. — At Aquilée, in the Abruzzo Ulteriore, the Blessed Antoine Turrian, confessor of our Order, who, after having carried the Gospel into different regions of the globe, was sent to Aquilée to appease civil discords, and who, by force of charity, prudence and apostolic eloquence, happily accomplished this difficult mission.

*Martyrologies of the three Orders of Saint Francis, of the Friars Minor and of the Minor Capuchins.* — The vigil of Saint James, apostle. — At Lima, in the kingdom of Peru, Saint François Solano, confessor, of the Order of Friars Minor, illustrious by his preaching in the West Indies, by his virtues and his miracles. The sovereign pontiff Benedict XIII inscribed him in the fasti of the Saints. His death occurred on 14 July, 1610.

## Additions Made from the Bollandists and Other Hagiographers

In Russia, the holy Romain and David, martyrs, patrons of the government of Moscow. In 1702 their relics were transferred to the church which had been built under their invocation at Vislegorod. 1010. — In the ancient borough and priory of Stone, in the kingdom of Mercia (Great Britain), the holy Wulfhad and Ruffin,

martyrs. They were brothers and sons of Wulfhere, king of Mercia. Baptised secretly by Saint Chad, bishop of Lichfield, about the year 670, they were inhumanly massacred by their father, one day when both were at prayer. The queen Emmelinde, mother of the two princes, had them buried at Stone, a place so named on account of a great heap of stones that had been formed on their tomb, according to the custom of the Saxons: she afterwards used these stones to build in that spot a church which took the name of the two Martyrs. 7th century. — In the diocese of Cracow, and in several places in Poland, Saint Kinge or Cunégonde. She had for father Béla IV, king of Hungary, and for mother Marie, daughter of Theodore Lascaris, emperor of Constantinople. She married in 1239 Boleslas the Chaste, sovereign of the palatinates of Cracow, Sandomir and Lublin; but she bound herself by vow, as did her husband, to live in perpetual continence. Boleslas having died in 1279, she took the veil in the monastery of Sandecz, recently built for nuns of Saint Clare. In 1690 her name was inscribed in the catalogue of the Saints by Alexander VIII. 1292. — At Lentini or Leontini, in the province of Syracuse, in Sicily, the holy Cléonique and Stratonique, martyrs. After having endured, under the judge Tertulle, the torments of the breaking of the teeth and of scourging, they had their tongues cut off and expired in this cruel last torment. Thrown first into a well, their bodies were drawn out of it by the bishop Saint Néophyte, who buried them religiously in the basilica of the Three Brothers, at Lentini. Under Valerian. — At Sebaste, today Sivas, a city of Asia Minor, near the Halys, the holy martyrs Théozone, Victor, Emérite and his two brothers, Statien, Silvain, Capiton, Stercace and Cariton. — At Amiterne, today San-Vittorino, in the ancient country of the Sabines, in Italy, with the eighty-three blessed soldiers cited by the Roman martyrology of this day, Saint Victorin, martyr. — At Astorga, in the kingdom of León, in Spain, Saint Dictin, bishop and confessor. 5th century. — At Ardmor, in Ireland, Saint Déclan, bishop, who converted several tribes of those regions. 6th century. — At Ferrara, a city of the kingdom of Italy, the Blessed Jean de Tossignani, bishop of that see. 1446. — At Tauriana, in Calabria, an archiepiscopal city of Italy, Saint Fantin, confessor, cited in various martyrologies on 31 July, 30 August and 6 September. 4th century.

## Saint Christine, Virgin and Martyr, in the Ancient City of Tyr, in Tuscany

*About 300. — Pope: Saint Marcellinus. — Roman Emperors: Diocletian and Maximian.*

> *It is a great thing to die for Jesus Christ. What glory, when tender and delicate limbs suffer a long and painful martyrdom with courage!*
>
> *Saint Pierre Damien.*

As the victory of martyrdom is one of the most astonishing miracles of the almighty power of God, it is also one of the rarest marvels of the generosity of the faithful; and this glory is all the more resplendent when the person is of a more delicate constitution and of a more tender age, and when the torments she endures are more severe. These are the three circumstances which appear in splendour in the triumph of Saint Christine. She was a child who was only ten years old, and nevertheless she suffered at the hands of her own father’s cruelty everything that the rage of tyrants has ever been able to invent of the most inhuman. We shall relate what Saint Adon has left in writing about her in these few words:

“This illustrious virgin was of Tyr, an ancient city of Tuscany, situated on the shores of Lake Bolséna, but which has since been submerged by its floods. Her father, who was its prefect and governor in the name of the emperors, was called Urbain; he himself became the executioner of his daughter. Here is the subject of his anger: Christine, enlightened by heavenly lights and impelled by a motion of the Holy Spirit, had embraced the faith of Jesus Christ; not content with this, she had carried off all the idols of gold and silver which her father adored in his house, and had broken them in pieces to make alms of them to the poor Christians. This action of Christine raised this barbarous father to such an excess of fury that he put her on the spot into the hands of the executioners, who by his order buffeted her cruelly, scourged her outrageously, and finally, by an unheard-of cruelty, completed the tearing of her precious body, already all bloody, with

iron claws, so that the bones were laid bare in several of her limbs; but so burning a pain was far from beating down the courage of this invincible virgin or disturbing the peace of her soul; she gathered up without astonishment the pieces of her flesh and presented them to her father, who was glutting his eyes on her torment.

“An action so surprising, instead of touching this tiger’s heart, served only to irritate it the more. He had her thrown into a dreadful prison, loaded with chains and irons; then he had her fastened to a wheel raised a little from the ground, which he had drenched with oil on every side and under which he had a great fire lit, so that, the wheel turning, the body of this little innocent should suffer a double torment at the same time. But a miracle from heaven suspended the effect: the fire respected that body so pure, and turning its flames upon a crowd of unbelievers whom curiosity and pleasure had made run to the spectacle, consumed a great number of them.

“The father, at the sight of a prodigy which covered him and all the idolaters with confusion, was a prey to the most violent spite. He had his daughter brought back to prison; but she did not remain there without succour: an Angel descended into her dungeon, consoled her, healed her of her wounds, and gave new strength to her spirit and her heart. This unnatural father, having learned of this marvel too, made in his fury one last effort. He commanded the executioners to tie a stone to Christine’s neck and to cast her into the lake; but God, who had known how to preserve her from the flames, knew well how to preserve her from the waters also. The same Angel who had followed her into the pit accompanied her into the sea, and, having freed her from all fear and all pain, brought her out and led her to the bank of the shore, where she was found as sound as before. It was this last blow from heaven that finally struck down this inhuman father; the rage he had at seeing that the miracles did not cease in favour of his daughter put him so far beside himself that the next day he was found dead in his bed.

“Dion, who was his successor in the government of the city, was also the heir of his cruelty. He raged against Christine as he had done; he invented a thousand kinds of torments to torture this innocent virgin. The most rigorous was when he had her laid in an iron cradle filled with boiling oil mixed with pitch; but Christine, whom God took pleasure in protecting before the face and to the confusion of her tyrants, with a single sign of the cross over herself calmed such burning heats, and, by a holy insult to the executioners, told them that ‘they had put her in this cradle like a child who had just been regenerated to grace by baptism.’ These detestable ministers of Satan were in despair at seeing a child of ten triumph over all their efforts and remain invulnerable in the midst of so devouring a torment. Thereupon these infamous barbarians, forgetting all the respect they owed to the modesty and decency of this innocent virgin, cut off her hair, stripped her of her garments, and in this deplorable state dragged her outrageously to the temple of Apollo to oblige her to offer incense to this false god. But she had no sooner entered than, by a new miracle of the Almighty, the idol was broken into pieces, the tyrant fell stark dead, and the sight of this marvel so touched the hearts of those present that three thousand of these unbelievers were converted to the faith.

“After the death of this new prefect, Saint Christine passed again into the hands of a third, named Julien; for this tyrant, believing it was a point of his honour to avenge the shame and even the death of those who had preceded him in his office, tried on her all the torments he could. First he had her cast into a burning furnace to be consumed there; but God, willing to renew in her person the ancient miracle of the three children of the furnace of Babylon, rendered those flames powerless, and permitted the Saint to remain there five days without suffering anything. Then the men, finding themselves at the end of their malice, resolved to have recourse to the devil. They addressed themselves to a magician, who threw into the prison of our admirable Martyr a quantity of horrible serpents, asps and vipers, in order to make her die by the venom; but this diabolical invention served only to exalt her glory further and to make her triumph over animals after having vanquished the elements. Her tongue was cut out, but she did not for that lose the use of speech; on the contrary, she made heard with more force than ever the praises of the true God whom she adored. At last

Julien, losing all patience, had her tied to a stake, where her body was pierced with arrows until she rendered her soul to God in this torment, in which she completed her triumph and merited the crown of one of the most illustrious Martyrs of Jesus Christ. This precious death occurred on 24 July, as is marked in all the Martyrologies. Some authors have believed that Saint Augustine spoke of this glorious virgin in writing on Psalm cxx; but they were deceived by the error of a copyist, who put Christine in place of Crispine, another celebrated Martyr of Thébeste in Africa, of whom the Church makes memory on 5 December. As for our Saint Christine, her holy body was afterwards carried to Palermo in Sicily, where she was revered with much devotion by the people, who had taken her for one of their advocates and chief patronesses."

In the course of the eleventh century, it was carried off by two pilgrims and brought near Béthune, to the united parishes of Ecque (La Pugnoy) and La Beuvrière: for it was there that the second of these pilgrims had died, after having confessed to the priest of the place the circumstances of his pious theft. Then a church was built and a monastery founded to honour worthily such precious relics, and religious were brought from the abbey of Charroux to guard and venerate them. In 1587 the abbey of Charroux ceded this establishment to the abbey of Saint-Vaast, and from then until the Revolution the provostship of La Beuvrière succeeded to the primitive priory.

Twice each year, on Low Sunday and on the Sunday following 24 July, the parish of Viserny (Côte-d'Or) carries in triumph, in a solemn procession, the reliquaries and the ancient shrine in which the bones of Saint Christine are preserved, a treasure which has enriched the church for centuries.

She is represented in four ways: 1° holding a knife in her hands, to signify that her breasts and her tongue were cut off; 2° carrying an arrow in her hand; 3° having broken idols near her; 4° a serpent is often put in her hand, because one of the torments she overcame was that of the venomous reptiles to which she had been exposed.

We have completed the account of Saint Adon with the *Acta Sanctorum*, local notes, and Father Cahier.

## Saint Ursin or Ursicin, Ninth Archbishop of Sens, and Confessor

*End of the 4th century.*

> *I shall keep in my old age the faith that I received at birth.*
>
> *Saint Jerome.*

The metropolitan Church of Sens celebrates today the feast of one of its first bishops, very celebrated for his faith and the integrity of his morals, and a glorious confessor of Jesus Christ in the persecution of the Arian heretics, in which he was involved. He governed this Church, one of the principal ones in the Gauls, when the emperor Constantius, son of the great Constantine, having remained master of the world, wished to have this infamous heresy received everywhere, which took away the divinity from Jesus Christ and reduced Him to the rank of creatures. Several bishops of the Gauls generously opposed this impiety, and, as much by their writings as by their preaching and their synodal assemblies, did what they could to maintain the peoples in the truth of the Catholic faith. We have already seen, on 13 January, with how much zeal Saint Hilaire, bishop of Poitiers, one of the greatest lights of the Church, applied himself to this duty. Our Saint Ursicin seconded him marvellously, and did so with the more fruit as his holiness was recognised by all the world. He had already caused to be built, in his metropolis, a monastery under the names of Saint-Gervais and Saint-Protais (386), where he had gathered a holy community of religious; and, although he was not of their number, but their father and founder, it may nevertheless be said that he was their example, and that they had, in his life, the model of all the virtues which they were to practise in their cloister. Thus Arianism could not slip into his flock, and his sheep always esteemed much more the sound doctrine which he preached to them than the falsehood and error which these heretics strove to spread on all sides.

But, as these impious men had power in hand, being in great favour with the emperor, they tore Ursicin from his sheepfold, to have more liberty to enter it and to make their ravages there. Du Saussay, in his martyrology, says that he was deposed, with Saint Hilaire and other orthodox prelates, at the conciliabulum of Béziers (356), which Saturnin, archbishop of Arles, infected with the poison of Arianism, had assembled to make a formula of faith contrary to the creed of the Council of Nicaea, and that he was afterwards relegated to Phrygia. He went there, not as a banished man, but as an apostle who bears everywhere the light of truth; and, because it was there that heresy had most credit, being received in almost all the cities, he had on all sides occasion to exercise his zeal and to show his learning and his firmness in the discussions which he was obliged to sustain. The particular place of his exile is unknown, and also the ills he endured there: they could only be very great, since he was always in unknown countries and in the midst of his most cruel enemies; but he returned at last to his diocese, either by the order of Constantius, who did not wish to have so powerful an adversary in the East, or after his death and at the beginning of the reign of Julian the Apostate, who revoked all the decrees of banishment of his predecessor. He then employed the rest of his life in the functions of a pastor, applying himself faithfully, and with all his strength, to destroy the remains of idolatry, to civilise the Christian people, to imprint on them horror of vice and love of virtue, and above all to make himself the form and model of his flock.

The tradition of the Church of Sens holds that Saint Hilaire, having also returned from his banishment, paid him a visit, and it is believed that the church of Saint-Hilaire, at Sens, was built on the spot where this blessed bishop lodged. At last Saint Ursicin ended his life happily, to go and receive in heaven the reward of his labours and of his confession; which happened on 24 July, toward the end of the 4th century.

The Roman martyrology makes mention of him. Baronius makes him the successor of Saint Polycarpe, who is not found, however, in the order of the archbishops of Sens. Du Saussay puts him after Saint Séverin, who assisted at the Councils of Sardica and of Cologne. But MM. de Sainte-Marthe still put four bishops between Saint Séverin and Saint Ursicin: as they also put three between Saint Ursicin and Saint Agrice, to whom Sidonius Apollinaris wrote in the year 372. But it may be that some of these prelates were only chorepiscopi. In the list of the bishops of Sens which we have received from that bishopric, Saint Ursicin is found the ninth: 1° Saint Savinien; 2° Saint Potentien; 3° Léonce; 4° Audat; 5° Héraclien; 6° Lunaire; 7° Simplice; 8° Séverin; 9° Saint Ursicin; 10° Théodore; 11° Siciin; 12° Saint Ambroise; 13° Saint Agrice, etc.

*Acta Sanctorum*, and local notes.

## The Blessed Louise de Savoie, Widow, Religious of the Order of Saint Francis

*1503. — Pope: Julius II. — Duke of Savoy: Philibert II, the Handsome.*

> *Modesty is the companion of moderation and of purity; it observes the rules of humility, safeguards the tranquillity of the soul, loves continence and chastity, maintains decency and honesty, moderates the appetites by reason, is insensible to outrage and does not answer it with insult.*
>
> *S. Ang., De Ordine vitæ.*

Louise, daughter of Amédée, duke of Savoy, gave from her childhood marks of her future holiness. There shone in her an admirable purity of heart, an ardent zeal for prayer, a singular modesty and a great contempt of the world. It was not her fault that she did not consecrate her virginity to God; yielding to the will of her uncle, who had become her guardian after the death of her father, she married a count of Chalon-sur-Saône. She did not abandon in marriage the virtues which she had practised as a virgin. Her example was very salutary and very effective for the correction of morals in the city of Châlon; and her husband himself, whom she loved extremely in God, let himself be inflamed with the desire of evangelical perfection. Having become a widow at the age of twenty-seven, she gave herself entirely to God. She could never be persuaded to a second marriage. Content with a very modest household, a frugal diet and a very simple dress under

which she wore the rough Franciscan tunic, occupying herself with the meditation of heavenly things and with works of penance and piety, she made every day fresh progress in perfection. Of a boundless charity and liberality, she gave all her revenues for the nourishment of the poor, of religious and of clerics, visited and served the sick, even those who were afflicted with the most repulsive diseases. She ended by disengaging herself entirely from the embarrassments of the world and by embracing the religious life in the Franciscan monastery of Orbe, a town of Switzerland, in the canton of Vaud. The most humble of the religious and the most submissive to the rule, she burned with an extraordinary love for Jesus suffering and for the Virgin Mother of God. Her soul was at times flooded with the graces of heaven. She was taken from this world by a violent illness, at the age of forty-two, on 24 July, as she had foretold, in 1503. Her holiness shone forth by several miracles.

Her body was buried with great honours in the monastery of Orbe, then transferred shortly after to Nozeroy, chief town of a canton of the Jura, in the arrondissement of Poligny, and placed in the choir of the church of the Cordeliers. Gregory XVI approved her worship in 1839 in all the States of the king of Sardinia.

*Proper of Chambéry.*

## Saint François Solano, Missionary, of the Order of Friars Minor

*1610. — Pope: Gregory XV. — King of Spain: Philip III.*

> *Sanctorum prædicatio solo charitatis ardore flammescit.*
>
> *It is the ardour of charity alone that enkindles the preaching of the Saints.*
>
> *S. Greg. Mag., Lib. ii Moral.*

Saint François Solano was born at Montilla, in Andalusia, in the diocese of Cordova, in the month of March 1549. His father and mother, distinguished by their rank and piety, inspired him from his earliest childhood with the fear and love of God. He made his studies with the Jesuits, where he drew the affection of all who knew him by his modesty and gentleness. His presence alone prevented dishonest games and words. He loved peace so much that he hastened to reconcile the quarrels of his schoolmates. One day, indeed, seeing two men fighting a duel, he went boldly up to them and said to them with extreme gentleness: “For the love of God! do not fight in so dangerous a manner; for there is no one to reconcile you, and certainly you will wound each other to death.” Touched by this ingenuous remonstrance, the two men put their swords back in the scabbard and parted in peace.

The hours that were not given to study young François employed in cultivating his father’s garden, and he charmed this work by the singing of hymns. To grow in piety, no less than in knowledge, he assiduously frequented the sacraments of Penance and the Eucharist. At the age of twenty he entered among the Franciscans of Montilla. The austerities of the novitiate did not suffice for his fervour. Under his ordinary garments he wore a rough hair-shirt, observed an almost continual fast, lay on vine-cuttings, with a block of wood for pillow, during Advent and Lent, and frequently scourged himself to blood. After his profession he followed the studies of philosophy and theology. As he understood these sciences, he turned them into meditations accompanied by prayers and tears, so that he became at once the most learned and the most holy. Named master of novices, then superior of a convent, he instructed and commanded more by his examples than by his words. Having obtained leave to resign these charges, he gave himself wholly to the salvation of souls, preaching with much faith, charity and fruit to the poor people of the country. When he was sent out to beg, he gathered around him the little children, and recited with them the principal truths of Christian doctrine. The plague having broken out in the country, François devoted himself to the service of the sick, as much for the soul as for the body. He taught them to sanctify their pains, and tried to bring remedy to them. Those who escaped death, he clothed anew, and led back to their homes to the singing of hymns. The religious who assisted him having died, François did alone the office of two. He was himself stricken; but,

scarcely recovered, he returned to serve his dear sick, until the scourge had ceased. His faith and charity obtained more than one extraordinary cure.

As the grateful populations showed him great esteem and affection, the humble François sought to escape from it. He asked permission to go and preach to the barbarians of Africa, hoping to shed his blood there for the faith. He obtained only to go to South America, in 1589. On the coasts of Peru the ship was assailed by a furious tempest, which drove it against a sandbank and made a leak in it. The pilot, seeing no remedy, engaged the principal passengers to save themselves in the longboat; François Solano was of the number. But, considering that the multitude could not profit by it, he cried out aloud: “God forbid that, for the love of temporal life, I should separate myself from my brothers here who are in peril both of temporal life and of eternal life!” At once, raising the cross, he exhorted them to implore the divine mercy. As there were among them negroes still unbelievers, he instructed them in a few words in the Christian faith, and conferred Baptism on them. A few moments after, a gust of wind broke the ship in two. The half in which most of the neophytes were disappeared in the waves. The other half, in which Saint François was, began to float. Terror was at its height among his companions in shipwreck; alone without fear, the holy man exhorts them to put their confidence in God, to merit His help by prayer and penance, assuring them that the longboat would come back to take them after three days. In the interval, he preached penance to them on the wreck of the ship, giving them himself the example by striking himself with cords on his bare shoulders. After they had thus passed three days and three nights between life and death, they saw the longboat appear. François was about to climb into it the last, when the part of the ship which had saved them for three days came to be engulfed. As the waves had carried the longboat away, the holy man joined it by swimming; his habit was carried off by the waves, but he found it again on land, on the shore. When the missionaries had somewhat recovered from their fatigues at Lima, François Solano was sent more than seven hundred leagues, into the province of Tucuman, otherwise Rio de la Plata, to evangelise the tribes wandering in the forests and deserts. Their languages were various and very difficult: he learned them in a short time, less by the efforts of mind and memory than by the grace of Him who said: “They that believe in me shall speak with new tongues.” For at the end of fifteen days he spoke one of these languages in such a manner as to surpass the natives. These, in the beginning, attributed this prodigy to magic; but soon they remarked something more marvellous. As at the first Pentecost, while the Saint spoke in one single language, he was understood in all the others.

But that to which the new apostle applied himself still more than to speech, for the conversion of souls, was prayer, fasting and voluntary austerities. Journeys, fatigues, perils across forests, deserts and rivers, nothing cost him anything to win to Jesus Christ the poor savages, to instruct them, baptise them, hear their confession. With time he had no longer need to run after them: they came to find him of themselves, and in great troops. And what the magistrates had not been able to obtain from them by the rigour of justice and the fear of penalties, the Saint had only to say a word, and they executed it at once with joy. Here is, among others, a proof of the authority that his humility and charity had won for him.

One Holy Thursday, while the faithful were occupied at the divine offices, an army of barbarians came upon them, bringing them war and death. The terror was extreme. François Solano walked alone to meet the enemies; and, although they spoke very different languages, he announced to them in one single language peace and concord. They understood him so well that more than nine thousand of these barbarians asked for and received Baptism. Their change was such that that very night a great number of them mingled with the Catholic faithful to give themselves the scourging, in honour of Jesus scourged at the pillar. All these peoples, returned home, assured that they had heard all their languages in that of the holy man. Other miracles increased still further his renown. One day when he was preaching in Tucuman, he learned that these peoples, because of the lack of water, were on the point of leaving the country, to their great regret and prejudice. Enlightened from on high, he assured them that quite near was a spring of living water. The inhabitants not being able to believe it because of the long drought, he went out with them into a field, and,

designating with his staff a quite arid spot, he ordered them to dig there. Scarcely had they removed a little earth when a considerable fountain of sweet water flowed from it. Even today it is so abundant that it turns two mills; and the inhabitants, Spaniards and Indians, have not ceased to call it the fountain of Saint-Solano. Named successively Custos of the province of Tucuman, and superior of the monastery of Lima, François did so much by his humble supplications that he was discharged from his employments, in order to be able to apply himself solely to preaching and the salvation of souls. God favoured him with extraordinary graces, with the supernatural knowledge of hearts, the gift of healing, the spirit of prophecy. As his predictions were seen to be accomplished exactly, his threats made a terrible impression. In 1603, preaching in the city of Truxillo, not far from Lima, he announced expressly, fifteen years in advance, that the first of these cities would be destroyed with the church in which he was preaching, but not the pulpit, which would remain intact in the midst of the ruins. This was accomplished to the letter, by an earthquake, on 14 February 1618. The year that followed this prediction, that is to say in 1604, being at Lima, he went out one day from the monastery toward evening, advanced to the great square, before the people, who soon ran up from all sides. He began to speak strongly against the corruption of morals, and taking for text this word of Saint John: “All that is in the world is the concupiscence of the flesh, and the concupiscence of the eyes, and the pride of life,” he announced in a threatening manner the approaching perdition, not of the material city, but of the souls of those who dwelt in it.

This preaching was for the people of Lima what the preaching of Jonah was for the people of Nineveh. Although the Saint had not spoken of the ruin of the city, but of that of souls, all the hearers interpreted it in both senses. The whole city clothes itself in mourning; everyone strikes his breast and implores the divine Mercy; the churches are opened, the Blessed Sacrament exposed; they confess with great compunction; the confessors of the city cannot suffice. This salutary terror spread even into the houses of the religious: those of Saint Dominic practised extraordinary penances on themselves and chanted litanies to appease the justice of heaven. The viceroy of Peru, astonished at this sudden commotion of the whole city, consulted that very night with the archbishop of Lima, Saint Thuribe. A commission was named to seek out the causes. It called Saint François, who repeated before it his oath. The effect was the same, all the hearers were seized with fear and melted into tears. At the same time, the Saint gave a declaration in writing that he had not spoken of the material destruction of the city, but of the spiritual ruin of souls by sin. This declaration was made public; but it did not prevent compunction and terror from increasing still more. Then the viceroy said: “Let us not take useless pains; this is the work of God, who has willed, by this means, to soften hearts till then hardened.”

What Saint François Solano had been all his life, a model of faith, patience, humility, charity and seraphic devotion, he was particularly in the two months that preceded his death. Exhausted by a continual fever, he looked on the Saviour on the cross and blessed Him that He was willing to make up by the pains of the illness for the discipline which he could no longer give himself. He conversed continually with God, or of God with his brothers. Often he was rapt in ecstasy. At the feast of the Holy Trinity he went out of his cell, in spite of his weakness, and intoned in a strong voice: “Let us bless the Father and the Son, with the Holy Spirit!” His familiar aspiration was: “Glorified be God!” At the feast of the Blessed Sacrament he had ecstatic conversations with the Lamb of God, on his bed of pain. He predicted that he would die on the day of Saint Bonaventure, his saint of predilection. Three days before his death, looking at the religious who served him, he melted into tears and said: “Lord Jesus, whence comes this to me? You are fastened to the cross, and I am relieved by the ministry of your servants; you are naked, and I am covered; you are struck with blows and crowned with thorns, and I am loaded with so many goods and consoled in so many ways!”

On the day of Saint Bonaventure, 14 July, the fever ceased suddenly, the sick man’s breath gave out a sweet odour, his hands lost their wrinkles. As the religious were reciting the divine office, the sick man raised his hands at the *Gloria Patri*, and said his accustomed aspiration: “Glorified be God!” Then the Creed was sung. When they came to these words: *Et incarnatus est de Spiritu Sancto ex Maria Virgine*, the bell of the church

tolled the elevation of the solemn Mass; at once the holy man, looking at the crucifix and crossing his hands, breathed for the last time his prayer: “Glorified be God!” and he expired, on 14 July 1610, at the age of sixty-one. Countless miracles attested at once his holiness. The acts cite more than a hundred for his beatification. The process of canonisation cites still more than twenty. He was beatified by Clement X, and canonised by Benedict XIII, in 1726. His feast has been fixed on 24 July.

He is represented baptising negroes, and holding a rosary in his hand. *Acta Sanctorum*.

## Saint Pavace, Bishop of Le Mans, and Confessor

*Uncertain epoch.*

> *Visible miracles appear only to raise hearts to the faith of invisible things, so that the exterior marvel may make known the much greater marvel of the interior.*
>
> *Saint Gregory the Great.*

Saint Pavace was given by Saint Clement as coadjutor to Saint Julien, to whom he rendered great services in the ecclesiastical ministry and in the preaching of the Gospel. Under the episcopate of Saint Thuribe he filled important functions in the church of Le Mans. The doctrine and purity of morals which he showed in the exercise of his functions made him agreeable to all the faithful who composed the church of the Cénomans, and drew upon him their wishes and their votes when a pastor had to be chosen to hold the place of Saint Thuribe. From then on he never ceased to show his charity toward the flock entrusted to his keeping. There was seen to appear in him the indefatigable zeal of his predecessors for the propagation of the faith, and the marvels which had cast so much brilliance on their pastoral career illustrated his also. In effect, the miraculous cures which he wrought helped powerfully to the conversion of the unbelievers of his diocese. The church of Le Mans also progressed by this means in the temporal respect; for many gave their goods to the church.

A Christian and rich woman, named Casta, overwhelmed with several diseases at once, had spent her fortune in seeking relief for her ills, and had at last lost all hope in human remedies. In this desperate state she heard of the miraculous cures which the holy bishop had procured for several sick persons, and she desired to experience for herself the charity of the servant of God. She had herself carried by her relatives and friends to the place where Pavace was, and, as soon as she was in his presence, she felt her hope redouble; she set before him what she expected from his piety; he prayed for her, addressed to her also some holy instructions, and she was cured of her illness. In gratitude for this benefit she gave to the Church what remained to her of fortune, and took the resolution to lead henceforth a more Christian life.

This cure made a great stir, and it drew to the holy bishop a multitude of sick who also came to ask him relief for their pains. Of this number was a paralytic, crippled in all his limbs, who had vainly tried all the helps that medicine offered him. He came to find Pavace with a great confidence of obtaining his cure; he remained several days near him, without however yet feeling the power of the holy bishop; meanwhile the latter prayed always for this intention; he even offered, to obtain the grace asked, the holy sacrifice; at last God heard the prayers of His servant and the confidence of the sick man, who was entirely cured.

After having given health back to this paralytic, Pavace engaged him to consecrate himself to the service of God for the rest of his days. This man answered to this vocation, and Pavace had him instructed in Christian doctrine, with more extent than the common run of the faithful; he neglected nothing on his side to make him enter into the knowledge of the sacred dogmas; for it is thus that, for several centuries, the first bishops presided themselves over the catechetical school, and that the doctrine which Saint Julien had received from the Apostles, and taught first, was preserved living there.

However, the marvels which Pavace worked were known not only in the country which had been witness of them, but also in the neighbouring countries; they rejoiced and strengthened in the faith the new faithful. He obtained by his prayers a still much more signal grace. A plague, caused by the corruption of the air, decimated the population throughout the territory of the Cénomans; the holy bishop was keenly moved by this misfortune, and he had recourse to prayer to appease the wrath of God; he joined fasting to prayer and was at last heard. The plague ceased, and not only the faithful, but also the whole population of the country, were indebted to him for their safety.

A short time after this event, a serpent of prodigious size and ferocity appeared in the country. Such was the terror this terrible animal spread that all the villages near its lair saw their inhabitants flee, and seek farther away a less dangerous refuge. This monster spared neither men nor animals, the very air was infected with its pestilential breath. The terror, increasing each day, stopped the most courageous men, and no one dared to approach the place which served it as retreat. Pavace alone showed himself without fear: he went to the cave of the dragon, struck it down by the force of the sign of the cross, entwined it in the folds of his stole, then he made the faithful approach who had followed him, but who had stopped at a distance, held back by fright. The sight alone of the serpent, thrown down as it was, still froze them with terror: the Saint forced them to approach, wishing them to be witnesses of the prodigy. But the marvel was not limited to that: Pavace betook himself to prayer, the earth opened, and the monster disappeared for ever.

Pavace worked another signal miracle in favour of two young men, sons of a man powerful among the Cénomans, named Benedictus, and of his wife Lopa. These young men were reduced to extremity by a violent fever, and their parents were in despair: they had recourse to the holy bishop whose miraculous power they knew, for they had already embraced the Christian faith, and they begged him to come and visit their dying children. The Saint acceded to their wishes: as soon as he arrived, he made the sign of the cross on the two young sick men, and rubbed their heads with a blessed oil; at that very instant they found themselves cured. These happy parents, not knowing how to testify to God and to His minister all their gratitude, offered their children themselves to Pavace, that he might raise them in the clerical state. They joined to this their goods, which they wished to give to the Church to provide for the needs of worship, and for the maintenance of its ministers, of the brethren who were in necessity, of all the sick and all the poor of whom the Church took charge from its origin.

Benedictus and Lopa added further, to all these gifts, a greater sacrifice, for they consecrated themselves to the service of the Church, in the hands of the bishop. This kind of devotion, which became so common afterwards, was not unknown to the first centuries of Christianity. Providence seemed to take pleasure in spreading the reputation of Pavace far beyond the limits of the country of the Cénomans, the Diablintes and the Arviens. An inhabitant of the country of the Andegaves, working at the harvest in the middle of the fields, and having lain down on the ground to rest for a while, a reptile slipped subtly into his body: at once this unfortunate man felt frightful pains, and though physicians were called in vain, they could not relieve him. This man was a Christian; he put all his hope in the God whom he adored, and had himself taken to the oratory which the first apostles of the Andegaves had consecrated to God, in honour of Saint John the Baptist, under the walls of the city. He remained there some time, hoping for his cure. One night when he was there at prayer, sleep took hold of him, and during his rest he received an order from heaven to go to find Pavace, the bishop of the Cénomans, who was to give him back health. This unfortunate man hastened to come and cast himself at the feet of the holy prelate, who cured him in the presence of many persons, having made the sign of the cross over him.

Pavace, laden with years and labours, ceased to live on the ninth day before the calends of August, 24 July. His body was buried by the disciples whom he had trained, in the basilica of the holy Apostles, in the cemetery of the Christians, near the tombs of his two predecessors, to the left of Saint Julien. The power of the miracles with which God had honoured the whole course of his episcopate was not extinguished with his

life; after he had gone down into the tomb, the peoples continued to come and implore him, and felt the happy effects of his intercession.

In the 9th century his body was transferred to the cathedral by Saint Aldric. Four years afterwards he enclosed his relics, with an arm of Saint Liboire, in a precious urn which was placed in the church of Saint-Sauveur, not far from the city, a church which has become a parish church under the name of Saint-Pavace.

Several centuries after the episcopate of Saint Pavace, a figure of this monster was still to be seen, with the representation of all that we have just related, in the palace of the bishops of Le Mans; the dragon was represented there with gigantic proportions. Hence came the custom of painting our holy bishop holding a dragon in chains.

Taken from the Proper of Le Mans, and from the *History of the Church of Le Mans*, by Dom Piolla.

## Saint Raven, Priest, and Saint Rasiphe, Deacon, Martyred near Séez (about 470)

Raven and Rasiphe, born in Great Britain, were driven from their country by the governor of the province, on account of the zeal they showed in instructing the inhabitants of the region. They crossed the sea and came to take refuge in a desert place now called Macé (Orne), near the city of Séez. They lived there, covered with the skins of beasts and nourished only on roots; but, by a disposition of God, their holiness was made manifest to the eyes of men, and a great concourse of people came to their hermitage. At this news, the governor of Neustria sent satellites to kill the two Saints.

Buried in this desert place by the Christians, their bodies remained long hidden; at last they were discovered miraculously and a church was built on the place of their burial. These holy relics, after having long rested in the church of Macé, were carried to Saint-Vaast, near Bayeux, and placed out of reach of the sacrilegious devastations which the Normans were accustomed to inflict on churches. Later, under the episcopate of Hugues II, bishop of Bayeux, a religious woman, having known by a revelation the place where the bodies of the two Saints lay, made it known to this prelate.

He went in procession, with his clergy and his people, walking barefoot, like everyone else, in spite of his great age, to the church of Saint-Vaast; there was found, at twenty feet depth in the earth, a stone sarcophagus which, when it was opened, gave out an agreeable odour; it contained the bones of the Martyrs, wrapped in a bag of stag leather. These precious relics were carried to Bayeux. The Lord worked numerous miracles to glorify His servants. Eudes, successor of Hugues, had them placed in a new shrine more beautiful than the one in which they had been; they remained there until 1562, the epoch at which they were burned by the Calvinists. Some bones were gathered, and they are today in the chapel of the castle of Grancey in Champagne. But as it was necessary to hide them at the time of the Revolution, the authentic was lost, and these relics could not thenceforth be exposed to the veneration of the faithful.

*Proper of Bayeux*; *Lives of the Saints of the Diocese of Séez*, by M. l'abbé Blin.

## Saint Christina of Saint-Trond, Surnamed the Astonishing, Virgin

*1224.*

Saint Christina, surnamed the Astonishing, was born in 1150 at Saint-Trond, a town of the bishopric of Liège, of honest and hard-working parents, who brought her up in the fear and love of the Lord. Favoured from her birth with an uncommon grace from heaven, she grew up in innocence and virtue. And so, from her tender childhood to her youth, she had no other occupation than prayer; she scarcely knew any road but the road to church. After the death of her parents, Christina and her two sisters agreed to live on and work the

family inheritance together. The keeping of the flocks fell to our Saint. This occupation, so despised in the eyes of the world, filled her with joy; she loved with her whole soul this lowliness, this contempt, this deep obscurity that hid her from the eyes of men and only made her more like her Saviour, whom she had long since chosen as her only Bridegroom. She fulfilled these humble duties for seventeen years without a complaint ever passing her lips, without the least sign of opposition or discontent being seen in all her conduct. In the fields, far from the dealings of the world, she was soon in continual company with God and the angels. Everything she saw and heard raised her young soul toward the Creator. So the young virgin had only one thought, the Lord; her soul, absorbed in divine contemplation, burned with the continual flame of the purest love. She also had the liveliest tenderness for the Blessed Virgin; but as it was not enough for her to lavish her homage on Mary in solitude, she let slip no opportunity of winning hearts for her and spreading her devotion and her cult. This tender love of God and Mary necessarily produced the liveliest love of her neighbour. Christina loved all men without exception; prayers and sighs rose continually from her heart for their present well-being and their eternal happiness; but the richest share of her good works belonged to the needy and the unfortunate, above all to the souls in purgatory and to poor sinners. The state of continual contemplation in which Saint Christina lived soon undermined her frail constitution; so she fell ill and died in the flower of her age, in 1182. Her body was carried the next day to the church of Our Lady at Saint-Trond for the funeral service, amid an immense, close-packed and recollected crowd that had come from all sides to attend her obsequies. During the Mass, at the moment when the priest was finishing the last *Agnus Dei*, the dead woman's body began to move; then suddenly it sat up, rose rapidly and came to rest, motionless, on one of the crossbeams of the building. At this sight terror seized the congregation; everyone rushed out of the church except the officiating priest and Christina's elder sister. When Mass was over, the priest ordered her in the name of the living God to come down; she obeyed instantly. Here is how she told her relatives and friends of the unheard-of and incomprehensible event they had witnessed:

"Scarcely had my soul left my body when the angels of God took me in their arms and carried me to a place of darkness and horror, full of a countless number of souls enduring frightful and unheard-of torments: it was Purgatory… They then carried me before the throne of the eternal God. I was then transported with an unspeakable joy, for I thought that from that moment I was going to enjoy His adorable presence for ever. But the Lord said to me: For the whole of eternity you will swim in that ocean of glory your eyes behold; but for the present I offer you a choice: either to stay with Me now and enjoy beatitude in My bosom for ever, or to return to your body on earth and suffer there the pains of an immortal soul in this mortal body, which sufferings will nevertheless not be able to destroy. By these torments you will deliver all the souls in purgatory that inspired you with such sorrowful compassion. Moreover, by the sight of your holy and suffering life you will turn souls still living away from evil and bring them back to Me. When you have accomplished these things, you will appear before Me again, laden with an immense treasure of merits. So spoke the Lord; without hesitating for an instant, I chose His second proposal. And God, blessing me for my choice, ordered His angels to carry my soul back into my body that very instant."

Saint Christina's extraordinary life and unheard-of sufferings surpass all human conception. As soon as she had returned to life, she wished to live only for the one purpose marked out for her second existence: to suffer for the conversion of sinners and for the deliverance of the unhappy souls held in purgatory. Shunning with extreme care all dealings with men, she had to do with her fellow creatures only when religion and charity required it, to help the needy, convert sinners and above all assist the dying. Here are some striking details of her everyday life. Every morning she heard holy Mass, and on all Sundays and feast days she went to the holy table. To this ardent love for Jesus she joined the liveliest tenderness for Mary. She had the greatest esteem and a boundless respect for priests, looking on them with the eyes of faith as the envoys and representatives of her heavenly Bridegroom. She scarcely knew sleep; almost all her nights were spent in prayer or in expiatory mortifications. She usually walked with her head bowed and her eyes lowered. She was very often heard heaving heartbreaking sighs, and floods of bitter tears flowed almost continually from

her eyes. She loved poverty above all things and practised it in the most heroic degree; she lived only on the alms she went herself to beg from door to door. Her clothes were poor and wretched. Her usual dwelling was in the most remote and lonely places, in the most inaccessible and wildest woods. Often, when she wished to pray or plunge into heavenly meditation, she would perch on the highest trees, on the tops of towers, on the roofs of churches, on the ridges of castles and houses; her body then had the agility and lightness of a bird.

However extraordinary this way of life of Christina's must appear, it seems little in comparison with her prodigious sufferings. Having returned to earth to suffer in her mortal body the horrible and unimaginable pains of the souls in purgatory, so as to pay for them, and to obtain for sinners graces of conversion and salvation, we shall see her, led by the Spirit of God, submit herself to terrible, frightening, inconceivable pains. The chief pain she inflicted on her body was that of fire; she had chosen it above all others as her habitual torment, applying it to herself in the most terrible way, so as to be more like the souls in purgatory. She often threw herself into burning ovens meant for baking bread. When there were no ovens, she went into houses and ran to the hearths; according to their size, she either threw herself into them entirely or held her arms or legs, her hands or feet, in them long enough to reduce them to ashes, but for a striking miracle of the divine omnipotence. At other times she flung herself into boiling cauldrons, plunged into them as far as she could, and then poured the scalding water over the rest of her body. In this way she suffered unheard-of pains; but, according to God's promise, her body, which such torments should have destroyed, was found again sound and unharmed.

Water furnished her with another kind of torture. In the most bitter cold she often threw herself into the frozen waters of ponds and rivers and stayed plunged in them for whole nights and days. At other times she placed herself under the wheels of water mills, where the water and ice fell violently on her head and all her limbs. At other times again she threw herself into the current, which carried her down to the wheels, by which she was at once swept round and as it were crushed, with horrible sufferings.

The instruments of torture then in use for criminals also served her on occasion to vary her torments. She was frequently found hanging from some gallows among thieves and brigands, swinging often for a day or two in convulsions, suffering the most frightful anguish of the agony produced by strangulation. In the cemeteries she found another way of expiation: opening fresh graves, she spent whole days lying there with the rotting corpses, thus expiating the sins of men amid the horrible decomposition of the human body that is their consequence. Christina inflicted these various tortures and others on herself for years, suffering every day all the pains of death and never dying; frequently mutilated in all her limbs, destroyed and annihilated, so to speak, and yet always alive and ready for new torments.

This extraordinary life and these sufferings so far above nature struck the people with amazement. Yet hard and coarse men began to put an evil construction on these unheard-of and inexplicable practices. The rumour soon even spread that Christina was possessed by several evil spirits, and that all the wonders of her life were only pretence, diabolical illusions and sorcery, by which she knew how to dazzle and bewitch people's eyes. Her friends themselves, and even her sisters, joined in the general injustice. Her sisters, after trying everything, but in vain, to force her to change her way of life, seized her and fastened her with heavy chains to a block of wood. In this painful and humiliating situation the Saint had to bear contempt, cruel reproaches, bloody outrages, terrible privations and every kind of misery; but it happened one night that her chains suddenly broke. Having thus recovered her freedom, she fled at once into the wilderness, into the depths of the thickest woods, to live there in the trees the wild life of the birds. The complete lack of food soon made her feel all the torments of hunger and thirst. In this extremity she abandoned herself entirely to Providence, and God fed her miraculously. After nine weeks of searching she was found, seized and chained more tightly, but again in vain. God broke her fetters once more, and Christina was able to escape again. This time the fugitive took another direction and reached the city of Liège, about seven leagues from Saint-Trond.

At Liège, too, she could not long continue her extraordinary life and frightful torments without opposition. After some time her sisters, having learned where she had taken refuge, charged a man as robust as he was hard and pitiless to seize her at any cost so as to chain her up again. This madman, driven by the hope of a rich reward, pursued her from refuge to refuge in every direction, but in vain; when he was about to seize her, she slipped out of his hands like a shadow. At last, full of fury and rage, he armed himself with a heavy club and, having the fugitive once more within reach, broke her leg. Christina, seized in this painful state, was tied on a cart and brought back to her sisters. Knowing her extraordinary strength, they shut her up in a solidly walled room, fastening her to the wall with chains; but God healed her and set her free miraculously. Some time later her sisters, at the sight of a new miracle, ceased to struggle against the divine will. Free from then on to live according to her inspirations, Christina took up again her unheard-of austerities with more heroic ardour than before. She did everything to accomplish her great mission: the conversion of sinners and the deliverance of the souls suffering in purgatory.

The Spirit of God moved her inwardly to beg alms of the most hardened sinners, because in this way they might more easily come to hate sin and amend their lives. The food she obtained from them not only resulted in their conversion but also became for her a means of incredible sufferings: disordered movements and convulsions betrayed her inner tortures. Often, giving way under the violence of such a torment, she cried out with groans: “O my God, why treat me so, and not put an end to my tortures? Unhappy soul, why seek and beg for this filth? Why do we fill ourselves with these horrors?” To this means of converting sinners she joined warnings and even preaching, and this in so pressing and effective a way, with so many tears and sighs, that no one could resist her entreaties. The most wretched of sinners had the greatest share in her help. If she learned that one of them had been struck by a mortal illness, she at once redoubled her prayers and works of penance, her fasts and abstinences, her expiations and tortures; she offered everything to God for that soul, to obtain a signal grace of conversion. Moreover, she went to the sick and, inwardly enlightened by a supernatural light, often set before their eyes their most secret faults and their most hidden crimes. Then she spoke to them so vividly and with such inspiration of the unhappy death of the sinner, of the judgment of God, of the inexorable severity of His justice, and above all of the incomprehensible sufferings of hell, that the unhappy sinners, seized with anguish and terrified, asked with burning impatience for a confessor, so as to confess to him the faults of their whole life. Another priceless favour the Saint usually obtained for the dying she assisted was to be preserved from the frightful anguish of the death agony. For she put into their souls so much consolation and courage that they saw the last moment approach with complete tranquillity and rested with full confidence on the infinite mercy of God. Saint Christina’s whole life was nothing but a martyrdom accepted out of love for the souls still in debt to God. She suffered the most frightful tortures for them; and what sustained her in these torments and filled her with ever new ardour was that God allowed each soul she delivered to come and thank the Saint. The most terrible sufferings, beyond all imagining, no longer seemed anything to her in the contemplation of these souls shining with heavenly glory, plunged in the rapture of their eternal happiness. While the Saint was thus lavishing the miracles of charity by accepting these inconceivable pains for the conversion of sinners, the happy death of the dying and the deliverance of souls, she never ceased to advance in the wonders of her supernatural life. Meanwhile the report of her holiness, and above all of her resurrection and her extraordinary life, had soon spread far and wide, and people came daily not only from the places round about but from the farthest parts of the country and from abroad to see the Flying Saint, as she had been called. The continual arrival of these eager crowds did not fail to worry the respectable inhabitants of the town. Remembering how her miraculous existence had already been put in an evil light before, and fearing the same thing would happen again, they asked God to suspend the supernatural manifestations in her, so that her life might no longer offer these spectacles that struck people with amazement. God heard them. One day Christina, seized with a great feeling of repugnance at the sight of human beings, fled as far as Wellen, a village about two leagues from Saint-Trond, went straight into the church and plunged herself entirely into the baptismal font, which she found open. She came out of it

transformed. From that moment all thought of isolation had ceased, and she could live and converse with men as before the miracle of her resurrection. From then on she also lived at Saint-Trond, with her two sisters or with the nuns of the convent of Saint Catherine.

So far we have considered Christina only in her life of expiation and suffering. What remains to be told of this wholly miraculous life, though less unheard-of and less striking, will only make her holiness shine with greater lustre. We mean some special graces with which the Lord had generously endowed His chosen one.

The first of these heavenly favours, which we find in a wonderful degree in our Saint, is the gift of knowledge. Christina was entirely without human learning; but, a disciple of the divine Master, who had favoured her with His gifts and inner lights, she possessed a knowledge that made everyone, even the most learned men, regard her as a miracle of doctrine. She penetrated the most hidden mysteries of religion and explained them with extraordinary clearness.

Another gift Christina had received in no lesser degree was the gift of prophecy. Already in her childhood God had wonderfully favoured her by more than once revealing to her the divine mysteries and things to come, while the care and keeping of the cattle was still her only occupation. Later, after her resurrection, she not only announced to a great number the dangers that threatened their souls, giving them the advice needed to escape them, but even foretold the conversion of many sinners who, humanly speaking, showed not the least sign of turning back.

Of all the extraordinary gifts the Lord had bestowed on Christina, none was more singular or more striking than the gift of ecstatic song. Since her return to ordinary life she had taken to going often to confer with the Benedictine nuns on the things of the religious life. It sometimes happened that the conversation became absorbed in heavenly contemplation. Christina was then suddenly seized by ecstasy. In this state she began to spin round on herself with so rapid a motion that none of the outlines of her body could be made out any longer. After spinning like this for some time, she would throw herself on the ground as if worn out, all her limbs relaxed. Then a wonderful song was heard: it was ineffable and enchanting. Not the least sound, not a breath came from her mouth or nostrils. These superhuman harmonies, of angelic sweetness, were produced inside her breast. Meanwhile all the limbs of her body remained motionless; she looked like a statue; her eyelids were lowered and still. When the moment came she returned to herself and came out of it as from a fit of intoxication.

At the same time there lived at Looz a holy maiden named Jutta. She had broken off all dealings with men and lived apart in a narrow hermitage, wholly occupied with God alone; but her extraordinary virtues and the high holiness of her life could not long remain hidden in that solitary refuge. Christina went to visit her from time to time. They found so much charm and consolation in their conversations that they resolved to live together. So Christina said farewell to her father’s house, went to live with the recluse of Looz and spent nine whole years there. Her life was much the same as at Saint-Trond; she persevered in her terrible expiations. God continued His wonderful gifts to her, above all the ecstatic song, which she made heard every night in the church.

After forty-one years of unheard-of martyrdoms, incomprehensible wonders and heroic acts of charity, Christina had come to the end of her incomparable existence. Back at Saint-Trond, the most lonely places and the darkest woods round about became once more her only dwelling. Throughout the whole of this last year of her life she applied herself more than usual to suffering and expiation. This continual martyrdom had so wasted her body that it looked like a skeleton, and it was no longer possible to look at her without a kind of terror. She wept and groaned unceasingly, in a tone that broke one’s heart. No one would have dared to speak to her or even greet her. She no longer spoke, not even to the Benedictine nuns, to whom she went for her poor food; she always ate it standing and then fled toward the solitude of the woods. She hardly ever slept, and then only for a few moments. Almost always she was praying ardently or meditating deeply. By

the spiritual exercises and bodily mortifications we know of, she had so annihilated and subdued her body that she seemed to have nothing bodily left, and it was hard to be sure, on seeing her, whether she was a spirit or a human creature. When she passed through the streets she seemed not to touch the ground, and nothing in the world could have held her back or turned her aside. When the day came on which the Saint knew by revelation that the illness of which she was to die was at hand, she gave up her extraordinary life once more, left her wilderness and came back to the cloister of the Benedictine nuns. As soon as she arrived there the illness seized her. For three weeks she remained so deeply absorbed in heavenly contemplation that her life was nothing but one continual ecstasy, from which she could be drawn only with great difficulty for a few moments, and to her deep distress. When the three weeks had passed, feeling that her last hour was near, she received holy Viaticum and Extreme Unction, after which she gently expired in the year of Our Lord 1224, forty-two years after her first resurrection, in the seventy-fourth year of her age.

Saint Christina's body was buried in the convent of Saint Catherine. A great number of miracles worked through her intercession, and many favours and graces obtained by invoking her, soon made her tomb renowned among the people, a famous place of pilgrimage and the refuge of all the unfortunate. In 1231, the Benedictine nuns having left their convent at Saint-Trond to live in the cloister of Milen, larger and more secluded, the body of Saint Christina was solemnly carried there. After this glorious translation the Saint was to receive on the altars new and no less striking honours. In 1249 the body was exhumed, following a heavenly warning, and placed with honour in a raised place quite near the altar in the convent church. A striking miracle took place on this occasion. From then on Saint Christina was honoured in the cloister of Milen by a great concourse of the faithful; new and continual miracles bore witness to her power with God and to her ever-living charity toward her neighbour. From then on her glorious name of Christina the Astonishing was confirmed for all the ages. The Benedictine nuns did not leave Saint Christina's bones where they lay. To show better their love and gratitude to their wonderful protectress, they had a pretty chapel built in her honour, where they placed her relics enclosed in a copper shrine. They remained there exposed to the veneration of the faithful until the end of the eighteenth century. The Benedictine nuns then asked the ecclesiastical authority for permission to celebrate the feast of Saint Christina solemnly every year. This grace was granted them without difficulty, and from then on the ceremony took place regularly on 24 July, with great splendour; the Mass of Virgins was sung. On that day above all, the roads leading to the cloister of Milen were thronged with countless pilgrims of every rank and age, who came there to ask in their spiritual and temporal needs for the inexhaustible charity and unfailing protection of the wonder-worker of Saint-Trond. This concourse of pilgrims continued without interruption until the end of the last century.

At the time of the Revolution, when the republican bands had invaded Belgium, the Benedictine nuns of Milen left their country, taking with them the blessed remains of Saint Christina. They were taken in by a convent of women at Grevenberg near Düsseldorf, in Prussia. After some years' stay in this house they returned to Belgium; but their convent had been partly destroyed and had passed into the hands of strangers. They went to live in a small country house at Nieuwerkerken, about a league from Saint-Trond. In 1838 only one inhabitant was left in this house: she was the last survivor of the nuns of Milen. Feeling her end approaching, she offered to the Redemptorist Fathers established at Saint-Trond to hand over to them at her death the relics of her beloved patroness, Saint Christina the Astonishing. The offer was received with boundless joy and gratitude. After the death of this nun, which took place on 28 September 1838, the Saint's bones were carried by some of the Fathers to their house of Steenaert. These relics were placed with honour and exposed to the veneration of the religious. When Mgr de Montpellier, bishop of Liège, had published on 11 November 1857 a pastoral letter prescribing to all the priests of his diocese the cult of the Saints who had lived of old in the country of Liège, the Redemptorist Fathers judged that the time had come when the solemn exaltation of the relics of Saint Christina could take place and they could be exposed again to public veneration. As Saint Christina the Astonishing was among the Saints whose offices were approved by His Holiness Pius IX, they applied to the ecclesiastical authority of the diocese for the solemn recognition of the

relics and the establishment of their identity; this took place on 1 June 1863, in the presence of Mgr de Montpellier, bishop of Liège.

Saint Christina is invoked for the conversion of sinners; for a good death; for the deliverance of the souls in purgatory; in difficult and doubtful affairs that call for counsel and direction, in temporal as well as spiritual matters; against the diseases of cattle; and lastly against contagious diseases and in all incurable ills.

Because of the supernatural state of ecstasy in which she rose and went to settle on trees, towers and other high places, she was usually called the Flying Saint; and to represent this ecstatic flight she is usually painted with wings. The convent of the Redemptorist Fathers at Saint-Trond possesses a painting on canvas representing our Saint. She wears the habit of a Carmelite nun and is winged like an angel; a white veil covers her slightly bowed head; her features express a gentle ecstasy; her face is pale, with a whiteness as transparent as wax; one would say the blood no longer flowed in that body, for there is not the slightest tint of colour on the cheeks; only the lips are a deep crimson, as if the artist had wished to represent the inner flame that consumed her heart in her love for the Saviour and her neighbour. All the life seems gathered in the eyes, which are the mirror of the soul. She is absorbed in meditation on the passion and death of the Saviour, whose bleeding and crucified body she has just been contemplating, set on a table before her. Her hands are crossed on her breast; the right one holds the beads of a rosary.

Extracted from the *Vie de sainte Christine l'Admirable*, translated from the Flemish of Father Henckens, Redemptorist, by A. Giron, senior. Brussels, 1866.

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[1] See her life in the Supplement of this volume.

[2] See his life on this day.

[3] See his life on 18 July.

# 25 July

## Martyrologies

### Roman Martyrology

Saint James, apostle, brother of Saint John the Evangelist, who was beheaded by Herod Agrippa, a little before the feast of Easter. His holy relics, transported on this day from Jerusalem to Spain, and deposited at the farthest extremities of that country, in the province of Galicia, are honoured not only by the piety of the inhabitants of the country, but also by the continual concourse of Christians of all nations who come there out of devotion and to fulfil their vows. 44. — In Lycia, Saint Christopher, martyr, who, under the emperor Decius, was torn with iron rods; then, having been preserved from the flames by the virtue of Jesus Christ, he was pierced with arrows and beheaded, and thus consummated his martyrdom. 3rd century. — At Barcelona, in Spain, the feast of Saint Cocuphas, martyr, who, after having overcome several torments, under the president Dacian, during the persecution of Diocletian, had his head cut off and entered victorious into heaven. 306. — In Palestine, Saint Paul, martyr, who, during the persecution of Maximian-Galerius and under the president Firmilien, seeing himself condemned to have his head cut off, asked a little time to pray; having obtained it, he prayed to God with all his heart, first for the Christians, his brothers, then for the Jews and the Gentiles, that they might acknowledge the truth of the faith, then for all the crowd which surrounded him, and finally for the judge who had condemned him and for the executioner from whom he was about to receive the stroke of death; after which, having had his head cut off, he received the crown of martyrdom. 308. — In the same country, Saint Valentine, virgin, who, having overthrown with her foot a little altar before which she had been brought to sacrifice, was very cruelly tortured, and, having been thrown into the fire with one of her companions, flew away to her heavenly Spouse.[1] 308. — At Forconio, in the Abruzzo

Ulteriore, the holy martyrs Florent and Félix, natives of Siponte. 3rd century. — At Cordova, Saint Théodemir, monk and martyr. 851. — At Trier, Saint Maigneric or Magnéric, archbishop of that see and confessor. 596.

### Martyrology of France, Revised and Augmented

In the diocese of Strasbourg, Saint Arbogaste, bishop and patron of the whole diocese, whose life we have given on 21 July. 678. — In the diocese of Lyon, feast of Saint James, apostle, and commemoration of Saint Christopher, martyr, cited in the Roman martyrology of this day. — In the diocese of Beauvais, the decease of Saint Evrou, whose life we give on the following day, which is that of his feast. 600. — At Maestricht, in Dutch Limburg, Saint Jean the Lamb, bishop of that see. His gentleness won him his surname. He was born at Thyange, near Huy, in Belgium, in the province of Liège, and was raised early, thanks to his talents and virtues, to the see of Maestricht. He gave all his patrimony to the basilica of the holy Côme and Damien of Huy and was buried there. His relics were raised from the earth in 1230, and were placed religiously in the altar of these Martyrs. About 646. — In the diocese of Troyes, Saint Urse or Ours, bishop of that see, of whom we shall speak on the following day. — At Metz, Saint Glossinde or Glossinne, virgin, abbess of the first monastery of that city. 608. — At Paris, the translation of Saint Germain, whose life we have given on 28 May. He was first buried, according to his will, in the chapel of Saint-Symphorien, which he had caused to be built near the portal of the great church of the abbey of Saint-Vincent. But in 754, nearly two hundred years after his death, the abbot Lantfrède received an order from heaven to have his bones transported into the choir of the great church: he gave notice of it to Pepin the Short, king of France, who wished to be present with his two sons, Carloman and Charles, and as a monument of the miracles which took place at this translation, he gave to the abbey of Saint-Germain (ancient monastery of Saint-Vincent) the village of Palaiseau, and confirmed this donation by a solemn oath which he made on the tomb of the Saint. 754. — In the Ponthieu (*Pontivus pagus*), ancient country of Lower Picardy, translation of Saint Josse, king, priest and solitary, whose life we shall give on 13 December. Buried first in his hermitage, between Étaples and Montreuil-sur-Mer (Pas-de-Calais), his body was discovered at the right side of the altar of Saint-Martin, raised from the earth, and deposited in the confession of this altar. 977. — At Le Mans, translations of Saint Julien, first bishop of that see, whose life we have given on 27 January. The most celebrated translations were those of 840, of 1093, of 1136 and of 1254.

### Additions Made from the Bollandists and Other Hagiographers

At Caesarea of Palestine, today Kaisarieh, a city of Judea, between Dor and Apollonia, Saint Thée, virgin and martyr, companion of Saint Valentine and of Saint Paul, cited in the Roman martyrology of this day. The judge Firmilien had threatened to have her exposed in a place of prostitution; she reproached him with his injustice and the corruption of his heart. To punish her for her boldness, the judge ordered that she be cruelly beaten, then stretched on the rack where she had her sides torn with iron nails. 308. — At Rome, the holy martyrs Agonce and Nonne, cited by Saint Jerome. — The holy martyrs Stercorius, Clément and Julien, cited by the same without further details. — Among the Greeks, Saint Jérusalem, martyr, who perished by the sword. — In Arabia, Saint Jorio, bishop of Mount Sinai, died at Béthune, in the diocese of Arras, and named in the martyrology of France of 26 July, where the few biographical details concerning him may be read. 1033.

## Saint James the Greater, Apostle, Surnamed Son of Thunder

*44. — Pope: Saint Peter. — Roman Emperor: Claudius.*

> *The Apostles, these men who, professing the true religion, taught that all is governed by the providence of God, showed that they themselves did not think of the morrow.*
>
> *Saint Jerome.*

We have already given, on the first day of May, the life of a Saint James, apostle, son of Alphaeus, whom Saint Paul calls by way of honour Brother of the Lord, because he was his close relative. The Church presents to us today another, whom the Gospel always prefers to the first, and who is called for this reason the Greater, because in effect he was received with him into the company of the Son of God and among the number of His disciples. His father was named Zebedee, as all the Evangelists have remarked, calling very often Saint James and Saint John, his brother, the sons of Zebedee. As Scripture says, speaking of Zebedee, that "his sons left him to put themselves in the following of this divine Master," Theophylact concludes from it that he did not believe in the Gospel. But Albert the Great, and, after him, the learned Luke of Bruges, are of another opinion and doubt not that he was a friend and even a disciple of the Son of God; and in fact, he showed much virtue in that he did not oppose the vocation of his sons but let them go at once, although they were the supports of his old age and he received from them great help for the conduct of his boat and the exercise of his fishing. If Scripture tells us that his sons left him to follow Our Lord, it is not that he remained alone incredulous and obstinate; but he stayed in his boat and continued the care of his domestic affairs, because the Saviour did not call him, but only his sons. As for the mother of our holy Apostle, Saint Mark names her Salomé; that was also the name of the mother of the seven Maccabee brothers. She is believed to have been a relative of the Blessed Virgin; but it is certain that she was not her own sister and daughter of Saint Anne, for the Blessed Virgin was an only daughter. She could therefore be her first cousin, daughter of a brother or a sister of Saint Joachim or of Saint Anne herself. The Roman martyrology makes mention of her on 22 October, where it calls her Marie Salomé.

It is probable that Saint James and his brother Saint John gave themselves as disciples to Our Lord from the beginning of His preaching and a short time after the first vocation of Saint Peter and Saint Andrew, since from then on the Gospel always represents Him accompanied by His disciples. If Saint Matthew marks the vocation of these two brothers only more than a year afterwards and jointly with the vocation of the two first Apostles, it is that up to then, while attaching themselves to Jesus Christ, Saint James and Saint John had not entirely left their father. They were also called twice, like Saint Peter and Saint Andrew. Thus it may be that they were present at the wedding at Cana, in Galilee, where Jesus Christ changed water into wine; at the solemnity of the Passover, in the Temple, when He drove out the merchants for the first time; at the conversation with Nicodemus, one of the principal among the Pharisees; at the passage through the city of Sichar, where the Samaritan woman was converted; and finally at the healing of the son of a lord of the city of Capharnaum: actions which Jesus Christ did in the company of His disciples, and which are nevertheless marked before the celebrated vocation of our four Apostles. Saint John the Baptist had already been arrested by Herod, and Our Lord had left Judea to preach more ordinarily in Galilee. Thus, passing along the shores of the sea of Tiberias, after having called Saint Peter and Saint Andrew, with the promise of making them fishers of men, He perceived also our Saint with John, his brother, who were working with their father to mend their nets, and He called them. At that very hour they left their father, their boat and their nets and put themselves in His following. From that time they no longer separated from Him, and they occupied themselves sometimes with fishing; it was only in passing and at times when Our Lord had withdrawn to pray. We find in the Gospel that one day the Prince of the Apostles cast his nets into the sea by order of the Son of God, to whom he had complained that he had laboured all the night in His absence without taking anything; his nets were found so laden with great fishes that he was obliged to call Saint James and Saint John, who were in another boat, to help him. It was a figure of what was to happen in the preaching of the Gospel and the conversion of the faithful, where all the Apostles were to be the ministers of Jesus Christ and the co-operators in the zeal and solicitude of Saint Peter.

Our glorious Apostle then had part in all the actions of the life of his master, and even in those which He wished to do only in the presence of a small number of persons. Thus, when He wished to restore life to the daughter of Jairus, one of the rulers of the synagogue, He took with Him Peter, James and John, and left outside the other disciples; and in the choice which He made of twelve among them to be His Apostles, He

placed Saint James the third and called him with his brother, by a great privilege, Boanerges, that is to say Sons of Thunder; so that he is again one of the three to whom He gave new names to mark their pre-eminence and particular merit. Moreover, He named them Sons of Thunder, that is, according to the manner of speaking of the holy Letters, true thunders, because Saint James was to be a thunder by the force, brilliance and promptness of his preaching, and Saint John by the vigour and light of his Gospel and of his Apocalypse, which he composed only in the midst of thunderbolts and lightnings. Moreover, when the Son of God wished to work the miracle of the transfiguration, He chose Saint James for one of the three witnesses of this prodigy; and having led him, with Saint Peter and Saint John, on the mountain of Tabor, He was transfigured in his presence. He saw then the face of his Master shining like the sun and His garments white as snow, and he heard the voice of the eternal Father, who said: “This is my beloved Son: hear him.” He had again the consolation of seeing Moses and Elijah, those two great Prophets of the ancient law, who conversed with the Saviour of the pains which He was to endure at Jerusalem. This marvel happened at the end of September of the year 33 of salvation.

A short time afterwards, our Saint showed his faith and his zeal for the glory of his Master, for, seeing that the inhabitants of a city of the province of Samaria had refused their gates to Him, he asked permission, with John, his brother, to make fire come down from heaven upon it; and, in fact, they were not less guilty than those two companies of soldiers whose captains spoke insolently to the prophet Elijah, and upon whom he made a heavenly fire descend which reduced them to ashes. But Our Lord stopped this impetuosity and, without taxing them with cruelty or injustice, He warned them that this was no longer in season, because His law was not a law of rigour and severity; but a law of grace, indulgence and mercy. In the thirty-fourth year, some time before His Passion, as He was going to Jerusalem to consummate there, by His death, the work of our Redemption, Salomé, mother of our blessed Apostles, threw herself at His feet and begged Him, in favour of her sons, at their instigation, that He would make the one sit at His right hand and the other at His left in His kingdom. There was doubtless ambition in this request, and the two brothers showed that they did not yet possess the true spirit of the Gospel, which leads to loving contempt and abjection and to fleeing glory, pre-eminence and all that the world has of the brilliant and magnificent. But, at the same time, they gave a great testimony of their courage and of the disposition in which they were to suffer all things for the honour of their Master; for, when He said to them: “You know not what you ask; can you drink the chalice that is prepared for me?” they answered without hesitation: “Yes, Lord, we can,” that is to say, “we are quite ready to drink it, when it shall please you.” Our Lord did not reprove them; but He said to them, on the contrary, that they should drink it indeed; however, that it was not in His disposal to make them sit the one at His right hand and the other at His left, because He had to follow in this the eternal order of the predestination of His Father.

Saint James was again one of the four Apostles who asked Our Lord, in the very week of His Passion, when those great predictions of the ruin of the city of Jerusalem, of His second coming and of the consummation of the ages would be accomplished; so that it is to him in part that we owe the important lights which the Saviour has given us on those terrible days. Finally, when, after the first Supper, Jesus Christ withdrew into the garden of Gethsemani to make His prayer there and prepare Himself for the bloody sacrifice which He was to offer on Calvary, He left the other Apostles outside and took with Him only Saint Peter and the two sons of Zebedee. We do not wish to excuse here the cowardices which they committed on this occasion and in all the time of the Passion of their divine Master. They fell asleep when He was praying with His face against the earth and sweating blood and water by the violence of His agony. They fled when He was bound and led away prisoner to be the victim of the envy and fury of the Jews. They hid when He was dragged to the tribunals and the sentence of death was pronounced against Him. But God permitted this pusillanimity in those who were to be the lights of the world and the pillars of His Church only to make appear with more éclat the power of His grace and the strength of the blood of His Son, since those who fled at that time through fear of a troop of soldiers afterwards resisted magistrates, kings and emperors, and endured torments

and death with an invincible constancy. It would be useless to say that Saint James was present, after the Resurrection, at all the appearances of the Saviour, at His glorious Ascension, at the descent of the Holy Spirit, and that he received the fulness of it, by which his spirit was enlightened with the highest lights of Christianity and his heart inflamed with so great a love of God that he burned continually with the desire to make Him known throughout the whole world and to shed his blood for the glory of his divine Master. What must be sought now is what he did on earth to acquit himself of the duties of his apostolate, until the time when he was beheaded by the command of Herod, surnamed Agrippa, that is, in the space of nine or ten years. The tradition of the Churches of Spain holds that after the death of Saint Stephen he preached the faith for some time in Judea, Samaria, Syria and the neighbouring provinces; in the same way as Saint Peter and the other Apostles, although at that time they still spoke only to the Jews, and that afterwards, by divine permission, he crossed the whole Mediterranean sea and came into Spain, where he announced the coming of the Messiah. God permitted nevertheless, by a holy conduct of His providence, that he made few conversions there and that the seed of faith which he cast into hearts bore no fruit then, but only after his death, by means of his Disciples. This tradition is reported and defended by so many ancient and modern authors, not only of the kingdoms of Spain, but also of other countries, that one may safely rest on it, above all since the Roman Church has inserted it in the lessons that are said at Matins on the feast of our Apostle; which was doubtless done only after a very serious examination. This is not the place to reply to the objections made to destroy it, since we are not making a criticism or a controversy, but a sacred history; we shall say only that it has nothing contrary to what the Acts of the Apostles testify of the martyrdom of Saint James at Jerusalem before the dispersion of these holy preachers of the Gospel; since seven years had elapsed from the martyrdom of Saint Stephen to this dispersion, Saint James had time in this interval to come into Spain, to preach the Gospel there and to return to Judea; and besides, if the door of faith was not yet opened to the Gentiles, he could, in Spain itself, preach only to the Jews, since that nation was already spread through the principal parts of the Roman empire. Moreover, the preaching of Saint James in Galicia does not prevent Saint Pier ter and Saint Paul from being called the founders of the Churches of Spain, as Saint Gregory VII speaks in his epistle lxiv, since Saint James, having converted only a few persons there, left room for Saint Paul to labour there himself, and for Saint Peter to send there the seven missionaries of whom mention is made in the martyrology of 15 May; besides, this kingdom having so great an extent and being difficult to traverse, it may very well be that Saint Paul and the missionaries sent by Saint Peter preached there in provinces where Saint James had not preached.

One of the memorable things which befell him, according to another tradition of that country, was the apparition of the Blessed Virgin: although still living on earth, she made herself seen by him to console him and animate him to pursue the great work of the preaching of the Gospel. The history is reported by almost all the authors, above all by Diego Murillo, of the Order of Saint Francis, in a special book on this subject, and by Jean Tamayo Salazar, in his Notes on his martyrology. This great Apostle was in that part of Spain which was called Celtiberia, in the city of Saragossa, on the river Ebro. As he was praying one night outside the city, on the bank of the water, with his disciples, he heard the angels who said alternately: *Ave, Maria, gratia plena*; and, at the same time, he perceived, in the midst of this troop of heavenly spirits, their glorious Queen, whom they had brought, mounted on a pillar of white marble; she spoke to him with much love and benevolence, and commanded him to build in that place an oratory under her name, assuring him that this part of Spain would be very devout to her until the end of the ages, and that she herself would favour it with her particular protection. Saint James obeyed this order and had a temple made in honour of the Mother of God, where, in the course of ages, a great number of miracles have been worked. This is the celebrated church which is called Notre-Dame del Pilar, or of the Pillar, where there is still shown today the pillar upon which Our Lady appeared, with an image of this glorious Virgin above it, before which nearly a hundred silver lamps burn continually. When our Apostle had been some time in Spain, he returned to Jerusalem for the common affairs of the Church; this was perhaps for the difficulties which had arisen on the subject of the

conversion of the Gentiles, when the Apostles assembled in council to decide that these new converts were in no way engaged to the observance of the law of Moses, and that it was enough that they abstained from blood and from things strangled, as well as from meats immolated to idols. Saint Luke, in his Acts, says only that Herod put him to death by the sword, that is, beheaded him; but ecclesiastical history has remarked other particulars of his martyrdom. This great Apostle was labouring in Judea at the establishment of the faith and of the Christian religion, with the same zeal which he had shown in Spain and in the other places through which he had passed. The Jews, furious against him, solicited Hermogène and Philète, two notable magicians, to oppose his doctrine, and, if they could not confound him by the force of their reasonings, to make him perish by their spells. Philète was the first who dared to attack the holy Apostle; but, seeing that he delivered the possessed, enlightened the blind, healed lepers and even raised the dead, and being besides unable sufficiently to admire the solidity of his doctrine, confirmed by evident passages of the holy Scriptures, he was converted and believed in Jesus Christ. Having returned to Hermogène, whom he had previously acknowledged as his master, he tried to persuade him to embrace like himself the Christian religion, outside which, he told him, he could hope for no salvation; but this magician, far from yielding to his remonstrances, bound him so by his enchantments that he made him immovable. Philète had Saint James warned of it, who sent him his handkerchief, by virtue of which he was set at liberty. Hermogène, irritated at this deliverance, invoked the demons against the Saint and against his neophyte, and sent them to them to chain them both and bring them to him. But, by the prayer of the Saint, which was more powerful than all his imprecations, the demons chained him himself and brought him with feet and hands bound before the Apostle. This was only to open his eyes to the truth and convert him. In effect, recognising thereby the impotence of the malignant spirits and the empire which Jesus Christ and His servants have over them, principally when he had been untied by Philète, he prostrated himself at the feet of Saint James and asked him for baptism, which was granted him after he had cast one part of his books of magic into the fire and the other part into the sea, and had laboured to undeceive those whom he had seduced by his evil artifices. We know that Saint Paul, in his second epistle to Timothy, chap. i, complains that Phygelle (some authors read Philète) and Hermogène have turned their back on him. But, as Baronius says very well in the year 44 of his *Annals*, perhaps after having been converted by Saint James they afterwards perverted themselves and became authors of heresy, as did Simon the Magician, who had been baptised by Saint Peter.

However, the first artifice of the Jews against our holy Apostle having succeeded so ill for them, they came to an understanding with Lysias and Théocrite, captains of the Roman garrison, for a sum of money which they gave them: while Saint James should preach the name of Jesus Christ, and they, on their part, should excite a sedition among the people, the captains were to seize his person to bring him to trial. In effect, one day when this holy Apostle was proving efficaciously, by the testimonies of the holy Scriptures, that Jesus Christ was the true Messiah promised by the law, announced by the Prophets and awaited by their fathers, a tumult having been excited in the assembly, Josias, one of the scribes of the Pharisees, threw himself on him and put a rope about his neck; at the same time the soldiers seized him and led him to Herod Agrippa, grandson of the first Herod, who had put to death the innocents, and nephew of the second, who had put to death Saint John. His trial was soon dispatched; this wicked prince, who wished to draw the esteem of the Jews, at the expense of the life of good men, condemned him to have his head cut off. As he was being led to execution, he healed a paralytic who presented himself before him, and implored his help; this made so great an impression on the mind of Josias, who had seized him first, that he was converted, and, casting himself at his feet, begged him urgently to pardon him his death and to receive him among the number of the disciples of his Master. The Apostle asked him whether he truly believed that Jesus Christ was the Son of the living God: “I believe it,” said Josias, “that is my faith, and I wish to die in this confession.” Upon this word, he himself was seized and bound, to receive the same chastisement as the holy Apostle: the order was obtained from Agrippa. When they were at the place of execution, they asked for a glass of water, and it was brought them: Saint James baptised the Pharisee and gave him the kiss of peace with his blessing, making the sign of

the cross on his forehead. Thus they both lost their lives for the confession of the name of the Saviour, about the feast of Easter of the year 44. Some authors believe that it was on 25 March; but the Roman Breviary says that it was on 1 April. It must have been before Easter. A part of these circumstances are drawn from Clement of Alexandria, and reported by Eusebius of Caesarea in his *Ecclesiastical History*, book ii, chap. viii. The others are drawn from the *History of the Passion of the Apostles*, to which we believe, after Baronius, that one may defer on this point, above all because of the connection it has with what is reported by Eusebius.

According to Saint Epiphanius, reported by Baronius in his Notes on the martyrology, Saint James is one of the Apostles who kept virginity; which should make us regard him with a quite particular respect, since he possesses three excellent aureoles: one of Apostle and Doctor of the Church by eminence; another of Martyr and of the first martyr among the Apostles, and the third of Virgin.

The Spaniards like to represent Saint James the Greater mounted on a horse and charging at the head of one of their squadrons the armies of the Moors; they say that in several encounters the Saint was seen rendering this good office to the old Christians. They have, on this account, surnamed him the killer of Moors, and they celebrate a particular feast of his apparition. Saint James the Greater has for attribute, like Saint Paul, the sword with which he was beheaded. He is also met with, in the course of the Middle Ages, in pilgrim costume, with the staff, the scrip and the pilgrim's cape adorned with shells; sometimes, as at the cathedral of Chartres, without garments and covered with shells. When he is found united with the other Apostles holding banderoles with the different articles of the Creed, there is read on the banderole of Saint James the Greater: *Qui conceptus est de Spiritu Sancto ex Maria Virgine*.

## Worship and Relics

The body of the blessed Apostle was buried by the Christians at Jerusalem, where it remained until the disciples whom he had brought from Spain, having received order from the Apostles to return there to labour at the ruin of idolatry, carried it away with them; and, having arrived in Galicia, at a city called Ma Flavia, and, in Spanish, El Padron, they deposited it in a marble sepulchre, where it received for a long time the respects of the new faithful. Afterwards, in consequence of the persecutions, of the inundations of the Barbarians, and of the overflow of heresies in Spain, this treasure became wholly unknown; that is why Venance Fortunat, who lived in the 6th century, wrote that it had remained at Jerusalem. But in the time of Pope Leo III, that is, at the beginning of the 9th century, it was happily found at Iria and transferred to the city of Compostela, which is only two or three leagues from it. Pope Leo, at the prayer of Alphonso the Chaste, king of Galicia, also changed the bishopric of Iria and put it at Compostela; and, from that time, the countless miracles which these precious remains worked made the place so celebrated that, after the pilgrimage to Jerusalem and Rome, there is none in the world so renowned, to which Christian princes have extremely contributed, by establishing on all sides hospitals to lodge and feed the pilgrims of Saint James.

One cannot express the graces which the Spaniards have received from the protection of this great Apostle. Tamayo relates to us fifteen different apparitions with which he favoured the kings and princes of Spain, and which were always followed by some particular assistance. Numerous relics of the holy Apostle were brought into France: the greatest part to Toulouse, in the church of Saint-Sernin. There are seen there: 1° a glass in which was enclosed a bone of the carpus of the foot, a tooth and some fragments of bones in a yellow silk stuff; 2° a part of a jaw in two pieces, with teeth and some fragments of bones; 3° two parts of a skull, one large and one small.

A bone of the arm of Saint James the Greater existed in the abbatial church of Saint-Loup (Aube), in the diocese of Troyes. It was enclosed in a silver arm. This precious relic had been brought back from Constantinople at the same time as the body of Saint Hélène, virgin, about the year 1209. It disappeared, together with its rich reliquary, at the Revolution of 1793. The reliquary of the cathedral of Nevers contains a

bone of Saint James the Greater, which was withdrawn from the profanation of the impious in 1793. Another bone of the arm of the same Apostle, of about five centimetres, is deposited in the Christ-of-the-Relics of the borough of Nolay, in the canton of Pougues (Nièvre).

There are bones of the skull at Arras, in the cathedral church; at Paris, in the church of the Grands-Jacobins; a portion of the jaw at Amiens; a bone of the arm at Troyes, in Champagne. Finally, there are still in France so great a number of churches dedicated under the name of this great Apostle, and where he is invoked and served with much devotion, that it must not be doubted that he regards it with a favourable eye. There were seen to rise in the city of Paris alone four churches in his honour; namely: the parish church of Saint-Jacques de la Boucherie; that of Saint-Jacques du Haut Pas, which, though dedicated under the names of Saint James the Less and Saint Philip, did not fail to acknowledge the great Saint James as patron; the hospital of Saint-Jacques for Pilgrims, and the great convent of the religious of Saint Dominic, which was called for this reason Jacobins throughout France. In the church of the Armenians, at Jerusalem, there is shown the place where Herod Agrippa I had the head of Saint James the Greater cut off. *Acta Sanctorum*, local notes due to the kindness of M. l'abbé Ro^er, vicar general of Toulouse. — Cf. *The Holy Places*, by Mgr Mislin; the *Hagiology of the Nivernais*, by Mgr Crosnier; Dom Ceillier; Godescard.

## Saint Christopher or Christophore, Martyr in Lycia

*3rd century.*

> *Te novimus, Christophore, christiferum; simul junxit ensis martyrem Christo Deo.*
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> *We knew, O Christophore, that you bore Christ on your heart; and the sword that cut short your days has only united you more closely to your God.*
>
> *Acta Sanctorum.*

It is an indubitable thing that there has been in the Church a Saint Christopher, who, according to the signification of his name, bore Jesus Christ in his heart by the pure love which he had for Him; in his mouth by the preaching of His Gospel, and in his limbs by the participation in His sufferings. The churches and chapels dedicated under his name, the feasts established in his honour, the memorials that all the Breviaries and Martyrologies make of him, and his images publicly exposed in a great number of cathedrals, are a convincing proof of it; but, as for the circumstances of his history, they are not altogether certain: either because antiquity did not take care to write them exactly, or because the malice of heretics, to obscure the truth of it, inserted in it things too extraordinary and quite beyond belief. It is therefore fitting, in this life, to make a wise discernment of truth from falsehood, and to say so what may do wrong to the glory of this glorious Martyr, that nothing be said of him but what is well established and supported on sufficient testimonies. Cardinal Baronius, who examined his Acts, finds none more assured than those which are contained in a very ancient hymn of the Breviary of the Mozarabs, drawn up by Saint Isidore, to which must be added what we learn of him from the preface of Saint Ambrose, for the Mass of Saint Christopher, reported by Surius.

According to these Memoirs, Christopher was a Canaanite by origin, a pagan by religion; he followed the career of arms and formed part of the expedition against the Persians, under the orders of the young emperor Gordian. He was converted to Christianity under the emperor Philip. Inflamed with the love of Jesus Christ, he left his country to announce, in divers places, and principally in the province of Lycia, the doctrine of our holy religion. His labours were so fortunate, accompanied by so many graces from heaven and so many miraculous works, that he converted no fewer than forty-eight thousand persons. He was of high stature and majestic bearing. He had a beautiful and agreeable face, shining hair, and so much grace in all he did and said that he easily won the affection of all who saw him. He usually walked leaning on a staff; and, one day, having planted in the earth the one he carried, he made it miraculously grow green again and bear flowers

and leaves: which was the cause of the conversion of many unbelievers. The persecution of the emperor Decius was then kindled in the world, and the Christians were seized on all sides to be put to death; but principally those who, not content with being faithful, laboured to augment religion by new conquests. As Saint Christopher was of this number, the emperor, or some president on his part, sent soldiers to take him. He had the goodness, in the hunger which they suffered, to multiply supernaturally the little food which they had, to sustain them. This prodigy having opened to them the eyes of the soul, to know the error in which they lived and the truth of one only God, creator of heaven and earth, they renounced the worship of idols and entered into the Church of Jesus Christ. This did not prevent the capture of Christopher, who, far from fleeing martyrdom, desired it ardently and sought it with eagerness. The tyrant, having had him put in prison, sent there two dissolute women to corrupt his faith by corrupting his purity: they were called Nicette and Aquiline; but he spoke to them with so much zeal and vigour that, instead of being perverted by their artifices, he converted them themselves and made them chaste and faithful: a short time after, they generously endured martyrdom with the soldiers whom he had enlightened with the light of the faith, and several other noble and rich persons, who acknowledged him as their spiritual father.

The persecutor, seeing the invincible courage of Saint Christopher, had him tormented by several very cruel torments. His head was covered with a blazing helmet, and he was stretched on an iron bench of the length and breadth of his body, under which burning coals were placed, while boiling oil was poured on his limbs. These torments did him no harm; at this sight many pagans cried out that there was no other God than the one Christopher adored, nor other religion than the one he professed. Then he was fastened to a stake and a very great number of arrows were shot at him, during a whole day; but not one pierced his body, so that he appeared as if invulnerable. On the contrary, there was one which struck the eye of one of the executioners, and put it out: which furnished the Saint a fine occasion to show his heroic charity; for, forgetting the evil offices of this wretch, he gave him back his eye by drops of his blood which he counselled him to apply to it. This blood, escaped from some wound of which his history does not speak, was so efficacious that it gave back to this same executioner the light of the soul with that of the body, and made of him a Christian disposed to endure martyrdom. At last the judge condemned our Saint to have his head cut off. Before receiving the mortal stroke, the martyr prayed Our Lord with much urgency to render Himself propitious to the sinners and the sick who should implore His mercy through his intercession, and to preserve also from hail, fire, plague and famine the place where his body should be buried. The hymn of the Mozarabs adds that ten thousand Christians, whom he had animated to martyrdom by his example, were executed with him: which gave him the glory of enriching the Church triumphant, after having increased the Church militant.

The memory of Saint Christopher is celebrated in all the Latin churches on 25 July, with the exception of that of Valencia, in Spain, which solemnises it now on the 10th of the same month, because on that day a synagogue of Jews, whom Saint Vincent Ferrier had converted, and who assured that Saint Christopher had often warned them, in dream, to leave the superstition of Judaism and to ask for Baptism, was dedicated and consecrated, with ecclesiastical ceremonies, in honour of this invincible Martyr.

As for his portrait, which is represented of so prodigious a size, carrying the Child Jesus on his shoulders, and crossing a river with a verdant tree in his hands, Baronius testifies that he does not know the cause of it certainly; but he marks sufficiently, by the verses he reports from the hymn of the Mozarabs, that he recognises there something historical and something singular and symbolic. The history is that Saint Christopher was great, and, going ordinarily with a staff, he made it grow green and flower for the conversion of idolaters; but the symbol is that he had a soul great, generous and invincible, that labours did not astonish him, and that he marched with giant strides, not only in the exercise of virtue, but also in that of the preaching of the Gospel; that he bore Jesus Christ into the infidel countries whose approach was very difficult because of the tempests and storms which emperors and magistrates excited there on all sides; that he crossed rivers of afflictions and sufferings, without being able to be submerged in them, because of the

strength of his spirit and the height of his courage, which put him above all the persecutions of men; finally that his constancy and firmness, represented by his staff, have always been flourishing and have never lost their vigour. He is also represented in elevated places, to signify the power he has over the meteors of the air, such as thunder, hail, impetuous winds and the tempests against which his name is invoked. It would be difficult to mark the origin of these mysterious representations. Baronius speaks of it on 23 April, on the subject of Saint George. There is appearance that that of Saint Christopher came from the East, and that he began to be represented in the manner we have described as soon as Constantine gave power to build churches in honour of the Martyrs.

A great part of the relics of Saint Christopher are in Spain. The church of Toledo possesses some bones, which Tamayo says were brought there as early as the year 258, that is to say four years after his decease. That of Valencia has more of them: but it had them from Toledo, when that city was ruined in the year 828. An arm is shown at Compostela and a jaw at Astorga. All these limbs are of an extraordinary size. We have at Paris a parish of his name, which is very ancient and one of the first of the city. The Benedictines, who possessed very considerable establishments in the ancient diocese of Toul, appear to have brought there several relics of Saint Christopher, of which some still subsist. The church of Senones, diocese of Saint-Dié, possesses a considerable fragment of a bone of an arm of Saint Christopher, coming from the ancient abbey; that of Moyen-Moutier, in the same valley, possesses the articular extremity of a great bone, probably the humerus; the church of Lay-Saint-Christophe, diocese of Nancy, possesses a fragment of bone.

## Legend of Saint Christopher

Etymology of his name. — Christopher, before his baptism, was called Reprobate (*Reprobus*); but, afterwards, he was called Christopher (*Christophorus*), that is to say Christ-bearer, because he bore Christ in four ways: on his shoulders, in passing him over; in his body, by mortification; in his soul, by devotion; in his mouth, by preaching. His life. — Christopher, a Canaanite by nation, was of gigantic stature and terrible aspect, and he was twelve cubits high. Finding himself, as one reads in a history, with a Canaanite king, it came into his mind to seek the greatest prince that was in the world and to come and dwell near him. He betook himself therefore to a very powerful king whom renown gave everywhere as the greatest prince of the world. As soon as he saw him, the king received him willingly and made him stay in his palace. Now, once, a certain jongleur was singing a song in which he often named the devil. Now, as the king had the faith of Jesus Christ, every time he heard the devil named, he at once imprinted on his forehead the sign of the cross. Christopher, seeing this, was greatly astonished why the king did that, and what this sign meant. As he questioned the king on this subject, and the latter would not reveal it to him, Christopher said to him: “If you do not tell it to me, I shall not remain with you henceforth.” Wherefore the king, forced, said to him: “Every time I hear the devil named, I arm myself with this sign, fearing that he may gain some power over me and do me harm.” Upon which Christopher: “You fear that the devil may do you harm! it is clear that he is greater and more powerful than you, since you avow that you dread him so much, and I am frustrated in my hope, I who thought I had found the greatest and most powerful lord of the world. Farewell then! for I wish to go and seek the devil, in order to take him for my lord and to become his servant.” He separated from the king, and he hastened to seek the devil. Now, as he journeyed through a solitude, he saw a great crowd of soldiers, of whom one fierce and terrible soldier came to him and asked him where he was going. Christopher answered: “I am going to seek the lord devil, that I may take him for lord.” To which the other: “I am he whom you seek.” Christopher, joyful, attached himself to him for ever as servant and took him for his lord. As they journeyed both, they met a cross set up on a road. As soon as the devil perceived this cross, he fled in terror, and, leaving the road, he led Christopher through a rough solitude and then brought him back to the road. Christopher, astonished at seeing this, asked him why he had, so trembling, left the high road, and, making so great a detour, had passed through a rough solitude. As the devil would not explain it to him, Christopher said: “If you do not explain it to me, I leave you this instant.” Wherefore the devil, driven to

extremity, said to him: “A man, Jesus Christ, was fastened to this cross; when I see the sign of this cross, I have great fear and I flee trembling.” Upon which Christopher: “He is therefore greater than you, this Christ whose sign you dread so much: I have then laboured in vain, and I have not yet found the greatest prince of the world. Farewell then! for I wish to leave you and seek the Christ.”

Now, when he had sought someone who would make the Christ known to him, he came at last to a hermit, who preached the Christ to him, and instructed him diligently in the faith; but the hermit said to Christopher: “This king, whom you desire to serve, asks of you this service, that you will have to fast frequently.” — “Let him ask another service, for I cannot do that at all.” — “You will have to make many prayers to him.” — “I do not know what that is; so I cannot yet fulfil that office.” — “Do you not know that river, where most of those who cross it run great dangers and perish?” — “I know it.” — “As you are of great size, robust, if you were to settle near this river, and if you were to pass everyone across, that would be very agreeable to the king Christ, whom you desire to serve, and I hope that he would manifest himself to you.” — “Yes, I can fulfil that office, and I abandon myself to him for that service.”

He came then to the said river, he made himself a dwelling there; and, carrying in his hand a pole in guise of a staff, with which he supported himself in the water, he passed everyone across without respite.

Many days having thus gone by, as he was resting in his dwelling, he heard the voice of a child who called him and said: “Christopher, come outside and pass me across.” Awakened, he went outside, but he found no one, and, returning into the cabin of which we have spoken, he heard again a voice calling him; he ran outside again, but found no one. A third time, called as before by the same person, he went out and found a child on the bank of the river, who begged Christopher urgently to pass him across. The latter, taking the child therefore on his shoulders, and arming himself with his staff, entered the river to cross it, and behold the water of the river swelled little by little and the child weighed like the heaviest lead. The further he advanced, the higher the water rose, the more the child crushed Christopher’s shoulders with an intolerable weight, to the point that he found himself in serious embarrassment and feared to run the greatest dangers. But when he was out, and had touched the bank, he set the child down there and said to him: “You have put me, my child, in great danger, and you have weighed so much that, if I had had the whole world on my shoulders, I should scarcely have felt a heavier burden.” The child answered him: “Be not astonished at it, Christopher, for you have had on you, not only the whole world, but also Him who created the world; for I am the Christ, your king, whom you serve in this office; and, that you may have a proof that I say true, when you have passed over, plant your staff in the earth, near your house, you will see tomorrow that it will have flowered.” And at once he vanished from his sight. Coming therefore, Christopher planted his staff in the earth and, rising in the morning, he found it like a palm, covered with leaves and laden with dates. Now, after that, he came to Samos, a city of Lycia, where, not understanding the language of the country, he prayed God to give him the understanding of it. Now, as he was at prayer, the judges, thinking him mad, left him. Christopher having obtained what he asked, with his face covered, came to the places of the combat, and strengthened in the Lord the Christians who were being tormented. Then one of the judges struck him in the face. Christopher said to him, covering his face with a disc: “If I were not a Christian, I should soon have avenged this injury.”

Then he planted his staff in the earth, and prayed God that it might flower for the conversion of the people. This having at once come to pass, eight thousand men were converted. Now, the king sent two hundred soldiers to bring him to him; and these, having found him at prayer, feared to signify this order to him. The king sent as many more; and having also found him in prayer, they prayed with him. Now, Christopher, rising, said to them: “What do you seek, my dear children?” Seeing his face, they said to him: “The king has sent us that we may bring you to him bound.” Christopher said to them: “If I did not wish it, you could not take me away either free or bound.” They said to him: “If you do not wish it, go away free wherever you please, and we shall tell the king: We have not found him.” — “No,” said he, “but I shall go with you.”

Now, he converted them to the faith, and had his hands tied behind his back by them and had himself presented bound to the king. The king, seeing him, was terrified and fell from his throne; then, raised up by his servants, he questioned Christopher on his name and his country. Christopher answered him: “Before my baptism I was called Reprobate; but, now, I am called Christopher; before my baptism I was a Canaanite, but now I am a Christian.”

The king said to him: “You have imposed on yourself a foolish name, taking that of the Christ, who was crucified and who could do nothing for himself or for you; wicked Canaanite, why do you not sacrifice to our gods?” Christopher said to him: “You are rightly called Dagus: for you are the death of the world, the companion of the devil. As for your gods, they are the work of the hands of men.” The king said to him: “You have been nourished among wild beasts, you can say only wild words, unknown to men; now, therefore, if you wish to sacrifice, you will obtain from me the greatest honours; if not, you will die in the most terrible torments.”

Christopher therefore not willing to sacrifice, he ordered him to be put in prison and the soldiers who had been sent to arrest him to be beheaded. Then he had shut up in the same prison two very beautiful young girls, of whom one was called Nicca and the other Aquilina, promising them great rewards if they drew Christopher to sin with them. Christopher, seeing this, gave himself to prayer; but as the girls pressed him with caresses and cajolery, he rose and said: “What do you want and why have you been brought in here?” But they, frightened by the brightness of his face, said: “Have pity on us, servant of Jesus Christ, that we may believe in the God whom you preach.” The king, having learned this, had them brought to him and said to them: “You also then have been seduced! I swear by the gods, if you do not sacrifice, you will die the most cruel death.” They answered: “If you wish us to sacrifice, order that the streets be cleaned and that the people betake themselves to the temple.” When this was done and the people were in the temple, they passed their sacred girdle round the necks of the gods, and, dragging them to the ground, they reduced them to dust and they said to those present: “Go, call the physicians, that they may heal your gods!”

Then, by the king’s order, Aquilina is hung up; a great stone is fastened to her feet; all her limbs are torn. When she has rendered her soul to the Lord, her sister Nicea is cast into the flames; but she comes out without any harm, and at once she is beheaded. And after that Christopher is presented to the king, who orders him to be beaten with iron rods and a helmet of red-hot iron to be put on his head. He orders next that an iron seat be made, that Christopher be bound to it, and that pitch be cast into the fire to burn him; but the seat melts like wax and Christopher comes out of it without any harm. Then the king orders that he be bound to a stake and that four hundred soldiers pierce him with their arrows. But the arrows remained all suspended in the air, and none could pierce him. Now the king, believing that he was pierced, began to mock him, and at once one of the arrows came from the height of the air and, turning against the king, pierced him in the eye and he became blind. Christopher said: “Tomorrow I shall be consumed. Then, therefore, tyrant, you will temper mud with my blood, you will put some on your eye and you will be healed.” Then, by the king’s order, he was led away to be beheaded. And there, having poured himself out in prayer, he was beheaded. Now, the king, taking a little of his blood and putting it on his eye, said: “In the name of God and of Saint Christopher!” and at once he was healed. Then the king believed, and he ordered that those who should blaspheme the God of Christopher should perish at once by the sword. Extracted from the *Legends of the Saints* of Jacques de Voragine, vulgarly called the *Golden Legend*, Cologne edition, 1476. We have had the pleasure of making our translation almost literal, from this monument, so rare today, of the infant printing-press.

## Saint Maigneric or Magnéric, Archbishop of Trier, and Confessor

*596. — Pope: Saint Gregory I, the Great. — King of France: Thierry II.*

*Pietas certissima vitæ norma est et conversationis optima disciplina.*

*Piety is the surest guide of life and the best rule of conduct.*

*S. Joan. Chrys., hom. xii sup. I Tim.*

Trier, on the Moselle, is one of the oldest cities of Germany. About the year 500, the bishop of that see was Saint Nicet or Nicaise, a man of firm character, who did not know how to compromise with duty. King Clotaire having allowed himself all sorts of injustices with regard to the Church of Trier, Saint Nicaise, after having long warned and threatened him in vain, excommunicated him. Clotaire answered the sentence of excommunication by a condemnation to exile. It was then that the young Magnéric, a devoted disciple of Saint Nicaise, offered himself voluntarily to share his sad lot and to protect him at need. The illustrious fugitive said to him then: “How is it that you do not act like the others who have all abandoned me?” Magnéric replied: “I have resolved not to leave you any more, as long as a breath of life remains to me.” Saint Nicaise went on: “Since it is so, I swear to you that from tomorrow I shall return to my functions.” In effect, the next morning a messenger came to announce to Saint Nicaise that King Clotaire was dead (561), and that his son Sigebert had taken the reins of government; that at the same time he was charged to tell him that the new king desired to live in union with the bishop of Trier.

Magnéric, after having been faithful to his unfortunate bishop, attached himself to him in a still closer manner when the latter was restored to his see. He drew at the same time the esteem of all who knew him, and, after the death of Saint Nicaise, he was elected by a unanimous voice to be his successor. He showed himself by his virtues worthy of this illustrious see. The kings Sigebert and Childebert had for him much consideration and granted him great credit with their persons. Théodore, bishop of Marseille, found with him, when an iniquitous decree condemned him to exile, the most charitable welcome. Jointly with Saint Gregory of Tours, whose intimate friend he was, he obtained from King Childéric, then residing at Coblenz, the deliverance of this persecuted prelate.

Sprung from the family of Tetradius, senator of Trier, a family formerly loaded with benefits by Saint Martin, he had for this great Saint an admirable devotion. He built chapels in divers places under his invocation. The church of Holy Cross having been destroyed by a fire which consumed a part of the city, he rebuilt it and, besides, he built beside this basilica, that is, between the bank of the Moselle and the walls of Trier, a monastery which he dedicated to Saint Martin. He peopled it with Benedictine religious who made morals, piety and studies flourish there until, by a consular decree of the French Republic, it was suppressed in 1802. His activity in the government of his diocese was surprising. He traversed it ceaselessly, saw everything, took knowledge of everything by himself. His piety was as enlightened as his charity. Ouflay, better known under the name of Valfroie, and whose life we shall give on 21 October, having come from Italy, asked him, to live there as a solitary, a place situated on a high mountain, where he raised a column on which he dwelt, like Simeon the Stylite, observing an extremely austere manner of life. Afterwards, Saint Magnéric exhorted him to live in community with the brethren. Ouflay having therefore come down from the column, our Saint had it overthrown during the night. The Stylite resolved then to take part in the community, where he passed the rest of his days holily.

As for the holy bishop, old age and at last death surprised him in the midst of his labours. He expired on 25 July. His body was buried in the open air, beside the basilica of Saint-Martin, as he had ordained. Later, on a warning which he himself gave, it was transferred into the crypt of the same church, where he shone forth by numerous miracles.

*Proper of Trier* completed with the *Acta Sanctorum.*

## Saint Glossinde or Glossinne, Virgin, Foundress and Abbess of the First Monastery of Metz

*608. — Pope: Boniface III. — King of France: Clotaire II.*

*Quid eo sapientius, qui contempta mundi stultitia, Christum secutus est, Dei virtutem et Dei sapientiam?*

*What is wiser than he who, despising the folly of the world, has followed Christ, the power of God and the wisdom of God?*

*Saint Jerome.*

Saint Glossinde was the daughter of Duke Wintron, one of the principal lords of the court of Austrasia, under Childebert II and Théodebert II. She was born in the Messin country and was brought up, with all possible care, near Godile, her mother, a woman still more commendable for her piety and her virtues than for her high birth. Inflamed with the love of God from her most tender years, Glossinde resolved to consecrate her virginity to Him and to attach herself to Him alone. This secret engagement was crossed by her parents, who promised her in marriage to a young man of great nobility among the Franks, named Obolenus. But the project of this alliance was broken by a disgrace which befell Obolenus, who, on some suspicions, was arrested by order of the court, on the very day fixed for the marriage, and after a year in prison lost his head on the scaffold. This catastrophe, which Glossinde regarded as a blow from heaven favouring the resolution she was in of giving herself to God, completed the breaking of all the ties of the young virgin to the world. She profited by this sad incident to persuade her parents that God did not destine her for marriage; but she was not listened to, they presented her with a new husband whom she constantly refused. Convinced by the uselessness of the means she had opposed to this new engagement that it would be impossible for her to elude it, she fled to Metz and took refuge in the church of Saint-Etienne, which was one of the most sacred asylums of the country. She placed herself between the altar and the confession of the holy Martyr, which enclosed a phial of his blood and several other precious relics. Her parents soon followed her there and forgot neither threats nor caresses to draw her out of this venerated sanctuary. Respect for the right of asylum not permitting any violence to be used, they tried to constrain her to come out, by hunger and by the privation of all things of first necessity. A guard was kept day and night at the doors of the church. But the young virgin, unshaken in her resolution, remained six whole days without going out and without taking any food, solely occupied in the prayer of which she made her nourishment. On the seventh day, which was a Sunday, a man of angelic face was seen to appear, followed by two young men of marvellous beauty. In sight of the numerous bystanders who filled the church, he approached Glossinde, who held the altar embraced, and covered her head with a sacred veil which he held in his hands. He then disappeared with those who accompanied him. The parents of Glossinde, vanquished by her perseverance and by these signs from heaven, asked her pardon for so much opposition and permitted her to follow the heavenly attraction which impelled her to consecrate to God the purity of her soul. Glossinde withdrew to Trier, to Rothilde, her paternal aunt, a virgin of great virtue, who had been for long years at the head of a community of women. The examples of this virtuous woman, still more powerful than her counsels, soon put her in a state to serve as model and guide to others. She returned to Metz, where she began to gather a community of women who desired to follow, under her direction, the evangelical counsels which they already practised in their families. She asked of her parents a piece of land which they possessed in the city, near the Serpenoise gate, and which was very suitable for the design she had of withdrawing with her companions. She had a monastery built there (604), and soon saw herself at the head of a hundred religious. She governed them six years with admirable wisdom, giving them the example of a profound humility, of an inviolable purity of morals, of a perfect disinterestedness and of an exact fidelity to all the duties of the spiritual life.

The abbey of Sainte-Glossinde (*S. Glodesendis*), of the Order of Saint Benedict, was called at first Saint-Pierre of Metz. It suffered much from the siege of that city by Charles V, and its enclosure had to be narrowed. In 1739, Marguerite-Eléonore de Hottmann undertook the almost total repair of the abbey: she laid, in 1752, the first stone of the present church, built on the site of the ancient one and today the chapel of the bishop’s palace. This graceful monument has suffered much from the vandalism of the Revolutions.

God did not delay to fill up the measure of the graces with which He had favoured our Saint; and, to reward her for the pious use she made of them, He called her to Himself at the age of thirty, about the year 608.

She is represented receiving the veil from the hand of the angels, while she stood near the altar to escape from her family who wished to marry her.

### Worship and Relics

Saint Glossinde was first buried in the church of the Apostles, known since under the name of Saint-Arnould, as she had asked. She had been resting there twenty-five years, when she appeared in a dream to one of the religious of her monastery: the Saint, standing on the wall of the city, held in her hand a stone which she threw into the country; she ordered the religious to observe the place where this stone should fall, and to build there a church in honour of the Blessed Virgin Mary. She indicated at the same time the place in the rampart where a door of communication would be opened between this church and the monastery. As the abbey was under the immediate protection of the king of Austrasia, the religious dared undertake nothing without having obtained the authorisation of Sigisbert II, who resided at the palace of Metz. The pious monarch received their request favourably. He permitted them to have a cemetery around the new church, and to transfer to it the body of Saint Glossinde. It was placed in a new tomb, at the right side of the altar, and it was then seen with admiration that it was as well preserved as on the very day when it had been buried. The body of Saint Glossinde remained in this state until the time of Louis the Debonair. The miracles which God worked there led Drogon, then bishop of Metz, to make the exhumation of it. He transferred it, in 830, from the church of Notre-Dame to that which the Saint had herself built, and exposed it to public veneration in a shrine placed behind the high altar.[1] This church, which bore the name of Saint Sulpice, bishop of Bourges, took afterwards that of Sainte-Glossinde. Jean, abbot of Saint-Arnould, historian of her life, reports that a sort of oil of an agreeable odour was seen to flow from her tomb and spread over its whole surface; it could even be gathered and used for pious purposes.

The Benedictine religious of Sainte-Glossinde had the happiness of preserving, at the time of the Revolution, the sacred relics of their holy foundress from the profanation of the impious, and, at the restoration of worship, they gave them to the diocesan bishop, who had them exposed anew to the veneration of the faithful, in the ancient church of Sainte-Glossinde, which is today the chapel of the bishop’s palace, where they are enclosed in a beautiful reliquary. There was long preserved there the veil of Saint Glossinde, as also the custom of carrying, in memory of the miracle of the veil, her relics from her monastery to the church of Saint-Etienne, where they were placed with great solemnity beside those of the holy deacon, martyr.

We have completed the account of Father Giry with the *Acta Sanctorum* and local notes.

## Saint Cucuphas of Scillite, Martyred at Gerona in Catalonia (306)[2]

Cucuphas was born of noble parents in a small town of Africa called Scillite, and sometimes Scilitane. As he was making his studies at

Caesarea of Mauretania, today Cherchell, on the northern coast of Africa, he heard from afar the noise of the persecution which was kindling in Catalonia, raised by the cruel Diocletian. Jealous of the honour of martyrdom, he throws himself on a ship and touches at the port of Barcelona. His alms, his preaching and the great brilliance of his miracles soon mark him out to the persecutors. Subjected to the most barbarous tortures, he discourages his executioners by the visible protection which heaven extends over him. A marvellous brightness comes to illuminate his prison, his wounds close of themselves, the lions refuse to tear his innocent flesh and lie down at his feet, the flames of the pyres go out, the executioners are struck with blindness, the earth opens under the steps of the pagan judge and devours him alive; and he who succeeds this man of iniquity is crushed by the sudden fall of his idol. The young confessor of Christ has at last his head cut off and his soul flies to the heavens. His relics were brought from Spain to France, and Fulrad, abbot

of Saint-Denis, deposited them in the church of the monastery of Liepvre or Leberau (*Lelrahense*), in the diocese of Strasbourg, of which he was the founder. The relics of the holy Martyr remained at Liepvre until 835, the epoch at which Hilduin, abbot of Saint-Denis, had them brought, on 25 August, to his abbey, where they were still honoured toward the end of the last century.

The Spaniards pretend that the body of Saint Cucuphas is at Barcelona, and that only his head was brought into France.

*Acta Sanctorum.* — Cf. Godescard, the poet Prudentius, Chastelain, the *Breviary of Paris*, and the *History of the Church of Strasbourg*, by the abbé Grandidier.

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[1] There were in the Thebaid a great number of Christians condemned to the labour of the porphyry quarries. Ninety-seven of these confessors were detached from the others and led to Palestine before the judge Firmilien. Of this number were Paul, Valentine and Thée, her companion. A short time after, one hundred and thirty confessors of Egypt, having had, by order of Maximin, a foot mutilated and an eye put out, were sent to the mines, some in Palestine, others in Cilicia. — Eusebe, Tillemont, Orsi.

[2] The church of Notre-Dame was given in 159, by Agnès, abbess of Sainte-Glossinde, to some clerics of the Church of Metz who founded there the collegiate church called Saint-Thiébaut. In 1195, Pope Celestine III granted numerous indulgences to those who should visit its church; he even dispensed from the pilgrimage to Rome those who would give to this church the value of what they would have spent to accomplish that journey. The sumptuous basilica of Notre-Dame of Saint-Thiébaut saw a suburb form early around it, to which its name was given. It subsisted nearly three centuries and was ruined with the regular buildings and the suburb, in 1444, at the siege of Metz by Charles VII and René of Anjou, and the collegiate church was transferred into the city.

[3] He is called Saint Congat at Barcelona, Saint Quiqueufat at Ruel, near Paris, and Saint Guinefort or Cucufat in several parishes of France.

# 26 July

# Martyrologies

## Roman Martyrology

The blessed passing of Saint Anne, mother of the glorious Virgin Mary, Mother of God. 1st century before Jesus Christ. — At Philippi, in Macedonia, the birth into heaven of Saint Erastus, who, having been left in that city by Saint Paul, in his quality of bishop, received there the crown of martyrdom. 1st century. — At Rome, on the Latin Way, the holy Symphrone, Olympe, Théodule and Exupérie, who, having been consumed by the flames, as the Acts of Pope Saint Stephen relate, attained the glory of martyrdom. 3rd century. — At Porto, in Italy, Saint Hyacinth, martyr, who was first cast into the fire, then thrown into a river, from which he came out safe and sound; at last the consular Léonce put him to death by the sword, under the emperor Trajan. A Roman lady named Julie buried him near Rome, in her country house. 2nd century. — At Rome again, Saint Pastor, priest, under whose name there is a cardinal's title on the Viminal hill, at Sainte-Pudentienne.[1] 2nd century. — At Verona, in Venetia, Saint Valens, bishop and confessor. 531. — At the monastery of Saint-Benoit, in the duchy of Mantua, in Venetia, Saint Siméon, monk and hermit, who, celebrated for his numerous miracles, died in peace at an advanced age.[2] 1016.

## Martyrology of France, Revised and Augmented

At Béthune (Pas-de-Calais), in the diocese of Arras, Saint Jorio or Jorion, bishop of Mount Sinai, in Arabia. The Bollandists suppose that he had come to France to pay his homage to the Blessed Virgin, in the so renowned sanctuary which she had at Boulogne. After having satisfied his piety, he betook himself to Béthune, to an inhabitant of that city, with whom he had had relations, probably in a journey which the latter made to Palestine. During the night, a death as prompt as it was gentle took the pilgrim bishop from this world and carried him to the heavens. His body, carried to the church of Saint-Barthélemy of Béthune, was deposited in a chapel to which the Saint's name was given. Later, his head, separated from the body, was placed in the sacristy, and the rest of the relics in a precious shrine under the high altar. 1033. — At Troyes,

Saint Urse or Ours, seventh bishop of that see and confessor. 426. — At Moselweys, near Coblenz, Saint Béat, priest of Trier and confessor, brother of Saint Banthe or Banton, cited in the martyrology of France of 31 July. He illustrated the solitude of the Vosges by the brilliant renown of his holiness. His body, transferred to Coblenz, gave its name to the hill on which it was deposited. Persons attacked by fever invoke him with success. In 1802 the sacred bones of Saint Béat were transferred into the parish church of Moselweys. 7th century. — At Dendermonde or Termonde, in Belgium, in East Flanders, in the diocese of Ghent, Saint Christine, virgin. 8th century. — At Paris, translation of Saint Marcel, bishop of that see, whose life we shall give on 1 November. — In the diocese of Beauvais, Saint Evrou, abbot, whose decease is marked on the preceding day. 600. — At Agen, Saint Frédebert, bishop of that see and confessor. — At Maestricht, in Dutch Limburg, the holy

Monulphe and Gondulphe, bishops of that see, already named on the 16th of this month. 599 and 607. — At Aubusson (Creuse), in the diocese of Limoges, the Blessed Turpin, bishop of that see, which he illustrated for more than forty years. He rebuilt anew the monastery of Saint-Augustin of Limoges, and reconstructed entirely the church of this abbey. He died at Aubusson, his native place, and was buried at the monastery of Saint-Vaulry, seven or eight leagues from there. 944. — At Langoat (Côtes-du-Nord), in the diocese of Saint-Brieuc, Saint Pompée, widow, and the Blessed Sève, her daughter, both religious. The tomb of the first is found in the church of Langoat, at the top of the nave, on the Gospel side: raised about three feet above the ground, it is adorned with a bas-relief representing the Saint in a ship, accompanied by several religious. Her recumbent statue is on the tomb, and above it is a shrine of painted and gilded wood, containing her relics. A very ancient statue, representing the Blessed Sève in the dress of a religious and holding a book in her hands, is in the same church. 6th century. — At Celles (Ariège), canton of Foix, diocese of Pamiers, from 26 July to the first Sunday of November, pilgrimage to Notre-Dame de Celles, which has its chapel on the slope of a mountain, ten kilometres from Foix. About twenty thousand pilgrims are seen there each year.

## Martyrologies of the Religious Orders

*Martyrology of the Basilians.* — The octave of Saint Macrine, virgin and abbess, sister of Saint Basil and of Saint Gregory of Nyssa.[3] 379.

## Additions Made from the Bollandists and Other Hagiographers

At the little borough of San-Germano, three leagues from Vercelli, a fortified city of Upper Italy, feast of the translation of the Blessed Antoine de la Chiesa, cited in the martyrology of the Dominicans on 28 July. In 1813, on the same day, his body was transferred to San-Germano, and deposited on the rich altar of the Most Holy Rosary, in the parish church. These venerable relics belonged formerly to the convent of the Dominicans of San-Giovanni di Piedemonte, not far from Como; but this convent having been suppressed and even demolished, the R. P. M. Luigi asked and obtained from Mgr Carlo Morelli and from the French government permission to transfer the body of the Blessed to San-Germano, his native place. — At Laodicea of Phrygia, today Eski-Hissar, the holy Jovien, Julien, Emile, Félix, Marcien, Maxima, Saturnine, Gloriose, and another Emile, martyrs, cited by Saint Jerome. — The holy martyrs Mutien and Laudasie, cited by the same without further details. — At Constantinople, Saint Oréozèle, martyr. — Among the Greeks, Saint Ignace, confessor, surnamed Steironite, probably because he was born at Steiria, an ancient city of Attica, or inhabited it for some time. — At Bennago (Malcesine), near Verona, Saint Bénigne and his disciple Saint Lazare, whom the Italians call San-Caro, solitaries. They are cited in the martyrology of the Augustinians on 21 July. Beginning of the 9th century. — At Brescia, a city of Lombardy, Saint disent, hermit and confessor. A contemporary of Charlemagne, he served under him in his armies; later he withdrew to a mountain and ended his days there in the sweetness of contemplation. The animals of the neighbourhood brought him his food. When he died, a dove was seen bringing wood and foliage near his cell, where a church was afterwards built in his honour. 9th century. — At the monastery of Mœlk, in Austria, the Blessed Gotthalm, confessor.

His body was deposited in the church of the abbey, in a coffin of white marble, beside the altar of the Blessed Virgin: several miracles were worked on his tomb. About 1020. — At Verona, a fortified city of Venetia, the Blessed Evangéliste and Pérégrin, confessors, of the Order of Hermits of Saint Augustine, cited in the martyrology of that Order on 20 March, the day under which we have given their life. 13th century.

## Saint Anne and Saint Joachim, Parents of the Most Holy Virgin

*1st century before Jesus Christ.*

> *O par beatum Joachim et Anna! Vobis omnis creatura obstricta est; per vos enim donum omnium donorum præstantissimum Creatori obtulit, nempe castam matrem quæ sola Creatori digna erat.*
>
> *O thrice-happy couple of Saint Joachim and Saint Anne! You have an imprescriptible right to our gratitude: thanks to you, we have been able to offer to our God the gift most sensible to His heart, a virgin mother, the only mother worthy of the Creator.*
>
> *S. Joan. Dam., Orat. i de nat. B. M. V.*

There was in Israel a man called Joachim, of the tribe of Judah. He was a shepherd of sheep and served God in the simplicity and goodness of his heart. Solely occupied with his flock, he consecrated the produce of it to the maintenance of the poor who feared God and were faithful to His law. Of all that he gathered, whether wool or lambs, he made three parts: one was for the widows, the orphans, the poor and travellers; the second was for the temple, and the last for himself, his servants and the maintenance of his house. This conduct drew the blessing of heaven on his flock, which multiplied to such a point that he had not his like in Israel. At the age of twenty, Joachim had married Anne, of the tribe of Judah, like himself, and of the family of David. He had lived twenty years with her without having a child. On a feast day, Joachim had mingled with those who were offering incense, and brought, like them, his presents. A priest named Ruben, having perceived him, approached and said to him: “Why do you mingle with those who sacrifice to the Lord, you whose marriage God has not blessed, and who have given no child to Judah?” Humiliated thus before all the people, Joachim went out of the temple weeping, but did not return to his house; he went to rejoin his flock, and, taking with him his shepherds, he plunged far into the mountains, and Anne, his wife, was five months without learning any news of him. Meanwhile she wept and repeated in her prayers: “Lord, God of Israel, strong God, why have you deprived me of a child? why have you removed my husband from me? Behold five months have passed, and I do not see him; I do not know whether he is dead and whether burial has been given him.”

One day when she was thus weeping, she withdrew into the interior of her house, and, falling on her knees, she poured out abundantly her sighs and her vows before the Lord. Her prayer ended, she made an effort to dispel her sorrow, she put off her garments of mourning, adorned her head and put on her bridal robe. About the ninth hour she went down to walk in her garden. There was a laurel there, under which she sat and made to God this prayer: “God of my fathers, hear me and bless me as you blessed Sara, to whom you gave a son.” And, raising her eyes, she perceived on the laurel a nest of sparrows and began to weep. “Alas! to whom shall I compare myself?” she said within herself. “Of whom then am I born, to be thus the curse of Israel? I am repulsed, I am despised, I am cast out of the temple.

“To whom shall I compare myself? I cannot compare myself to the birds of heaven, for the birds of heaven can appear before you, O my God!”To whom shall I compare myself? I cannot compare myself to the animals of the earth, for the animals of the earth are fruitful before you, Lord! “To whom shall I compare myself? I cannot compare myself to the rivers and the sea, for the rivers and the sea are not struck with barrenness: whether calm or moved, their waters, filled with fishes, sing your praise.”To whom shall I compare myself? I cannot compare myself to the plains, for the plains bear their fruits in their season, and their fertility blesses you, O my God!” What sorrows in these sighs of a wife deprived of the glories and joys of motherhood! How well these repetitions express the despair of a soul overwhelmed with shame, and which finds a bitter pleasure in repeating to itself its humiliation!

And as she was saying these words, an angel appeared suddenly before her and said to her: “Fear not, it is in the designs of God to give you a child, and he who shall be born of you will be the admiration of ages till the end of time.” Having thus spoken, he disappeared. Anne, moved and trembling at such a vision, returned into her dwelling and threw herself on her bed as dead. She passed all the day and all the night in trembling and in prayer. The day come, she called her maid to her and said to her: “You know that I am alone and in sorrow; why did you not come in to me?” — “If God has made you barren and removed your husband from you,” her maid answered, murmuring, “what can I do about it?” On hearing this harsh reproach, Anne began to weep hot tears.

At the moment when an angel appeared to Anne to announce to her that she should be a mother, another heavenly messenger, says the legend, showed himself to Joachim on the mountain where he was feeding his flocks, and gave him in the name of heaven the same assurance.

“Of your blood,” he said to him, “shall be born a daughter; she shall dwell in the temple, and the Holy Spirit shall descend upon her, and her happiness shall be above the happiness of other women; her fruit shall be blessed, she herself shall be blessed and called the Mother of eternal blessing. Therefore come down from the mountain, return to your wife, and together give thanks to the Lord.”

Joachim bowed before him and replied: “If I have found grace before you, sit down a little in my tent, and bless your servant.” The angel answered him: “Call me not your servant, we are all servants of the same Master. I shall not take the food you offer me; my food is invisible, and my drink cannot be known to men. Press me not then to sit down under your tent, and offer in holocaust to God the viands you wished to serve me.” Joachim, having offered the sacrifice that the angel had ordered him, returned to his house, where his wife received him with transports of joy. Nine months after, Anne gave birth to a daughter, to whom she gave the name of Marie, and whom she nursed herself with her milk. Saint Anne, according to Suarez and a multitude of Catholic theologians, bore without pain and without shame her whom she conceived without transmitting to her the stain of our origin. And, if it is permitted to suspect that this great soul had learned from the angels of heaven something of the destinies reserved for Marie, where shall words be taken capable of expressing the joys of her maternal heart, when she gave her milk to her who was one day to give hers to her God? Anne, says the legend, presented her child at the temple, to that temple from which she had formerly been driven out on account of her barrenness. Does one understand her maternal pride and the delirium of her joy, on seeing coming to her with respect those priests who had previously expelled her? She snatched her child from the hands of the priests who had just blessed it, carried it to her breast, and sang this canticle before all the people:

“I shall sing the praises of the Lord my God, because He has visited me and has taken away from me the reproach with which my enemies covered me.

“The Lord has put in me the abundant fruit of His justice.

“Who will announce to the sons of Ruben that Anne the barren gives suck?”Hear, hear, tribes of Israel, behold Anne gives suck!” Certainly, never did a cry of triumph burst forth with more power, never did a woman’s heart leap with more impulse. What intoxication and noble pride in this appeal to the twelve tribes, and how this song has an antique and grandiose form!

Here, the thread of tradition becomes so fine that it breaks continually, and the rest of the life of Saint Anne is almost entirely conjectural. This mother who had obtained the Virgin of Isaiah after so many fasts and tears, who had received from the Queen of angels the first kiss, the first look, the first caress, who had surrounded her childhood with so much love, who had carried her in her arms to the Lord and had laid her weeping in His sanctuary, reappears only for an instant on the scene, and it is to die.

Joachim, who was not an artisan like Joseph, cultivated, to all appearance, the little inheritance of his ancestors, and enjoyed a happy mediocrity. Age and labour wore out his strength. The beloved father of Marie fell gravely ill; he asked for his daughter: Marie came. At the moment when the old man was stretching out his blessing hands, a revelation from on high made him see suddenly the glorious destinies to which heaven called his daughter. The joy of the elect spread over his venerable face; he lowered his arms, bowed his head and died. The last tears which the Virgin shed over this holy patriarch, one of the authors of her days, were scarcely dry when she had to deplore the loss of the other. Saint Anne gathered her failing strength to bless her daughter, recommended her to her relatives and fell asleep with the sleep of the just.

1° Saint Joachim is often painted offering a little lamb at the altar. The legend relates that, presenting himself at the temple on a feast day, he was repulsed by the priest who declared him accursed of God on account of the barrenness of his wife and unworthy to have his offering accepted. Humiliated thus publicly, the unfortunate husband withdrew to his country house to avoid the contempt of those who had seen him branded with infamy. It was then that God consoled him by making him know that he was to become a father and that his child would be worth, alone, the finest families of which others could be proud; 2° an angel announces to him that he is going to become a father; 3° he is represented pensive in the midst of a landscape where sheep are seen grazing, because he had withdrawn to the country after the insult he had received at Jerusalem; 4° he meets Saint Anne and embraces her before the Golden Gate, under the walls of Jerusalem.[1] Sometimes an angel accompanies them there. Saint Joachim and Saint Anne had imposed on themselves a separate exile after the reproach of the temple. An angel appeared to each of them in the retreat where they had isolated themselves and told them to return to Jerusalem. As proof that God would henceforth bless their union, they were to meet under the Golden Gate. Some monuments of the end of the Middle Ages add even to this scene a lily which has its root on the lips of the two spouses, and sometimes the flower which crowns the stem bears a bust of the Mother of God. Is it possible to express in a more graceful manner the Immaculate Conception of Marie? 5° Rubens has depicted Saint Joachim holding in his arms the VIRGIN still a child.

Saint Joachim has been taken as patron by the ancient Confraternities of the Immaculate Conception, doubtless on account of this manner of representing the first instant when Our Lady received life. One of these Confraternities existed at Paris, in the parish of Saint-Séverin, in the year 1581.

## Worship and Relics

The tomb of Saint Joachim is still shown today to the pilgrims of the Holy Land, in the church of the Holy Sepulchre of Notre-Dame, in the valley of Josaphat, on the right side of the great altar, with that of his wife Saint Anne and of Saint Joseph, spouse of the Blessed Virgin. His body has since been transferred to Jerusalem, and a part of his head is preciously preserved at Cologne, in the church of the Maccabees.

The body of the Blessed Anne, mother of the Virgin Mary, transported to France by the bark of Provence from the sepulchral chapel of Notre-Dame of Josaphat where it rested near that of Saint Joachim, was delivered, according to an ancient tradition, to the church of Apta Julia, by a signal favour of God. The very ancient martyrology of Apt mentions this translation. Trithemius, *De laudibus sanctæ Annæ*, Joannes de Montevilla, *In itinerario*, say that the body of Saint Anne was transported from the East to the West and deposited in the Gauls. Several journeys in the East, notably that of Father Nau, speak of it.

But the time of the persecutions advancing with great strides, the blessed Auspice, first bishop of Apt, hid it in a sort of cupboard made in the wall of the lowest crypt, which still exists today. He placed before the relics a lighted lamp which went out only in 792, the day of their discovery. The holy bishop having afterwards walled up the crypt very diligently, so as to make it impenetrable, and the confidants of the secret, who had knowledge of the place, being dead, the crypt remained unknown to men for seven centuries, and the relics of Saint Anne were thus preserved, thanks to the foresight of Saint Auspice, in the irruptions of the Alans, the

Suevi, the Vandals and other barbarians who ravaged Provence, and the horrible devastations of the Saracens, after the total defeat of whom the glorious Charlemagne had the happiness of discovering them. Charlemagne came to sojourn at Apt at the approach of the paschal feast, after having pacified Provence by the defeat of the Saracens, in the plain which extends between the mountain of Cordes and the hill of Montmajour. The memory of this battle, in which the last hope of Islam was destroyed, is preserved in an inscription in the church of Montmajour-lez-Arles. The first care of Charlemagne, after his arrival at Apt, was to have the cathedral church, which had been polluted by an impious worship, reconsecrated by Turpin. While an extraordinary concourse of great lords and of people assisted at this solemnity, and while the population spread around rendered to God, in its rapture, praises on the occasion of His sanctuary restored, the Lord, enveloping in His love the pious wishes of the city and the ardent faith of Charlemagne, discovered, by a striking miracle and an unhoped-for favour, the unknown treasure of the relics of Saint Anne.

A young man of the name of Jean, aged fourteen, blind, deaf and dumb from birth, son of the baron of Caseneuve, was present in the sanctuary. For some time this young man was seen to appear to listen to a certain heavenly warning. Soon he began, striking on a flight of steps leading to the high altar, to make a sign that the ground should be dug deep, so that, the steps removed, one might see what was perhaps hidden beneath. The divine office was disturbed by this, without its being in the power of the guards or the other officers to restrain this young man. However, all the bystanders being surprised by the novelty of the fact, the prince, presaging a miracle, gave order to conform to the wishes so keenly expressed by the youth. They remove at that very hour the steps of the indicated ascent, and discover at once a door closed with great stones, which makes one presage something remarkable. The workmen having opened this door with blows of the hammer, an entrance was seen and a descent of steps which led to an underground grotto artistically wrought. It was the crypt where the blessed Auspice, apostle of the Aptésiens, was accustomed to nourish with the holy word and the Sacraments the people entrusted to him.

The blind Jean walked first, indicating the way with such assurance that Charlemagne was obliged to have him held near him that he might not be trampled by the curious. The young man always made it understood by gesture that the earth should be dug deeper at the part of the wall which he pointed out. They descended at last into a long and narrow underground passage; but there an extraordinary light appearing surrounded the bystanders. The lower crypt being at last opened, while all, full of admiration, look at a burning lamp placed before a sort of walled-up cupboard, the king himself, the clergy and the nobles of the court run, all joyful, toward the mysterious brightness, which went out at once on contact with the air.

Admirable thing! behold Jean, having suddenly his eyes opened, as well as his ears, and his tongue loosed, cries out: “In this opening is the body of Saint Anne, mother of the most holy Virgin Mary, Mother of God.”

All the spectators, filled with astonishment, raise a thousand acclamations of joy. Meanwhile the most pious king orders the niche to be opened. At once an odour like that of balm spreads, and the sacred deposit, attested by so great a miracle, appears enclosed in a chest of cypress, wrapped in a precious veil, and certified by this inscription: “Here is the body of the blessed Anne, mother of the Virgin Mary.” The chest opened, a sweet odour spread in both crypts for the confirmation of the miracle. The archbishop Turpin, having taken the chest, put it in the arms of Charlemagne to make him kiss it as a sign of joy and consolation. The pontiff rendered thanks to God, author of this miraculous invention, who had manifested the venerable body of the grandmother of Christ to be the protection and help of the city of Apt. Charlemagne ordered all the facts to be put in writing, as they had happened, and to refer them to the sovereign Pontiff, by whom they were approved by a diploma which he delivered. The emperor, wishing nevertheless to inform the first pope Adrian of it, wrote him a letter which we still possess.

During the Revolution, the precious relics preserved at Apt were not profaned. A part of the gifts offered by the pilgrims escaped the social upheaval and are today the ornament and the glory of this church.

It is from the city of Apt that all the relics of Saint Anne have come, which can be seen and venerated now elsewhere.

The convent of the Visitation of Chartres has the happiness of possessing a small part of the head of Saint Anne.

But nowhere is Saint Anne so honoured as at the pilgrimage which bears her name near Auray, chief town of a canton of the Morbihan, arrondissement of Lorient. This pilgrimage, long forgotten, was renewed in 1624. Saint Anne, as has been established by the most multiplied and most minute judicial inquiries, appeared several times, in several places, at various hours of the day and night, to Yves Nicolazic, a ploughman of the parish of Pluneret, near Auray, diocese of Vannes, and of the village of Kerauna (a word which signifies, in Breton, the same thing as the city of Anne, in French).

Nicolazic owed a reparation to Saint Anne in the name of his ancestors. For these, in cultivating the piece of land of the Bocennu, where there still remained vestiges of the ancient chapel of the Saint, had drawn from it from time to time cut stones which they had gathered, and with which the father of Yves had built, in 1614, a barn in which could be distinguished stones that had served for some church window. Sometimes Yves Nicolazic heard a great noise, found himself surrounded with a great light, in the midst of which Saint Anne appeared to him. Sometimes he saw this Saint who, at night, walked before him, a torch in her hand. Sometimes he perceived only the torch and the hand that held it. The grandmother of the Saviour had the form of a venerable lady, dazzling with beauty, with garments white as snow. She taught him that, in the Bocennu, there had formerly been a chapel dedicated to her name, ruined for nine hundred and eighty-four years and six months (that is, the year 699). She desired that this chapel be rebuilt. Guillemette le Roux, wife of Nicolazic, rising from her bed on 6 March, found on her table, in the very place where her husband had seen before a hand with a lighted candle, twelve quarter-écus, French money, of which some were of the year 1613 and others of unknown date, marked with various stamps with letters which no one could explain. Later, these mysterious pieces were disputed as objects of devotion. At last Saint Anne ordered Nicolazic to go to the field of the Bocennu, where he would find, at a spot which would be indicated to him, a statue which represented her. In effect, he set out with witnesses, guided by a light which was seen by those of his companions who were in a state of grace, and, at the spot where this light stopped, they found, on digging, a wooden statue representing Saint Anne. Some time after, the barn of which we have spoken, and which was covered only with straw, was entirely consumed by fire, without its being possible to extinguish it, whatever quantity of water was thrown on it. The fire spoiled nothing of what was in the barn, nor the heaps of sheaves of rye which were quite near it, although the wind would naturally have carried the flame there. It was therefore at once a chastisement and a benefit. The image of Saint Anne soon drew an innumerable crowd of pilgrims; with their offerings a chapel was built: it was embellished by the religious of the Order of Carmel, who established themselves in this sanctuary on 21 December 1627; King Louis XIII gave them a relic of Saint Anne in 1639. Urban, by his bulls dated 22 September 1638, granted great indulgences to the pilgrims and to the Confraternity of Sainte-Anne d'Auray. The religious were driven out in 1792, their convent and church sold, the image was broken and burned, one single piece of the figure escaped destruction; it is still seen in the pedestal of the new statue. The church and convent, bought back in 1815, were entrusted to the Jesuit Fathers who established a small seminary there. They were expelled from it in 1828. Since that epoch the house of Sainte-Anne has not changed its destination, it is still the ecclesiastical school of the diocese of Vannes, and devotion still draws numerous pilgrims to its church. Saint Anne is also in great honour in German Lorraine. In the diocese of Nancy, near Albestroff, chief town of a canton of the Meurthe, arrondissement of Château-Salins, there is remarked a magnificent Romanesque chapel of rather recent date, but built on the site of other monuments consecrated to Saint Anne. This worship of the grandmother of Our Lord Jesus Christ is of an origin so remote in this part of Lorraine that its date cannot easily be assigned. From the 12th century we find, at the place which occupies us, a chapel dedicated to Saint Anne, who had,

according to tradition, herself determined its site. Today this place of pilgrimage has become still more important since it has been enriched with a signal and precious relic of Saint Anne, coming from Apt, in Provence. We have made use, to complete this biography, of *The Life and Worship of Saint Anne*, at Girard, bookseller at Lyon, 1869; *Devotion to Saint Anne*, by X. Mathieu; local notes furnished by MM. Armaud, curé-archpriest of Apt, Barrier, vicar-general of Chartres, and Clément, secretary of Mgr the bishop of Nancy. — Cf. *The Glories of Sainte Anne d'Auray*, by the abbé Bernard; *Lives of the Saints of the Diocese of Troyes*, by the abbé Defer; the *Hagiology of the Nivernais*, by Mgr Crosnier.

## Saint Evrou or Evrouls, Abbot, Founder of Monastic Life in the Beauvaisis[2]

*600. — Pope: Saint Gregory I, the Great. — King of France: Clotaire II.*

> *Ebrulfum nemoris pangimus incolam, Certo consilio quem Deus abdidit, Ne contagio sæculi Mores læderet integros.*
>
> *Let us sing the praises of the blessed Evrou, whom Providence knew how to lead into the impenetrable sanctuary of the forests, to shield his innocence from the contagion of the age.*
>
> *From the hymn of his office.*

At the moment when the bloody quarrels of Brunehaut and Frédégonde were afflicting France, a holy religious of the Beauvaisis, named Evrou, was raising peaceful asylums for humility, expiation and prayer. By forming in the practice of Christian virtues numerous disciples gathered around him, he worked efficaciously for the transformation of the manners of that half-barbarous epoch.

Marvellous circumstances preceded the birth of Evrou, and showed that he was predestined to the accomplishment of a great mission. As his mother was praying to God, through the intercession of the Blessed, to put an end to her barrenness, an angel told her that she would give birth to a son, whose life would be illustrious for holiness and miracles. This prediction was not long in being fulfilled: Evrou was born, and appeared from the cradle prevented by the graces of the Lord. He was seen grave, recollected, inclined to piety, at an age which knows only lightness and attachment to vain and futile things. The desire of his perfection soon engaged him to leave his parents and put himself under the direction of a virtuous servant of God. Profiting by the lessons of this skilful master, Evrou made rapid progress in letters and above all in the knowledge and imitation of the Saviour. He learned to master his passions by fasting, penance and every kind of austerity. In order that the enemy of salvation might not penetrate into his soul, he took care never to remain idle: he passed successively from prayer to meditation, from meditation to study, and from study to manual labour.

Meanwhile, Evrou, in order to have no more intercourse with the world whose dangers he dreaded, put on the religious habit and withdrew to a solitary place, at some distance from Beauvais. He built for himself, in this new Thebaid, a cell and a modest oratory, where he strove to walk in the footsteps of the most perfect anchorites. But it was in vain that he sought to hide his virtues from the eyes of men: their brilliance shone out far, and soon he saw himself surrounded by numerous disciples. New cells rose beside his own, his oratory was enlarged, and the Saint, who had wished to live unknown to all, found himself placed at the head of a fervent community.

To the ascendancy which the virtues of Evrou gave him over his brethren, Radingue, bishop of Beauvais, wished to join that which is attached to the dignity of the priesthood. This prelate, having called the servant of God to him, succeeded in making the refusals of his humility yield before the duty of obedience, and conferred on him the order of priesthood.

The Saint found in his elevation a new motive to humble himself, to mortify his body, to be assiduous in labour and prayer. From that moment he seemed to belong more to heaven than to earth. His voice was stamped with an inspired accent which penetrated hearts and carried them to virtue: it was the effect of the

grace which filled his soul and inspired all his actions. His detachment from himself and from all exterior things, and his continual union with God, merited for him the gift of miracles. From all sides sick people were brought to him that he might lay his hands on them and heal them. The prayers of the holy Religious having restored health to some lords of the court of Chilpéric I, Evrou was named, by the counsel of Queen Frédégonde, abbot of the monastery of Saint-Fuscien, which had just been founded a league and a half from the city of Amiens.[1] He did not go away without regret from the religious of the Oratory; but his sorrow was tempered by the frequent intercourse he kept up with them. While giving his care to the new community, he exercised a paternal supervision over them, guided them by his counsels and often recommended himself to their prayers.

Evrou had a great devotion to Saint Lucien, apostle of the Beauvaisis. Jealous of all that could enhance his glory, he often thought with sorrow of the sad and deplorable state of the basilica raised over his tomb by the piety of the faithful. One day, as he was seeking the means of bringing it out of its ruins, Saint Lucien appeared to him, ordering him to search at Montmille (Oise, commune of Fouquenies) and to join to his remains the relics of Maxien, companion of his martyrdom. Without delay, Evrou went to make known this miraculous apparition to Dodon, successor of Radingue on the episcopal see of Beauvais. The prelate and the holy Abbot repaired at once to Montmille, questioned local tradition, and ended by discovering the place where the body of the blessed Maxien reposed. His translation to the tomb of Saint Lucien took place with great solemnity, and was accompanied by several miracles. These events, marked by the finger of God, revived the confidence of the people of Beauvais in the glorious Martyrs. All, with one voice, asked that the church where they were invoked should be rebuilt. Their wishes, presented to King Chilpéric I by Dodon and Evrou, were not long in being granted.

A grave illness and the loss of two of his children had just recalled to Chilpéric the frailty of life and the nothingness of the goods of the earth; he therefore cooperated willingly in a work destined to merit for him in heaven powerful protectors and riches as solid as they are lasting. The ordinance which he issued in this regard shows well what sentiments of faith and piety animated this prince. “As we remain but a short time in this life,” he says, “and advance rapidly toward death, we ought to have at heart to do the will of God, and to build churches in the places where the Martyrs are honoured, to merit to share with them the joys of eternity Dodon, venerable bishop of Beauvais, and our beloved Evrou, abbot, with a great number of the faithful, having begged us to have rebuilt a basilica anciently built near the walls of Beauvais, we have resolved to grant their request. We were the more inclined to it, because our ancestors had already allotted some of their revenues to the re-establishment of this edifice The apparition of the blessed Lucien to Evrou, the order which he gave him to exhume the body of Saint Maxien, and the miracles which followed the execution of this order, determined us to it still more particularly We will therefore that this church, built formerly in honour of the Prince of the Apostles and of Saint Lucien, be rebuilt by our munificence, and appropriated to the service of Almighty God We will moreover that a community of cenobites be established there to attend to the divine service.”

The generous intentions of King Chilpéric were punctually carried out. Thanks to his largesses and to the solicitude of the pontiff Dodon and of Saint Evrou, there soon rose a church and a monastery destined to revive, under the rule of Saint Benedict, the virtues of Saint Lucien and his companions. Evrou fixed his residence there and was its first abbot, without leaving the government of the monasteries of the Oratory and of Saint-Fuscien. The activity of his zeal enabled him to acquit himself successfully of this difficult and laborious task. He maintained in these three establishments the love of retreat, fidelity to the rule, manual labour and the various exercises of the religious life.

Faithful to the counsel given by Jesus Christ to His Apostles, Evrou regarded himself as the last of the religious of whom he was the head. His charity led him to render them the humblest services. And yet, by him, God worked great things: at his voice the sick recovered health, and the demons took flight. As he was

walking one day in the midst of his brethren, explaining to them the divine Scriptures, a man was brought to him, blind and possessed by the evil spirit. His prayers restored his sight, and ravished him from the power of the demon. This same enemy of the human race had, another time, seized upon a thief, caught in the act of theft, in one of the monasteries governed by the holy Religious; Evrou snatched this unfortunate man from the yoke of Satan, granted him his pardon, embraced him tenderly and let him depart in peace.

On returning from a pilgrimage to the tomb of Saint Martin, the blessed Evrou felt his strength failing. Understanding then that his last hour was near, he called his religious and addressed to them his last farewells. To their prayers, accompanied by sobs and tears, he mingled his own, and died in their arms, on 26 July, about the year 600.

### Worship and Relics

After the death of the Blessed, his disciples carried his body to the monastery of the Oratory: Evrou had wished to be buried in the place where he had renounced the servitude of the age for the amiable yoke of the divine Master. A lady of high birth, named Théolène, magnificently adorned his tomb. Later, Chrodobert, bishop of Paris, had a church raised near this tomb, and several buildings each of which was consecrated to the memory of some Saint. Miracles wrought at the sepulchre of Evrou attested his holiness and merited for him the confidence and homage of the faithful. His relics, after having escaped the ruins which the Normans sowed everywhere on their passage, were transferred to the cathedral of Beauvais. They remained there until 1793, and disappeared in one of the days of destruction so common in that fatal epoch. The worship of Saint Evrou, interrupted during the tempest which carried off his relics, has resumed the rank which it had occupied for so long in our solemnities. The Church and diocese of Beauvais continue to invoke the first abbot of Saint-Lucien as one of their most powerful protectors.

Extracted from the *Lives of the Saints of the Diocese of Beauvais*, by M. the abbé Sabatier.

## Saint Christine, Virgin, Patroness of Termonde or Dendermonde, in the Diocese of Ghent

*8th century.*

> *Charitas nunquam otiosa est, semper in alterum se porrigit.*
>
> *Charity is never idle: it always reaches out toward the neighbour.*
>
> *Saint Pierre de Blois.*

Saint Christine was daughter of a king of the Angles, whose ancestors had made an invasion into Great Britain. Her father was called Migramme and her mother Marona. It is believed that they were still pagans and that their daughter had been brought up in the practice of idolatrous superstitions. But later God, to reward her for her charity toward the poor and the unfortunate, granted her the grace of arriving at the knowledge of the Gospel. It would be impossible to specify the various incidents which must have preceded and followed this conversion of the young virgin, as well as the events which passed around her. Undoubtedly there were then in her family things not ordinary, and one would almost be entitled to suppose that, like several other young virgins of those remote times, Saint Christine had the courage to leave her country and her parents to go, into unknown and distant places, to practise a holy religion which she at last had the happiness of knowing.

She is seen in effect, afterwards, living with several holy maidens who had followed her, in the village of Diclevenne, near Termonde or Dendermonde, a city of East Flanders in Belgium, in the diocese of Ghent. The secret of her works and of her virtues is known only to God. The body of Saint Christine was transported to Termonde at the same time as that of the missionary bishop Saint Hilduard. Both receive in that religious country, for six centuries, the homage of the faithful. From time immemorial the city of Termonde

celebrates, on 26 July, the feast of Saint Christine, its patroness, as well as that of the translation of her relics, which took place during the invasion of the Normans. These relics were previously in the village of Diclevenne, where this Saint died after having passed a great part of her life there. These two feasts had their own office in the collegiate church of Termonde. To these solemnities must still be added one day of each week, on which was celebrated, in the morning, the holy sacrifice of the Mass, at the altar of Saint Christine, and in the evening a very solemn Benediction.

This worship, so ancient and so popular in that country, tells us well enough that Saint Christine left there deep memories and salutary impressions. It is regrettable that her acts have been lost or destroyed: those that remain to us today are of too recent a date and offer no sufficient guarantees for one to follow them with confidence. The little that we have said of them is found in the oldest authors.

*Acta Sanctorum*, translation by M. the abbé Destombe, canon of Cambrai.

## Saint Urse or Saint Ours, Seventh Bishop of Troyes and Confessor (426)

Saint Urse, vulgarly called Saint Ours, holds the seventh rank among the Pontiffs of Troyes: he succeeded Aurélien, who died in 426. Our Saint had scarcely taken possession of his see when he undertook the visitation of the diocese entrusted to his solicitude. Like the good Shepherd who wishes to know his sheep and to be known by them, he went through the parishes, sowing everywhere the word of God, distributing the graces of the Sacraments and causing the name of the Lord to be blessed. But, whether that, already bending under the weight of years and infirmities, he could not bear the prolonged fatigues of such laborious journeys, or that God wished to reward his zeal before the end of his labours, Saint Urse did not see his episcopal city again. He died the very year of his election, at Queudes (Cubita), near Sézanne, which, now of the diocese of Châlons-sur-Marne, was then under the jurisdiction of the bishops of Troyes.

His body was enclosed in a richly ornamented marble sepulchre; it rested there until it was transported to Troyes, where the cathedral church and the collegiate church of Saint-Étienne possessed a considerable part of it before the French Revolution.

Mention was formerly made of Saint Urse, in the divine office, on 26 July of each year. *Lives of the Saints of the Diocese of Troyes*, by M. the abbé Defer. — Cf. *Gallia christiana*,

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[1] Mount Viminal (*Viminalis mons*), one of the seven hills of Rome, in the eastern part, between the Quirinal on the north and the Esquiline on the south, was so named from the abundance of osiers (*vimina*) that were found there. — Title is said of certain churches of Rome or its environs, whose names the cardinals take: cardinal of the title of Saint-Pierre aux Liens, of the title of Saint-Jean de Latran, of the title of Sainte-Sabine, etc.

[2] In his images a hind is seen near him. One day when he was about to succumb to hunger in the cell where he had retired, and that because of the rigour of the winter, a hind came and offered herself to him and nourished him with her milk until the season when the herbage could feed him.

[3] See her life on 19 July.

[4] It appears that this gate was on the east of the city, and it is believed that it was of Corinthian bronze.

[5] Alias: Evroul, Evrols, Ebrulfe, Evroux, Evrouil.

[6] Certain historians have placed the foundation of this abbey toward the end of the 11th century. But, according to the just remark of the *Gallia Christiana*, many have taken the restorations of monasteries for their foundations. (See *Ann. Benedict.*, t. i, p. 189, no. 30.)

# 27 July

## Martyrologies

### Roman Martyrology

At Nicomedia, in Bithynia, the martyrdom of Saint Pantaléon, physician, who, having been arrested for the cause of the faith by order of the emperor Maximian, was tormented on the rack and burned with burning torches; but, having been consoled in his torments by the apparition of Our Lord, he consummated his martyrdom by the sword. 303. — In the same city, Saint Hermolaûs, priest, who had converted Saint Pantaléon by his instructions; and the saints Hermippe and Hermocrate, brothers, who, after several other pains which were made them to suffer, were at last beheaded for the confession of Jesus Christ by decree of the same Maximian. 4th century. — At Nole, in Italy, the holy martyrs Félix, Julie and Juconde. — At Bisceglia, in Apulia, Saint Maur, bishop, martyred under Trajan with Saint Pantaléémon and Saint Serge. 2nd century. — In the country of the Homerites, in Arabia Felix, the memory of the holy Martyrs who were burned alive for the faith of Jesus Christ, under the tyrant Dunaan. — At Cordova, in Spain, the holy martyrs Georges, deacon, Félix, Aurèle, Natalie and Liliose, who were put to death during the persecution of the Arabs.[1] 852. — At Ephesus, in Asia Minor, the birth into heaven of the Seven blessed Sleepers, Maximian, Malchus, Martinian, Denis, Jean, Sérapion and Constantine. 250. — At Auxerre, the decease of Saint Ethère, bishop of that see and confessor. About 570. — At Constantinople, Saint Anthuse, virgin, who, after having been beaten with rods, under Constantine Copronymus, for the worship of the holy images, was afterwards sent into exile and fell asleep there in peace. 8th century.

## Martyrology of France, Revised and Augmented

In the dioceses of Cologne, Sens, Cahors and Perpignan, Saint Pantaléon, martyr, cited in the Roman martyrology of this day. — In the dioceses of Metz, Nantes, Reims, Quimper and Lyon, memory of the same Saint Pantaléon, martyr. — In the dioceses of Saint-Claude and of Besançon, Saint Désiré, bishop of the latter see and confessor. About 414. — In the dioceses of Laval and of Le Mans, Saint Apollinaire, bishop and martyr, whose life we have given on 23 July. — In the diocese of Metz, Saint Glossinde, virgin and abbess, whose life we have given on the 25th of this month. — In the dioceses of Nantes and of Quimper, Saint Samson, regionary bishop and confessor, whose life we give on the following day. — In the diocese of Reims, Saint Arnoul, bishop and martyr, already cited in the martyrology of France of the 17th and of the 18th of July, days under which some details on his life may be read. — In the diocese of Lyon, Saint Pérégrin, priest, cited in the Roman martyrology of the following day. — In the diocese of Metz, Saint Phronime, bishop of that see, whom, contrary to the express opinion of the Bollandists, many hagiographers, Baronius among others, in his Notes on the martyrology, confound with Saint Firmin or Fremin, cited in the Roman martyrology of 18 August. — At the town of Lescar (Basses-Pyrénées), in the diocese of Bayonne, Saint Galactoire or Galactaire, bishop of the ancient see of Lescar and martyr, whose life we have given on 12 February. 507. — At Limoges, the translation of Saint Just, priest and confessor, whose feast is indicated in the martyrology of France of 26 November. — At Aix-la-Chapelle, in the Rhenish province, translation of the relics of the blessed Charlemagne, king of France and emperor of the West, whose feast is celebrated on 28 January, the day under which we have given his life. — In the diocese of Paris, the saints Aurèle, Félix, Natalie and Liliose, martyrs, cited in the Roman martyrology of this day. — At Tours, Saint Ours of Cahors, founder and abbot of several monasteries of France, and of whom we shall speak tomorrow, the day on which he is honoured at Bourges. 508. — At Trier, Saint Magnéric, archbishop of that see and confessor, whose life we have given on the 25th of this month. 596.

## Martyrologies of the Religious Orders

Martyrology of the Franciscans. — At the monastery of Sandecs, Saint Kinge or Cunégonde, who, married to Boleslas (1239), duke of Poland, kept her virginity in marriage for forty years, and after the death of her husband (1279) embraced the monastic profession of the second Order of Saint Francis. She went away to the heavenly Spouse on 24 July, most celebrated for her miracles.[2] 1292. Martyrology of the Augustinians. — At Amelia, a town of the kingdom of Italy, the blessed Lucie de Bufaïare, prioress of the religious women of our Order, whose body is honoured most piously in this city, and is invoked specially for the deliverance

of the possessed. 1350. Martyrology of the Camaldolese. — At Faenza, a fortified town of Romagna, the blessed Névolon, confessor, Camaldolese oblate, who undertook by devotion several very fatiguing pilgrimages, and who, broken by vigils and fatigues, rested in a holy death. 1280. Martyrology of the Congregation of Saint Sylvester. — At Sentino, in ancient Umbria, the blessed Hugues,[3] confessor and disciple of our Father Saint Sylvester, abbot, illustrious by the nobility of his origin, and still more illustrious by the glory of his charity and of his miracles; he died on 26 July. 13th century.

Martyrology of Vallombrosa. — Saint Vincent de Paul, confessor, who is mentioned on 19 July.[4] 1660.

Martyrology of the Discalced Carmelites. — The Octave of Saint Elias, prophet, our Father.[5]

### Additions Made from the Bollandists and Other Hagiographers

Among the Greeks, with Saint Pantaléon of Nicomedia, cited in the Roman martyrology of this day, memory of the holy blind man healed by him. The Menaia of the Greeks say on this subject: “After having received from Saint Pantaléon the light of the body, the sword of martyrdom which cut the thread of his days opened to him the eyes of the mind, and he was able to contemplate the glory of God.” 303. — At Barcelona, in Spain, in Catalonia, the holy Julienne and Sempronie, virgins and martyrs. Converted to the faith by Saint Cucuphas, whose life we have given on 25 July, these generous athletes of the faith were buried at the side of him who had begotten them to Jesus Christ. About 303. — At Milan, Saint Laurent, archbishop of that see and confessor. He accompanied Saint Epiphanius of Pavia, who was going to Ravenna to King Theodoric: both pleaded before this prince the cause of the peoples oppressed and despoiled by iniquitous laws which had just been enacted and of which they obtained the softening. Laurent assisted afterwards at the Council held at Rome, in 502, under Symmachus, and in which this holy Pope was declared innocent of the accusations brought against him. Several of his homilies are found in the *Library of the Fathers*. 512. — At Ravenna, in Italy, Saint Ecolèse, bishop of that see and confessor, whose body rests in the church of Saint-Vital of that city. 534. — At Lincoln, in England, on the Witham, the blessed Hugues, a child, martyred by the Jews in hatred of the Catholic religion. 1255. — At the monastery of Garsten or Steiergasten (*Cœnobium Garstense*), in Upper Austria, the blessed Berthold, abbot. Ottokar, margrave of Styria, having founded this religious house, placed at its head Berthold, who had passed from the convent of Saint-Blaise, as prior, to that of Gœttwein. He devoted a great part of his time to hearing the confession of the numerous Christians who sought avidly his sublime and powerful exhortations. Two translations of his venerable relics were made: one on 3 June 1677; the other on 4 June 1686. About 1140. — In the diocese of Naples, Saint Pantaléon, martyr, cited in the Roman martyrology of this day.

## The Seven Blessed Brothers, the Sleepers, Martyrs at Ephesus, in Asia Minor

*250. — Vacancy of the Holy See. — Roman Emperor: Decius.*

> *Death will rise again in presenting its victim, and, as on coming out of a long drowsiness, the soul will advance to rejoin its body.*
>
> *Saint Ambrose.*

There are no Saints whose death, according to the manner of speaking of Holy Scripture, may not be called a sleep, because they do not die to remain eternally in the sepulchre, but to rise again one day gloriously as if they had only been asleep. But the Martyrs whom the Church proposes to us today are called Sleepers for a quite particular cause, and because in fact they were, long after their decease, in the same state and in the same posture as men who sleep, and they rose at last from the place where they were like persons who wake after having rested sufficiently. This will appear from their history which we are going to relate.

Among the Roman emperors who persecuted the Church, it is certain that Decius, who lived in 249, was one of the cruellest: so it was in the few years that he reigned that our principal Martyrs of Italy, of the Gauls and

of Spain suffered death, and that the whole Christian world sent an infinity of innocent victims into heaven. This tyrant, having passed into Asia, stopped some days at Ephesus, where, to maintain the worship of Diana and of the other false divinities, much respected in that city, he applied himself particularly to having the Christians tormented, in order to force them to acknowledge them, to adore them and to offer them incense. This impious and cruel conduct brought trouble into the assembly of the faithful. Some sought their safety in flight, others hid in underground places, in the hope that the storm would soon pass; some, intimidated by the threats of this tiger, and not believing they could bear the rigour of the torments, renounced their Creator to obey a monster. Others, finally, who had for Jesus Christ a constant and perfect love, deploring the cowardice of these, exposed themselves with intrepid courage to all kinds of torments, so as not to lose the grace which they had received in Baptism. Of this number were the seven blessed Martyrs of whom we speak, whom Saint Gregory of Tours names brothers german, and whom the Roman martyrology calls, after him, Maximian, Malchus, Martinian, Denis, Jean, Sérapion and Constantine. Simeon Metaphrastes gives to some of them other names; perhaps they had two, or this author made use of a not very correct copy of their life. They were of very illustrious birth and had as parents the first of the city. Seeing the persecution kindled, they put themselves all together, so as to animate one another the more to the defence of the faith. They went every day in secret to the church, where, by their prayers, their groanings and their tears, they asked God either that He would strengthen His servants, so as not to succumb under the weight of so terrible a temptation, or that He would turn it away betimes from their heads. Their zeal and devotion having discovered them, they were presented to the emperor as obstinate Christians and disobedient to his orders. He made every effort, by promises, threats and artful speeches, to oblige them to yield to his wishes; he could not resolve to lose seven young men of fine stature, and from whom he hoped to draw great services in his armies; but seeing that his persuasions were useless, he cashiered them from his militia and had the belt of knights taken from them, after which he sent them back for a time to their homes, telling them that he used this indulgence toward them only out of compassion for their youth, and in the hope that, becoming wiser, they would have in future more regard for his commandments, and would esteem more his goodwill and his friendship.

These illustrious Martyrs no sooner saw themselves out of the hands of the emperor than, instead of relaxing from their first fervour, they promised themselves anew to remain firm and unshaken in the fidelity which they owed to Jesus Christ. They did not fail, nevertheless, to deliberate among themselves on the conduct they should follow, and the conclusion was that they would absent themselves for a time, so as not to expose themselves without necessity to the violences and cruelties of their persecutor. They therefore drew what money they could from their parents, and, having distributed the greater part of it to the poor, they kept the rest to supply their necessities in the place where they would keep under cover. Then they went out of the city, went and hid in a cave, which was on a neighbouring mountain, which was called Mount Ochlon, where they remained several days, praying continually the divine Majesty to fill them with the spirit of strength to confess His name generously unto death. But as this grotto did not furnish them with the means of living, they sent from time to time the youngest of them to the city, to bring them food. He acquitted himself of this office with much skill, for he was a man of wit, and who had much prudence. He usually disguised himself as a poor man, and, nevertheless, he made no journey without still giving alms to the other poor, and without learning news of the emperor and of the persecution of the Christians.

Meanwhile this prince, who had gone to other cities of Asia, to make the servants of the true God feel his cruelty there, returned to Ephesus and ordered there a great sacrifice, to thank his idols for the success of his affairs and the happiness of his return. He summoned to this sacrilegious ceremony the principal men of the city, and commanded, among others, that the seven Confessors whom he had interrogated and released on his first journey should be brought there. He was told that they were no longer in the city, but that they had withdrawn secretly without anyone’s knowing what had become of them. He fell thereupon into a great anger, and swore that he would find them, in whatever place they might be, and that he would make them

feel what it was to despise him. The pious steward of the saints learned all that was passing; and having escaped adroitly, he went to find them again, bringing them provisions, with the news of the inquiries that were going to be made after their persons and of the torments which were being prepared for them. This account, far from casting them down, inflamed their courage the more. They peacefully took their refection, and, after having made their prayer with extraordinary fervour, they lay down on the ground and went to sleep as tranquilly as if they had had nothing to fear. This sleep was for them a sleep of death. They all seven departed before the day and without awaking, and, God having placed their souls in a place of rest, their bodies remained on the spot in the same state in which they were on falling asleep. The emperor, having at last learned where they were, resolved, not without a particular design of divine Providence, to have them shut up in this grotto, so that despair and hunger might make them die there, and that they might be buried all alive in this sepulchre which they had chosen for themselves. The entrance of the cave was therefore blocked with large stones, and, so that no one from outside should have the boldness to deliver them, his seal was put on it with that of the city. But Theodosius and Barbe, two officers of his chamber, who were Christians, took care to have engraved, on a plate of lead, the names of the holy Confessors, with the time and the kind of their martyrdom, and, having put this plate in a copper box, which they sealed most diligently, they found means to throw it into the cave before the door was quite blocked.

We are now going to admire the ways of God and the wise conduct of His Providence, which has never permitted evil but to draw from it a greater good, and which works unheard-of prodigies to glorify His servants and to support the faith and doctrine of His Church. The emperor Decius being dead, with many others who succeeded him, the monarchy of the universe fell at last, about the year 408, into the hands of Theodosius the Younger, son of Arcadius and grandson of Theodosius the Great. This prince, being very religious, did all he could to sustain the glory of the Christian religion and to repress the fury of the heretics who wished to corrupt its innocence and purity. However, besides Nestorianism, which he had condemned at the general Council of Ephesus, there arose, toward the end of his reign, another heresy, that of the Sadducees, which, by denying the resurrection of the dead, ruined the hope of the just and turned the faithful away from the practice of good works. This prince was extremely afflicted by it; but God soon consoled him, making use of our blessed martyrs to confound this new heresy and to establish the truth of the resurrection. There was in Ephesus a lord named Adolius, who had become possessor of the mountain and of the cavern where these Saints had fallen asleep. As he had a great number of flocks, he resolved to have a sheepfold built there where they could be put under cover. The workmen whom he sent there, seeking stones on all sides, took those which blocked the door of the cave: so that it remained open, without however anyone’s entering within. Then the divine power spread the spirit of life into our seven Sleepers, and raised them. They rose at once, and, after having made their prayer to God, according to their laudable custom, they saluted one another, without any sign of astonishment: for there was no change in their persons, and nothing appeared which could make them know that they had been dead during so many years. Their garments were no more worn than before their drowsiness. Their bodies were without corruption or alteration. Their minds were found in the same state as formerly; and, although it was nearly two hundred years since they had lost feeling with life, they appeared as if they had fallen asleep the evening before, and had awakened in the morning as usual. Finally, they were still in the same cares about the affair of their religion and about the persecution of Decius, whose issue they were still awaiting. Maximian, who was the eldest, even made them an exhortation to engage them to suffer generously for Jesus Christ all the torments that the tyrant was preparing for them, in the hope of the reward of eternal life. After which he gave order to their ordinary steward to make still in secret a journey to the city to buy bread and to learn what was passing. The holy young man set out from the cave at daybreak, perceiving yet no change; but he was greatly surprised when, the sun being risen, he saw at all the gates of the city the saving sign of the holy cross, planted with much honour and glory, and the people who saluted it, in passing, with great respect. He did not know whether he was awake or asleep, whether it was a truth or a phantom. “What then!” he said within himself, “yesterday this sign was in horror, and there

was no cave deep enough to hide it, and today behold it triumphant and glorious, and no one fears to render it honour publicly. How could the world change so prodigiously in one night, and how could such beautiful crosses even be wrought in so short a time?" All that he met increased his admiration: for he saw the buildings embellished, the squares widened, the garments and the manner of speech totally changed, what there had been before in Ephesus in a quite different disposition. It came into his thought therefore that he had perhaps been transported into another city, and he asked in effect what the one where he was was called; he was told that it was called Ephesus, which astonished him still more. He resolved to take bread as soon as possible and to go to his companions, to impart to them so surprising a novelty. But when he wished to pay the baker, the money he offered in payment appeared so ancient to those present that they got it into their minds that he had found some treasure hidden in the earth. This caused him to be led before the bishop and the magistrate, with whom he was obliged to explain himself. He was very much surprised to see no longer in Ephesus either profane temple, or image of false gods, or any vestige of the worship which had formerly been rendered to Diana, and to see there, on the contrary, a magnificent church dedicated to the true God and a bishop honoured by all the people; but they were not less so to hear him speak of the emperor Decius, of the persecution of the Christians, of the massacre of the martyrs and of many other events which he assured them he had seen the evening before, although it was nearly two hundred years since all that had passed. In this mutual astonishment, he told the prelate and the officers that, to be persuaded of what he told them, they had only to come with him, and that he would show them his six companions whom the cruelty of this emperor had forced to hide in a grotto. They followed him willingly, with many persons, who wished to see the issue of so prodigious an encounter.

When they were on the mountain, the holy Martyr showed them the door of the cave. The bishop entered first, and met at once between two stones the little copper chest of which we have already spoken. He found there plates of lead on which the persecution and martyrdom of the seven Confessors were written; he read them in the presence of the whole company, which cried out in astonishment that God was admirable in His works and that an infinity of praises must be given Him. Then they all advanced further into the cave, where they perceived the six blessed ones with a luminous countenance and all shining with glory. There was no one of the company who did not prostrate himself on the ground to honour men so extraordinary and so favoured by heaven; we doubt not even that each hastened to kiss their feet and hands. Maximian, the eldest, explained at great length what had passed with regard to them under the emperor Decius, and the state in which the Church was at that time; seeing that things were so marvellously changed during their sleep, he rendered a thousand praises to God for it. Notice was given as soon as possible to the emperor of what was passing; he came himself to Ephesus, he entered the cave from which the servants of God had not wished to come out; he venerated them, says Saint Gregory of Tours, with his face glued to the ground, and conversed with them with much consolation. And these blessed ones, to whom God had made known His design upon their resurrection, taking the word, said to him: "August prince, it is not without reason that God has preserved us so long without corruption and has given us back life: it is to confound heretics who have arisen in your empire, who have impiety enough to deny the resurrection of the dead, in order to tear from the heart of Christians the faith which works by hope and charity. Learn then, by our resurrection, that nothing is truer than what the apostle Saint Paul says, that all of us, as many as we are, shall appear in body and soul at the end of the ages before the tribunal of Jesus Christ, to be judged there for all the good and all the evil we shall have done. And beware of letting yourself be surprised by the false reasons of these impostors." The emperor listened to this discourse with much joy, and rendered thanks to God for His mercy.

Then the seven Martyrs, having taken leave of the company and made their prayer to God, resumed their first posture and fell asleep anew in Our Lord, to reign eternally with Him in heaven. Theodore, after their decease, wishing to give them marks of his royal magnificence, commanded that a sepulchre of gold should be made for each of them; but, the following night, they appeared to him and begged him not to make this expense and to leave them in their cave. This prince, receiving this vision as an order from heaven, revoked

that which he had given: and the Saints remained in the place which they had so long sanctified by their presence, covered only with little veils of silk or linen. Saint Gregory of Tours and Metaphrastes say that they were still there in their time. The cave where their bodies were found became famous by the devotion of the faithful. It is still shown to travellers who go to the Levant.

There are two ways of explaining this miracle: the first is that they fell asleep with a true sleep, and without dying, and that after two centuries they awoke. The second, that they died, and that, their bodies having remained without corruption, they rose again: which caused their death to be called a sleep, and that they are given the name of Sleepers. Baronius, in his Notes on the martyrology, cites for the first, among the Greeks, Metaphrastes, Nicephorus, Callistus and Cedrenus, and and among the Latins Saint Gregory of Tours and Sigebert. But these authors are for the second. Be that as it may, there is nothing in what we have reported which is not in the power of God, and the difficulties which may be proposed to combat it are easy to resolve. Above all, it is certain that there were seven martyrs who have, from all antiquity, been called *Septem dormientes*; this was not without motive. This prodigy was no more difficult to establish than another: the testimony of Gregory of Tours and of Metaphrastes must be rejected everywhere else, if it is not admitted here, where they are contradicted by no earlier or contemporary historian.

The Latin martyrologies make memory on this day, 27 July, of these seven Martyrs; the Greeks, in their menology, on 4 August and 22 October, which are the day on which they were shut up in the cave, and that on which they were afterwards found.

There is seen at Rome, in the Musœum Victorium, a stone which resembles rather a precious stone. A group of figures is engraved above it which represent the seven Sleepers, each with his name. Jean and Constantine have two clubs near them; there is one full of knots near Maximilian. Malchus and Martinian have two axes at their sides; Sérapion, a flaming torch; and Denis, a great nail. It was wished to represent the different kinds of torments which were made them to suffer. The seven martyrs appear very young, which agrees with several ancient monuments where they are called children.

Taken from Saint Gregory of Tours and Simeon Metaphrastes. — Cf. *Acta Sanctorum* and the work printed at Rome in 1741, in quarto, under the title *Dissertatio de sanctis septem Dormientibus.*

## Saint Pantaléon, Physician, Martyr at Nicomedia, in Bithynia

*303. — Pope: Saint Marcellinus. — Roman Emperors: Diocletian and Maximian.*

> *Nil omnipotentiam Verbi clariorem reddit, quam quod omnipotentes facit omnes qui in se sperant.*
>
> *What gives most lustre to the omnipotence of the Word is the power which He communicated to those who hope in Him.*
>
> *S. Bernard, serm. lxxxiii sup. Cant.*

Pantaléon is one of the most illustrious Martyrs who sustained the glory of the Christian religion in the persecution of the emperors Diocletian and Maximian. He was of Nicomedia, where he had for father a very obstinate pagan named Eustorge, and for mother a most holy and most religious Christian called Eubule. His mother having died during his infancy, he could not profit by the seed of the true religion which she had cast into his heart and, according to the education which he received from his father, he was engaged in the worship and adoration of idols. After having studied the humanities and philosophy, he gave himself to medicine, and succeeded in it so well, under the discipline of Euphrosyne, first physician of the emperor Maximian, that this prince, informed of his skill, and moreover admiring the beauty of his mind, his gentleness, his honesty and his prudence, resolved to take him to his court and make him one of the physicians of his person.

But heaven, which destined him to serve another sovereign than a man of the earth, permitted that he should be met by a holy priest named Hermolaus, who had withdrawn into a small house, very secret, to guard himself from the persecution of the Gentiles. This great servant of God, reading in his face the good dispositions of his heart, begged him to agree that they should have a familiar conversation together. Pantaléon having found it good, this priest inquired of him who he was and what he did. He answered "that he was a young man of the city, of a rather illustrious birth and who could hope for great wealth; his father followed the ancient religion of the empire, but his mother had been a Christian and had died in that profession; as for himself, he was occupied in studying medicine, because his father had so desired." This wise old man made advantageous use of this answer to awaken in him the first sparks of Christianity which his mother had kindled in him. He told him "that Aesculapius, Hippocrates and Galen gave in truth secrets to cure the ills of the body and to maintain, during a little time, the health and the life which must necessarily be lost; but that Jesus Christ was a much more excellent physician, since He cured the maladies of the body and of the soul, since He gave an eternal life, and since His servants, by His virtue, had even the power to cure evils which drove all physicians to despair: such as to enlighten the blind, to give hearing to the deaf and speech to the dumb, to straighten the lame and to raise the dead." These words having won the heart of Pantaléon, he parted from Hermolaus only with the design of coming to see him again. He did so often, and his conferences were so useful to him that he felt himself at last inflamed with the same fire with which his blessed catechist was filled. But what determined him entirely to renounce idolatry to embrace the Christian religion was a great miracle which he wrought himself by the invocation of the name of Jesus Christ.

One day when he was walking in the country, musing on the change which he wished to make, he met on his road a dead child, and a viper beside him; he judged at once that it was the venomous bite of this animal that had poisoned him; but believing that divine Providence offered him this occasion to try the sovereign power of Jesus Christ, of whom the holy priest told him so many marvels, he had the boldness to say to the child: "Dead one, arise, in the name of Jesus Christ"; then he said to the viper: "And you, wicked beast, receive the evil that you have done." At the same instant the child rose again and the viper died. At this prodigy he hesitated no more to become a Christian; he ran therefore at once to Hermolaus, related to him what had just happened and begged him to give him holy baptism: which the holy priest granted him with good heart.

Pantaléon remained seven days with the good old man, nourishing his soul and his heart with the abundance of the word of life which he received from him. Thus he prepared himself, by strengthening himself in the true spirit of Christianity, to become an instrument of salvation for a great number. On the eighth day he returned to his father's house, who said to him: "Where wast thou, my son, during these last days? Thy absence caused me great anxiety. Has some accident befallen thee?" Pantaléon answered: "We had gone, my master and I, to one of the courtiers of the emperor who, being very gravely ill, needed continual care. We therefore remained there seven whole days, without wishing to withdraw until he had recovered perfect health." He said this, not by a spirit of lying, but to express mysteriously what had passed, acting thus with a very judicious prudence, and not from any bad intention. The following day, when Pantaléon returned to his master Euphrosyne, he was also questioned by him, and answered with a similar excuse: "My father," he said, "having bought a piece of land, ordered me to take care of it. I had therefore to go there and not come back before having sufficiently examined it, and distributed the work to those who are to cultivate it; for it is a possession of so great a price that no other is comparable to it." He said this to designate in covert terms the inestimable grace of holy baptism. He also took the greatest care to omit nothing which could withdraw his father from the fatal error in which he was plunged. Wishing to win him to the true religion, and to give the life of grace to him from whom he had received temporal life, he ceased not to attack him each day skilfully on some side, and to put to him questions to which it was difficult for him to answer, in order to weaken little by little in his mind the belief in false gods. "Why," he said to him, "O my father, are some of your gods always standing without ever thinking of sitting down? Why are the others always seated without ever rising?" His father knew not how to answer, and the idea which he had of the power of his gods diminished

from day to day. Pantaléon thanked Christ in the depth of his soul, seeing that the heart of his father was, if not yet entirely won, at least already divided, so that from that time he no longer offered such frequent or such magnificent sacrifices as he had done before.

Pantaléon had at first had the thought of breaking and annihilating the idols of his father; for there were many in his house. He did not do so, however, because he had it much at heart to do nothing disrespectful toward his father, and also because he said to himself: “By persuasion and gentleness I shall bring him more easily to the faith of Christ, and then in concert we shall break both of us these vain images.” Because of this, our God, who has commanded to honour parents, seeing the pious designs of this excellent young man, gave him a favourable occasion to execute them. For when Pantaléon was still occupied in seeking in his mind the means of winning his father, some men brought to his dwelling a blind man whom they led by the hand. They knocked at the door, asking whether the physician Pantaléon was there. They were answered affirmatively, and they waited for him. Our Saint, having been warned, took his father with him, came to them, and when he was near the blind man, asked him what he wished. The sick man answered: “I am deprived of light, which is for all men the sweetest good. Have pity on my evils; cause me to live no longer thus only by half, but to see the sun, to see the sky; in the infirmity which afflicts me, I am like a man plunged in the depth of the shadows of hell. I have spent all my goods to have myself treated by physicians; I have gained only to be completely ruined, and to lose the feeble glimmer which still remained to me.” — “Well,” answered Pantaléon, “if I make you recover sight, what will you give me?” “The little that remains to me,” answered the unfortunate blind man, “I will give willingly and with all my heart, in recompense of such a benefit.” Pantaléon answered: “The Father of lights will restore to you by my ministry the sight you desire; as for the money you have promised me, you shall give it to the poor.” The senator, hearing these words, interrupted him, saying: “Undertake not this, O my dear son; for you would become, you also, a subject of mockery. Will you then be able to do more than the other physicians to whom he has already addressed himself?” Pantaléon answered: “No one up to now has known how to treat this man as I am going to treat him. There is a great difference between the other physicians and the master who gave me his lessons.” His father, believing that he meant to speak of Euphrosyne, said to him: “I know that thy master himself gave him care without being able to cure him.” Pantaléon resumed: “Wait only a moment, O my father, and you will see what is going to happen.” At these words he touched the eyes of the blind man, and invoked by a fervent prayer the holy name of Christ. The eyes of the blind man were suddenly opened; and this miracle, dissipating the darkness of impiety which filled the soul of Eustorge, obliged him to confess the true faith. The blind man also received a double benefit; for, as he was a worshipper of idols, the eyes of his soul were no less closed than those of his body. Both believed; and, having been judged worthy of holy baptism, were admitted to the number of the faithful. Eustorge did not stop there: as worthy father of the great Pantaléon, he felt that he must destroy the idols which filled his house. He broke them, and had them buried in a pit, that they might be for ever plunged in the oblivion which they deserved.

One cannot express the joy which this good son felt on seeing his father in the ways of eternal salvation; he gave a thousand praises to God as to the author of so great a good, and was inflamed more and more with the desire to please Him and to do something extraordinary for His service. The death of his father, which came shortly after and which God sent to this good old man to put him out of danger of losing the grace received in baptism, furnished him with a fine occasion for it. Seeing himself heir of all his goods and in the power of disposing of them, he freed his slaves and gave them wherewith to make an honest establishment in the world; he sold a part of his estates and distributed the money to the poor; he got rid, in favour of the widows and orphans, of his furniture and jewels; in a word, if he retained anything, it was only to be able to continue his alms and to have wherewith to relieve until his death all sorts of miserable people. His condition as physician made him devote himself to the visiting of prisoners and the sick. But what was admirable in his conduct is that he remedied efficaciously three sorts of evils: poverty, by giving abundantly to those who were in necessity wherewith to relieve their misery; sickness, by healing the most desperate evils, not by the

rules of Hippocrates and Galen, but by the virtue of Jesus Christ; the needs of the soul, by converting sinners and enlightening the infidels with the pure lights of the Christian religion.

Such striking actions soon put him in such reputation that there was no one in Nicomedia, poor or rich, who did not wish to have him for physician, and people came from all sides to him as to a man who had in his hands life and death, health and sickness. But what should have conciliated to him the goodwill of everyone excited against him the hatred and envy of the other physicians. They feared that his admirable cures would make them pass for ignorant men and diminish their gain. So, learning that Pantaléon was in continual relations with the Christians and that those whom he cured were or became of that religion, they went to denounce him as a Christian to Maximian who was then at Nicomedia, representing to him that, if he did not put order into it, he would soon see Christianity established and the worship of the gods entirely ruined. They confirmed what they said by bringing before the prince the blind man whom they had not been able to cure by their remedies, and whom Pantaléon had cured by invoking the name of Jesus Christ. Maximian asked him how he had recovered sight. He answered courageously that he was indebted for it to Pantaléon, and that it was not by remedies, but by the virtue of the Almighty, who was none other than Jesus Christ, that it had been restored to him. “Say not that,” replied Maximian; “but acknowledge that you hold from our gods so signal a favour.” — “But how can it be,” said the blind man healed, “that those who do not see and who have neither feeling nor life give sight; that is out of all appearance and even against every kind of reason.” Maximian entered into fury at once against him and commanded that his head be cut off: which was done. Saint Pantaléon, being informed of it, bought his body and had it buried beside that of his father, considering them both as children whom he had begotten to faith and to grace and with whom he had an altogether holy and altogether divine alliance, which surpassed infinitely that of flesh and blood.

Some time after, the emperor had Pantaléon called, whom he treated at first with sufficient gentleness, contenting himself with representing to him the love he bore him, the kindnesses he had had for him, the care he had taken to have him instructed and the intention he had had of naming him his physician. “It is not credible, after that,” he added, “that you should be ungrateful toward me and that you should revolt against the justice of my ordinances, by refusing to the gods of the empire the worship which I wish to be rendered to them.” — “I must not hide it from you, great prince,” said Pantaléon, “I no longer adore your gods, I no longer acknowledge them as true divinities: I adore only Jesus Christ, my sovereign Lord, who has the power to give sight to the blind, hearing to the deaf, speech to the dumb, walking to the lame, and life to the dead. If your gods had this power, they would deserve some honour; but, to show that they have it not, and that Jesus Christ has it truly, make appear here a sick man of whom all medicine despairs; let your priests invoke Jupiter, Apollo, Mars and Neptune, and I will invoke the redoubtable name of Jesus Christ, and it will be seen by whom he shall be healed, so that that one alone may be acknowledged the true God.” The emperor agreed to this proposal. A paralytic was sent for, who, for a very long time, was so crippled in all his limbs that all human remedies had become useless to him. The idolaters did what they could by their prayers, their cries and their sacrifices, to obtain his cure, but it was in vain. The prayers of Pantaléon were far more efficacious. He raised his eyes and hands to heaven, and, after having made his prayers to the true God, he took the paralytic by the hand, raised him from his bed, commanded him to walk in the name of Jesus Christ, and at once the sick man found himself happily delivered from his evil and in the free use of all his body.

This miracle produced a marvellous effect on the mind of all the spectators. The greater part recognised the truth, and, rising from their spiritual paralysis, began to have movements useful for heaven. As for the idolatrous priests and the physicians who, by their own fault, were in no state to be healed, they did not receive the light of truth; but approaching Maximian, they excited his fury against the Saint, saying to him: “If you let this impious man live, our gods and our sacrifices will soon be annihilated: our religion will be put in the rank of fables: the Christians will laugh at us, and their affairs will prosper more and more.” Maximian lent an easy ear to this perfidious discourse; he sent for the Saint, and as if he had wished to show him his

goodwill by giving him a salutary counsel, he said to him: “Believe me, Pantaléon: sacrifice to the gods. Do you not see that all those who have not wished to let themselves be persuaded to do so have been punished for their sacrilegious incredulity by torments and by death? You have seen the fate of Anthime, that foolish old man who despised our gods. But I have pity on your youth; know therefore that you will perish like him in torments, if you persist in the same disobedience.”

Pantaléon took good care not to let himself be seduced by these counsels of which he knew all the perfidy; as for the threats, he despised them, knowing that the pains of this life, compared with eternity, are but shadows. He answered therefore: “Think not, O emperor, that you can win me by your promises or frighten me by your threats. Could I be tempted by love of the goods of this world or frightened by passing torments, I who not only despise death, but desire besides to suffer it for the love of Christ? Far from fearing torments, I should fear that they might be too few and too light: on that side I dread clemency more than rigour. As for Anthime, I envy his lot; for I know that he is not unhappy, as you are destined to be, but that he enjoys beatitude. I place his glorious death above the sweetest life, since he crowned his old age with so fine an end and heightened the lustre of his white hairs by the purple of martyrdom. If then, in that advanced age, he showed so great a strength and such constancy, is it not just that I, who am in the strength of youth, should bear the same pains to arrive at the same crown? You will not persuade me, you will not conquer me: I swear it by these evident signs, by these numberless miracles which have brought me to the knowledge of the true faith; for otherwise I should dishonour the memory of my father and my mother who formed me to piety, and with whom I make haste to go and rest in the eternal tabernacles.” So spoke Pantaléon, showing well enough to the tyrant, too proud of his empire, what man he was going to have to fight. Knowing no more what to say to him, Maximian had recourse to tortures, preferring to abuse his power rather than to act according to true wisdom and prudence.

Pantaléon was first seized, fastened to the rack and torn with iron nails: at the same time his sides were burned with burning torches. In the midst of this torment he seemed to feel nothing; for his soul was raised toward Him from whom he awaited his help. His hope was not deceived: Christ appeared to him under the figure of the old man Hermolaus, and gave him the sweetest consolations. “I am with thee,” He said to him, “in all these torments which thou sufferest for my love with so great patience.” This divine deliverer gave him without further delay signs of His assistance: the arms of the lictors were as if benumbed, the torches went out of themselves; and the emperor ordered the execution to be suspended for the moment, not knowing even whether he would have it begun again later. He therefore had the martyr unfastened, not that he was touched by a feeling of compassion, but because he was undecided about the course he should take. Approaching him then: “What then,” he said to him, “O Pantaléon, is this magic art by which you have wearied the lictors and caused the torches to go out?” Pantaléon answered: “My magic science is the power of Christ who comes to assist me and who Himself works all these marvels.” — “And what will you do,” resumed the emperor, “if I make you undergo still greater torments?” — “Then,” answered the Martyr, “I shall have a right to a greater reward.”

Maximian ordered a brazen cauldron to be brought, lead to be melted in it, and the Martyr to be plunged into the burning metal. The orders of the emperor were executed; but, at the moment of undergoing this terrible trial, Pantaléon asked the help of Him who could transform into a sweet refreshment the ardours of this cauldron, and he said: “Lord, hear me when I pray to you: deliver my soul from the fear of enemies. Protect me against the plots of the wicked, against the multitude of those who commit iniquity.” Such was his prayer; at once Christ, appearing to him a second time, under the form of the holy old man Hermolaus, entered with him into the cauldron: at that very instant the fire went out, and the Martyr felt no harm from it. The Martyr therefore began to pray again, and choosing this time a psalm of thanksgiving, he said: “I have cried to the Lord, and He has heard me; in the morning, at noon and in the evening, I will tell His benefits and announce His greatness; and He will hear my prayer.” All those who were present felt themselves filled with

admiration; the emperor alone persisted in his blindness. He asked himself what new torment he should employ against the Martyr of Christ, to make him abandon the faith or to take his life from him. Several of the emperor's officers advised him to cast Pantaléon into the depth of the sea; for, after the death of the Martyrs, the Christians were accustomed to gather their relics carefully. The emperor yielded to this advice; he ordered that a great stone be tied to the neck of the Saint and that he be precipitated into the sea. The satellites accomplished this order; but God took care to send His help to him who suffered for Him, as was soon seen. For, when they had arrived on the shore and had tied a stone to the neck of Pantaléon, he was thrown into the sea; but Christ, appearing for the third time, still under the form of Hermolaus, made this great stone float like a leaf of a tree; and the Lord, taking the Saint by the hand, as formerly the apostle Saint Peter, made him walk on the waves. It was easy to recognise by this that the deliverer and saviour of the Martyr was He who, as the holy king David says, finds in the sea and on the abyss of the waves routes and paths which no one could know. Pantaléon therefore reached the shore, blessing God with an effusion of gratitude worthy of his greatness of soul and of the immense benefits he had received. The emperor, seeing him reappear against his expectation, said to him: "Is the sea then also subject to your enchantments?" Pantaléon answered: "The sea obeys, like all the other elements, the orders it receives from God; for if your servants obey the orders you give them, you whose reign will last but a few days, how could all creatures not obey the voice of the eternal Monarch?"

The tyrant, without letting himself be convinced by all these prodigies, but hoping always to persuade Pantaléon to return to the worship of false gods, ordered that wild beasts of every kind be brought. The satellites obeyed: the beasts were brought; and the emperor, showing them to Pantaléon, wished to inspire him with fear, and on the other hand to feign being moved with compassion. He said to him therefore: "These wild animals that you see have been brought to make you perish. If then you have any pity on yourself, for as for me I am touched by your youth and your beauty, let yourself be persuaded; show your prudence by choosing, when you still can, life rather than death, happiness, glory and delights in preference to shame and sufferings." The Saint answered: "If, even before having experienced the help of God, I let myself not be won by your promises, I shall listen to you far less still, after having received such striking proofs of the protection of God over me. Why do you seek, O emperor, to frighten me by the sight of beasts? He who has rendered powerless the hands of the executioners, who has extinguished the fire and restored the boiling lead to its natural temperature; He, in short, who knew how to enchain the waves of the sea, will know also how to soften the fury of wild beasts and make them gentler than lambs."

The Martyr of Christ not wishing to obey the orders of the tyrant, and preferring to be delivered to wild beasts rather than to adore demons, the whole city assembled to see what was going to happen. The Saint was therefore brought; he presented himself, brave as a lion, as his name indicates. His step was firm; nothing was seen in his looks that seemed to implore pity. And how could it have been otherwise, since Christ, appearing to him once more under the figure of Hermolaus, ordered him to take good courage? When the tyrant had given the order to let the beasts loose, it was believed they would at once tear our holy Martyr to pieces; but such was not the will of Him who has said: "The place of thy refuge is an inaccessible height: evils will not be able to reach thee, and scourges will not penetrate to thy dwelling. Thou shalt walk upon the asp and the basilisk, and thou shalt trample under foot the lion and the dragon." The hope of the faithful servant of God was therefore not deceived. In fact, far from doing any harm to the Saint, the beasts seemed to have lost all their ferocity; for they came to lie down at his feet, and licked them gently: each of them seemed to wish to get before the others; and they withdrew only after the Saint, laying his hand on their head, had given them his blessing.

All the people who were present were seized with admiration, and cried out: "Great is the God of the Christians: He is the only one, He is the true God!" Others cried: "Let the just man be set at liberty." But what! he who alone on that day was truly ferocious, the emperor, took it out on the beasts for their not

serving his desires, and ordered that they all be taken away and killed; for he could not bear the lesson of humanity which they had given him. The bodies of these animals which had been thus slain remained several days without being devoured by the other carnivorous animals. God permitted it so for the glory of His faithful servant and for the instruction of impious men who persecute His saints. The emperor ordered the bodies of these animals to be cast into a pit, and deliberated afterwards with his officers as to as to what he should do with regard to Pantaléon. “You see,” he said to them, “that he has already won a great number of men to the faith of Christ; what shall I do now, to remain victor in this struggle?” They answered him: “A wheel must be made, which shall be placed on some mountain. Pantaléon shall be tied on this wheel; then it shall be launched with violence down the steep slope, so that all his limbs may be broken.” Such were the counsels of the impious, always prompt to invent new crimes; but God, who watches unceasingly over those who love Him, defended Pantaléon as His beloved son. The holy Martyr was left in prison during all the time that was spent in constructing this wheel. When all was ready, a great multitude assembled to be present at this spectacle: the emperor himself was there. The Martyr was tied to the wheel, and it was launched with force down the slope of the mountain. Pantaléon ceased not to pray: always the divine words of the psalms were on his lips, and he implored ardently the help of the Almighty. God showed well that He was with His servant; for the bonds broke, the Martyr remained safe and sound; and the wheel, appearing to wish rather to defend him than to do him harm, killed many infidels. Thus was accomplished the just punishment of these wicked men; it showed that the Lord judges according to justice, and that the God of vengeances freely exercises His wrath on the impious. At this prodigy the city was filled with fear, and the emperor himself remained in astonishment. But, as he was always blinded by his vices, and could not see the light of truth, he asked the Saint: “What does all this mean? Until when will you continue to draw one part of our people into your false doctrine, causing the loss of the other, so that these die miserably, and the others, becoming Christians, become our enemies?” He asked him next who was the master who had instructed him in Christianity. Pantaléon, without hesitation, named Hermolaus, being unable to leave in silence and oblivion a man who was so worthy to appear in the light, and not to remain unknown in an obscure retreat. The emperor ordered him to bring him before him, and the Martyr did not delay, knowing that the holy old man had enough knowledge and facility of speech that it would be easy for him to resist all attacks, and to procure great conversions. He set out therefore with three soldiers under whose guard he had been placed, and betook himself to the house which served as retreat to the holy old man Hermolaus. When the latter saw him: “What art thou come to do,” he said to him, “O my son, and what motive brings thee?” Pantaléon answered: “My father, the emperor calls thee to appear before him.” — “I know it,” answered Hermolaus; “it is now the time to suffer and to die for Christ, as He Himself revealed to me last night.” They were therefore brought both before the emperor; and he, interrogating the old man, asked him: “Who are you? and what is your name?” Hermolaus gave his name; and the emperor having asked him whether there were not other Christians hidden with him, he named likewise Hermippus and Hermocrate; for he would never have wished to disguise the truth. They were brought in like manner before the emperor, and when they were united with Hermolaus, the emperor said to them: “It is you who have seduced Pantaléon to make him abandon the worship of the gods?” They answered: “Christ Himself knows well how to call to the light those who are worthy of it.” The emperor resumed: “Let us leave these vain dreams. If you wish to obtain pardon for the crime you have committed, persuade Pantaléon to sacrifice to the gods; if you succeed, I will count you among my friends, and I will give you the first dignities of the empire.” — “Eh! how should we do it,” they answered, “since we ourselves are firmly resolved never to abandon Christ, and never to sacrifice to your impotent divinities?” They said it, and raised their eyes to heaven. While they were making their prayer, the Saviour appeared to them full of glory and majesty, and in all the surroundings a violent earthquake was felt.

The emperor, quite frightened, said: “Behold our indignant gods make the earth tremble.” The Martyrs made him this answer, which bore witness to their wisdom and courage: “What will you say then, O emperor, if your gods themselves are overthrown?” They had not finished this word when one of the officers of the

palace ran up crying: “O emperor, the gods, what a frightful misfortune! the gods have fallen and are broken on the pavement of the temple.” Every man endowed with a little judgment would have recognised the hand of the Lord almighty working these prodigies; but Maximian was not susceptible of opening his eyes to the light. He showed at once what fruit he had drawn from these warnings of heaven, and how much the better he had become; for, after having made the three generous confessors undergo the most cruel torments, he had their heads cut off. As for Pantaléon, he had him taken back to prison during that time. The Christians took care to gather the bodies of the holy Martyrs, and to give them an honourable burial.

Maximian then had Pantaléon drawn from his dungeon, and said to him: “Do you think then to go out alive from my hands, without having consented to sacrifice to the gods? Do you not wish to imitate the example of your masters Hermolaus, Hermippus and Hermocrate, who have taken the good part? So, as the price of their obedience, I gave them high dignities in my palace. If then you do as they, if you imitate their happy change, then you will see, O Pantaléon, that, if I am severe when it is a question of punishing the wicked and the obstinate, I am liberal and magnificent when it is necessary to reward those who know how to obey.” Thus it was that, to win the holy Martyr, he lied shamelessly, trying to make him believe that his companions had abandoned the faith. But Pantaléon, enlightened with a divine light, confounded him, saying to him: “Why then do I not see them near you among the officers who surround you?” Maximian, continuing his lies, answered: “They are absent, because an urgent affair obliged me to send them to another city.” The Martyr answered: “You are constrained in spite of yourself to tell the truth: for they are in heaven, and they dwell truly in the holy city of God.”

After having tried all means to win Pantaléon, the impious tyrant, seeing that he could not beat down his courage by his threats, nor win him by his promises, had him cruelly scourged, no longer to make an impression on the mind of the Martyr, but to satisfy his own cruelty. Then he pronounced the sentence which declared that Pantaléon should have his head cut off, and that afterwards his body should be burned. The athlete of Christ was therefore seized by the executioners, and dragged to the place where his torment was to end. He arrived there full of joy, knowing by what ineffable consolations his sufferings were to be rewarded. He sang on the road this psalm of David: “My enemies have delivered violent assaults against me from the time of my youth; but they have not been able to conquer me. They have overwhelmed me with ill treatment: they have put the crown to their iniquity; the Lord, in His justice, will break the head of the wicked.” God wrought on this occasion a miracle no less great than those which had preceded; for, when the executioners had bound the Martyr to the trunk of an olive tree, one of them wished to cut off his head; at once the edge of the sword softened like wax, and the neck of the holy Martyr showed no trace of wound. At this sight, fright seized the murderers: they approached Pantaléon, begging pardon and embracing the feet of him whom, a moment before, they did not judge worthy to live, and confessing loudly that they believed in Christ. The Saint not only forgave them the malice they had shown toward him, but obtained for them also the pardon of God. For, after he had asked it in prayer, a voice was heard, which said to him: “Thy requests are granted. Therefore henceforth thou shalt no longer be called Pantaléon, but Pantaléémon, that is, merciful: a name which shall not be vain; for many shall obtain mercy by thy intercession.” When the Saint had heard this voice, he turned toward the lictors, telling them to do what had been commanded them. They refused, saying that they could not lend themselves to such an attempt; the Martyr, for his part, insisted: they were therefore divided, not knowing whether they should obey their just compassion or the pressing solicitations of the holy Martyr. At last, after having embraced him and given him all possible marks of veneration, they cut off his head, on the twenty-seventh day of July. After his death he was still glorified by new miracles, God wishing to make illustrious before men the name of him who had given his life for His love. Instead of blood, milk flowed from his wounds; and the olive tree to which he had been bound by the executioners appeared suddenly laden with fruit. This fact having come to the knowledge of the emperor, he ordered this trunk of a tree to be used to burn the body of the Martyr, as he had previously ordered. But the soldiers who had been present at this spectacle had the cruelty of the tyrant in horror; and they behaved toward him as the Magi

toward Herod: they did not return to him; but they went away publishing the glory of God and of His Martyr. The faithful gathered the holy body, and carried it to the country house of a man of letters named Adamance, and there they gave it an honourable burial.

He is painted bound to a tree, and the Germans represent him with his hands nailed on his head. He is also seen holding in his hand the sword with a palm, and at his feet a lion who caresses him.

### Worship and Relics

The relics of this glorious Martyr were transported to Constantinople, and they were already there, in the place called Concord, at the time of the second general Council which was celebrated in that city in 380. A church was built there in his honour, which was restored by Justinian, as the historian Procopius relates. The emperor Charlemagne, having obtained these same relics, had them brought to France. The head was put at Lyon and the rest of the bones in the celebrated abbey of Saint-Denis, two leagues from Paris. The city of Lavello, in the kingdom of Naples, still preserves now, in its cathedral church, a phial full of the blood of this Martyr, which is exposed every year on the day of his triumph, and which, as is related, becomes liquid at that time, although all the rest of the year it is cold and congealed. The physicians honour Saint Pantaléon as their principal patron, after Saint Luke.

The martyrology of the Greeks and the martyrologies of the Latins all mark the memory of Saint Pantaléon and of his companions, on this day, 27 July. Baronius speaks of it also in his Annals. *Acta Sanctorum*; the *Acts of the Martyrs*, by the Reverend Fathers Benedictines of the Congregation of France.

## Saint Désiré, Bishop of Besançon

*About 414. — Pope: Saint Innocent I. — Emperor of the West: Honorius.*

> *Seminantes non deficiamus, tempore enim proprio metemus.*
>
> *Let us not lose courage when we sow, for we shall reap in due season.*
>
> *Saint Augustine.*

Saint Désiré was born at Lons-le-Saulnier (Jura), at the end of the 4th century. He was of a Gallo-Roman family, distinguished by its nobility and its piety. As his name indicates, this child was granted by heaven to the prayers of his parents. Before he came into the world they had revelations of his future holiness, and it was foretold them that one day he would become a bishop. The happy dispositions which Désiré showed from his tenderest childhood confirmed these predictions. He had taste only for the things of God; he said nothing, he did nothing which did not engage everyone to admire and love him. He had above all a great love of chastity, and this virtue spread over all his life that pure brightness which makes man like the angels. His parents, wishing to respond to the designs which God seemed to have on this child of blessing, took the greatest care to have him instructed. We do not know to what masters he was entrusted. At that time the Séquanie had not yet monastic schools to form the young men destined to the priesthood, as it had later at Gondat and at Luxeuil. Perhaps Désiré was sent to Lyon, to the celebrated school of Aisnay, directed by the abbot Sabin, and where were formed, some time after (about 400), Saint Romain and Saint Véran. Perhaps again (and this appears more probable), he was entrusted to the community of clerics of Besançon, established by the bishop Saint Just about 365. Be that as it may, the cares with which the youth of Saint Désiré was surrounded were not useless. He distinguished himself in the schools, among all those of his age, by much wisdom and by a great facility for eloquence. Admitted to sacred orders, he fulfilled their charges with so much zeal and so much success that the reputation of his virtues soon spread through the whole province. He was a witness of the ravages which the Vandals committed in the Séquanie, under the leadership of Crocus. Saint Antide had just been immolated by the fury of these barbarians (407). When the tempest had passed, the clergy and people of Besançon unanimously chose Désiré to replace the holy bishop

and martyr. This choice was fortunate for the diocese. For Saint Désiré seemed to have been raised in dignity only to show his virtues in all their lustre. Solely preoccupied with the glory of God and the salvation of his flock, he was assiduous in instructing the faithful in the divine word; he himself visited the sick and healed a great number; he went into the prisons to see the captives, to console them and even to ransom them whenever he could; the poor, the widows and the orphans were as his family; finally, he took care to form holy priests, who were the witnesses of his zeal, the imitators of his virtues, and who continued his good works. Thus it was that he embraced all the parts of the charge which God had entrusted to him.

Such is the life of this holy prelate, according to the traditions which have been preserved in the legendaries and martyrologies. For the rest, we know none of his actions in particular. The zeal of bishops for the salvation of souls and the instruction of the faithful led them to visit often the different parts of their dioceses, to announce there the Christian doctrine. For at that time they ordinarily fulfilled alone the ministry of preaching. Accompanied by a part of their clergy, they went, says Dunod, during the course of the year, to the considerable places of their dioceses, to preach the word of God, to celebrate the divine offices and to administer the sacraments, as they do today in their pastoral visitations. This is what was called stations. In conformity with the usage of his time, Saint Désiré visited the churches, still few in number, which existed outside Besançon. If tradition is to be believed, Lons-le-Saulnier, his native town, possessed a church in honour of the resurrection of Jesus Christ and under the invocation of Saint Nicholas. Our holy prelate passes for its founder or at least its restorer, and naturally it must have been for him an object of station. Another church not less ancient existed also in the neighbourhood of Lons-le-Saulnier. It is that of Coldres built on the summit of one of the mountains which dominate the valley of Conliège, and dedicated to Saint Stephen. This church, which still subsists, is seen from a great distance, and it is thought that at that epoch it served as parish for all the surrounding villages.

It was probably in the course of one of these visits that Saint Désiré died, in 413 or 414. He rendered his soul to God with great joy, say the ancient chronicles, having always desired death as the entrance into the blessed life. Thus he would have held the see of his church only five or six years. His body, placed in a stone sarcophagus, was buried in the church which he had had built at Lons-le-Saulnier, and which still bears his name.

## Worship and Relics

The peoples, full of gratitude toward this prelate, came in crowds to honour his sepulchre and implore his protection.

From the 9th century, the church of Saint-Désiré was placed under the patronage of the abbey of Baume. In the course of the 12th century, a cloister was added to the church, and the religious who were placed there were charged with the divine service. They had the title of curés and rectors, and regulated all that concerned the keeping of the schools, the service of the parish and the guarding of the relics. From the death of Saint Désiré to our days, the name of this prelate has been preserved in the memory of peoples as a remembrance of blessing. Already, at a very remote epoch, his feast was celebrated every year at Lons-le-Saulnier, on 27 July. It drew there, on that day, a great number of the faithful who ran, like the ancient pilgrims, to honour the tomb of the illustrious bishop. In the 11th century, his bones had been taken out of the stone sarcophagus and placed in a wooden shrine, to be exposed to the devotion of the peoples. His venerable head was given to the church of Baume-les-Moines, where this holy relic is still preserved today.

In 1465, under the episcopate of Charles de Neuchâtel, archbishop of Besançon, the noble and honourable échevins, burgesses and inhabitants of Lons-le-Saulnier, wishing to raise a monument in honour of their glorious patron, had a magnificent shrine made at Salins. The relics of Saint Désiré were transferred from their ancient wooden shrine into this new silver shrine, on 27 July, the feast day of Saint Désiré, in presence of all the magistrates of the city and of a great concourse of people. His relics were exposed at the solemn

feasts, in the octave of the patronal feast and in public calamities. But this exposition could be made only with the concurrence of the municipal authorities. The vine-dressers of Lons-le-Saulnier were specially charged to guard the holy shrine during the whole time of the exposition. They always accompanied it, armed with halberds, in the processions which were made on the patronal feast. This ancient usage subsisted until 1792. There was then seen, to the respect for the memory and relics of the saints, succeed outrage and devastation. The National Convention had ordered the destruction of all the exterior signs of the Catholic worship. The relics of the holy bishop were brought to the national hôtel and thrown into the fire after a joyous orgy, and the shrine sent to the Mint. However, not all the relics of the Saint had been consumed by the flame, and a pious person was fortunate enough to gather secretly, among the ashes, the bones which had escaped destruction. The little of the relics that was thus preserved was divided between the two churches of Lons-le-Saulnier. In 1801, when liberty had been restored to the Catholic worship by the Concordat, the clergy of the city had a new shrine made, of gilded wood, and enclosed in it what remained of these holy remains. In 1834, the fabric of the church of Saint-Désiré devoted a sum of four thousand francs to the purchase of a shrine of gilded copper, of precious workmanship. Solemnly placed in a side chapel of the parish church, this shrine contains no other relics of Saint Désiré than a portion of the arm and of the finger. The translation of it was made in the month of August, by M. de Montgaillard, vicar-general of the diocese of Saint-Claude.

The sandstone sarcophagus, in which the body of our holy bishop had rested, is still today in the very crypt constructed in the church of Saint-Désiré. The profanations to which this glorious sepulchre was given over in the evil days have only made it still more venerable. For all that attaches to the memory of Saint Désiré is dear to the faithful of Lons-le-Saulnier. Nothing is more popular among them than the worship of their glorious patron, and his memory is perpetuated in Christian families, as an inheritance of piety. There are, in the diocese of Besançon, three parishes which have chosen Saint Désiré for patron: they are Byans and Soye in the Doubs, and, in the Haute-Saône, Choyé, whose ancient church went back to the 9th century. Saint Désiré is inscribed in all the modern martyrologies. The most ancient catalogues and the lauds or litanies of the Church of Besançon give him the title of saint, and his office is celebrated under the double rite of nine lessons.

Taken from the *Proper of Saint-Claude*, and from the *Lives of the Saints of Franche-Comté.*

## The Blessed Névolon, Confessor, of the Order of the Camaldolese (1280)

Névolon was born at Faenza, a fortified town of Romagna, and embraced the state of shoemaker. His youth was stormy, and it was necessary, to bring him back into the way of good, from which he had turned aside for a long time, that heaven should send him a very grave illness. Restored to health, he distributed his goods to the poor and devoted himself to the relief of widows, orphans and the indigent. To these works of mercy he joined the austerities of the cloister life which he was soon to embrace. Pilgrimages were much in use in his country: our Blessed undertook those to the tomb of the Apostles, at Rome, and to Saint James of Compostela, in Galicia. Returned to Faenza, he had much to suffer from the ill humour of his wife, who looked with a jealous eye on his great liberalities and his devotion which she called excessive. One day a beggar came to knock at the door of our Blessed, and he told his wife to give him a loaf; she refused, protesting that there was no more in the cupboard. “For the love of Jesus Christ,” replied Névolon, “give alms to this poor man.” His wife, to rid herself of his importunities, opened the cupboard out of spite. How great was her surprise when she found in it a great quantity of loaves! This miracle converted her; she accompanied from then on her virtuous husband in his holy pilgrimages and prepared herself Christianly for death.

Become a widower, Névolon distributed the goods that his wife had bequeathed him to the poor, the infirm, the widows and orphans of Faenza and of the surrounding countries, then he went and shut himself up in a

convent of the Order of the Camaldolese. For a long time he edified the brethren there by the practice of the most sublime virtues. At last, overwhelmed with old age and bending under the weight of the good works of which his life had been but a rich tissue, he died holily at Faenza on 27 July 1280. It is reported that the bells of the church in which he was accustomed to pray rang of themselves to announce his death.

His holy body was deposited in the cathedral of Faenza, where a marble monument was raised to him. On 31 May 1817, Pope Pius VII approved his worship.

*Acta Sanctorum.* — Cf. the continuators of Godescard.

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[1] Saint Georges was born in the territory of Bethlehem, and had embraced the contemplative life in the monastery of Saint-Sabas, three leagues from Jerusalem. — Félix and Aurèle were relatives: their houses served as an oratory for the persecuted Christians. — Natalie, called also Sabigothon, was the wife of Aurèle, and Liliose that of Félix. — The Christians carried off the bodies of the Martyrs, during the night, and buried them in different places. They put the body of Saint Georges and of Saint Aurèle in the monastery of Philemellar, that of Saint Félix in the abbey of Saint-Christophe, that of Saint Natalie in the church of the Three Martyrs, and that of Saint Liliose in that of Saint-Genêt. — Baillet, Godescard.

[2] See her Eulogy in the martyrology of the Bollandists, under 24 July.

[3] He was born at Serra-di-San-Quirico, in the March of Ancona, and made his studies at the University of Bologna; after which he entered the Congregation of Saint Sylvester, in spite of the obstacles which his family put in the way of this affair. — The inhabitants of Monte-Granario, in Italy, among whom our Blessed had made a long sojourn, chose him as their patron immediately after his death, erected an altar in his honour and have never ceased to render him a religious worship, celebrating his feast on 19 September. His worship was approved in 1757 (27 July), by Pope Benedict XIV. — Cf. Butler.

[4] See his life on this day.

[5] See his life on 20 July.

# 28 July

## Martyrologies

### Roman Martyrology

At Rome, Saint Victor, pope and martyr. 197. — In the same place, Saint Innocent, pope and confessor. 417. — At Milan, the triumph of the holy martyrs Nazaire, and Celse, a young child; during the bloody persecution stirred up against the Church by Nero, they were kept a long time in a rigorous prison by the judge Anolin, and at last beheaded by his order. 1st century. — In the Thebaid, in Egypt, the memory of several holy Martyrs who suffered during the persecutions of Decius and Valerian: the Christians wished to give their lives for Jesus Christ, but the malicious enemy who aimed at souls and not at bodies, imagined every day slower torments. One of these generous athletes, after having overcome the rigour of the racks, of the blades and of the burning cauldrons, was rubbed with honey and exposed, his hands bound behind his back, to the greatest ardour of the sun, to the stings of flies and wasps:[1] another, softly laid on a bed of flowers and bound tightly, was abandoned to the impudicity of a courtesan; but when he saw her come to him to solicit him to sin, he cut off his tongue with his teeth and spat it in the face of that infamous woman. About 250. — At Ancyra, in Galatia, Saint Eustathius, martyr, who, after having been tried by rigorous tortures, was thrown into a river, from which an angel drew him out in perfect health; at last he was called to the reward of eternal salvation by a dove which descended from heaven. — At Miletus, a city of Asia Minor, Saint Acacius, martyr, who, after divers torments, was thrown into a burning furnace; but, having received no damage, by help of God which he received there, he completed his martyrdom by giving his head for the support of the faith of Jesus Christ. 4th century. — In Brittany, Saint Samson, bishop and confessor. 565. — At Lyon, Saint Pérégrin, priest, whose brilliance of miracles attests his holiness. Beginning of the 3rd century.

### Martyrology of France, Revised and Augmented

In the dioceses of Paris, Rennes, Coutances and Saint-Brieuc, Saint Samson, bishop of the ancient see of Dol, cited in the Roman martyrology of this day. — In the dioceses of Cologne, Gap, Coutances and Carcassonne, the holy martyrs Nazaire and Celse, cited in the Roman martyrology of this day. — In the diocese of Cologne, the saints Victor and Innocent, popes, cited today in the same martyrology. — In the diocese of Mainz, Saint Christopher or Christophorus, whose life we have given on 25 July. — In the diocese of Meaux, memory of Saint Colombe, virgin and martyr at Sens, whose life we shall give on 31 December. — In the diocese of Auxerre, Saint Géran, forty-first bishop of that see. He was born at Soissons: his father was called Othard and his mother Give. His uncle Rodoin, bishop of Soissons, took charge of his education. At first a simple cleric attached to the clergy of Soissons, his learning and rare virtues soon raised him to the dignities of canon of the cathedral, provost of the Chapter, archdeacon, and finally bishop of Auxerre (21 December 909). Consecrated in the church of Sens on 14 January 910, he heightened his episcopal dignity by the brilliance of the most sublime charity for the poor of his diocese. He died at Soissons, and was buried beside Rodoin, his uncle. 914. — At Troyes, Saint Camélien, surnamed Himérius, bishop of that see and confessor. 536. — At Vannes, Saint Guuery or Goueri, priest, cited in the martyrology of France of 4 April, and in the same martyrology of 18 July, where we have given some details on his life. 6th century. — At Sens, Saint Colombe, virgin and martyr, whose life we shall give on 31 December. — At Bourges and at Tours, Saint Ours, abbot, cited in the martyrology of France of the preceding day, and Saint Léobat, confessor and abbot. About 508. — At Toul, in the diocese of Nancy, Saint Auspice, bishop and confessor, whose life we have given on 8 July. About 487.

## Martyrologies of the Religious Orders

Martyrology of the Basilians. — At Rome, Saint Innocent I, pope and confessor, of the Order of Saint Basil, celebrated for his erudition and his holiness. 417.

Martyrology of the Dominicans. — At the little town of San-Germano, diocese of Vercelli, the blessed Antoine, of the Order of Friars Preachers, a personage illustrious for his holiness, his morals, his religion and his learning.[2] 1459.

## Additions Made from the Bollandists and Other Hagiographers

At Laodicea of Phrygia, today Eski-Hissar, on the Lycus, the saints Theophilus, Auxentius, Prudence, Philip, Alexander, Zoticus, Macarius, and the saints Bessie and Seconde, all martyrs, cited by Saint Jerome. — The saints Septimia and Augusta, virgins, cited by the same, without more details. — At Constantinople, at the monastery of Chrysobalanton, Saint Irene, abbess. At the death of Theophilus, emperor of the East (842), Irene was promised in marriage by queen Theodora to her son Michael; but, jealous of having no other spouse than Christ, she shut herself up in a convent. Her rare virtues soon drew her a high reputation and she became abbess. Her continual occupation was to edify by her examples the religious women who had been entrusted to her. God granted her the gift of tears and that of prophecy. After having predicted the day of her death, she fell asleep gently in the Lord. 9th or 10th century. — In Sweden, Saint Hotuide or Botwin, martyr. His parents were pagans and lived in the province of Sùdermanland. Having formed a friendship with a pious ecclesiastic who revealed to him the marvels of the Christian religion, he resolved to occupy himself henceforth only with winning to Jesus Christ the poor inhabitants of his country. A man of the country of the Slavs whom he had ransomed from slavery and whom he was occupied in instructing in the faith, surprised him treacherously during his sleep and struck him on the head a blow of an axe which brought him death. His body was carried into the Sudennanland, and a church was raised over his tomb which took the name of Botuidskirche or Botkirk. 12th century. — At Piacenza, in Italy, Saint Raymond Palmer, confessor. At the death of his father, he made with his mother the pilgrimage to the Holy Land, then returned to his country where he lost his mother. He then married a virtuous woman and had five children by her whom he brought up in piety. Heaven took them from him while still quite young: Raymond then distributed all his goods to

the poor and undertook holy pilgrimages, doing good everywhere he passed. He died in the midst of the fatigues of his frequent journeys. Numerous miracles have made his tomb illustrious. 1200.

## Saint Nazaire and Saint Celse, Martyrs at Milan

*1st century. — Pope: Saint Peter. — Roman Emperor: Nero.*

> *Non cessat hostis persequi; et si non aperte sævit, insidiis agit.*
>
> *The enemy never ceases his persecutions; when he does not attack in the open day, he plots in the shadow.*
>
> *Saint Augustine.*

In the first century of the Christian era, Nazaire was born at Rome; his father, named Africain, was an infidel and held a high rank in the armies of the empire. His mother, a pious woman whom the Church honours under the name of Saint Perpétue, had received baptism at the hands of Saint Peter; this generous Christian watched with tender solicitude over the soul of her son, who had a very gentle nature and an upright heart. He responded to the maternal care by those precocious virtues and those habits of innocence which make the charm and the beauty of young age.

Having reached his ninth year, Nazaire perceived that his parents did not adore the same God, did not follow the same worship; each of them, in fact, strove to draw the young child to his own belief: a difficult struggle in which many succumb and which deprives many souls of eternal glory! but grace, responding doubtless to the ardent prayers of Saint Perpétue, drew him from this cruel uncertainty and attached him irrevocably to the God whom his mother adored. He was baptized by Saint Linus, who became pope later, and the faith, bearing fruit a hundredfold in this young heart, soon made Nazaire one of the most fervent Christians of Italy. Africain had seen vanish thereby the hopes of honours and fortune which he had conceived and founded on the future of his son. So he employed promises first, then threats, then ill-treatment, to detach him from his faith and carry him to the worship of idols. Nazaire was unshakable, and the father, vanquished by this firmness and touched by grace, ceased his violent and importunate pursuits; he even gave him back all his affection, and, seconding the bold project which he had conceived of going to preach the Gospel, he engaged him to leave Rome, hastened his departure and handed him considerable sums for the journey.

Our young Christian soon took the first step which leads to the perfect life; a new athlete, he stripped himself the better to fight. All the treasures which he had received from his father were distributed to the poor; and, free at last to listen only to the holy inspirations of his zeal, he traversed Italy, sowing the faith among those idolatrous peoples, instructing them by his word, edifying them by his virtues. Unfortunately details are wanting to us on his apostolic journeys.

We find him again, ten years after, at Milan. The prefect of that city, informed that he was destroying the worship of the gods, cites him to his tribunal, and after having had him cruelly beaten, drives him out of the city with ignominy. Happy and full of joy at having been judged worthy to suffer, he too, for the glory of his divine Master, Nazaire left Milan, quitted Italy and betook himself first to Cimiès, a little town situated near Nice, in Cisalpine Gaul. It was there, according to our traditions, and not at Geneva, that a lady brought him her son Celse, begging him to instruct him, to baptize him, and, if he were willing, to attach him to himself as his disciple. The docility of the son responding to the faith of the mother, Nazaire took Celse with him; he was no longer to separate from him.

The conversions having multiplied, the governor of Cimiès took fright at it; the apostle was in consequence arrested anew, then beaten with rods and subjected to cruel tortures; he would have paid with his life for his zeal and his successes if the governor’s wife had not made her husband understand all the odiousness of such a persecution against weak and innocent young men. At the prayer of the wife of this new Pilate, liberty was given back to the martyrs, but on the express condition of preaching no more at Cimiès.

Profiting by their deliverance and trusting in Him who gives to the least of the birds their food, Nazaire and Celse leave the rich countries on the shores of the Mediterranean and climb the rough paths which lead to the summit of the Alps. All these mountains were, at the epoch of which we speak, covered with immense and solitary forests; the eye met there scarcely anything but almost eternal glaciers, inaccessible rocks and deep valleys in the midst of which lived, in a few rare and poor villages, coarse and idolatrous men. This sad aspect did not discourage Nazaire and Celse; they surmount all these obstacles and penetrate as far as Embrun.

Soon their ardent word, and still more their holy life, bring forth numerous disciples to the faith; they raise in that city a chapel to the true God, and, leaving to others the care of watering this divine seed scattered over a land prepared by the sweat of their brow and at the peril of their life, they go away, insatiable for new conquests, to evangelize the Viennese country. It is after having traversed as apostles all this province that they brought to Geneva, still idolatrous, the true doctrine of Jesus Christ.

From Geneva, the two heroes of truth betook themselves to Trier: they took their road by Autun, where a respectable tradition holds that they announced the Gospel a hundred years before Saint Bénigne and Saint Andoche. Why, in fact, would Nectaire, bishop of Autun, later have put his cathedral under the title of Saint Nazaire? Why did this same Nectaire also make the journey to Milan, where the missionaries had been crowned by martyrdom? Was it not because he wished to venerate the relics of him whom a tradition then still little removed from its source designated as one of the apostles of the Celts? It is even believed that before occupying the see of Rome, Saint Linus, he who baptized Saint Nazaire, had preceded him in Gaul and had spread there the divine seed of the Gospel.[1] But let us follow Nazaire and Celse to Trier: this city was then the seat of the praetorian prefect of Belgic Gaul. The successes of their preaching, their striking miracles, the building of a chapel, raised against them the idolatrous passions of the crowd. Cornélius, governor of the city, to whom they were denounced, warns the prefect of it.

The latter sends at once a hundred armed men to seize Nazaire. His hands are bound behind his back and the troop leads him away, saying to him: “The prefect commands thee to come to him.” He was thus conducted, bound, to the prisons of that city. Celse, who followed him weeping, shared his captivity.

At the end of some days, the prefect, reproaching himself for not having delivered these Christians at once to torment, orders that they be brought to him. His satellites therefore descend into the dungeons which enclosed the two confessors, and, believing they were making themselves more agreeable to their master by exercising their cruelty on the prisoners, they strike them brutally, throw them down, trample them under their feet and then lead them, bruised and bloody, before the praetorian prefect. But, O marvel! they appear before his eyes, the face dazzling and radiant with glory.

Then, like that king of Egypt who attributed to magic the prodigies of the power of the God of heaven, the obstinate pagan hardens his soul and has the martyrs conducted into a temple, with express order to sacrifice to the gods of the empire if they did not prefer death.

Scarcely introduced, Nazaire and Celse prostrate themselves; they pray Him who strengthens the faithful Christian against all the powers of earth and hell, and suddenly the idols are overthrown and broken.

The prefect, at this news, is transported with fury; to glut his rage, Nazaire and Celse shall perish under the waters, and if, by some new sorcery, they reach the shore, an immense pyre is ready; burned alive, their impious ashes shall be cast to the wind.

A boat was there; the two confessors get into it; they move away from the shore; they push toward the confluence of the Saar and the Moselle, forming at that place a sort of very extended lake or little sea, and they cast them into the depths of the river. At the same instant a furious tempest rises, it beats the skiff and threatens to engulf it. Meanwhile the glorious Martyrs were walking calm and serene on the firmed waves.

Terrified at this new prodigy and on the point of perishing, the sailors utter cries of distress, stretch out their arms to the holy Confessors, call them to their help. Then, touched by their faith and their repentance, Nazaire and Celse command the angered element, which grows calm, then they re-enter the barque. They are led to land and are begged, trembling, to go away for ever.

After this striking miracle which had just taken from them, for some time yet, the palm of martyrdom, Nazaire and Celse took again the road to Milan. Arrived in that city, they were soon arrested by the judge Anollin, who had received the severest orders against the

Christians. He was to exterminate them to the last, and above all to take care that they did not profit, to preach the Gospel, by the word which was given them in the interrogations which they were made to undergo.

Nazaire and Celse appeared before the proconsul firm and unshaken. Neither caresses, nor threats, nor tortures, nor the sight of the last torment could for a single instant make their faith waver.

At the reading of the judgment which condemned them to have their heads cut off, the two holy Martyrs burst forth in transports of joy; they threw themselves into one another's arms. "What happiness for us," cried Nazaire, "that the Saviour has deigned to permit us to drink of His chalice and to receive today the palm of martyrdom!" — "I render thee thanks, O my God," cried Celse in his turn, "I render thee thanks that, at an age little advanced, thou deignest to receive me into thy glory." Then, addressing Nazaire, whom he always called his father, he said to him: "Come, my good father, let us give our blood for Him to whom we owe our life, our salvation and the conversion of so many souls."

They were then conducted to a public square, near the gate of Rome, and there had their heads cut off about the year 56 of the Christian era and under the empire of Nero.

The death of these generous Martyrs was a triumph for the Church, and their precious blood a seed of Christians whose number was one day to weary the fury of persecutors, disconcert the policy of the senate and end by subjugating the entire universe.

The bodies of the blessed Nazaire and Celse were carried off during the night by the Christians and buried deep in a garden situated outside the gate of Rome, in a place which was called the Three Walls. They remained there long unknown; the memory of them had at last been lost. All that was known of them was that the possessors of this garden forbade their descendants ever to sell this inheritance in which was buried, they said, a rich treasure.

## Worship and Relics

Saint Ambrose, archbishop of Milan, informed by a divine revelation of the place where these precious relics rested, betook himself there with all his clergy and had them raised from the earth in 395. The body of Saint Nazaire was found first intact and perfectly preserved; the blood which, according to the usage of the first Christians, filled a phial placed in his tomb, was red and vermilion as if it had been shed that same day. The faithful put some drops of it on handkerchiefs and made of the rest a sort of paste of which Saint Ambrose sent a part to Saint Gaudentius of Brescia. The head was separated from the trunk; one would have said it had just been washed and put in the earth. There exhaled from the tomb an odour so sweet and so penetrating that that of the sweetest perfumes could not be compared to it. The body of the Saint was placed on a decorated litter arranged for the purpose and carried into the city.

In another part of the same garden, excavations had also been made and the body of Saint Celse discovered; united to that of Saint Nazaire, they were both deposited in the basilica of the holy Apostles, which Saint Ambrose had had built. Since then, the feast of the invention of these glorious relics has been celebrated; the Roman martyrology places it on 10 May. The Church of Milan, enriched with this new treasure, distributed a

part of it to the other churches. Saint Paulinus made of these relics one of the ornaments of his Church of Nole. Ennodius of Pavia sent some by his deacons to some bishops of Africa. The city of Embrun received a similar gift before any other city of the Gauls. Artemius, immediate successor of Saint Marcellin, had himself made the request to Saint Ambrose. The precious deposit was placed in a church dedicated to Our Lady and built, as is believed, on the site where the ancient metropolitan church now stands. The veneration of the people of Embrun for Saint Nazaire and Saint Celse was from then on so profound and their confidence in the holy Martyrs such that some authors believed that two other saints of the same name had been martyred in that city.

During the persecutions which arose and the invasions which followed them, the relics of the two Martyrs were hidden, to withdraw them from profanation, and, on the same spot, a pear tree grew up, the fruits of which had, it is asserted, the singular privilege of healing persons afflicted with some malady. Later, the holy treasure was raised from the earth and a church was built, in honour of the illustrious confessors, on the very spot where the miraculous tree had grown old. Their feast is inscribed in the sacred diptychs on 28 July; it is also on this same day that the office is made of it in the diocese of Gap.

Until 1770, these two Saints were titulars of the cathedral of Autun. In the time of Father Giry, there was still preserved in that city an ancient coin which bore on one side this inscription: *Moneta sancti Nazarii*, and on the other these words: *Civitas ædua*. Taken from the *Hagiological History of the Diocese of Gap*, by Mgr Depéry.

## Saint Victor, Pope and Martyr

*197. — Roman Emperor: Septimius Severus.*

> *Regnum cælorum, o homo, aliud non quærit pretium, nisi teipsum; tantum enim valet, quantum es: da te, et habebis illud.*
>
> *The kingdom of heaven, O man, asks no other price than thyself; it is worth just what thou art: give thyself, and thou shalt have it.*
>
> *Saint Augustine.*

Saint Victor, African by birth, was elected pope after the death of Saint Eleutherius, which occurred in the year 185 of Jesus Christ, after that of the emperor Commodus, at the time when, according to Eusebius, Pertinax enjoyed the empire. He showed himself a worthy successor of the Apostles, by opposing with vigour the heresies which arose in his time.

Theodotus of Byzantium, a currier by profession, having apostatized to save his life in the last persecution, dared to say, to diminish the enormity of his fault, that Jesus Christ whom he had denied was not God, that He was only a pure man; in which he outdid the Arians, who also regarded Jesus Christ as a creature, but one that had existed before the world. Having come to Rome, he published his error there and made several disciples; but Saint Victor stopped the progress of his heresy by excommunicating him with Ebion, Artemon and another Theodotus who taught the same blasphemy. This Theodotus, called the Trapezite or the Banker, formed the sect of the Melchisedechians, who pretended that Melchisedech was greater than Jesus Christ.

About the same time there was seen a new convert attack the Church, after having uselessly tried to obtain from it the first places. He was born in Mysia, on the confines of Phrygia, and was named Montanus. Ambition and pride led him insensibly to enthusiasm; he counterfeited the illuminated. Losing sometimes the use of his senses, he made use of expressions quite extraordinary. Prisca or Priscilla and Maximilla, both women of quality, but of bad life, abandoned their husbands to follow this new prophet; they imitated his extravagances, pretending to have succeeded those among the disciples of the Apostles who had the gift of prophecy. Montanus even set himself above the Apostles, in that he had, he said, received the Holy Spirit promised by the Saviour to give to the evangelical law its last perfection. He took from the Church the power

of remitting the sins of idolatry, homicide and impurity; he taught, against the doctrine of Saint Paul, that second marriages were illicit and contrary to chastity; he would not have Christians take flight in times of persecution. An austere exterior and a pretended zeal for the purity of morals drew to him many disciples, to whom was given the name of their master. They are also known under that of Cataphrygians, because of their country, and under that of Pepuzians, because of the little town of Pepuzium, of which they had made their chief place, and which they called Jerusalem. They boasted of their martyrs, although there were few among them who had suffered for religion. But what is martyrdom without humility? There was remarked in the new sect a great fund of hypocrisy and very corrupt morals: so

Apollonius, cited by Eusebius, reproached publicly these vices to the two prophetesses of Montanus. “What!” he said, “was a prophet ever seen to dye his hair and eyebrows, to play at dice and to lend his money at usury? I am nevertheless in a position to demonstrate that they are guilty of these crimes.” The learned priest Asterius Urbanus confounded these heretics in a conference which was held at Ancyra in 188. He convicted their prophecies of falsity, in that they had not been verified by the event, in that they were proscribed by the Church, in that the true prophets had not been beside themselves in speaking like the new enthusiasts. At last Montanism was condemned as impious, and the Church cut off from its bosom those who professed it. Eusebius, who reports what has just been said, adds that Montanus and Maximilla fell into despair, and that they hanged themselves.

Tertullian, who became a Montanist toward the end of the life of Saint Victor, says that this Pope sent letters of communion to the pretended prophets. It is easy to conceive how Victor could be deceived. It was a point of fact; he was far from the places where the persons lived: the Montanists, moreover, hid their vices and their dogmas under the mask of hypocrisy; but Praxeas, who came from the East, had no sooner informed him of the true state of things than he revoked his letters and condemned the innovators. The faith of this Praxeas was nevertheless anything but orthodox. Puffed up with the honour he had had of being imprisoned for Jesus Christ, he became a heresiarch at Rome itself. He taught that there was only one person in God, and that the Father had been crucified as well as the Son, which caused his followers to be given the name of Patripassians. His errors had no sooner been known than he was cut off from the number of the faithful.

Tatian also made shipwreck in the faith, under the pontificate of Victor. He was a Platonic philosopher born in Syria; he had taught some time at Rome, after the death of Saint Justin, martyr, his master. Having returned to Syria, in the year 171, he published there his errors, which he had not dared to put forth at Rome. Marcion, Valentinus and Saturninus were his principal guides. He taught, like them, that there were two principles, the one good and the other evil, and that the Creator of the world was the evil one. He added that Adam was damned, and that marriage was no less criminal than adultery. It is for this reason that his disciples were named Encratites or Continents. They were also called Hydroparastates or Aquarians, because they employed only water in the consecration of the Eucharist, in consequence of the horror they had of wine. They condemned also the use of meat. Tatian, according to the remark of the Fathers, strayed from the principles of the faith only by a consequence of that pretended philosophical spirit which is only too common. When one imagines having lights superior to those of others, one disdains the beaten roads, one makes for oneself new systems which self-love afterwards prevents one from abandoning.

Saint Victor combated all these heresiarchs, and strove to stifle scandals from their birth; he showed also much zeal in the dispute which had arisen concerning the celebration of Easter. The Asiatics celebrated this feast with the Jews, on the fourteenth day of the moon after the spring equinox, on whatever day of the week it fell; on the contrary, the Roman Church and the other churches of the Christian world always celebrated it on the Sunday which immediately followed the fourteenth day. Pope Anicetus permitted the Asiatics to follow their usage, even at Rome; but Soter, his successor, obliged them to conform to what was practised in the places where they should find themselves. Divers Councils held in the East and in the West ordained that the discipline on this point should henceforth be uniform and that the usage of the Roman Church should be

adopted. However, Polycrates, bishop of Ephesus, took up strongly the defence of the Asiatics. He pretended that they could not be disturbed, and that they had on their side the authority of Saint Philip, who died at Hierapolis, of Saint John the Evangelist, of Saint Polycarp, bishop and martyr, of Sagaris, also bishop and martyr, who died at Laodicea, and of several other persons whose memory was in benediction among the faithful. Pope Victor, seeing that the Asiatics could not be reduced, threatened to excommunicate them. Some moderns[1] have concluded from the expressions of Eusebius that Saint Victor in fact excommunicated the Asiatics, but that he revoked the sentence at once; others,[2] on the contrary, think that he held to a simple threat, and this opinion appears the most probable. The schism which the priest Blastus had formed at Rome on the occasion of this dispute, and for which he had been degraded by Pope Eleutherius, was doubtless what determined Saint Victor to show vigour, in order to prevent the evils which might arise from the diversity in question; but, from a motive of charity and prudence, he avoided carrying severity too far, and he followed in this the counsels which Saint Irenaeus had given him in a letter which he wrote to him on this subject in his name and in the name of the faithful of the Gauls. He died on 28 July of the year 197 of Jesus Christ, after having held the see twelve years, two months and ten days. Some writers of the 5th century call him martyr, and his name is found with this title in an ancient pontifical written in 530. In two ordinations made in the month of December, he created four priests, seven deacons and twelve bishops for divers places. Some epistles are attributed to him, and particularly two, to Desiderius and to Paracodes, bishops of Vienne. He was buried at the Vatican.

*Acta Sanctorum*; Godescard. — Cf. *History of the Church*, by the abbé Darras.

## Saint Innocent I, Pope and Confessor, of the Order of Saint Basil

*417. — Emperor of the West: Honorius.*

> *Ecclesia omnium credentium mater est, quæ natos a morte regenerat ad salutem.*
>
> *The Church is the mother of all believers; she snatches her children from death to put them in the way of salvation. Saint Augustine.*

Saint Innocent I, pope, did not, in truth, end his life by a violent death; but the calamities of the Roman Church, which occurred in his time, made him live in a long and continual martyrdom. He was of Albano, near Rome, and son of Innocent. His great and eminent virtues made him rise by degrees to the pontifical chair, from which he spread his light through the whole Christian world. He made himself first the protector of Saint John Chrysostom, unjustly persecuted by the empress Eudoxia and by the faction of Theophilus, patriarch of Alexandria, for he was not content with annulling all that had been done against him in a conciliabulum held in the suburb of Chalcedon, and with ordering that he should be reinstated in his see; but he also struck with anathema those who had had a hand in his persecution, above all after he had learned that he had died in exile by the cruelty of the treatment which had been made him undergo in all his journey.[1] He worked also with vigour for the extinction of the schism of the church of Antioch, which since the death of Saint Eustathius, in 440, had always had two bishops, and he had the consolation of seeing it reunited in a single communion, under the patriarch Alexander.

But this joy was soon crossed by a great affliction. Alaric, king of the Goths, was ravaging all Italy; he laid siege to Rome, which did not yet know what it was to be besieged, since its capture by the Gauls, in the year 364 of its foundation. When, after the raising of this first siege, our Saint, having gone to Ravenna, to the emperor Honorius, to work for public peace, learned that this barbarian and Arian king had not only recommenced the siege, but was also triumphant in the city, and that he had pillaged it and filled it with murders and blood; this good Pastor doubtless had much sorrow at having been at that time separated from his dear sheep; but God did not will that the innocent should be punished with the guilty, and, as the historian Orosius says very well, He withdrew him from this city, which He had resolved to chastise, as formerly the just Lot from Sodom, that he might not be enveloped in its ruins.

After the departure of the barbarians, the holy Pope returned to Rome, and by his presence alone consoled his afflicted people. He taught the faithful to profit, for their salvation, by the calamities which had just fallen on them. The patience with which they suffered the loss of their goods and of all that they had dearest edified the pagans singularly. These did not stop at a sterile admiration of the virtues of which they were witnesses, they presented themselves in crowds to be instructed and to ask baptism. The Pope confirmed them in their holy dispositions, and formed of them a new people which occupied itself no more but with the practice of good works. Innocent did not limit himself to the care of the Roman Church; he wrote several letters which will be eternal monuments of his learning and zeal. That especially which he addressed to Saint Exuperius, bishop of Toulouse, and to Decentius, bishop of Gubbio, in answer to several questions which they had put to him, contain useful rules and very wise decisions. He says in the first that absolution must never be refused to penitents who are on their deathbed, so as not to imitate the harshness of the Novatians; and in the second that it belongs only to bishops to confer the Holy Spirit in confirmation, by anointing with oil the forehead of the baptized, because they alone have the fulness of the priesthood, and he adds that he cannot recite the words used in conferring this sacrament, for fear of unveiling the mysteries to the infidels. He uses the same reserve in speaking of the holy sacrifice, so inviolable was the secrecy with which the first Christians treated all that had reference to the sacraments. In this same letter, Innocent speaks also of Extreme Unction given to the sick, which ought to be done, he says, only to penitents who have been reconciled, because Extreme Unction is a sacrament, and the sacraments cannot be administered to those who are still in penance. This remarkable passage proves that, in the first centuries, Extreme Unction was as much regarded as a sacrament as the Eucharist. Innocent does not condemn the laymen who, by a devotion customary in that time, made use of the holy oils, but without employing the sacramental words. To the question that was put to him, whether bishops could give Extreme Unction, which was commonly administered by simple priests, he answers that they can doubtless, since priests do it. He supposes therefore as an indubitable thing that it belongs to priests and not to laymen to administer this sacrament. The Councils of Carthage and of Milevum having condemned, in 416, the errors of the Pelagians, wrote to the holy Pope to inform him of what had been done. The two synodal letters were drawn up by Saint Augustine. Innocent, in his answer to the Fathers of Milevum, says “that all the ecclesiastical matters of the Christian world ought to be brought by divine right to the Apostolic See, that is to say to Saint Peter, the author of this name and of this honour.” He recommends to the same bishops to act so. “By this,” he says, “you will follow the ancient custom which you know as well as I to have always been observed by all the world.” When the act of confirmation given by the Pope to the Councils of Carthage and of Milevum had arrived in Africa, Saint Augustine says in one of his discourses: “The decisions of the two Councils have been sent to the Apostolic See; the rescripts of this See have come, the cause is now finished: may heaven grant that the error also may be finished!”

He held the see fifteen years, two months and twenty days; he held the Ordinations four times in the month of December, where he consecrated thirty priests, twelve deacons and fifty-four bishops. He dedicated at Rome the basilica of the holy Gervasius and Protasius, which he enriched himself by his personal offerings. He died full of years and of merits, on 28 July of the year 417, and was buried in the cemetery of Priscilla. Saint Jerome speaks of him with much honour in his letter to Demetrias, saying to her: “Hold constantly the faith of Saint Innocent, who is the spiritual son and successor of Anastasius, of happy memory, in the apostolic chair, and, whatever confidence you may have in your own lights, beware of embracing any other doctrine than his.” *Acta Sanctorum.* — Cf. *History of the Church*, by the abbé Darras; Godescard.

## Saint Ours of Cahors, Founder of Monasteries, and Saint Léobat, Abbot of Sennevières, in the Diocese of Tours[2]

*508. — Pope: Symmachus. — King of France: Clovis I.*

*Quid aliud monasteria quam robustorum virorum adversus seipsos dimicantium nuncupaverim castra?*

*What can I see in a monastery if not a camp of robust warriors fighting against themselves?*

*S. Laur. Just., de Discipl. monast.*

Although the Breviary of Bourges has not adopted him, Saint Ours, native of Cahors (Lot), belongs to Berry, according to Saint Gregory of Tours, by a notable portion of his life passed in that province, and in a more direct fashion still than his illustrious compatriots Saint Genou and Saint Ambroise. Drawn by the love of solitude and contemplation, he left his country early and retired into the deserts of Berry, where he founded three monasteries, those of Toiselay (*Tausiriacum*), of Heugnes (*Onia*), and of Ponlivy or Pontigny (*Pontiniacum*).

After having placed recommendable persons at the head of these pious houses, he passed into Touraine, where he founded two other abbeys: the first at Sennevières (Indre-et-Loire), which he left with his instructions to the keeping of his faithful companion Léobat, the second in a place named Loches (Indre-et-Loire), on the river Indre, on the slope of a mountain dominated by a solid castle. Renouncing to push his pilgrimage further, he settled himself in this place, with a Congregation of monks who had ranged themselves under his rule to glorify the Lord and earn their living by the sweat of their brow, according to those beautiful words of the apostle Saint Paul: “Work with your hands, that you may be able to relieve the needy and the afflicted. He who does not work shall not eat.”

As he had received from heaven the gift of miracle, he healed the sick, delivered the possessed by the breath alone of his mouth, and did, in the name of the Lord, many other excellent works. He lived in great abstinence, and recommended to his disciples not to turn their looks or their thoughts on impure things. Yet, while imposing on the monks these wise and rigorous doctrines, he watched with care that their strength should not be spent in useless fatigues, and, to spare them the pain of turning themselves the millstone which ground their corn, he had the ingenious idea of substituting for the arms of men a wheel mill, set in motion by the current of the Indre. Having therefore planted across the river stakes united by great blocks of stone, so as to form a sluice, he gathered in a canal the whole mass of water, which made the wheel go with a prodigious rapidity and provided for the needs of the community, under the supervision of a single brother, which sensibly diminished the labour of the monks.

Meanwhile Sichlaire, favourite of Alaric, king of the Visigoths, having heard speak of this curious machine, betook himself to Loches to see it, and showed himself so amazed that he said to our Saint: “Abandon to me your mill that it may form part of my domain, and I will pay for it what you wish.”

But the Saint answered: “I cannot abandon to you what we have had so much trouble to build with our poor means, for our brethren would die of hunger.” — “If you will cede it of good will,” added Sichlaire, “I shall thank you for it. In the contrary case, I shall take it by force, or I shall build another whose sluices will prevent your wheel from going.” — “You cannot go against the will of God,” replied the Saint, “and you shall not have this mill with our consent.” Furious at this refusal, but not daring to employ violence, Sichlaire built below a similar machine which, making the water flow back, prevented the going and rendered useless the mill of the monastery. Seeing which, the brother miller came to find the abbot about midnight, as he was praying in his oratory, and said to him: “Father abbot, rise and commend us to God; for the wheel is stopped by the swelling of the river and the dams of Sichlaire.” At this news, the abbot dispatched messengers to the religious of all his monasteries, to enjoin them to put themselves at once in prayer and to suspend their other occupations until further order. Then he fell himself again on his knees, and remained two days and two nights in his oratory, ceasing not to implore the Lord.

The third day was beginning to dawn when the monk appointed to the keeping of the mill ran up all joyful, announcing that the wheel was turning with as much speed and ease as in the past. Desirous of knowing the cause of this happy change, our Saint went out with the brethren and directed himself toward the mill of Sichlaire. On arriving at the place where it had stood the day before, how great was his surprise at perceiving

neither building, nor canal, nor sluice. In vain he looked at the bottom of the water, had the river sounded, he could not discover the least trace of the mill, and afterwards no one found again either stone, or wood, or iron of it, any more than if it had never existed. It had therefore to be believed that, by a higher will, the earth had opened to swallow up and make disappear from the eyes of men a machine built in spite and to the detriment of the servants of God. Then the holy Abbot sent word to the religious of his monasteries: “Cease your prayers and resume your labours; for the Lord has avenged our injury.”

After this event, the holy man lived still a long time in the same places, surrounded with the respect and love of all, and, when his hour was come, he made a good end worthy of his life and departed for his heavenly country. His mortal remains, entrusted to the earth, called the blessing of heaven on the country. Energumens were healed and the blind enlightened by visiting his tomb. The brethren to whom he had committed the direction of his houses were confirmed in their posts by the goodwill of the bishops of Touraine and of Berry, and Léobat continued to direct the abbey of Sennevières, where he ended his days gently and found his sepulchre.

The parish of Loches is dedicated to Saint Ours and that of Sennevières to Saint Léobat.

*Acta Sanctorum*, translation by M. Veillât, in his *Pious Legends of Berry*. — Cf. Baillet, Godescard.

## Saint Camélien, Bishop of Troyes

*536. — Pope: Saint Agapetus I. — King of France: Childebert I.*

> *Puritas cordis in duobus consistit, in quærenda gloria Dei, et utilitate proximi.*
>
> *Purity of heart consists in seeking two things: the glory of God and the good of the neighbour.*
>
> *Saint Bernard.*

The ecclesiastical school directed by Saint Loup was like a nursery of bishops; it was to give to the illustrious pontiff a successor worthy of him. Camélien, whom some believe to be he who escaped the massacre of the companions of Saint Mesmin, was, of all the disciples of the prelate of Troyes, the one who reproduced most faithfully the virtues of his master. “He allied admirably in his actions gentleness and gravity, in his counsels prudence and skill. Profoundly versed in profane letters, he made above all of the holy Scriptures his dearest delights, and while tasting the beauty of the style, he penetrated himself with the mysterious sense hidden under the words. There was not an instant in his life which knew idleness or frivolous occupations: the thought of Jesus Christ regulated all his steps and gave them an inestimable value. But that in which he excelled was in the practice of mortification. He was fond of fasting, so much had he contracted the habit of the cross, and charity alone or the desire to hide the secret of his abstinences determined him to take sometimes a more abundant nourishment. Always ready to oblige others, he asked of no one a service in his own particular interest. His humility went so far as to yield precedence not only to his equals, but even to his inferiors. His conversation was so moderated by charity that never was any stranger humiliated, never a friend saddened: the most suspicious criticism could surprise no malice in it, and his lips knew not slander. Simple as the dove in his pastoral functions, he had outside the prudence of the serpent; so neither good nor wicked refused him their esteem and veneration.”

So many virtues merited for him the name of a truly apostolic man, and make us understand the preference of Saint Loup, when, pressed to designate himself his successor, he made his choice fall on Camélien. The people of Troyes accepted with joy the new pontiff, and congratulated themselves on finding again in him the faithful image of him whom they had lost.

Camélien, raised to the dignity of bishop, would omit nothing of his pious practices, and, to attend more freely to prayer, he discharged the temporal on a steward worthy of his confidence. This was Saint Aventin, his fellow-pupil formerly, and whose merit and virtue he had appreciated. Let us content ourselves with

saying here that, faithful interpreter of the generous sentiments of his master, Aventin distributed in good works the greater part of the revenues of Camélien. The widows, the orphans like the indigent, associated their names in their thanksgivings and their prayers, and many times God, rewarding by miracles the holy prodigality of the steward and of the bishop, permitted that the provisions, in spite of these largesses, should undergo no diminution.

Under the episcopate of Saint Camélien, the city of Troyes fell under the power of Clovis I, and became part of the French monarchy; but although the prince was still an idolater, the Tricasses remained none the less faithfully attached to their faith, thanks doubtless to the untiring zeal of the pontiff who neglected nothing to keep away from his spiritual family all that was capable of altering religious beliefs or even of shaking them. In 493, he received in passing the Frankish king Clovis I, when this prince went as far as Villery, to meet his wife Clotilde. Saint Camélien assisted, in 511, at the first council, convoked by Clovis, at Orléans, against Arianism; he is named there the sixth, and signed thus: *Camelianus episcopus ecclesiæ Tricassinæ*.

Since this council, nothing more is said of our holy Bishop except to indicate the year of his death. It occurred in the year 536 of Jesus Christ, on 28 July, after an episcopate of fifty-seven years.

He was put in the number of the Saints, some years after, by his successor, Saint Vincent, and his precious relics reposed in the abbey of Saint-Loup. Visited in 1180, by the religious of this convent, they were placed by the abbot Nicolas Forjot in a new shrine which was opened in 1606, and showed the body of the holy Pontiff in the best state of preservation. The furies of the Revolution have deprived us of them as of many others. There is however a considerable fragment at the parish church of Saint-Mards-en-Othe.

The feast of Saint Camélien was celebrated until these last times on 28 July of each year.

Extracted from the *Lives of the Saints of Troyes*, by M. the abbé Defer.

## Saint Samson, Bishop of the Ancient See of Dol, in Brittany

*565. — Pope: John III. — King of France: Sigebert I.*

> *Apostolos magnos præcipue effecit verus ac non simulatus gloriæ atque pecuniæ contemptus.*
>
> *What made the greatness of the Apostles is principally their true and sincere contempt of glory and of riches.*
>
> *Saint John Chrysostom.*

Ammon and Anne, two spouses equally illustrious by their birth and by their virtues, in Great Britain, had lived for several years without having a child, in spite of their prayers, their alms and their good works; God made known to them at last that their wish was about to be fulfilled. In the year 480 a son was born to them, who was named Samson at the sacred font of baptism.[1] His parents omitted nothing to bring him up in the fear of God and in the faithful observance of His commandments.

At the age of five years, having already an open mind, he showed them a quite particular inclination for the sciences, and asked to study. His father was repugnant to it at first, for fear that his son, having become learned, should make himself a cleric or religious. But God, who had inspired such good inclinations in this young man, warned Ammon, by an angel, to second him. This excellent father obeyed, and, whatever tenderness he had for so dear a son, he resolved to make the sacrifice of him. He led him to Saint Iltut, abbot of a celebrated monastery of that country, who, having recognised at once the fine qualities of the soul of this child, received him with joy.

Samson was ten years under the discipline of so good a master, and although at the end of this term he was only fifteen years old, he had made such extraordinary progress in the sciences that he equalled in doctrine the most skilful of his time. This is not to be wondered at, since the exercise of prayer was inseparable from his studies, and since he learned more at the foot of the crucifix than in all the books of philosophy. One day,

when he had fallen upon a great difficulty without being able to draw the true solution of it either from his master or from his books, he had recourse to his ordinary refuge, joining to his prayers a rigorous fast and other humbling austerities. The third night, as he was in prayer, all his chamber was filled with an extraordinary light, and, at the same time, he heard a voice which told him that “God had heard his wishes, that, not only had he obtained the elucidation he desired, but that, in the sequel, whatever grace he might ask of heaven, it would be granted him.” This promise was realised by numerous miracles.

One day, Saint Samson, still a schoolboy, went with his companions by the order of Saint Iltut, to pull up the weeds from a field of wheat; as they were occupied in this work, a snake slipped under the robe of one of these young scholars, bit him in the leg, and infected him with its venom: the death of this child was imminent. Samson, remembering the promise he had received from heaven, set himself to prayer, then, causing holy oil and blessed water to flow on the wound, he made the venom come out drop by drop and restored health to the sick boy. Another time, he drove away by his word, from a newly sown field, a cloud of crows which had settled there and were eating the grain that had been thrown in, although Saint Gildas, afterwards abbot of Saint-Ruyer, and Saint Paul, afterwards bishop of Léon, with all their efforts, had been unable to disperse them. And when he was bishop, he purged also the marshes neighbouring Dol of an infinity of wild geese which, by their cries, extremely troubled the religious of the monasteries round about, when they were at prayer, or chanted the divine offices.

When the young Samson had finished his studies, his father wished to make him return, to bring him up beside him and make him his support in the world; but the holy young man begged of him with such insistence the permission to become a religious, that Ammon, remembering the former remonstrances of the angel, dared not refuse him his request, for fear of opposing the designs of God. Samson saw therefore the accomplishment of his desire: he asked the monastic habit of the holy abbot Iltut, who gave it to him with an incredible joy, to the great satisfaction of all the religious of the monastery. He was no sooner clothed in these precious liveries of Jesus Christ than, stripping himself altogether of the old Adam, he renounced all the inclinations of the flesh, to follow no more but those of the spirit. As he redoubled his first fervour, he rendered himself almost inimitable to his brethren in the practice of the rarest virtues. His life was a continual prayer: he passed whole nights in it, and, if he stole some moments from it in the day, it was to apply himself to the study of the holy Scriptures or to some other thing for the utility of the monastery. His abstinence was surprising. Since his religious profession, he never ate flesh or fish, nor anything that had sensitive life: his fast was so extraordinary that he passed sometimes a whole week without eating anything, and, during all Lent, he ordinarily made only three or four meals, rather to keep himself from dying than to try to live. He had no other bed than the earth: moreover, most often he slept standing, leaning only against the wall. He made so much account of chastity that this rare virtue was all his life the most beautiful ornament of his mind and of his body; and, to avoid what could have given the least blow to his modesty, he fled every kind of relations with women, and if necessity or charity obliged him to speak to them, he wished there should always be someone to accompany him.

God heightened the virtues of His servant by miraculous signs. Saint Dubrice, bishop of Caerleon, having come to confer orders in the monastery, Samson received the order of the diaconate. During this ceremony there was seen on his head a white dove which made known visibly to all the world the profusions of grace that the Holy Spirit poured into his heart at the moment when the holy prelate laid hands on his forehead. This prodigy was renewed later, when he received the priesthood.

Such eminent virtues served much to increase the zeal of his brethren, who had good inclinations and who sought their perfection: they were, on the contrary, only a subject of envy and hatred for the two nephews of the abbot Iltut, whose soul was perverted and morals corrupt. They gave the Saint, on all occasions, marks of their aversion, and the excess of their passion did not permit them to be able to dissimulate it. The Saint, who easily perceived it, was extremely afflicted at it, not that he feared the harm they could do him, but he was

inconsolable at the danger in which he saw them of losing themselves. He regarded himself as guilty of their sin, because he was the object and occasion of it, and this view penetrated his heart with a continual grief, which led him to incredible penances and continual prayers, to obtain the conversion of these two unfortunate men. But the more he sanctified himself on their account, the more also their rage and jealousy grew.

That one of the two who was not a priest had the charge of apothecary of the house. This employment gave them the thought of poisoning the Saint, and they imagined they would succeed by presenting him some drink. There was the practice, in that house, of giving the religious, at certain times, the juice of some medicinal herbs, for the preservation of their health, and it was permitted to no one to abstain from it. These two unfortunate men made a poisoned potion, composed of the juice of some deadly plants, the strength of which they tried on an animal to which they gave a few drops in milk, and the animal died of it on the spot. When Samson presented himself to drink, they gave him a cup full of this pernicious drink. The Saint perceived well that the drink presented to him was very different from the others; but in order not to give his enemies subject to complain that he had suspected them lightly, and full of confidence in Him who has said in the Gospel that those who should have a lively faith would drink the most deadly drinks without their being able to harm them, he swallowed all that had been given him, without feeling any harm from it, to the great astonishment of those who had prepared this poisoned cup for him. Samson, knowing well that it was to God alone he was indebted for the preservation of his life, consecrated anew all its moments to His service to testify his gratitude, and he thanked the apothecary in a manner so gentle and so honest that he won this religious, much less wicked than the priest his brother, and touched him so much that he repented of his crime, and made every effort to bring his brother to reason, in which however he could not succeed, so much did envy possess the latter.

The following Sunday, Samson, performing the office of deacon at the holy altar, presented, according to custom, the chalice to this wicked priest. But this sacrilegious man had no sooner communicated than the demon took possession of him at that moment, and tormented him in a horrible and shameful manner; which caused so much fright to his brother that he confessed publicly their common crime. He promised to do penance for it the rest of his days, and offered even to employ them entirely in the service of the Saint, to repair the harm he had wished to do him. The whole community, extremely surprised and afflicted, and Iltut at their head, begged Samson not to impute to them the crime of the two brothers. But Samson, far from having the least movement of indignation against anyone, was the most desolate of all, and complained affectionately to God that on his account He had punished his confrere so severely, and asked pardon of Him with an incredible contrition, as if he had been guilty of all the evil that had been done. So great a goodness gave the religious the boldness to beg him to employ himself with God for the deliverance of the possessed man, and to have the charity to go and see him. He did so with all possible tenderness, and the demon, not being able to bear the charitable cares of a man who so heroically returned good for evil, left the religious, and left him safe and sound to Samson, as a trophy of the love of enemies, all the more glorious in that, penitent for his fault, this religious would not afterwards abandon the Saint. After Samson had exercised for two years his office of deacon, the same Saint Dubrice conferred on him the order of priesthood, and there was again on this occasion an apparition of a dove like the first. This holy dignity was for Samson a new motive to increase the rigours of his penitent life; and it was then that it seemed to him that the common rule of the monastery was not austere enough for him. However, in the desire to lead a more hidden life, for the brilliance of his virtues and miracles had already rendered him too celebrated in the country where he was, our holy religious asked Saint Iltut permission to retire to another monastery, governed by the abbot Pyron, situated in a rather remote island in the sea. The latter granted it to him; but he did not stay there long, for, a few days after his arrival, a courier came to him on the part of his father to announce to him that he was at the extremity and that he desired, that he even had need to see this dear son before dying.

The abbot Pyron commanded our Blessed to go and render his last duties to this good old man. He obeyed, and, receiving this order as coming from heaven, he set out at once with another religious of the same monastery who was given him as companion. As they were passing through a forest which lay on their road, the demon appeared to them under the figure of a woman who omitted nothing to shake their chastity. But seeing that all his efforts were useless, he discharged his anger on the companion of our Saint; he threw him on the ground, dragged him into the wood among the brambles and thorns and at last overwhelmed him with a thousand blows. Samson, not being able to see without horror this insult of Satan, wrought with a single action a double miracle; for, having recourse to his ordinary arms, prayer and the sign of the cross, he put the demon to flight and healed his companion of his wounds; and even, in restoring his first strength to him, he gave him back also courage to pursue their road.

They arrived therefore at last at the dwelling of Ammon. As soon as this illustrious old man perceived his son, he had so great a joy and took so much confidence in his virtue and merits that he put all his conscience in his hands and made him his confession as for dying. Samson had no less consolation, on his side, in seeing the good sentiments of his father; and by the fervent prayers he made to God in his favour, he obtained for him the remission of all his sins and the perfect cure of his malady. The old man was so grateful for this double benefit that, wishing to consecrate to the service of God this life which he held no more but by a miracle of heaven, he resolved to become a religious with five of his sons, brothers of Samson, who thought themselves happy to take the part of their father. His wife, who had consented to this pious vocation, followed the same road; she also became a religious in a monastery of maidens, where she passed holily the rest of her days. Thus all this noble family separated generously from the world to go and seek with more assurance, in solitude, the one object of their love and of their desires. They had still a daughter; she found this state too rigorous for her and refused to embrace it. Our Saint, being unable to do anything else, contented himself with recommending her to his relatives to take care of her and preserve her in modesty and innocence. He converted likewise Umbrafel, his uncle, and his aunt Asfrelle, who followed in all the example of Ammon and Anne.

Saint Samson, after having rendered thanks to God for so fine a conquest, returned to his island with a satisfaction which cannot be expressed. But his joy was soon changed into sadness by the death of the abbot Pyron, which occurred a short time after his return. This grief became still more keen when he learned that all the religious had cast their eyes on him to make him their abbot in the place of him whom they had just lost. He did all he could to defend himself from it; but, at last, he was constrained to bow his head and submit his shoulders to this yoke. He behaved, in this charge, with all the zeal, all the prudence and all the charity that can be desired in a worthy superior. He had also always an admirable love for the poor; he forbade expressly ever to repulse any. One day, he had ordered that all the honey of the hives should be given, there being nothing else in the house; the next day they were found fuller than before, so agreeable to God was this charity. However, as his heart aspired always to solitude, after having governed his abbey about eighteen months, he thought of the means of abandoning it. Divine Providence led at that time into his house some Scottish religious who were returning from Rome to their country. Samson, conversing with them, recognised great treasures of knowledge and virtue in his guests, and remarked that they were incomparably more versed in holy Scripture and in theology than all those he had known till then; so that, hoping to profit much in their school, he obtained permission of Saint Dubrice to follow them into Ireland. He stayed there some time with them as a disciple, less learned, in truth, but much holier than his masters; and the gift of miracles, which God gave him then with more fulness than before, rendered him famous throughout Hibernia. The honours he received there were the cause that his stay in that country became insupportable to his humility; and his masters being able to teach him nothing more, permitted him to return to his monastery. A ship quite ready to set sail gave him the occasion, and they waited only for him to put to sea. He was pressed, and they even threatened to depart without him, if he delayed yet a moment. “Go,” the Saint then said to them, “speak when you will; I have still business here for a whole day; but tomorrow without fail we

shall make the voyage together." They left him on land, and set sail. Scarcely had they gone when religious came to find Samson, and beg him to be pleased to deliver their abbot, who was possessed by the demon. The Saint, who had predicted that he had still this affair to finish in the island, betook himself at once to the monastery of these religious which was not far from the port. He made his prayer and delivered the energumen, who was so grateful that he gave his abbey to Samson, subjected it to him, and took the resolution never to abandon his deliverer. The Saint, after having exhorted the religious of this house to live conformably to their rules and to tend always to the greatest perfection, promised them to send them soon a superior in place of him he had just healed and whom he had permitted to follow him. Returning then to the place whence the ship had departed the day before, he found it there still, because a gust of wind had forced it to put back. He embarked there as he had predicted; as soon as he was on board, a favourable wind was had, and Samson arrived happily at his monastery at the end of three days.

It was for him a great subject of joy to learn that his father and his uncle were the two most regular and perfect religious of his community, and more particularly still Umbrafel, his uncle; which obliged him to send him as abbot to the monastery of Ireland, which had been given to him, and where he had promised to choose one of his religious to govern it. Ammon accompanied his brother there by command of his son, whatever desire he testified of following the latter everywhere. But Samson, without having any regard to natural sentiments, made his uncle and his father depart in his presence, to go where he judged they were called by God. He took next the resolution of retiring to some desert, with four of the most fervent and perfect of his religious, and passed for that effect to the mainland, whatever efforts his community could make to retain him.

Having advanced much, ascending along the banks of the Severn, he discovered at last a place such as he desired. It was a cave hidden in the depth of a very thick forest, remote from the commerce of the world, and nevertheless not far from the ruins of an old castle. He established in these ruins his four religious. There was no path leading from the castle to the cavern where he retired, and where he forbade his disciples to come and find him. Persuading himself then that he had done nothing till then, he said with the Prophet: "It is now that I am going to begin in earnest." What is said of his abstinence is almost incredible, for it is asserted that he fasted regularly whole weeks without taking any food, and that on Sunday he ate the fourth part of a loaf which was given him every month. Prayer, contemplation and the reading of holy Scripture were all his exercises; he went out of his cavern only on Sunday, to go and celebrate Mass in the oratory which his religious had built in the place of their dwelling, where he communicated them, exhorted them to perfection; after which he withdrew through the woods to his cavern, without the people who came to his Mass being able to know what had become of him. This kind of life pleased Samson infinitely; but the more he hid himself, the greater his renown became in the neighbourhood, and the more was there desire to know so extraordinary a man. Someone applied himself so well to watching and following him that he discovered at last the grotto where he retired. The bishop of the diocese, holding a synod some leagues from the place where the holy anchorites lived, heard speak of their admirable life, and above all of the surprising conduct of their superior. The account that was given of it to the assembly gave all the desire to see and know him; and the man who had discovered the place of his retreat offered himself to serve as guide to those who should be sent to him. Some ecclesiastics were deputed, who brought him to the synod, where everyone did him much honour, and where he appeared only with much confusion on his part. He was commanded to leave this wild life, in which he was good only for himself alone, to take up again the cenobitic life, in which he would be useful to many; and, to take from him every pretext of excuse, he was made abbot of a celebrated monastery which Saint Germain of Auxerre had formerly built in that country, and which at that time was without a superior. The assembly wished to hear him preach before he departed, and he did so by obedience, with much apparent simplicity, but at bottom with so much force, so much zeal, so lively a penetration and so judicious a use of the words of holy Scripture, that the least sensible were touched by it, and that all judged that so great a light ought to be drawn from the obscurity of the cloister to be placed in a more eminent place.

A short time after the holding of this synod, three bishops of the province assembled at the monastery of Samson to ordain a bishop whose see is not marked. The writer of the life of the Saint says on this subject that the usage of the churches of Cambria was that a bishop was never consecrated alone; and, as three bishops were needed, according to the canons, to ordain a new one, that these bishops of Cambria always ordained also two assistant bishops, with the one who was to fill the vacant see, so that there were always as many bishops ordained as there were to ordain them. Two subjects who were to receive the imposition of hands had already been chosen, and it was not yet known who would be the third, because the prelates had put off his nomination to the time of their assembly, after they should have conferred about it. On the eve of the day when they were to make their choice, Samson, passing according to his custom the night in prayers, had an admirable vision. It seemed to him that in the midst of an assembly of persons all clothed in white and brilliant as stars, three prelates of a resplendent majesty, vested in episcopal ornaments, pressed him to enter the church with them; that he had taken the liberty to ask them respectfully who they were, and that it had been answered him that one of them was Peter, prince of the Apostles; the other, James, brother of the Lord, and the third, John, His beloved disciple, sent from God to consecrate him bishop; which they did next with the ordinary ceremonies; after which all disappeared. Saint Dubrice, in that same night, was warned by an angel that God had chosen Samson to be the third of those who were to be consecrated. Samson was therefore elected to be the third and received the imposition of hands with the two others; but a white dove, luminous and visible to all the bystanders, appeared again on his head when he was made to sit on the throne, and, resting tranquilly on him, it did not fly away, whatever noise and whatever movement was made till the end of the ceremony. While he celebrated the holy sacrifice of the Mass, all the bystanders saw flames of fire come out of his mouth, his ears and his nostrils, and his head surrounded with rays like the sun; and it was afterwards for him a rather ordinary favour to see angels at his side, who served him at the altar. The employment of auxiliary bishop did not suffice for the immense zeal of Samson, although it was already too much for his humility: God destined him to a more considerable ministry. Some years after his consecration, one Easter night, an angel warned him that he must cross the sea and go to France, into Armorica, to govern the flock which God had destined for him. Before departing, Samson went to visit his mother, his aunt and his other relatives; thence he went first to evangelize a country beyond the Severn, where idolatry still reigned.

One day when Samson was travelling with his brethren, he found himself under the necessity of passing near a village whose inhabitants were celebrating, in the presence of the count of the country, a pagan feast in honour of an ancient idol which they had preserved, and whose worship consisted in games, dances, feasts and all kinds of dissolutions. It is on these occasions that superstition is obstinate, because sensuality supports it; and the feasts where the senses find their satisfaction are always the best kept. A young man who was driving a chariot, having let himself fall, died on the spot from his fall. Saint Samson, having had the body brought, remained two hours in prayer, and gave him back life. The resurrection of this young man so touched all the bystanders that they themselves helped to overthrow their idol, and that they renounced for ever their sensual feasts.[2] Saint Samson delivered other villagers of the neighbourhood from a very venomous serpent, in whose cave he wished to dwell, and built a monastery near it. By means of this miracle and of several others which served as confirmation to his discourses, he sanctified all these countries. His companions assisted him in the apostolic functions, each on his own side. He employed some years in this mission, where the fruit he made retained him more than he had resolved. But at last, wishing to pass into Armorica, where he had been commanded to go, he sent for his father Ammon from Hibernia, and established him abbot of the monastery which he had built near the place whence he had driven out the serpent, and where the writer of his life says he saw the sign of the cross sculptured on a very hard stone by the Saint himself. He wished thus to make the Saviour of the world triumph, and to have Him revered in the place which had served as base for an idol which the superstition of these peoples had adored there.

His last resolution being taken, he exhorted his father to consummate holily the little life that remained to him, his religious to remember the salutary advices he had given them, and the peoples to persevere in the purity of the faith he had taught them, without ever returning to their superstitions. After which, followed by a great number of holy religious who would not leave him, of Saint Magloire and Saint Malo, he embarked and came happily to land at the most eastern part of the northern coast of Armorican Brittany, at a little port then named Winiau, formed by the mouth of a river called the Petit-Gouyon. On his disembarking, he met a lord of the place, named Privatus, who appeared very afflicted; he asked him the subject of his sadness. Privatus answered him that his wife was covered with leprosy and that his daughter was possessed by the demon; that this was what caused his grief. Saint Samson followed him to his house, and having seen these poor desolate ones, he healed both miraculously. Privatus, wishing to acknowledge so extraordinary a grace, offered the holy bishop a place on his lands to establish his dwelling there. Saint Samson accepted his offer and had a monastery built which was called Dol, which means grief, on account of the pitiable state in which this family was at the arrival of the Saint. Others pretend that the country bore the name of Dol before the arrival of the Saint: this word Dol, in Cambrian Breton, signifies low and fertile land, which suits this country very well, it is said. An entire city has been built there which bears the same name and which was for some time an episcopal see, as we shall say in the sequel. A short time after, Saint Samson had also built, at Landtmeur (Lanmeur), a convent of which he made his nephew, Saint Magloire, the first abbot. Meanwhile, furious troubles arose in Brittany through the ambition and tyranny of Canao, who killed King Jonas himself, by surprise, one day when he was hunting. Saint Samson, extremely irritated at so horrible a murder, had no difficulty in yielding to the prayers of the principal men of the country, who conjured him to make a journey to Paris to ask help there from Childebert, king of France, in favour of Judual, son of the deceased and legitimate heir of his crown. The success answered their desire. The holy bishop made his journey with every kind of good fortune, about the year 554. A great number of miracles which the Saint wrought during the road and at court, among others the death of a very venomous serpent, and above all the healing of a lord possessed by the demon, gained him a very eager reception from King Childebert. This prince did not think he ought to re-establish so quickly the young Judual in the states of his father, perhaps on account of the difficulties of the enterprise, and also because Queen Ultrogothe opposed it for motives which it is not opportune to describe here. But, full of veneration for Samson whose virtues and miracles he saw, he gave him lands on the river Risle, between Brionne and Pont-Audemer, in Normandy. Our Saint built there the monastery of Pentalle,[3] which he subjected, with the permission of Childebert, to that of Dol. Once, in going to this monastery, Samson passed by a country house of Saint Germain, bishop of Paris, who was there at the time of the vintage. There he obtained a spring of living water which Saint Germain had not had the thought of asking of God. The two Saints then made, it is said, an association of their monasteries, on condition that one of the two should furnish wine to the other, which had none, and that the latter, which abounded in bees, should give to the other community honey and wax.

Our Saint obtained at last that Judual should enter into possession of his states; this prince, in gratitude, made considerable presents to the monastery of Dol; at his prayer and that of Childebert, Pope Pelagius I erected this monastery into a bishopric, all the bishops of Brittany having also testified the desire of it, and saying that they would receive willingly this holy prelate into their body. The sovereign Pontiff sent the Pallium to Saint Samson, who received it barefoot and prostrate before the altar. From that time the prelates who succeeded him in this see have long pretended, against the archbishops of Tours, to the right of metropolitan and to the use of the Pallium; but at last Innocent III made them fall from their pretensions, declaring expressly that Saint Samson had been simply bishop of Dol, although he had received the permission to make use of the ornaments of this dignity. And it is for this reason that his successors still kept the cross before the suppression of this see, that they had it carried before them in their diocese and that they surmounted their arms with it.[4]

But let us return to our illustrious Saint: seeing himself once more engaged in the office of pastor, he employed all his cares to watch over the flock of Jesus Christ which was entrusted to him. He visited himself, once a year, all his diocese, and, every year, on the first day of November, he assembled his provincial Synod, where he worked with incredible zeal at the good regulation of his bishopric, at the reformation of the morals of the clergy and of the people, at the re-establishment and ornamentation of churches and hospitals, and took pains to fill the cures with ecclesiastics who were learned and virtuous.

It was this same zeal for the house of God which made him betake himself anew to Paris, to assist at the third Council which was convoked in that famous city in 557; there he showed his profound humility: for he would not subscribe among the archbishops, as he might have claimed; but he signed only the last but one of all the bishops, in these terms: “Samson, sinner, I have signed.” This same humility made him refuse to go and lodge in an apartment which the king had had prepared for him in his palace, having preferred to withdraw to the monastery built by Saint Germain, under the name of Saint-Vincent, and of which we have spoken above. Our Saint was, at that epoch, quite broken by age: he travelled in a cart; one of the wheels having broken, in the Beauce, in a place where there was neither wheelwright, nor any workman, nor any wood, those who accompanied him were dismayed; but Samson made the sign of the cross on the wheel, which was at once restored. Childebert, informed of the miracle, wished a monastery to be built in that place: our Saint called it Rotmou and put it under the dependence of the abbey of Dol. On returning to his bishopric, he wrought continual miracles all along the road; among others he made come out of the body of a man a snake which had entered it during his sleep. Having arrived at the city of Dol, he drew two dying persons from the gates of death; he delivered eight demoniacs and obtained fruitfulness for several barren women; finally, he restored sight to a lady of quality who had lost it in punishment for having entered his monastery, in contempt of his prohibition. Such were the miracles of this great Saint, who passed, afterwards, the rest of his days, or rather all his old age, in the same fervour, the same prayers, the same fasts, the same vigils and the same austerities that he had practised in the greatest vigour of his age, and before he was raised to the prelacy.

But at last, God, wishing to reward his merits with an eternal crown, sent him a malady which made him know that the hour of his triumph was approaching. Then he had his canons and his religious called; he warned them of his death, presented Saint Magloire to them as another Elisha, whom he left them with the spirit of Elias, that they might make the election of him as his successor, and, after having made a most touching discourse and received from their hands the last Sacraments with a devotion which drew tears from the eyes of all the bystanders, he gave them his blessing then rendered his spirit to his God, on 28 July, in the year of Our Lord 565. Three holy prelates honoured his funeral pomps: Saint Brieuc, who gave his name to his city and his bishopric; Saint Gurval, bishop of Saint-Malo, and Saint Ruélin, bishop of Tréguier. The angels also wished to assist at his obsequies: for, while the ceremony of his burial was being made, an extraordinary light appeared over his tomb, and a concert was heard whose harmony was so charming that everyone judged well that it came from heaven.

The principal disciples of Samson were Saint Magloire, his deacon and his successor at Dol; Saint Budoc, successor of Saint Magloire; Saint Similien, abbot of the monastery of Taurac; Saint Ethbin and Saint Guénolé the Younger, both religious of the same monastery of Taurac; the famous Saint Méen, founder of that of Gaël; besides the father, the uncle, the mother, the aunt, the brothers, the cousins of the Saint and several great men in France, in the one and the other Brittany, who carried everywhere the name and glory of Samson.

He is represented, sometimes with a dove hovering over his head, and sometimes driving a dragon before him.

## Worship and Relics

The name of Samson is the first in the English litanies of the 7th century, among the holy confessors of the nation. His feast is marked with nine lessons in the ancient breviaries of Dol, of Léon and of Saint-Brieuc, on 28 July, and with twelve in that of the abbey of Saint-Méen. His memory is also celebrated in the breviaries of Nantes, of Quimper, of Rennes, of Tréguier, of Orléans, and in the Roman martyrologies of Usuard and others. The cathedral church, today the parish of Dol, bears the name of Saint-Samson, as well as several parish churches in the other dioceses. His body was removed from that of Dol, in the time of the Normans, and carried to Paris, under King Lothaire, by Salvator, bishop of the ancient see of Aleth, with several other holy bodies, and afterwards a part was brought back to Brittany. The Church of Dol possessed a femur, a tibia, some fragments of other bones and some vertebrae of its holy patron. These holy relics were visited and transferred into a new shrine, on 24 December 1579, by the diocesan bishop named Charles d'Epioal. At the epoch of the Revolution, they were placed beside the high altar of the cathedral, in a very beautiful and very large reliquary; but they are now destroyed. As for the rest of the body of Saint Samson, left at Paris, it was divided between the church of Saint-Barthélemy and the city of Orléans. In the latter, a church was built in honour of the holy bishop, which was occupied by the Jesuits until their destruction. They did not possess the relics of Saint Samson; they had been so well hidden, in the time of the ravages of the Protestants, in the 16th century, that they could never be found again. Perhaps they were the object of the fury of these impious men. The bones, preserved at Paris, were lately in the church of Saint-Magloire; they are found now in that of Saint-Jacques du Haut-Pas. The shrine which contained these relics having been opened in 1647, on 19 January, there was found in it the quantity of bones expressed in the official record, with this inscription: "Here is the greatest part of the body of Saint Samson."

We have corrected and completed Father Giry, for this biography, with the *Lives of the Saints of Brittany,* by Dom Lobineau.

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[5] The idea of this torment appears borrowed from Apuleius (Lucius Apuleius, Latin writer and Platonic philosopher, born at Madaura about 114 of Jesus Christ, died in 190). Here, in fact, is what is read in book viii of the work entitled: *The Metamorphosis or the Golden Ass*: "He had the slave seized, and after having stripped him of his garments and smeared him with honey, he had him fastened firmly to a fig tree, in the carious bark of which innumerable ant-hills swarmed. Scarcely had these insects, which always go and come, circulate in all directions, felt the odour of the honey with which the body is impregnated, than they attach themselves to it and torment it by small but numerous and incessant stings, so much so that at last, and after a long torment, there remains of this living body only a skeleton whose bare bones, empty of marrow, are of a remarkable whiteness." In antiquity, this torment was called Cyphonismus, from *cyphon,* a sort of collar of wood or of iron, by means of which the sufferer was fastened to expose him to the flies after having rubbed him with honey. The laws recognised this torment, for it is read in some authors: "If anyone mocks the laws and turns them into derision, let him be fastened for twenty days to the cyphon, smeared with honey and milk, to be the prey of the bees and flies; after the twenty days, let him be covered with a woman's garment and cast down." (Cæl. Rhodig. *antiq. lectio*, lib. x, cap. 5.) Those condemned to the torment of the *scaphism* were also rubbed with honey. This horrible torment consisted in enclosing a man, the head excepted, either in a barrel or in the hide of an animal. In this state, he was given food, and the unfortunate man awaited death, his body plunged in filth and gnawed by vermin. Eunapius of Sardis treats of this torment at some length in the *Lives of the Philosophers*. Virgil describes (*Aeneid,* book xm) a torment nearly similar. Caligula and Maximin employed it, witness Suetonius and Julius Capitolinus, their historians. — Baronius.

[6] The blessed Antoine was born in 1334, at San-Germano, in Piedmont, of the illustrious family of the marquises de la Chiesa, entered, in spite of his parents, among the Dominicans, was named (1422) prior of the convent of Como, founded the Dominican monasteries of Savona, of Bologna and of Florence, shared the apostolic labours of Saint Bernardine of Siena, and distinguished himself by his preachings and austerities. He died at sixty-four years, on 22 January 1459, and was buried in the church of Saint-Jean, near Como. His worship was approved by Pope Pius VII, in 1819. — We have spoken of the translation of his relics in the additions of the Bollandists of 26 July.

[7] See the remarkable work of M. Dinet: *Saint Symphorien d'Autun*, introduction.

[8] Baronius, Constant and de Marca.

[9] Thomassin, Father Alexandre and Graveson.

[10] See the *History of Saint John Chrysostom*, by M. the abbé Martin d'Agde, vol. I of the *Complete Works of Saint John Chrysostom*. (Printing-house of the Célestins, at Bar-le-Duc.)

[11] Alias: Loubace, Libesse, Leubaco.

[1] Samson was born in that part of South Wales now known under the name of Glamorganshire. This country formed part of the land of the Demëtes, and was on the frontiers of the Wenetes, who inhabited the province called Guent by the Bretons, and at present known

under the name of Monmouthshire.

[2] The reader will kindly allow us to warn him, in passing, not to revolt against an account which makes him see idols still preserved and honoured among Christians in the 6th century of the Church; seeing that, in our Brittany and in the time of our fathers, some were seen to subsist until the 17th century with a sort of worship; witness the statue of Venus, or of some other false divinity, which is seen near Auray in the gardens of the château of Quinipili, called Groueg-Bouarn, that is to say Iron Woman, on account of the colour of the stone of which this figure is made, to which the peasants rendered until the century of Louis XIV a scandalous worship.

[3] This monastery has not existed for a long time.

[4] This story of the Pallium of Saint Samson is related very diversely, very confusedly, very much contested. Not having been able to discover the truth, we have left, by way of document, this passage of Father Guy as it was.

# 29 July

# Martyrologies

## Roman Martyrology

At Tarascon, in Provence, Saint Marthe, virgin, hostess of our Saviour, and sister of Saint Mary Magdalene and of Saint Lazarus.[1] 84. — At Rome, on the Aurelian way, Saint Félix,[2] second of the name, pope and martyr, who, having been driven from his see by the Arian emperor Constantius, in hatred of the Catholic faith, lost his life gloriously at Sora, in the Terra di Lavoro. His body, carried off from there by his clerics, was buried on the same way; and afterwards it was transferred to Rome into the church of Saint Cosmas and Saint Damian, where it was found under the altar in the time of the pontificate of Gregory XIII, with the relics of the holy martyrs Mark, Marcellian and Tranquillinus: all these relics were deposited in the same place, on the last day of July. There were found still under this altar the bodies of the holy martyrs Abundius, priest, and Abundantius, deacon, who, a short time after, were solemnly transported, on the eve of their feast, into the church of the Society of Jesus. 359. — Again at Rome, on the road of Porto, the holy martyrs Simplicius, Faustinus and Beatrix, executed in the time of the emperor Diocletian. The first two, after having endured numerous torments, were condemned to have their heads cut off; as for Beatrix, their sister, she was strangled in prison for having persevered in the confession of Jesus Christ. 303. — At Rome again, the holy martyrs Lucille and Flore, virgins; Eugène, Antonin, Théodore, and eighteen of their companions, who endured a glorious martyrdom under the empire of Gallienus. 262. — At Gangra, in Paphlagonia, Saint Callinicus, martyr, who was beaten with iron rods and tormented by other torments; thrown at last into a burning furnace, he rendered his spirit to God there. — In Norway, Saint Ûlads II or Olaf, king and martyr. 1030. — At Troyes, in Champagne, Saint Loup, commonly called Saint Léo, bishop and confessor, who passed into Great Britain with Saint Germain of Auxerre, to extirpate the Pelagian heresy there, and preserved, by his prayers, the city of Troyes from the fury of Attila, who was ravaging the Gauls; at last, after having worthily fulfilled the duties of the episcopate for fifty-two years, he rested in peace. 479. — At Saint-Brieuc, Saint Guillaume,[3] bishop and confessor. 1237. — The same day, the decease of Saint Prosper, bishop of Orléans. 463. — At Todi, Saint Faustinus, confessor. 3rd century. — At Mamia, in Galicia, Saint Séraphine, virgin. About 462.

## Martyrology of France, Revised and Augmented

In the diocese of Rennes, Saint Guillaume, bishop and confessor, cited in the Roman martyrology of this day. — In the diocese of Meaux, Saint Loup, bishop and confessor, cited on this day in the same martyrology. — In the dioceses of Cologne and of Rennes, memory of the saints Félix, pope, Simplicius, Faustinus and Beatrix, martyrs, cited in the same place. — In the diocese of Cologne, memory of Saint Loup, cited from the same source. — In the ancient diocese of Léon, present diocese of Quimper and Léon, Saint Suliau, Suliac or Sulia, abbot, cited also in the martyrologies of France of 1 October and of 8 November. Son of Rromail, king of Wales, he met in his youth the holy abbot Guimarcli who drew him into his monastery of Meibot, of which he became abbot. Obliged to escape from the criminal solicitations of a woman of evil life, he left his

country and his monastery and landed in Armorican Brittany, at the mouth of the Rance. He won to Jesus Christ the infidels of that country and soon saw himself at the head of some fifteen religious eager to live under the direction of a master of so high a reputation. The little town of Saint-Suliac (Ille-et-Vilaine, arrondissement of Saint-Malo, canton of Châteauneuf-en-Bretagne) recalls still in our days the retreat of our Saint. His body was deposited in the parish church of Plouer (Côtes-du-Nord, arrondissement and canton of Dinan), and there is still shown at the bottom of this church his stone tomb on which a great cross is outlined. 6th century. — At Aix, in Provence, Saint Marcelle, virgin, servant of Saint Marthe. She became a disciple of Jesus Christ, and, having followed her mistress into the Gauls, had part in the glory of her labours, as well as in the honour of the persecution which she had to endure on the part of the Jews. 1st century. — At Roi (Ille-et-Vilaine), in the diocese of Rennes, Saint Génevé, superior of the monastery of Dol, and regionary bishop. 639. — At Troyes, the saints Flore and Lucille, virgins and martyrs, cited in the Roman martyrology of this day. Saint Peter Damian pronounced their panegyric. According to the ancient breviary of Troyes, their heads were preserved in the monastery of Sainte-Marie-aux-Oies. — At the monastery of Saint-Berlin (S. Bertinus, Sithiu, Order of Saint Benedict), in the diocese of Arras, the venerable Héribert, abbot, celebrated for his love of purity, his zeal for the house of God and his piety toward the faithful departed. End of the 11th century.

### Additions Made from the Bollandists and Other Hagiographers

At Rome, on the way of Porto, the holy martyrs Abséode, Rufe, Abde, Pontien and Nicet, cited by Saint Jerome. — In Africa, the holy martyrs Félix, Nicétas or Niticas, Postinienne or Postunieune and Philippe, cited by the same. — The saints Philippe, Saturnien and Céleste, martyrs, and the saints Anastasie, Patrunie and Pélagie, martyrs, cited by Saint Jerome without more details. — Among the Greeks, the martyrdom of two children, of their father and of their mother, who perished by fire. — Among the Greeks again, the saints Benjamin, Bérée or Vérée, Binée and Bénée, whose names alone have come down to us. — At Constantinople, Saint Constantine I, patriarch of that see and confessor. The third Council of Constantinople (680) made his eulogy; in the sixth, his orthodoxy and the sincerity of his faith, which had been put in doubt, were perfectly demonstrated. 676. — In Sweden, Saint Olaùs, king of that country, and different from his namesake of the Roman martyrology. He was converted to the faith by Saint Anschaue, archbishop of Hamburg and Bremen, during the second mission which the latter undertook in Sweden to preach the faith there. Both aided each other mutually in the difficult work of the establishment and propagation of the faith in the Scandinavian countries. This zeal for the house of God created enemies for him: Olaùs, having refused to sacrifice to the idols, in a time of famine, was himself sacrificed to them in expiation, at Birka, by the hands of the rebels. 9th century.

## Saint Marthe, Virgin, Hostess of Jesus Christ, Sister of Saint Mary Magdalene and of Saint Lazarus

*84. — Pope: Saint Clet. — Roman Emperor: Domitian.*

> *Duæ sunt vitæ, activa scilicet Marthæ et contemplativa Mariæ; sed activa prior est tempore quam contemplatio, quia ex bono opere tenditur ad contemplationem.*
>
> *Life takes two forms: Marthe is the symbol of the active life, and Marie of the contemplative life. The one leads to the other; the first is the foundation of the edifice, the second its perfection.*
>
> *Saint Gregory the Great.*

We have in this excellent virgin a disciple, a hostess and a spouse of Jesus Christ: a disciple, because she was one of those holy women who, charmed by the sweetness and holiness of His words, followed Him ordinarily to profit by His admirable instructions; a hostess, because she had often had the honour of receiving Him in her house of Bethany and of presenting Him food; finally a spouse, because, having

preserved during all her life the flower of her virginity, she is doubtless of the number of those whom He honours particularly with the quality of His spouses. Saint Marthe was daughter of Theophilus, a Syrian by nation, and rich lord of Syria, and of Eucharis, a noble Jewess, of the royal blood of Israel; she had for uterine sister Saint Mary Magdalene, and for uterine brother Saint Lazarus, whose father is not known; in the division of their goods, Marthe had in particular for herself the house of Bethany; and having no part in the libertinism of her sister, who forgot herself in the beginnings, she kept herself in innocence, in modesty and in the purity which should be so dear to persons of her sex. She would doubtless have engaged in the bonds of marriage, had she not heard from the mouth of Our Lord the excellent praises which He often gave to virginity.

The first time that she is spoken of in the Gospel is on the occasion of a journey which Our Lord made to Bethany. “A woman,” says Saint Luke, “named Marthe, and who had for sister Marie, received Him into her house.” It was necessary nevertheless that she should already have merited the good graces of this divine Master, and that she should be of the number of His disciples: otherwise He would not have withdrawn to her house. It was then that she acquitted herself toward Him of all the duties of a perfect hospitality. For, first, she received Him, as Simon of Cassia says, with a mind full of reverence and with a heart full of joy, affection and tenderness; and this is what Saint Luke designates by these words: *Excepit illum in domum suam*; “she welcomed Him and lodged Him in her house.” Secondly, she took an extraordinary care to treat Him well; and, as she knew that she was a slave who had received her Creator, according to the manner of speaking of Saint Augustine, she spared nothing to give Him all the marks of her respect and gratitude: which even obliged Jesus Christ to tell her that she was troubled about too many things and that her solicitude was too great: *Sollicita es et turbaris erga plurima*. Finally, although she did not lack servants and maidservants for the ordinary services of her house, nevertheless, when it was a question of entertaining this King of heaven, she relied on no one for it, but put her own hand to the work, according to those other words of the Gospel: *Satagebat circa frequens ministerium*. And, assuredly, if afterwards queens and empresses have been seen holding themselves extremely honoured to serve at table the servants of God, as the wife of the emperor Maximus served the glorious Saint Martin, it is not to be wondered at if Marthe, receiving the Son of God, would not have other hands than hers prepare His supper and present Him food. Only her sister Magdalene she was willing to make a partaker of her happiness, not believing that she could have a more honourable employment than that which the Angels themselves had had in the desert: *Angeli ministrabant ei*; but, as Our Lord had entered this house rather to feed these holy sisters with the bread of His word than to receive corporal nourishment there, He preferred the repose of Magdalene, who had placed herself at His feet to receive His instructions, to the bustling of Marthe, who prepared the dishes, laid the cloth and arranged all things for the meal.

However, there is no doubt that, when the time of the refection had come, Magdalene joined her sister for so honourable a function, as it is also very probable that after the meal, and all the rest of the day, Marthe enjoyed in her turn the ineffable sweetness of the conversation of this great Master: which happened even very often, since He had several times the goodness to take His lodging with so pious a hostess. Here the reader may make a serious reflection on the great growths of grace which were continually taking place in her soul, when, the Author of all goods passing whole nights in her house, she had the convenience of representing to Him her needs and of opening at the same time her heart to receive the heavenly dew which He wished to pour there; Our Lord, infinitely generous and magnificent, must have paid her liberally for the good reception she gave Him, and given her an extraordinary abundance of spiritual blessings.

After this first meeting, Saint John, in his Gospel, relates to us a second in which, on the one side, the love of Jesus Christ for Saint Marthe, and on the other, the eminent virtue of this holy woman, appeared with much lustre. It was on the occasion of the illness and death of her brother Lazarus, which happened in her house of Bethany. Marthe showed her confidence in Jesus Christ, her resignation to the wills of God, and her

invincible patience when, seeing this dear brother ill, she contented herself with sending word to Our Lord how matters stood, without begging Him either to heal him, or to come and see him, or to give herself any consolation. She showed her respect and devotion for this divine Master when, learning that He was approaching Bethany, she left at once the most notable among the Jews, who had come to console her, to go to meet Him, and went out even beyond the gates of the town, to render Him more honour. She showed the greatness of her faith when she protested that she believed: first, that, if Our Lord had been present, her brother would not have died; secondly, that he would rise at the last day, that is to say at the time of the consummation of the ages; thirdly, that Our Lord was the Son of the living God, that His Father had sent Him into the world to be its Saviour and Redeemer; and that, as He was the resurrection and the life, He had the power to raise her brother at once, although he had been dead four days. A confession which appears no less exalted nor less generous than that which the eternal Father inspired in Saint Peter, and which merited for that Apostle the keys of the kingdom of heaven. So Our Lord, "who loved Marthe," as Saint John says, *diligebat Martham*, had regard to her desires; and, having betaken himself to the sepulchre of Lazarus, He brought him out all alive from the bosom of death. The tears of Magdalene doubtless contributed to this great miracle; but the faith of Marthe contributed to it no less, all the more as it was Marthe who warned Magdalene of the coming of their Master, and who brought her to Him, so that together they might obtain more easily what one alone did not judge herself worthy to obtain.

We have no more, after that, than a single word on our Saint in the Gospel: Our Lord having one day been invited to supper, in Bethany, Marthe was the one who served at table: *Martha ministrabat*: which shows that this excellent maiden had a particular inclination for these employments, which appear humiliating in the eyes of men, and took pleasure regularly in serving others. Baronius, in the year 34 of his Annals, writes that she was of those pious women who followed Jesus Christ on Calvary, on the day of His Passion, and who, having gone on the third day to His tomb, had the happiness of seeing Him in the state of His glorious Resurrection. It appears to us also very probable that this good Master visited her sometimes at Bethany, during the forty days that He remained on earth before His Ascension. But above all we have remarked, according to Saint Luke, that He betook Himself there and led there even His disciples, on the day when He willed to ascend to heaven. From this it is easy to conclude that Marthe was present at this last action of His great journey on earth, and that she received then His last exterior and sensible blessing, with all the disciples. One may also believe very reasonably that she accompanied the Blessed Virgin in the cenacle when the Holy Spirit, on the day of Pentecost, descended there in the form of fire, and filled all those present, not only with the abundance of His graces, but also with His divine person, and that thus she had part in this inestimable favour; or, if she was not there, she assuredly received the same gift by the imposition of hands of the Apostles, who extended it afterwards on all the disciples.

It is not necessary to repeat here what happened to her in Judea, after the accomplishment of these great mysteries. One may see, in the life of Saint Magdalene, how she was persecuted by the Jews, and how, after having suffered an infinity of crosses and snares, she was at last put in a vessel without sails, without oars, without pilot, without provisions, to perish miserably in the midst of the sea. But God, who had destined her to bring the first rays of the faith into the Gauls, preserved her from this shipwreck, which appeared inevitable, and made her land happily at the port of Marseille; there, having been received by the inhabitants with kindness, she laboured some time at their conversion. Then she went to Aix, to Avignon and to the other places round about, where she employed herself with all her power in enlightening with the lights of the Gospel these idolatrous countries corrupted by the vices of paganism.

There appeared at that time, on the banks of the Rhône, in the environs of the city of Arles, a horrible dragon which, being half terrestrial animal and half fish, caused great evils on the land and in the river; for, hiding in the water, it overturned the vessels that passed, to swallow up the passengers; and, besides, it made excursions into the neighbouring forest, where it slew and devoured all the men it met. The inhabitants,

knowing the incomparable virtue of Saint Marthe, and the great gift of miracles that she had received from heaven, begged her, with tears, to deliver them from this monster, promising her that, if she granted them this grace, they would all believe in Jesus Christ and embrace the Christian religion. Marthe had too much compassion for their misery and too much zeal for the glory of her Master to refuse them a help which, in relieving them, might contribute so advantageously to the establishment of Christianity. She betook herself therefore into the neighbouring wood, where she found the dragon finishing devouring a man. She made at once the sign of the cross toward it and threw holy water on it; and, by the virtue of these two actions, she weakened it so much that it had no longer the power to harm anyone. She bound it like a lamb with her girdle, and brought it to the people, who killed it with stones and lances. It is said that the name of Tarascon, which the city in that place bears, was given to it on account of this dragon and in memory of this prodigy, because Tarasque, in Provençal, signifies a horrible thing. This etymology is hardly likely, since Strabo, who is more ancient than the preaching of the Gospel, makes mention of this city under the name of Tarascon, in the books of his Geography.

What is more certain is that Saint Marthe chose this city for the place of her retreat, and that she assembled there an illustrious company of persons of her sex, with whom she lived in a very great austerity of life and an admirable holiness. As she was teaching at Avignon the doctrine of the faith, a young man, who was beyond the Rhône, having an extreme passion to hear her and having no boat to cross, ventured to cross by swimming; but his strength failed him, and he disappears under the waters. The next day only, about the ninth hour of the day, fishermen draw him out with their nets; the lifeless body is carried into the city; the people cry out that it must be brought to the saint and ask of her this new miracle. “If you see this young man living and rendering testimony to Jesus Christ, will you believe yourselves?” said Marthe. The crowd cries out: “We shall believe that your Saviour is truly the Son of God, and God Himself, who has chosen you to be the minister of His word.” Full of joy and confidence in the promises of Jesus Christ, Saint Marthe kneels down and implores the Saviour who raised her brother Lazarus. The moved crowd prostrates itself on the ground, and all this city cries to the Lord; then Marthe rises, advances toward the corpse, and commanding death: “Young man,” she said, “in the name of Our Lord Jesus Christ, arise and render testimony of the great things which the goodness of the Redeemer has done in your favour”; and the dead man rises full of strength; his living soul shines in his eyes; his lips open to thank the Lord; he proclaims his faith in Jesus Christ, and asks baptism. “Jesus Christ is truly God,” said the crowd transported with emotion and joy, “and there is no other God.” Marthe submitted herself to a life of penance, of which history has preserved the details for us. She always walked barefoot, a usage adopted by Christians and even by pagans in the ceremonies of expiation, but which Marthe kept during all the rest of her life. She was clothed in the coarsest wool, and wore, for headdress, a white tiara of camel’s hair; the tiara formed part of the Oriental costume, and appears to be that kind of turban with which the Magi kings are customarily represented.

She made, in the neighbourhood of Tarascon, a retreat of seven years, living in the most austere penance. Her bed was a bundle of vine shoots; her body wore a girdle of horsehair, full of knots, and a hair-shirt which tore her flesh. Herbs and wild fruits were her only nourishment; nevertheless, we see that, in her hermitage, she still found the means of exercising hospitality with the gifts that were offered her. Many Christians were soon formed as a result of her preachings, and the faithful came to bring to her retreat numerous gifts which were employed in exercising hospitality toward strangers. The historians give us to understand that the renewal of the provisions of the little community was also done by miraculous means, and that she never experienced any embarrassment in feeding the faithful who ran to her solitude; she was assuredly one of the first Christians who began this life of mendicancy which Christianity has always glorified, and which numerous faithful have practised since and still practise. For the rest, she did not live alone in this solitude; her other companions shared it; all prayed together and went away into all the neighbouring places to preach Jesus Christ; so all the cities which surround Tarascon claim today Saint Marthe for their apostle. It was during this retreat, in what the historians of the time call the desert of Tarascon, that she made perish miraculously the

monster so celebrated in history under the name of the Tarasque.

The sweetness of the solitude in which Saint Marthe lived, as well as the ardour of faith, was to draw toward this retreat the new Christian women who were born every day to the rays of this apostolate; it is held as certain that Marthe gathered a great number of them around her, making them live under the rule of a community which she directed; these companions of Marthe, whose daughters, under so many different habits, fill Christendom today, thus inaugurated among Christians the cenobitic life, supported on the vows which are its base; the hospitaller religious women and men of the Holy Spirit even have the pretension of going back to the institution of Saint Marthe, and claim her as their direct founder; although this pretension is not sufficiently justified, it is fitting however to dwell on it; the establishment, by Saint Marthe, of the first example of cenobitic life, is a fact important enough to be sufficiently discussed; the Knights Hospitallers have a breviary of which an edition of 1553 is possessed; there is read in it, in a lesson of the office of Saint Marthe, the following curious passage: *Dum autem Magdalena devotioni et contemplationi se totam exponeret, Lazarus quoque plus militiæ vacaret, Martha prudens et sororis et fratris partes strenue gubernabat, et militibus ac famulis sedule ministrabat.* "While Magdalene was entirely devoted to prayer and contemplation, and Lazarus occupied himself more specially with military things, the prudent Marthe directed actively the affairs of her brother and sister, and gave all her cares to the soldiers and servants."

The knights commented on this passage by the following tradition, which their Order would have preserved: "Lazarus," they said, "had founded at Jerusalem a militia of which he was the chief, whose mission was to protect pilgrims in their visits to the holy places." They pretend that, having arrived in France, Lazarus reconstituted this Order, and that Marthe, occupying herself with it actively, provided for the needs of the soldiers.

However that may be, the hospitaller religious women and men have always borne the cross of Saint Marthe with two branches, and give even, on the origin of this cross which has always been one of the attributes of the figure of Saint Marthe, the following explanation: according to them, the vertical branch of this cross represented the brother, the two arms figured the two sisters; the whole of the cross being thus the symbol of their association; it is certain, moreover, that this saint bore it herself. The most ancient bas-reliefs represent her thus, and until the Revolution, there was always preserved, in the church of Tarascon, a copper cross with two horizontal arms, which it was affirmed had served Saint Marthe herself; all the inventories of the treasure of the church mention it, and that of 1487 in these terms: "A cross of brass, which it is asserted Saint Marthe had when she took the tarasque." This institution by Saint Marthe of the first community of virgins that Christendom has seen is recorded in the Roman breviary. The Bollandists give several affirmative testimonies of it.

Saint Maximin, who was the intermediary between Magdalene and Marthe, informed the latter, it is said, of the marvels accomplished by her sister, and filled her with joy. One day he left Aix, impelled by a divine inspiration, to visit Marthe and converse with her; he had no other design than to sanctify himself by her sight, and to bring back to the grotto of Magdalene his joy and his edification. But God led him. At the same moment, Trophimus, bishop of Arles, and Eutropius, bishop of Orange, were setting out likewise for Tarascon, animated by the simple desire of seeing the saint; these three bishops found themselves thus united, by the hand of God, in the house of Saint Marthe. Then, by a common inspiration and accomplishing the mission for which God had united them unknown to themselves, they consecrated as a church, and dedicated to the Saviour the house of the Saint. Thus we have seen the Apostles consecrate, as a church, the houses of Marthe, Marie and Lazarus, at Bethany.

It was the second time that Marthe saw her dwelling, sanctified by her presence, become the house of God. This remembrance of ancient times and the solemnity of this day filled with joy her heart and that of her companions; she retained with urgency the venerable pontiffs and served them as she had done all her life, as she had so many times served the Saviour Himself. And this memorable day did not end without a signal

miracle manifesting the presence of Jesus Christ in the midst of His friends.

The provisions of the community were never very abundant. Saint Marthe nourished herself only on the herbs of the fields, and had to offer to her guests only the gifts offered by the faithful. It appears that God had inspired others with the same thought of visiting her, for the historian tells us “that many other persons were found among the guests, and that the wine came to fail.” The Saint, knowing the presence of Jesus, orders water to be drawn in the name of Jesus Christ, and the miracle of Cana was renewed. “The bishops, having tasted it,” says naively Rabanus Maurus, “perceived that it had been changed into an excellent wine.” Then they resolved to consecrate, by a feast, the memory of this miracle and of this solemn dedication; they therefore instituted this feast of 17 December, which the church celebrated until 1187. Since then, the feast of Saint Marthe has been placed on 29 July. One may regret the abandonment of the solemnity of 17 December, commemorative of a striking miracle, and which had been celebrated during eleven centuries; but when the relics of Saint Marthe, hidden during the ravages of the Saracens, were discovered, a tradition was recalled, rather uncertain since, but living in the 12th century, which fixed at this date the death of the saint. A great stir had been cast through all the country by the discovery of this holy body of which several parts were still clothed with their flesh. Enthusiasm provoked the institution of a new feast, which the churches adopted successively; nevertheless, the church of Tarascon, faithful to all the memories of the apostolate of its patroness, has continued to celebrate the one and the other feast, and has not forgotten the first institution, made by three Apostles united under the inspiration of God Himself, to be witnesses of a miracle which recalled one of the first accomplished by Our Lord Jesus Christ. Another church, to which this memory should be still dearer, preserved this feast of 47 December until its destruction. The church of Bethany, in celebrating the feast of 17 December, had joined, in this same solemnity, the memory of the brother and the two sisters, and honoured, on the same day, Lazarus, Marthe and Marie Magdalene.

When Marthe saw the bishops separate and take again the road to their dioceses, she addressed herself to Maximin, and, full of the thought of her dear Magdalene, lost to her for so many years, begged him to be still the messenger of her memories to her sister; Marthe, in the midst of the fatigues of her apostolate, had forgotten neither Bethany nor Magdalum; and her respect for the retreat of Magdalene was always the great sacrifice of her life; so, feeling, by a divine light, the end of her career approach, she begged Maximin to obtain of Magdalene a single visit before her death; she asked to see her once more on this earth, to clasp once more in her arms this sister who had always been her daughter, and to say to her a last farewell; Marie sent to her sister the most touching testimonies of her affection and promised to satisfy her desire. The bishops of Aix, of Arles and of Orange were not the only ones to visit Saint Marthe; the name and works of this saint were known afar, and the companions of her voyage, after having left her on the shores of the Mediterranean, gathered avidly all that was told of her. Saint Georges and Saint Front therefore united at Tarascon, to see again their ancient companion, converse with her of the days gone by, and edify themselves at the spectacle of so great a holiness.

Saint Marthe received with joy her ancient companions. They remained beside her until it was possible to return to their dioceses, where a violent persecution had arisen. It was then that she made to Saint Front a solemn farewell and said to him these memorable words: “Bishop of Périgueux, know that next year I shall quit this mortal body and abandon this earth; I beg your holiness to come and bury me.” The holy bishop promised it her, as Magdalene had promised to visit her sister: “My daughter,” he said to her, “I shall assist myself at your obsequies, if God wills and I live.”

The bishops being gone, the Saint gathered around her the companions of her retreat, and, announcing to them solemnly the end of her apostolate, warned them that her death would come at the end of a year. Our Lord, to purify her the more and give her the means of meriting a more glorious crown, sent her a fever which lasted her the whole year. She prepared herself during this time to receive well her divine Spouse and to appear before His eyes adorned with all the virtues.

During this time, Magdalene, delivered from her mortal prison, had ascended to heaven. The historians relate that Jesus Christ came Himself, accompanied by angels, to carry off His beloved into the heavenly abode. It is said that at the same moment, it was given to Marthe to see, from her bed of sorrows, the choirs of angels conducting to heaven the soul of her sister, and that, full of faith and emotion at this sight, she cried out: “My dear sister, why did you not visit me before your death, as you had made me the promise? Forget not her to whom your memory is so dear.” This apparition is likewise reported by Vincent of Beauvais, Peter de Natalibus, and others. The companions of her apostolate, full of emotion at the sight of this great miracle, gathered around her not to leave her any more, and the faithful ran from all sides around the bed of the Saint, in expectation of the prodigies which were to signal the arrival in heaven of the hostess of Jesus Christ. Multitudes gathered around her dwelling; tents were pitched in the country, fires lit on all sides, and the anxious crowd looked at the sky, awaiting the legions of angels who were to descend to receive the blessed soul of their great saint.

The tradition of the miracles which accompanied the death of Saint Marthe receives a great authority from this circumstance, the assembling of a whole people around her deathbed; the prodigies which the historians of the first centuries relate to us thus had as witnesses not three or four privileged faithful, but a whole people.

The details given us are so precise that none should be omitted; the faithful camped around this funeral couch relieved one another beside the Saint; and it was not only the virgins her companions who had the charge of watching her; but several were admitted to it, for history relates that on the evening of the seventh day which followed the apparition of the soul of Magdalene, all those who were watching her, being taken by sleep, fell asleep for an instant; that evening, Marthe had had seven wax torches and three lamps lit; this number, which tradition has preserved for us, had it something symbolic? and if it was only the effect of chance, why did the memory of the peoples transmit it to us so carefully? Then a great whirlwind of wind rose over the house, as on the day of Pentecost; but it was not God who arrived, it was the demon who put out all the lights; the saint, enlightened by divine intelligence, understood it, and arming herself with the sign of the cross, fought the enemy by prayer, after which, awaking her sleeping guards, she begged them to relight the tapers and the lamps; as they had gone out to seek lights, a supernatural brightness descended from heaven, the chamber was suddenly illuminated, and Magdalene, Marie Magdalene herself, appearing beside her sister and miraculously relighting what the demon had put out, approached Marthe and said to her: “Dear sister, I visit you before your death, as you had me asked by the holy pontiff Maximin; but behold the Saviour Himself who comes to recall you from this valley of misery; come then and delay not.” We have wished to change nothing in these naive discourses consecrated by the popular memory of so many centuries; the historian who relates them adds that the Saviour Himself approached the bed of His hostess, and looking at her with a very gentle air, said to her: “Behold me, I whom you formerly assisted with your goods with so much devotion, I to whom you gave hospitality so many times with so much care, and to whom, since my passion, you have done so much good in the person of my members; it is I myself, at whose feet, prostrate formerly, you said: I believe that you are the Messiah, Son of the living God; come then, holy hostess of my pilgrimage, come from exile, come and receive the crown”; and as Marthe was striving to rise to follow the Saviour: “Wait,” He said to her, “I am going to prepare you a place; I shall come again, and I shall receive you with me that where I am, you also may be with me.” Then the Saviour disappeared; Marie, “smiling gently at her sister,” disappeared also.

The companions of Marthe found on their return the chamber miraculously illuminated, and learned what signal prodigy had just been wrought in that sacred place. Saint Marthe ordered that she be carried outside, into the open air, to satisfy the assembled people and continue her apostolate to her last breath. Time, however swift, did not advance to her liking. A leafy tree was chosen, in the midst of the tents, under which straw was spread; on this straw a hair-shirt was placed, and a cross was traced on it with ashes. At sunrise the

servant of Jesus Christ is carried there; then, at her request, an image of the Saviour crucified is raised before her. There, after a little rest, turning her looks on the multitude of the faithful, she asked them to hasten by their prayers the moment of her deliverance; and while the crowd melted in tears, Marthe raising her eyes to heaven: “O my Guest,” she said, “why, O Lord, my Saviour, why do You delay so long to come? When shall I come and appear before Your face? Since You spoke to me this morning, my soul has as it were melted within me; since that moment, in the desire to possess You, all my members have grown stiff, my nerves are as paralysed, my bones arid and dried up to the marrow and all my entrails are consumed. Lord, deprive me not of my expectation! My God, delay not! Make haste, Lord!”

While she was thus meditating, it came to her thought that she had seen the Saviour expire on the cross, at the ninth hour, and that she had brought from Jerusalem the history of the passion of Jesus Christ in the Hebrew language. She called therefore Saint Parmenas, and begged him to take this writing and read it before her, in order to soften at least the weariness of her waiting. What she had hoped happened. While she heard read in her own language the sequel of the torments of her Beloved, compassion bringing tears to her eyes, she began to weep, and, forgetting for a moment her exile, she fixed all her attention on the account of the passion, until the moment when, hearing the word of Christ who commits His spirit into the hands of His Father and dies, she herself uttered a great sigh and expired. It was the fourth of the calends of August that she thus fell asleep in the Lord, the eighth day after the death of her sister, Saint Magdalene, the sixth day of the week, at the ninth hour, the sixty-fifth year of her age.

Her companions who had come with her from the East, and had remained constantly attached to her until that day, after having embalmed her body and wrapped it with honour, deposited it in her own church. They were Saint Parmenas, Germain, Sosthenes and Epaphras, who had been the companions of Saint Trophimus, bishop of Arles; and again Marcelle, her servant, Evodia and Syntyche. These seven persons devoted three whole days to her funeral with a multitude of peoples come from all sides, and who sang night and day the praises of God around this holy body, lighting tapers in the church, lamps in the houses, and fires in the woods.

On the day of the Sabbath an honourable sepulchre was prepared for her in her own church which the pontiffs had dedicated; and on the day we call the Lord’s day, at the third hour, everyone was assembled to bury worthily this holy body, on the eve of the calends of August. And behold, at that same hour, while the pontiff Saint Front, at Périgueux, a city of Aquitaine, was about to celebrate the holy sacrifice, and while, awaiting the people, he was dozing in his chair, Jesus Christ appeared to him and said to him: “My son, come and fulfil the promise which you have made to assist at the obsequies of Marthe, my hostess.” He said it, and on the spot, both in the twinkling of an eye appeared at Tarascon in the church, holding books in their hands, Jesus Christ at the head and the bishop at the feet of this holy body; they alone placed it in the tomb, to the great astonishment of those who were present there. The funeral accomplished, they go out of the church; one of the clerics follows them and asks the Lord who He is, and whence He came. The Lord answers him nothing, but hands him the book that He held. The cleric returns to the sepulchre, shows the book to all, and reads thus on each page: “The memory of Marthe, hostess of Jesus Christ, shall be eternal, she shall have nothing to fear from evil tongues.” The book contained nothing else.

Meanwhile, at Périgueux, the deacon awakens the pontiff, telling him low that the hour of the sacrifice is passing, and that the people are weary of waiting. Be not troubled, says the prelate, addressing the faithful, and be not vexed at this delay. I have just been rapt in spirit, whether with my body, or without my body, I know not; God knows. I have been transported to Tarascon with the Lord Saviour, to bury Marthe the most holy, His deceased servant, according to the promise which I had made her during her life. Wherefore, send someone to bring back my ring and my gloves which I put into the hands of the keeper of the church, when I placed this holy body in the tomb. The people are astonished on hearing these words. Deputies are sent to Tarascon. The inhabitants of that place indicate in a letter, to those of Périgueux, the day and hour of the

burial which were unknown to the latter, noting to them that with their pontiff, whom they knew very well, another venerable person had been seen at the funeral; they report also the circumstance of the book and its contents, in order to know whether the bishop would not have knowledge of it. For the rest, they send back the ring which the keeper had received, as well as one of the gloves; but they retain the other as a testimony of so great a miracle.[1]

As we have said after Rabanus Maurus, who, in the 9th century, faithfully summarised the ancient lives of Saint Marie Magdalene and of Saint Marthe, in a work recently published by E. Faillon, Saint Marthe, having converted to the faith the people of Tarascon, settled in this place and had built there a house of prayer, that is to say an oratory, where she lived until her death, and in which she was buried. It is the present crypt of the church of Sainte-Marthe. Rabanus Maurus adds that since the day of the death of Saint Marthe, miracles without number have been wrought in her basilica: blind, deaf, dumb, lame, paralytics, cripples, lepers, demoniacs, and others who suffered from divers ills, have obtained their cure there.

Saint Marthe, in spite of the weakening of faith, does not cease to obtain still, in our days, miraculous cures in favour of those who come to invoke her at her tomb. A child of Beaucaire, aged ten years, Alphonse Bernavon, being crippled in the legs for six months, the paralysis being complete, begged with insistence to be carried to the tomb of Saint Marthe. His parents led him there on 9 May 1820; he was lowered into the lower church. First he was supported on his knees, and in this state he made his prayer to Saint Marthe, that she might obtain his cure from God; he was then raised up to kiss the feet and hands of the Saint, sculptured on the cover of her tomb: he repeated several times his ardent kisses. At once, feeling strength enough to support himself, he asks to be set upright; movement has returned to his legs; he walks from the head of the tomb to the foot; encouraged by this first success, he claims the protection of Saint Marthe and he attains gradually to a complete cure, to the point that he himself mounts, supported, by pure precaution, by the hand, by his mother and a servant, the twenty-five steps that there are from the lower church to the upper. The four witnesses of this touching scene shed tears of joy. Since then the child has made very long walks. This event is supported by authentic attestations.

The tomb of Saint Marthe exists still today; it still contains the relics of the Saint; but it is no longer visible to pilgrims, being hidden, for nearly two centuries, under a great bed of state in white marble, which represents Saint Marthe on her deathbed. However, in order not to deprive entirely the faithful and the curious of the sight of this sarcophagus, the municipal council of Tarascon, at the prayer of M. Boudon, curé of Sainte-Marthe, has had the bas-reliefs recently moulded, and has had a facsimile in cast iron made of them, which is seen in the upper church, and which reproduces the original fairly exactly. This tomb is a Christian sarcophagus in white marble, which offers on one of its faces the same subjects that are presented by a great number of tombs of the same style, found in the catacombs of Rome. Unfortunately the heads of the figures which existed on the first plane were all struck off, when, in 1653, it was wished to enclose in the bed of state, mentioned above, this ancient tomb, it could enter it only at the expense of the heads, which were shaved off, except some of the second plane, less projecting than the others. Nevertheless, all the subjects which this tomb represents are still very well distinguished: they are about the same as those seen on several ancient sarcophagi, found at Rome and engraved in the collections which have been given to the public.

In spite of the darkness which the Saracens, in ruining most of the churches and monasteries of Provence, have spread over the history of Saint Marthe, the inspection of this tomb shows that it goes back to the first centuries of Christianity, and the worship of the Saint is therefore very ancient. Moreover, Rabanus Maurus calls her church a basilica: this word designated then a church served by religious. This historian adds that the accused were forced to purge themselves by oath on the tomb of Saint Marthe, and that those who perjured themselves received at once from heaven a terrible punishment. After having said that many sick in general were healed at Tarascon, at the tomb of Saint Marthe, Rabanus Maurus adds: “Clovis, king of the Franks and of the Teutons, who, the first of the princes of that nation, made profession of the Christian faith,

struck by the multitude and greatness of these miracles, came himself to Tarascon, and, scarcely had he touched the tomb of this Saint, when he was delivered from a very grave pain in the kidneys, which had vividly tormented him. In testimony of so great a miracle, he gave to God, by an act sealed with his seal, the land situated within a radius of three leagues around the church of Sainte-Marthe, on the one and the other side of the Rhône, with the towns, the castles and the woods, a domain which this Saint still possesses to this day, by a perpetual privilege." The privileges granted by Clovis to the church of Sainte-Marthe have been recognised, recalled, renewed by several of his successors, among others by Louis XI, by Charles VIII, by Henri II, by Charles IX. In consequence, the city of Tarascon enjoyed until the last century a very independent municipal régime, with privileges respected or confirmed in modern times by Louis XIII and Louis XIV.

She is represented with an aspergillum in her hand, sometimes with a holy-water stoup. The aspergillum might well have been at first, in the hand of Saint Marthe, only a broom, emblem of the active life, in opposition to the contemplative tendencies of Magdalene. In some monuments, Marthe tramples under foot a monster of great ugliness, from which she delivered the country of the Provençals: it is perhaps there a way of painting paganism attacked in the Gauls.

Lesueur has represented her complaining to the Lord of not being helped by Marie in the preparations for the meal; all the heads have their own character rendered with sublimity. Jouvenet has also painted this subject, and, besides, Marthe at the tomb of Lazarus. This latter picture, of a magnificent arrangement and a very beautiful colour, full of grandeur and religious spirit, was made for the church of the abbey of Sainte-Marthe; it is now in the Museum of the Louvre.

## Worship and Relics

At the epoch of the invasion of the Saracens, the Provençals, to save the holy relics from the profanations of these barbarians, buried them in the earth. Thus the body of Saint Marthe was hidden in the lower church where it has always reposed and where it is still today. A tablet of white marble was joined to it, on which were engraved these words: *Hic Martha jacet*. This tablet, found with the body in 1187, was afterwards preserved in the treasure of the church of Sainte-Marthe; it disappeared in the French Revolution.

The body of Saint Marthe was found without corruption, a marvel which is still today palpable in the signal relic of Saint Marthe which the church of Roujan possesses, today in the diocese of Montpellier, and which comes from the monastery of the Canons Regular of Notre-Dame of Cassan, situated in the neighbourhood. It is the arm and left hand of this holy body. This hand, which is thin and small, and this arm are still clothed with their skin, except a part of the arm, from which someone, by an unregulated devotion, has detached, it is said, the skin which is lacking; but in this very part where the bone is thus laid bare, various cartilages are still perceived; and moreover, the fingers of the hand are still accompanied by their nails, all perfectly entire, except that of the thumb, which has been likewise taken away by an excess of devotion. This signal relic is enclosed in its ancient reliquary of gilded silver, in the form of a Gothic church, where are represented the figure of Saint Marthe, who holds the tarasque tied with her girdle, that of Saint Marie Magdalene, her sister, and that of Saint Lazarus, her brother. This relic was offered to the religious of Cassan by an archbishop of Arles. Its preservation is due to an inhabitant of Roujan, M. Ygounen, former surgeon of this commune and of the convent of Cassan. He hid this precious relic, and gave it in 1819 to the church of Roujan. It was on the occasion of the invention of the relics of Saint Marthe that the upper church of Sainte-Marthe of Tarascon was built, which was finished in 1197. It is the birth of the Gothic style. One admires above all in this church the principal nave, for the elegance of its section and the boldness of its pillars. In 1458, her sacred head was drawn from the tomb of the Saint, to put it in a shrine of gilded silver, representing the bust of Saint Marthe. The ceremony of this translation was made on 10 August, with the greatest solemnity. A sweet and altogether heavenly odour spread through the church and perfumed the air. King Louis XI replaced this silver shrine by

another of gold; this shrine passed for the richest of the kingdom. He made to Sainte-Marthe other considerable presents and founded in this church a royal Chapter, wearing the same costume as that of the Sainte-Chapelle of Paris. One may see, in M. Faillon, a multitude of testimonies which other great personages have given of their devotion to Saint Marthe.

In the 18th century, the church of Sainte-Marthe was enriched with seventeen pictures by Vien and two by Vanloo. It already possessed works by Mignard and Parrocel. These canvases were respected during the French Revolution. These pictures were spared, but the municipal council had to send to the Mint the shrine of Saint Marthe. No one, so great was the alarm, each seeking to save his life, thought of taking from the shrine the head of the Saint, nor another considerable bone, enclosed in a reliquary in the form of an arm: these signal relics were lost. The rest of the sacred remains of Saint Marthe reposed in her tomb. The enemies of religion, after having horribly mutilated the portal of the church, broken all the images of the Saints and even the tombs, resolved to break also into pieces that of Saint Marthe and to annihilate her relics. Three times they descended into the crypt; three times a secret power stopped their sacrilegious hand. A former magistrate, M. Fabre, then had the entrance of the crypt walled up and thus saved the body and the tomb of Saint Marthe. In 1805, this tomb was opened, and some bones were taken from it which were put in a new shrine; one was placed in a reliquary of gilded wood, made in the form of an arm; these are the holy relics that the faithful can venerate since that epoch.

In the environs of Bethany, pilgrims visit, on a neighbouring height, the cistern of Sainte-Marthe. It is believed that the house of this holy woman was in the same place. We have corrected and completed Father Giry, for this life, with the well-known work of M. Faillon: *Unpublished Monuments on the Apostolate of Saint Marie Magdalene*, 2 vols. in quarto, Paris, 1858, and a pamphlet entitled: *Sainte Marthe, Hostess of Jesus Christ*, etc., at Douniol, Paris, 1868.

## Saint Simplice, Saint Faustin and Saint Béatrix, Their Sister, Martyrs at Rome

*303. — Pope: Saint Marcellinus. — Roman Emperors: Diocletian and Maximian.*

> *Contemne vivens, quæ post mortem habere non potes.*
>
> *Despise during life what you will no longer be able to possess after death.*
>
> *S. Isidorus Hispal.*

The holy martyrs Simplice, Faustin, and Saint Béatrix, their sister, all three died at Rome for the profession of the Christian religion, in the cruel persecution of Diocletian and Maximian. Simplice and Faustin were taken; and, as they testified an invincible constancy, the judge, after many torments, had their heads cut off. Their bodies were thrown into the Tiber, to be carried away to the sea; but Saint Béatrix, their sister, took care to have them drawn out of the water and to give them burial. Then this holy maiden withdrew to the celebrated Saint Lucine, who passed the day and a great part of the night in prayers and in works of charity. She remained seven months in peace in so happy a company, with a great desire to shed her blood for Jesus Christ, as her brothers had shed theirs. She obtained at last the happiness she desired; for Lucrèce, vicar of the emperor, a cruel and avaricious man, wishing to have an inheritance which was hers, to join it to the great lands that belonged to him, had her arrested as a Christian. He proposed to her, of two things one, either to sacrifice to the gods of the empire, or to lose all her goods, and even to be put to death. The Saint answered that she had nothing more precious than her faith and her salvation, and that, for all the things of the world, she would not sacrifice to demons nor to gods of wood and stone. On this confession, she was led to prison; and the following night, this infamous miser had her strangled. Saint Lucine, her dear mistress, buried her body beside those of her two brothers, on the side of the high road of Porto, in the cemetery called *ad Ursum Pileatum*. This happened about the year 303. Afterwards, Pope Leo II had a church built in honour of these Martyrs at Rome, where he had their bodies brought; they are today in that of Santa Maria Maggiore.

Divine justice soon made it appear that it is a rod that has eyes, and which watches for the vengeance of the just and the punishment of the wicked, as it is said in Jeremiah. Lucrèce, after the death of Béatrix, took possession of her inheritance which he had confiscated, and, on the very day of this criminal invasion, he gave a great banquet to his friends, where he testified an extraordinary joy and even mocked often at the Saint whom he had put to death and whose pursuits he did not fear. But, while he was jesting and blaspheming against the Christian religion, an infant in swaddling clothes, who was in the arms of his mother, cried out, in the company, in a clear and intelligent voice: “Thou hast killed, Lucrèce, and stolen her goods, but thou art going to be punished.” In effect, this miserable man having remained quite speechless under this menace, the demon seized his body that very hour, and, after having made him suffer horrible torments for three hours, strangled him to carry off his soul to hell. This terrible chastisement ought to serve us as an example to make us see that there is a reward for virtue and a chastisement for crime; that God discovers at last the tricks of the wicked, and that, if He seems sometimes to leave the impious without punishment, it is only a temporal delay which serves only for their greater condemnation, if they do not profit by it to do penance.

There are relics of Saint Béatrix with the Religious of Louvencourt at Amiens, and at the convent of Davenescourt.

Saint Béatrix is represented finding again the two corpses of her brothers, and taking care of their burial; sometimes with a cord, to mark that she was strangled in prison.

Cf. *Acta Sanctorum.*

## Saint Prosper, Bishop of Orléans and Confessor

*563. — Pope: Saint Marius. — King of France: Childeric I.*

> *Nihil est quod alios magis ad pietatem et Dei cultum assidue instruat, quam eorum vitæ exemplum qui se divino ministerio dedicarunt.*
>
> *There is nothing which disposes others more to piety and to the assiduous worship of God than the life and example of those who consecrate themselves to the divine ministry. Ex Concilio Tridentino.*

Prosper, bishop of Orléans, was a relative of another Prosper, doctor of the Church, surnamed of Aquitaine, the celebrated defender of the orthodox faith against the Semi-Pelagians, and whose life we have given on 25 June. He succeeded Saint Aignan, who rendered his soul to God on 17 November 453, and engaged the illustrious Saint Sidoine Apollinaire, bishop of Clermont, the most skilful writer of that time, to compose the history of the defeat of Attila, king of the Huns, in the plains of Châlons-sur-Marne, the siege of Orléans, the assault given to the city which was taken, but which the barbarians had not time to pillage, and the preaching of Saint Aignan on the deliverance of Orléans. He wished not only to augment the celebrity of his predecessor, but also to engrave deeply in the heart of the faithful the memory of his pure morals, of his merits and of his virtues. Sidoine set himself to satisfy him on this point, but some obstacles which supervened in this undertaking led him afterwards to excuse himself by a letter which he wrote to Saint Prosper, and in which he praises him for the piety he had for the memory of so great a Saint.

He himself revived this memory, if not by the help of letters, at least by that of his examples. He was the imitator of this great man, and Sidoine did not fear to say that for Saint Aignan himself, this pontiff so great, so consummate in holiness and the equal of Saint Loup of Troyes and of Saint Germain of Auxerre, it was an honour to have met at his death a successor like Prosper. Then flourished great bishops, in whom learning served to heighten still more the lustre of virtue: Mamert of Vienne, Eucher of Lyon, Hilaire of Arles, Salvien of Marseille, Sidoine Apollinaire of Clermont, previously named, all co-operators and friends of Saint Prosper, and whose great merit can make one appreciate that of the holy bishop of Orléans.

At the same time, the virgin Saint Geneviève, the illustrious patroness of Paris, having come to Orléans to pray at the tomb of Saint Aignan, restored, by a striking miracle, health to a woman who was dying. Prosper exercised the episcopate for the space of ten years. He died about the year of Our Lord 463, on 29 July.

He must not be confounded with another Prosper who assisted and subscribed at the councils of Carpentras (527) and of Vaison (529).[1]

Several hagiographers have nevertheless maintained that it was really a question here of the Saint Prosper of Orléans who occupies us, but one can hardly maintain in good faith this opinion, unless giving to our Saint more than seventy years of episcopate, and suppressing seven or eight bishops who succeeded him. It is known, besides, that at the epoch of these two Councils where the subscription of a Prosper is found, it was Eusèbe or Léonce who held the see of Orléans.

The Roman martyrology and the most ancient of Saint Jerome make mention of Saint Prosper on 29 July; however his feast is made only the next day in the diocese of Orléans.

We see nowhere mention of his relics. The opinion of those who attribute to him the book of the *Vocation of the Gentiles* does not appear supported by solid proofs.

*Proper of Orléans*, completed with Baillet. — Cf. *Acta Sanctorum.*

## Saint Loup, Commonly Called Saint Leu, Bishop and Liberator of Troyes

*479. — Pope: Saint Simplicius. — King of the Franks: Childeric I.*

> *Venit contra civitatem rex magnus et vallavit eam: inventusque est in ea vir pauper et sapiens, et liberavit urbem per sapientiam suam.*
>
> *A great king came against the city to besiege it, and there was found in that same city a man, poor but wise, who delivered it by his wisdom.*
>
> *Ecclesiastes ix. 14, 15.*

Saint Loup was born at Toul, in the present diocese of Nancy, of noble and virtuous parents. His father, who was named Epiroque, soon left him an orphan under the guardianship of Alistique, his uncle, who was a second father to him. This lord took very great care of his education and had him trained in all the studies suitable to his condition. Soon he acquired an illustrious name among his fellow-citizens, and the eloquence which he displayed in the contests of the bar, the beauty of his countenance, the gentleness of his character, the soundness of his judgment, made him sought after by the most brilliant societies. He could not resist the entreaties of Germain, governor of Auxerre, and later bishop of the same city, who drew him to his court; but never did the grandeurs and dissipations of the world prove capable of turning his heart away from the virtue that was so dear to him. In spite of his repugnance for marriage, he yielded to the solicitations of Saint Germain, who caused him to marry, in 417, at the age of thirty years, one of his kinswomen, Piméniole, sister of Saint Hilaire, bishop of Arles, who was extremely commendable for her modesty, her reserve and the beauty of her mind. As they both had great piety, fear of God and fidelity in His service, their life in marriage was truly a school of wisdom and an example of religion and of the fairest virtues of Christianity.

Meanwhile, knowing what Our Lord says: “If thou wilt be perfect, go, sell all that thou hast, give the price to the poor, and come follow me,” they resolved by common consent to dispose of their goods, to put them into the hands of the poor, that these might carry them into heaven, and to withdraw from the world. Saint Loup went away to the monastery of Lérins, then governed by the great Saint Honorat, who was afterwards raised for his merits to the see of Arles, and he took the religious habit under his obedience (424). The year of his probation was nothing but a continual penance and prayer. He was not content with the abstinences and vigils of the community, which were nevertheless very rigorous; but, with the permission of his holy abbot, he added new austerities to them. After this trial, he was obliged to make a journey to Mâcon to finish selling

his goods and giving them to the poor. It was then that Saint Ours, bishop of Troyes, having died, Saint Loup was carried off all at once to fill this see, without its being possible for him to resist the desires of the clergy and the people who had elected him (426). He was doubtless very happy to succeed such holy bishops, who had laboured with great zeal to sanctify their flock and to establish good order in their diocese; but the morals of that time were so corrupt that he still had much to labour to correct the disorders of clerics and laymen. He applied himself to it at first with a truly apostolic prudence and vigour, employing for this the force of the word of God, public and private remonstrances, and even, when it was necessary, the severity of reprimands and punishments.

He had been working at this work of God for two years, when it was learned in France that the heresy of Pelagius and Celestius was making great progress in Great Britain. The Catholics of that kingdom, not believing they had light or skill enough to refute this heresy, begged the prelates of the Gauls to help them and to send them someone from their body to combat so pernicious a doctrine. By order of Pope Celestine I, the bishops of the Gauls assembled in Council, probably at Troyes, condemned Pelagianism there, and charged Saint Germain of Auxerre and Saint Loup of Troyes to go and combat it in Great Britain. The two Saints accepted this commission with joy, in spite of the difficulties they foresaw in it, and, knowing that help given promptly is like a double assistance, they set out as soon as possible to betake themselves to the place of the combat, with the authorisation of Pope Celestine I (429). They passed through Nanterre and gave the veil to a young shepherdess: it was Geneviève who, several years afterwards, was to come to Troyes first, then to Arcis, to make provision of wheat for Paris decimated by famine, and to reward the service rendered to her native land by numerous and striking miracles.

The journey of our two prelates across Gaul was nothing but a succession of honours paid to their dignity and to their virtues. But the crossing was not so happy. The venerable Bede, who relates the circumstances of their voyage in the first book of his *History of the English*, says that the demons did what they could to thwart it: at sea, they stirred up so horrible a tempest that the sailors no longer doubted the loss of the ship; the winds were so impetuous and the sea so stormy that there was no likelihood that a passenger vessel could sustain the violence. The oars were breaking; the masts were falling under the redoubled blows of the furious winds; a few moments more, and sailors and passengers were about to disappear beneath the foaming waves. But the prayers of the holy prelates were stronger than all the malice of hell: they blessed a few drops of oil, cast them on the waves, invoking the most holy Trinity, and immediately the fury of that element was appeased, and the skiff arrived gently in port. It was already known that they were to come, for the possessed had published it, and besides the news had been received from the Gauls. Thus, a great number of Catholics came to meet them to receive them, and led them, with much joy and applause, to the places where error was beginning to cast deeper roots. The kingdom soon felt the happiness of their presence, for, by means of their preachings, in which learning and Christian eloquence appeared in all their lustre, and which, moreover, were full of the spirit of Jesus Christ, they converted the greater part of those who had let themselves be deceived. The miracles which they wrought contributed not a little to this happy success: for, by the imposition of their hands, the sign of the cross and the application of holy relics, they cured many sick and drove the evil spirits from the bodies of several possessed.

The principal ministers of the heresy, though astonished at these marvels, to which they could oppose nothing similar, did not hold themselves, however, for conquered. They had still the temerity to ask for a public discussion against the holy prelates, flattering themselves that, if they could not establish and persuade their dogmas, they would embroil the questions and shake minds by the subtlety of their reasonings. Saint Germain and Saint Loup willingly accepted the conference, but it was to the confusion of the heretics: for they refuted so learnedly all their reasons, and showed so clearly the falsity of their opinions and the truth of the doctrine of the Church, that these impious men remained without answer and dared appear no more. The venerable Bede, who describes this combat excellently, says that it took place in the presence of an immense

crowd; that divine faith, true piety, and Jesus Christ speaking by His servants, were on one side; and on the other, pride, human presumption, and Pelagius, full of the good opinion of himself; and that the eloquence of the holy prelates having appeared there like a great torrent which, by the evident testimonies of the Old and New Testament, carried away all minds, there arose, in their favour, a cry and a general applause of the whole assembly. They served also extremely, in the island, to exterminate the remains of idolatry and to establish everywhere the Christian religion. We shall relate, in the life of Saint Germain, all these marvels.

The affairs of religion being happily terminated, the holy prelates returned to their dioceses. One cannot worthily enough represent the holiness of life of which the blessed Loup gave examples everywhere. The great occupations of his pastoral charge made him diminish nothing of the austerities which he had professed in the cloister. During twenty years he lay on no bed, but only on a plank. He wore continually the hair-shirt, and had over it, in winter and in summer, only a simple, very poor robe. Of two nights he slept but one, or rather the least part of one, and passed the rest in prayers accompanied by tears, sighs and frequent glances toward heaven. He ate ordinarily only every second day: and on Saturdays he contented himself with a little barley bread. His revenues were more the poor's than his own, and he distributed them to them with so great profusion that there remained to him almost nothing for the subsistence of his household.

Thus he passed his life in his diocese, when Attila, king of the Huns and cruel persecutor of the Christians, entered like a torrent of fire into the Gauls, to depopulate the provinces. Nothing was seen along his whole march but pillages, violences, massacres, fires, entire ruins of cities and villages. At last, after having glutted himself on every side with the blood of the Gauls and of the Franks, who were beginning to be mingled together, he came to Troyes to besiege it, to pillage it and make of it a great sepulchre. He must have been the more eager for vengeance as he had just been beaten by Aétius, in the Catalaunian plains, in the neighbourhood of Méry-sur-Seine. The inhabitants were so terrified at it that they had not the courage to put themselves on the defensive; and in fact, the city was then without arms, without garrison, without fortifications and not at all in a state to resist so powerful an enemy. Saint Loup remained alone without apprehension; he assembled his people, exhorted them to penance and to prayer, and gave them a firm hope in the help of God, if they persevered in lifting their hands to heaven in a contrite and humbled spirit. As for himself, he sought this help by extraordinary austerities and by continual tears which he shed at the foot of the altars, clothed in sackcloth and covered with ashes. At last, having had a revelation that his city would be preserved, he clothed himself in his pontifical vestments, and, having himself accompanied by his clerics, one of whom was Saint Némorius, deacon, who carried on his breast the book of the Gospels, covered with plates of gold, he marched in procession to meet this barbarian king.

When Attila perceived this holy company, he commanded his soldiers to fall upon it: and, in fact, Némorius and some other clerics were massacred; but Saint Loup, having advanced to speak to him, the barbarian was seized with so profound a respect that he stopped the carnage and presented himself to give him audience. The Saint asked him who he was, and by virtue of what he had undertaken to make such great ravages throughout the earth: "I am," answered the prince, "Attila, king of the Huns, and the scourge of God." — "If you are the scourge of God," replied the blessed bishop, "be welcome, and chastise us as much as the hand which conducts you shall permit you." These words so softened the heart of the barbarian that he protested he would do no harm to the city of Troyes. The Saint thanked him for it; but wishing to remove him as soon as possible from his diocese, he made him traverse the whole city with his army, without his or any of his soldiers being able to recognise where they were, struck with a blindness similar to that of the Syrians whom the prophet Elisha made enter into Samaria, without their seeing where they entered, as is related in the 4th book of Kings. This conqueror, who had cast terror into all the East and all the West, was so astonished at this prodigy when he perceived it that he could hardly believe it, and he avowed that a single bishop had caused him more confusion than all the armies of the empire together. As the same thing happened to him again in Italy, when Saint Leo, pope, triumphed over his courage and his fury, and prevented him from

besieging Rome, the Latins, making allusion to the names of Leo and of Lupus, Lion and Wolf, said that there was but a Lion and a Wolf capable of vanquishing so terrible an enemy. There are many of these circumstances which are not in the life of Saint Loup transcribed by Surius; but they are drawn from some other authors cited by Baronius, in the year 451 of his *Annals*, who have treated more at length of the irruption of Attila into the Gauls. What we find in this life is that this prince, admiring the virtue of our Saint, and recognising the invincible strength of his prayers, wished him to conduct him as far as the Rhine, hoping that his presence would be of great help to his army, in order to leave the Gauls safely, where two hundred thousand of his men had already been cut to pieces in the plains of Méry-sur-Seine. When he had arrived at the Rhine, he sent him back, begging him urgently not to forget him in his prayers. The Saint, on his return, found the people in a terrible agitation: as it was necessary, after such great miracles, that temptation should try him and keep him in humility, there were malevolent minds who began to take umbrage at him, and to suspect him of an understanding with Attila, on account of the extraordinary favours which his signal piety had made him deserve from that prince. This calumny spreading more and more, Saint Loup judged it fitting to withdraw for a time from Troyes, until God should have made his innocence known. He withdrew to Mount Lansuine,[1] distant fifteen leagues from that city, and lived there two years in great privations; but seeing that his diocesans remained always in their sentiments, he withdrew to Mâcon, where he had formerly possessed great goods. It was there that the divine goodness made his innocence and his holiness appear by new prodigies. On the way thither, he cured a paralytic woman who lay on the high road. Afterwards, he restored the use of speech to a girl whom the demon had made mute. He re-established in health Claude, son of a great lord named Germanien, who was at death's door. He brought to perfect convalescence a mother of a family, sister of the holy priest Rustique, who, for ten months, had been so crippled in her whole body that she moved neither feet nor hands. At last, these marvels made him so celebrated in Europe that all the princes took pleasure in granting him what he asked, to the point that even Gébavulte, king of the Allemans, sent back, without ransom, at his prayer, several prisoners of war of the country of the Brions or county of Brienne.

The return of Saint Loup to Troyes was greeted with enthusiasm by his grateful diocesans. But if the city had not had to suffer from the invasion, thanks to the powerful influence of its illustrious pontiff, it was not the same with the country districts, the theatre of the stationing and of the defeat of the army of Attila; they had experienced only too well that the grass grew no more where the barbarian's horse had passed. So Saint Loup, touched by the disasters of these unhappy populations, hastened to repair them, as far as depended on him, and to be the father of his people after having been its defender. The country of the Lassois, near Châtillon-sur-Seine (*pagus Latiscensis*, *Latisco*), had just been ruined by the Vandals led by the ferocious Chrocus; Saint Loup installed on these abandoned lands the victims of the new invasion. Soon after, he led other colonists to the village of Mâcon, near Nogent-sur-Seine, and gave them what remained to him of his patrimonial goods. It is doubtless in memory of this benefit that the neighbouring village took the name of Saint-Loup (de Buffigny).

These material preoccupations, commanded by circumstances, did not hinder the holy prelate from giving himself to works of zeal. He had had built outside the city a church in honour of Our Lady, which was later that of the abbey of Saint-Martin-ès-Aires, and he took pleasure in assembling there his clergy and his disciples, to converse with them there of the things of heaven and to give them the rules of the most tender piety and the most sublime virtue. It was from this illustrious school that there came forth Saint Aventin, Saint Camélien and Saint Mesmin. History places also among his disciples Saint Pulchrone, who was bishop of Verdun, Saint Sévère of Trier, and Saint Alpin of Châlons-sur-Marne.

The advanced age of Saint Loup, while rendering his virtue more venerable, had diminished nothing of the vivacity of his zeal nor of the beauty of his mind. The only letter which he wrote to Sidoine Apollinaire, as soon as he had learned of his election to the see of Clermont, is the peremptory proof of it. The new pontiff

had asked of our Saint rules of conduct; the reader will not be sorry to find here the admirable answer of Saint Loup. He speaks in it with the tenderness and authority of an amiable father, and with the eloquence of a skilful orator:

“I give thanks to Our Lord Jesus Christ,” he says to him, “that, to sustain and console the Church, His dear spouse, in the midst of the tribulations which afflict her on all sides, He has called you to the episcopate, that you may be a light in Israel, and that you may fulfil the humble and painful ministries of the Church with as much care and glory as you have fulfilled the most honourable dignities of the Empire. When in the world, you strove to add to the lustre of your birth honours still more brilliant. You thought that a man ought not to be content with equalling others, that he ought to surpass them. But today, here you are in a state where, though superior to all, you ought to believe yourself so to no one. It is necessary now that you labour to become the servant of all those of whom you appeared the master. . . . Employ therefore in the affairs of God that mind which shone with so much glory in the affairs of the world. Let your peoples gather from your mouth the thorns of Jesus Christ crucified, as they gathered formerly from your discourses the roses of a worldly eloquence. . . . As for me, I am near my end; but I shall not believe that I die entirely, because I shall live in you, and because I shall leave you to the Church. . . . Oh! if God would that I had the consolation of embracing you! But I do in spirit what I cannot do otherwise. I honour and embrace in the presence of Jesus Christ, no longer a prefect of the republic, but a bishop of the Church, who is my son by his age, my brother by his dignity, and my father by his merits.”

A letter of so noble a style makes us regret that we have no other works of Saint Loup. One is less astonished that a man so eloquent could have calmed the furies of the ferocious Attila.

Sidoine replied to Saint Loup in terms which show well the respect with which he was penetrated for his holiness and his merit. “Blessed be,” he says, “the Holy Spirit and the Father of Christ, almighty God, that you, who are the Father of Fathers, the Bishop of bishops, the Saint James of your age, deign to cast your eyes on all the members of the Church, of whom your charity makes you as it were the vigilant sentinel. You are capable of consoling all the infirm and you deserve that all the world should consult you.” Sidoine adds that Saint Loup “is without contradiction the first of all the bishops of the world, that he is the rule of morals and the pillar of virtues; that all his colleagues in the episcopate respect and fear his censure; that the oldest are but children in comparison with him, who had already passed nine lustres,” that is, forty-five years, “in the episcopate.” Thus the holiness and advanced age of Saint Loup caused him to be regarded, with reason, as the father and master of those who were his equals in rank. In this same letter, Sidoine, in making a humble portrait of himself, admirably extols the virtue of Saint Loup: “I am,” he says, “the most unworthy of mortals; for I see myself obliged to preach to others what I have not the courage to practise. I condemn myself by my own words; and by not doing what I command, I dictate every day my own sentence. But intercede for me with Jesus Christ, like another Moses; less aged than he, you are not less great. Pray the Lord that He extinguish in my heart the ardour of my passions, that I may no more carry to the altar a strange and profane fire.”

This commerce of letters lasted several years, and Sidoine was never exhausted in the praises of Saint Loup. He repeats once more in another letter that he is the greatest bishop of the Gauls.

Meanwhile Saint Loup felt the years accumulate on his head and warn him of the near term of his pilgrimage here below. He prepared for death by a greater fervour in his religious exercises, by a greater love of solitude and silence, and awaited in peace the Lord’s calling him to the repose which he had so well deserved by a laborious episcopate of fifty-two years. At last the hour of deliverance sounded on 29 July 478 or 479.

Saint Loup was buried in the church which he had had built outside the city, on the present site of Saint-Martin-ès-Aires.

There was preserved at the abbey of Saint-Loup a double-faced seal. On one of the faces, Saint Loup was represented in pontifical vestments, with a sword, the point to the ground; there was read on it this inscription: *Sigillum capituli S. Lupi Trecensis*. The other face showed Saint Loup, in warrior's dress and brandishing a sword, mounted on a horse launched at full gallop. The exergue bore: *S. Lupus, cornes Trecensis*. — On one of the wooden panels which line the chapel of the Fonts at the cathedral, one sees Saint Loup leaving his wife Piméniole. She, her head adorned with a rich diadem of pearls, in a rose-coloured gown, with jewels on her breast and a long chain of gold hanging from her girdle, walks between two grave personages: one of them, in a rich doublet and covered with a mantle of rich stuff brocaded with gold, holds her hand. The other, in an analogous costume, wearing a black cap ornamented with gold and a white feather, is at her right; before her, a young white dog; and behind, several women, her attendants. — His voyage to England is depicted on a panel of the chapel of the Fonts at the cathedral. Saint Loup, in pontifical vestments, the mitre on his head and the cross in his hand, puts to flight the devils of England, lodged in the rigging of a ship, whose progress they strive to stop; the Saint, placed on the shore, with a sign terrifies the demons. One of these, plunged in the water to the middle of his body, clings to the anchor of the vessel, at the prow of which is a holy abbot, in a black robe, with a golden crosier in his hand. — In one of the windows of the cathedral, one sees near the choir, Saint Loup, in a red cope, holding his crosier in one hand, and in the other a sword, with which he pierces a dragon, symbol of heresy. — Above the western door of the chapel of the Hôtel-Dieu-le-Comte, a window forming a rose represents Attila stopped by Saint Loup, at the gates of Troyes, as well as the annual procession commemorative of the event. — At Chappes, of which Saint Loup is patron, a window also represents this interview: it is in the side chapel on the south side. Attila, followed by his army, presents himself at the gate of Troyes, from the top of which he is received by Saint Loup. The king of the Huns rides a richly caparisoned bay horse; he is covered with a cuirass of gold and wears on his head an imperial crown of the same metal. His warriors are also covered with rich armour. In the corner, at the left of the picture, one sees a soldier of Attila beheading a Saint who, kneeling, receives the mortal blow.

## Worship and Relics

The confidence of the people in the holy bishop soon became more and more lively. Mothers offered him their children after baptism; they carried them to his tomb when they were sick, and often their faith received its reward. The name of Saint Loup spread rapidly on all sides, and one saw temples multiply in his honour, not only in his diocese, but in several provinces of Gaul and as far as Belgium. For a long time the disciples of Saint Loup made use of the pontiff's ornaments and exposed them to the veneration of the faithful. As for his precious body, it rested in the place of his burial until the 9th century, and it was on his tomb that in 570 the kings Gontran and Chilpéric came to swear to each other a reciprocal peace. But, about the year 890, under the episcopate of Bodon, thirty-seventh bishop of Troyes, the clerics of Saint Loup had it transported within the enclosure of the city, and placed it afterwards in the church of Notre-Dame-de-la-Cité, which they built, and which became afterwards the abbey of Saint-Loup, today the Public Library.

The tomb of the holy bishop was opened in 1147, under Everard, second abbot of Saint-Loup. His shrine was carried in procession through the villages, to gather some offerings; but it was broken in one of these journeys. Jean de Chailley, 18th abbot, had another made, in 1359, which had the same fate, and was replaced, in 1505, by a reliquary, "very well fabricated and one of the most beautiful and rich jewels of France, set up by an ingenious goldsmith of Troyes, called Jean Papillon."

This shrine was made by the care of Nicolas Forjot, 24th abbot of Saint-Loup, son of a marshal of Plancy. It was a great bust all of silver and adorned with diamonds, supported by angels, on one of which (the one that supported the right hand of the bishop) shone a carbuncle cut in a long square, about three centimetres in length, and which was valued at more than three thousand pieces of gold. The holy bishop was, as were the angels, raised on a pedestal of like workmanship, all gilded and clothed with enamels of delicate work. This reliquary was of a value of at least two hundred thousand francs.

On 21 December 1640, Queen Anne of Austria asked of the convent of Saint-Loup “as much as might be possible of the relics of the holy bishop.” The religious made it a duty to acquiesce in this pious and royal desire. They distributed at the same time particles of the bones to some parishes, such as Saint-Nicolas of Vérosse (diocese of Geneva), Saint-Eloi of Noyon, Lévi (diocese of Auxerre), etc.

The venerable bones of the liberator of the city of Troyes could find no grace in the eyes of the revolutionaries: in the night of 9 to 10 January 1794, these audacious profaners opened the shrine and threw the bones into a fire lit in the sacristy called the Preacher’s Chamber. Only a portion of the skull could be secretly removed by two employees of the Church; it is this precious fragment that is preserved in a shrine enriched with enamels, coming from the ancient reliquary.

These enamels are of an admirable fineness of execution and of a taste of design which recalls the first schools of Italy. There are parts heightened with gold, and the precious stones which adorn the copes or other costumes are simulated in relief. They are disposed around the shrine in a series of semicircular arcades; but one sees, by the traces that remain, that they had occupied frames in a trefoil arch. There are five enamels on each great face of the shrine, and only three at the ends: in all, sixteen. In the base, below each of the subjects, one reads a legend in angular Gothic; but only fourteen of them are preserved. The letters are blue on a white ground. One sees there:

How Saint Loup, being a knight, married the sister of my lord Saint Hylaire.

How S. Loup took leave of his wife to enter religion.

How S. Loup entered religion and took the habit at Lesniause.

How S. Loup, being a religious, was elected to be bishop.

How S. Loup was consecrated bishop of the city of Troyes.

How S. Loup and S. Germain gave the habit of religion to Saint Geneviève.

How the devils tried to hinder S. Loup in passing to Britain.

How S. Loup repulsed the Pelagian error in the land of England.

How S. Loup sent S. Memor before Atille with his two choir children.

How S. Loup went to bury S. Memor and his children who were slain.

How S. Loup preserved the city of Troyes from King Athille and the Vandres.

How S. Loup delivered from prison a great number of Burgundians.

How S. Loup healed a woman who was paralytic.

How S. Loup healed a girl who was infected by the venomous serpent.

At the middle arcade, at the end of the shrine, the enamel which is without inscription presents for its subject a martyrdom: a young man on his knees, his hands joined, and bowed toward a tomb or coffin, probably that of Saint Loup, is about to have his head cut off with a stroke of the sword, by a man whose rather rich costume seems to indicate that he is not an executioner. The arm of the latter is held back by Death, figured by a naked man, with the head of a skeleton and fleshless arms.

At the opposite end, between the marriage of Saint Loup and the miracle of the young girl delivered from the devil, one sees Saint Loup on a throne, holding his crosier in one hand, and in the other a sword with which he overthrows a winged monster, symbol of heresy. Around the Saint are bystanders of every age and sex; several of them are kneeling.

According to immemorial usage, every year, on the Sunday which follows 29 July, the relic of Saint Loup is carried in procession, and a station is made near the Hôtel-Dieu. It is there that, according to an ancient tradition, Saint Loup met the king of the Huns and appeased his fierce temper. There has been formed, under the patronage of Saint Loup, a pious association which enjoys particular favours. For nine weeks, from 29 July, a novena of Masses is said for the intention of the associates living and dead. On 30 July, the holy sacrifice is offered, besides, for the deceased associates, and on 10 May, for the living and the dead. It suffices, to form part of this Association, to have oneself inscribed at the chapel of the Sacred Heart, at the cathedral, during the octave of Saint Loup.

*Chronicle of Lérins*, by Vincent Barali; *Life of the Saints of the Diocese of Troyes*, by the abbé Defer; *History of the Diocese of Toul*, by the abbé Guillaume; *The Monks of the West*, by the comte de Montalembert; *Nivernais Hagiology*, by Mgr Crosnier.

## Saint Guillaume, Bishop of Saint-Brieuc and Confessor

*1234. — Pope: Gregory IX. — King of France: Saint Louis.*

> *Purity is the royal road by which one arrives at the embrace of the Bridegroom and at the heavenly fatherland.*
>
> *Saint Bonaventure.*

Saint Guillaume was of a noble family of the diocese of Saint-Brieuc. He is given as father Olivier Pinchon, of the parish of Saint-Alban, near Lamballe, and as mother Jeanne Fortin, of the parish of Plénée-Jugon, in the same diocese, or of that of Pleurtuit, diocese of Saint-Malo. The admirable chastity, and all the other virtues which shone in Saint Guillaume, make us judge sufficiently that his parents gave him an excellent education. He was well made, of a handsome countenance; he had persuasion on his lips, and a gentleness of manners that won him the affection of everyone, advantages which could be dangerous for him and apt to expose him early to the loss of his innocence, had he not been sustained by a powerful grace. He experienced its help, and responded to it faithfully, in the house of a rich man, where a girl, profiting by the shades of night, did not blush to go and provoke him to crime. The holy young man, persuaded that flight is the most efficacious remedy in this sort of war, where the domestics are in league with the enemy, withdrew without hesitating from the unhappy person, with the same quickness with which one escapes from the midst of the flames in a fire, and with which one flees before a serpent. Guillaume ever after had the same attachment to this amiable virtue.

The piety of this virtuous young man inspired him with an attraction for the ecclesiastical state, and his merit made him worthy to be admitted into the sanctuary. Josselin, bishop of Saint-Brieuc, conferred on him the ecclesiastical tonsure, the minor orders and the subdiaconate; and seeing the great good that could be hoped for from so prudent and wise a young cleric, he took him into his house, kept him near him and conferred on him the orders of the diaconate and the priesthood. The two successors of Josselin, Pierre V and Silvestre, likewise kept Guillaume near them; but it is not known what employments they gave him. He was during this time named to a canonry of the metropolitan church of Tours, without its being known whether he was able to go and reside in that city. Silvestre died in 1220, after a year and a half of episcopate, according to Father Albert le Grand, or rather after having held the see eight years, if one relies on the ancient chronicles, and Guillaume was elected to succeed Silvestre, at a time when the Church of Brittany, disquieted by Duke Pierre de Dreux, had need of pastors who had the courage to defend it. Then this holy prelate was not content with having his loins girt by chastity; he believed that it was his duty to take in his hand the burning lamp by which the works of charity are designated to us. He regarded himself as the father of the poor, and in that capacity charged with the obligation of feeding them and relieving the wretched in their necessities. He did not believe himself quit toward them by the liberalities of his almoner; he carried a purse himself so as not to expose himself to the grief of meeting some needy person to whom he could do no good. His solicitude for

them was so great that when the remains of his table were distributed to them, he stood at a window, attentive to those who gave and to those who received, and watching that this distribution was made in such a way as to content everyone. If the number of the poor was too great in proportion to what there was to distribute to them, he had it supplied on the spot. In a year of dearth, Saint Guillaume, seeing the poor languish with hunger, opened his granaries to them and had all his grain distributed to them; and as there was still not enough to provide for their needs, he borrowed the wheat of his canons to make alms of it. At last he carried his liberality toward the wretched to the point that there remained to him nothing with which to make a will. Happy in this, to have preferred to make himself a treasure which followed him into heaven, rather than to amass on earth riches which would have abandoned him at death. His exterior occupations did not exclude in him the interior attention to listen to God and to speak to Him in prayer. Guillaume, applied to hearing the divine voice in the secret of recollection, employed his own also unceasingly in celebrating His praises; for besides the canonical hours and the other ordinary prayers, no day passed that he did not recite the whole Psalter, which he knew by heart. It is thus that the heavenly fire of the lamp which he used to enlighten others penetrated to his soul. His dignity was not a reason that dispensed him from the lowest services, when it was a question of making himself useful to the poor; he was seen prostrate on the ground, blowing with his own mouth the fire intended to cook the food he destined for them. One day a man came to his house to borrow a tub to give a bath to a poor woman. He was alone then in the house with his chaplain. He did not delay on that account to occupy himself with this good work; he went himself to remove the wheat with which this tub was filled, and with the help of his chaplain, he loaded it on the shoulders of him who had come to fetch it. Going to bed one evening, he perceived that the bed of a religious who was lodged in the episcopal house had been made up on the floor, while his own was made up in a higher and more commodious place. This difference shocked his humility; he immediately sent for people, and did not lie down until the two beds had been made equal. But when he was without witnesses, he often lay on the hard ground, while his servants believed that he was reposing softly. He treated his body as a dangerous enemy, and employed the rigours of penance to diminish its strength and vigour, which are only too often prejudicial to those of the soul. His rank and his dignity engaged him, on many occasions, to give meals in which reigned a decent, though modest abundance; but he tasted little of the meats that were served to the others, and the poor profited by them more than he. His habitual drink was pure water, or if he mixed wine with it, it was in very small quantity.

His bowels were always moved when he saw the pains and miseries of others. A dropsical woman asked an alms of him one day. The Saint, seeing her in a state so worthy of compassion, was not content with relieving her poverty; he wished also to bring some relief to her illness. The bishop, at his meal, remembered her, and sent her the best dish of his table, which he had scarcely tasted. He who did the errand sought this poor woman a long time in the streets, and found her at last at home, lying down and suffering pains which brought her to extremity. At this distressing news, the holy prelate went to the church to offer to God the sacrifice of his tears and prayers, and he remained there until someone came to tell him that the woman was up and perfectly cured. He had an extreme joy at it and had this woman brought to him. When he saw her, he could hardly trust the testimony of his eyes, so far was it from likelihood that a person whom he had seen the same day in so deplorable a state should in so little time have recovered so perfect a health. But no one doubted that this so surprising change was the effect of the prayers of the Saint, and of the regard God had had for his tears and for his charity. During the war which the bad conduct of Duke Pierre de Dreux drew upon Brittany, the city of Saint-Brieuc, not being walled, was in the power now of the Bretons and now of the French, and exposed to a thousand ravages. It was on these occasions that all the zeal and all the tenderness of the pastor burst forth, unceasingly occupied in gathering his scattered sheep and consoling them. How many times did he present himself in the midst of the brigands! How many times did he expose his life to preserve the life and goods of those whose care Providence had confided to him! How many times, finally, did men of blood lay sacrilegious hands on him, raise the sword over him, overwhelm with insults and try to terrify the holy and venerable pastor, who opposed to them only an unshakable firmness and an

invincible courage! He could sometimes not refuse the urgent prayers of his clergy to use the spiritual sword, by cutting off from the bosom of the Church these bloodthirsty enemies and these cruel brigands; but it was only with his soul penetrated with grief, and his eyes bathed in tears, that he exercised in these grievous extremities the power of the keys.

The duke, during that time, was persecuting the Church and declaring himself its enemy, under pretext of cutting off usurpations, and of reducing it to the measure of modesty which he imagined suited it better than the too brilliant exterior and the pomp to which he claimed it had insensibly given itself up. The executors of his orders found in the bishop of Saint-Brieuc a wall of brass, which stopped their progress and disconcerted their undertakings. He endured their insults and their threats with a firmness which irritated them. He would willingly have given his life for this cause; but they contented themselves with driving him from the province. The Saint, persuaded that all countries are equally the fatherland of the solidly virtuous man, and that the Christian who possesses God possesses all, endured without difficulty exile, shame, the loss of goods, in the hope of having part in the beatitude promised to those who suffer persecution for justice. He withdrew into the diocese of Poitiers, where the bishop, overwhelmed by sickness and unable to act, begged him to take care of his flock. Saint Guillaume passed some years there, during which he marvellously edified these strangers by the holiness of his life; he held ordinations, dedicated churches, consecrated altars, administered the sacrament of confirmation, fulfilled all the other duties of the chief pastor, and made himself agreeable to men as he was to God. At last, when it had pleased the Lord to soften the ferocity of the prince and to restore peace to the Church of Brittany, Guillaume returned in 1230 to take care of his own flock. Not content with edifying it by his holy life, with nourishing it spiritually and bodily, with defending and protecting it, he wished also to embellish his city with a material temple, and began to build the cathedral church which is seen there today, which is not among the least beautiful of the province. Whether by an impression of the Spirit of God, who puts the word in the mouth of the Prophets, or by a movement of the courage and resolution of the holy man, it is related that, thinking seriously of the difficulty of the undertaking, of the costs of the execution, of the length of the work, he said with assurance: “I shall finish my church nevertheless, alive or dead.”

The Lord willed to reward so pure a life, so full of good works, by calling His servant to Himself to make him enjoy the eternal rewards. Saint Guillaume, after having fulfilled all the duties of a good pastor, died on 29 July, which is the day on which the Church celebrates his feast. His body was buried in his cathedral church, under a flat tomb, on the right side of the upper part of the nave. It remained hidden there, like a precious stone, until, two years after his death, Philippe, his successor, intending to continue the building of the church, was obliged, to follow its alignments, to have digging done in the place where the Saint had been buried. For this purpose he assembled the clergy and the people, and when the holy body had been uncovered, it was found as entire as the day of his decease, and there came from it an odour as agreeable as if care had been taken to employ the most precious spices to embalm it.

From that moment so great a number of miracles were wrought by the intercession of Saint Guillaume that the reputation of his holiness was carried not only through the whole province, but even into the most distant countries; and the concourse of peoples at his tomb was so great that the offerings they made there and their liberalities gave Bishop Philippe the means of finishing the work which his predecessor had begun. Thus was accomplished what the Saint had said, that he would build this church, alive or dead. Bishop Philippe took care to draw up an authentic collection of the miracles which were wrought at the tomb of the Saint, and carried it to Lyon to Pope Innocent IV. This pontiff had a lively joy in learning of such touching marvels, and sent into Brittany a cardinal whom he charged with the care of drawing up a juridical inquiry. On the very day which the cardinal had appointed for the opening of the inquiry, there was an astonishing affluence of strangers, from very distant countries, who came, besides the witnesses who had been summoned, to bear witness themselves to the experience they had had, in their own persons, of the power which the suffrages of

the holy bishop had with God. The Pope, after having seen the inquiry, heard the report of the cardinal and taken the advice of all the cardinals, as well as of all the prelates who were present, inscribed Guillaume in the Catalogue of the saints, and decreed him a public cult by his bull of 15 April 1247.

The Pope commanded all the bishops of the kingdom of France to celebrate his feast on 29 July, the day of his decease, and to order that it be celebrated by all the faithful. To this disposition he adds indulgences of a year and forty days for those who shall visit his tomb on the day of his feast and during the octave.

### Worship and Relics

The body of the Saint was solemnly raised from the ground in 1248. The ecclesiastical authority of Saint-Brieuc erected a tomb to him on the place of his burial, and established on 15 April a particular feast of his canonisation, which is still celebrated today, besides the feast of 29 July. This tomb is still seen in the cathedral church; it is between two pillars before the chapel called the chapel of the Blessed Sacrament. On the monument is the statue of the Saint in pontifical vestments, lying and holding his crosier. As for the relics of Saint Guillaume, his skull was formerly in a silver bust which was carried off at the time of the spoliation of the churches in 1793. The rest of the body was in a shrine, placed above the altar of the chapel of which we have just spoken. This precious treasure was preserved from profanation at the time of the Revolution by a constitutional priest named Pincemin, who left a certificate of it; but it appears that his testimony alone was not found weighty enough, and these relics are now kept in the sacristy, without daring to expose them to the veneration of the faithful. The skull of the Saint is at present joined to the relics of Saint-Brieuc in the beautiful reliquary of gilded bronze given in 1820 by Mgr de Quelen. There are also seen in the same church eight teeth of the holy Bishop. There was dedicated to him, after his canonisation, the ancient church of Notre-Dame de la Porte, which is at the entrance of the city of Saint-Brieuc, on the side of the road to Lamballe. This church, which was collegiate, bore until the Revolution the name of Saint-Guillaume; but it has been profaned since that deplorable epoch. One may say that the cult of this Saint has been universal throughout Brittany, since his feast is marked in all the ancient calendars on 29 July, with the exception of that of the Church of Vannes, where it is advanced to the 19th, and of that of the Church of Léon, where it is deferred to the 30th. The diocese of Rennes has long since suppressed the feast of Saint Guillaume, without the reason being known; but it is still celebrated in those of Nantes, Vannes and Quimper. At Saint-Brieuc it is of the solemn major rite with octave.

Extracted from the *Lives of the Saints of Brittany*, by Dom Lobineau.

## Saint Olaus II or Olaf, Surnamed the Saint, First Christian King of Norway and Martyr (1030)

Olaus II, or Olaus the Saint, so called to distinguish him from Olaus I, king of Norway, who lost the throne and his life in the year 1000, in a war which he waged against Suénon I, king of Denmark, was the son of Harald Grenska, prince of Westfold, in Norway. This country had long groaned under the tyranny of the Swedes, governed then by King Olaus-Scot-Konung. Our Saint, being then only a simple captain of troops, undertook to deliver his fatherland from this odious yoke, which it bore only with the greatest repugnance: the great men of the country prized this project so highly that they proclaimed Olaus king of Norway.

Our Saint then represented to King Olaus-Scot-Konung that it would henceforth be impossible for him to retain under his jurisdiction the populations of Norway, and engaged him, for the good of peace, to renounce his pretensions for ever. He knew so well how to make him appreciate the reciprocal advantages which would be the necessary consequence of the abdication of his rights over Norway, that the king of Sweden relished the advice of his competitor and even granted him, to cement the peace which was rising so fair on that day for the two kingdoms, the hand of his daughter.

During the sixteen years that he governed Norway, our Saint applied himself to making Christianity flourish there. Jealous of his States, the king of England, Canute the Great, declared war on him. Olaus, betrayed, perished in a battle which was fought on 29 July 1030, at Stichstadt, in the province of Drontheim, where he was buried.

The body of Saint Olaus was found without any mark of corruption, in 1098, in the cathedral of Drontheim. Formerly, in the abbey of Saint-Victor of Paris, a shirt of our Saint was shown.

Bosch, *Acta Sanctorum*, and Baillet. — Cf. *Continuators of Godescard.*

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[1] Some martyrologies indicate on the same day the feasts of Saint Marthe, of Saint Mary Magdalene and of Saint Lazarus. We have given the life of Saint Mary Magdalene on 22 July, and we shall give that of Saint Lazarus on 17 December.

[2] The question was debated, under the pontificate of Gregory XIII (1572–1585), between the cardinals Baronius and Santorio, whether the name of Felix II should be retained in the Roman martyrology, as Pontiff and as martyr. Santorio wished it to be preserved under these two titles, when on 22 July 1582, the eve of his feast, his body was found again in the church of the Saints Cosmas and Damian, with an inscription which declared that Félix had been Pontiff and martyr. Baronius says on this subject (*Annal. eccles.*, ann. 357, no. 42): "It was for me a true joy to yield the palm to the cardinal Santorio who had constituted himself in our commission the defender of Félix. It seemed to me that I triumphed over my eminent adversary and friend, since the truth was victorious between us two."

However, some modern critics efface Felix II from the list of Pontiffs, believing that this inscription is not authentic. Some writers maintain that the body is preserved at Padua, in the church of the Cordeliers, and that the coffin bears an inscription with the title of Saint, placed in 1503. The legitimacy of Felix II is still argued today. Divers authors believe him a legitimate Pope. Bellarmine composed in his favour an apologetic dissertation. There are some who regard him neither as Saint, nor as Pope, nor as Martyr, but who will have it that he was antipope and even blameworthy in his doctrines. Of this number are Noël Alexandre, Sangallo, Fleury. — While waiting for the light to come, let us respect the letter of the Roman martyrology, accept as a precious benefit the discovery of which Baronius was the contemporary, and salute the name of Saint Felix II as that of a legitimate Pope and a Martyr of the faith. — Cf. *History of the Sovereign Roman Pontiffs*, by Artaud de Montor, vol. i, and *General History of the Church*, by the abbé Darras, vol. vii, p. 518.

[3] He is secondary patron of the diocese of Saint-Brieuc, and his feast is celebrated in that church only on the Sunday after 29 July.

[4] The glove retained by the inhabitants of Tarascon was preserved in their church as a precious relic until 1733.

[5] See, for the history of these assemblies, our *General and Particular Councils*, vol. i, pp. 401 and 408.

[6] His history says *Latisco*. But what is this *Latisco*? Some will have it that it is Lan-sur-Laigne, by corruption Lansuine or Lansuërae, others Lantage, between Chaource and Bar-sur-Seine. The abbé Lebœuf claims that it is Lincon, a league and a half from Troyes; finally Trasse maintains that it is Châtillon-sur-Seine.

# 30 July

# Martyrologies

## Roman Martyrology

At Rome, the feast of the holy martyrs Abdon and Sennen, Persians, who, under the emperor Decius, were brought to Rome, loaded with chains, bruised with whips weighted with lead, and beheaded for the faith of Jesus Christ. 254. — At Tuburbo, in Africa, the holy virgins and martyrs Maxime, Donatille and Seconde; the first two, during the persecution of Valerian and Gallienus, were first given gall and vinegar to drink, then cruelly torn with blows of the whip, tortured on the rack, roasted on a gridiron, and rubbed with quicklime. At last, having been exposed to the wild beasts with Seconde, a girl of twelve years, and having received no harm from them, all three passed by the edge of the sword. 304. — At Assisi, in Umbria, Saint Rufin, martyr. — At Caesarea in Cappadocia, Saint Julitte or Julie, martyr, who, claiming at law her goods which a powerful man had usurped, was by him denounced as a Christian. Immediately she received an order from the judge to offer incense to the idols, in order to be heard; on her constant refusal, she was thrown into the fire, where she rendered her spirit to God; but the flames respected her body. Saint Basil the Great made a fine panegyric in her praise. 303. — At Auxerre, Saint Ours or Urse, bishop and confessor.[1] About 508.

## Martyrology of France, Revised and Augmented

In the diocese of Bayeux, Saint Samson of Dol, regionary bishop, whose life we have given on 28 July. 565. — In the dioceses of Verdun and of Fréjus, Saint Loup, bishop of Troyes, whose life we have given on the preceding day. 479. — In the same dioceses and in those of Quimper and of Nantes, memory of the Saints Abdon and Sennen, martyrs at Rome, cited in the Roman martyrology of this day. 254. — Again in the dioceses of Quimper and of Nantes, Saint Guillaume, bishop of Saint-Brieuc, whose life we have given on the preceding day. 1237. — At Antwerp and in the former abbey of Feldwirth, in Frisia, near Groningen (Olde Klooster, Order of Saint Benedict), Saint Hatebrand, abbot, celebrated for his spirit of penance, his love of perfection, his inexorable zeal for monastic discipline, his holiness and his miracles. His relics were transferred in 1619 to Antwerp and deposited in the church of the former abbey of Saint-Sauveur. 1198. — At Metz, Saint Expièce, bishop of that see and confessor. The catalogue of the bishops of Metz thus makes his eulogy: “At the time when the blessed Ambrose was promoted to the archbishopric of Milan, and the very year when the glorious Saint Martin took in hand the reins of the Church of Tours (375), that of Metz saw with joy Saint Expièce placed at its head, who governed it holily for sixteen entire years, and died, carrying with him the regrets of all his children, under the pontificate of Siricius and the reign of Valentinian II and Theodosius I.” 390. — In the diocese of Saint-Claude, Saint Hymetière or Imetier, monk of Condat. Uncertain epoch. — In the diocese of Cologne, Saint Marguerite or Marine, whose life we have given on 20 July. 275. — In Maine, Saint Sylvain, anchorite. He was one of those numerous Aquitanians whom the celebrity of the monastery of Micy or Saint-Mesmin (*Miciacum*, Order of Saint Benedict, diocese of Orléans, founded about 498 under the invocation of Saint Stephen) had drawn into solitude at the beginning of the 6th century. Later, the desire of the eremitical life led him into the diocese of Le Mans. He chose himself a retreat in a very desert place, on the territory of Saint-Pierre-sur-Erve (Mayenne, arrondissement of Laval, canton of Sainte-Suzanne). One still sees today, in a little wood crowning a rock which overhangs the course of the Erve, a little chapel dedicated to this holy hermit and intended to recall the place where he lived. The details of the life of the holy anchorite are unknown to history, but his memory has remained in veneration in the region: a good number of pilgrims go to visit the chapel to be cured or preserved from fever. 6th century.

## Martyrologies of the Religious Orders

Martyrology of the Dominicans. — In Spain, Blessed Manne or Mannes de Gusman, brother of Saint Dominic, remarkable for his simplicity and his sincerity, and given to contemplation. Laden with merits, he rested in a holy death in the monastery of Saint-Pierre de Gumiel, where the burial-place of his family was. His tomb soon became celebrated for the striking miracles which Our Lord wrought there by his intercession. 13th century.

Martyrology of the Franciscans. — Saint Camille de Lellis, founder of the Canons Regular for the service of the sick.[2] 1614.

Martyrology of the Carmelites. — Saint Alexis of Rome, confessor.[3] 404.

Martyrology of the Discalced Carmelites. — Saint Anacletus, pope and martyr, whose death is marked on 13 July.[4] 96.

Martyrology of Vallombrosa. — Saint Alexis of Rome, confessor.[5] 404.

Martyrology of the Capuchin Friars Minor of Saint Francis. — Saint Vincent de Paul, confessor, who fell asleep in the Lord on 28 August, but whose feast is celebrated in the whole Church on 19 July.[6] 1660.

## Additions Made from the Bollandists and Other Hagiographers

Saint Abel, the first of the just, the first of the martyrs, and the first figure of Jesus Christ. 3876 B.C. — At Tuburbo, in Africa, with the Saints Maxime, Donatille and Seconde, virgins and martyrs, cited in the Roman martyrology of this day, the Saints Rufe, Prisque, Option, Ammonius, Juste, Abde, Acénée, Silvain, Magnile, martyrs; and the Saints Paternique, Septimie, Julie, Potamie, Hospis, likewise martyrs, indicated in the

martyrology of Saint Jerome. 304. — Among the Greeks, and principally at Constantinople, Blessed Jean, soldier. Having received from Julian the Apostate the impious mission of persecuting the Christians, he set out as if to execute the emperor's orders; but, instead of disturbing the faithful, he warned them in secret of the danger they ran and procured them the means of escaping the exactions of Julian the Apostate. After having led for some time this devoted but perilous life, he fell gently asleep in the Lord and was buried by Christian women at Constantinople, in the cemetery of strangers. 4th century. — Again among the Greeks, the Saints Mamas and Basilisque, martyrs. The first was thrown into the sea, the second was beheaded. — At Faenza, a fortified town of the Romagna, Saint Térence, confessor. He was born at Imola (*Forum Cornelii*), in the province of Ravenna, it is no longer known at what epoch. History has not preserved for us either the name of his parents. From his most tender years he showed great dispositions for the service of God. Assiduous in prayer and in the study of the ecclesiastical sciences, he merited to receive successively the clerical tonsure, the minor Orders, the subdiaconate and the diaconate. His humility made him refuse the priesthood, of which he believed himself unworthy. Having left his native land, he withdrew to Faenza and entered as infirmarian into the hospital of Sainte-Croix of that city, where he miraculously restored to health a great number of sick, among others a dropsical man, a blind man and a paralytic. God having revealed to him the day of his death, he prepared for it with faith and fell joyfully asleep in the Lord. He was buried in the church of Sainte-Croix of Faenza. Uncertain epoch. — At Canterbury, in the county of Kent, in England, Saint Tatwin, bishop and confessor. He received the pallium from the hands of Pope Gregory III, and obtained from him a bull confirming the supremacy of his see over all the bishoprics of England. 734.

## Saint Abel, the First of the Martyrs and the First Figure of Jesus Christ

*Year of the world 128. — 3876 years before Jesus Christ.*

> *Abel expressed the figure of Jesus Christ by three principal characteristics: virginity, priesthood and martyrdom.*
>
> *Saint Augustine.*

When, on the morrow of the original fall, Eve gave birth to Cain, her first-born, she cried out: *Possedi virum Dominum*, "I possess the Man-God." In the illusion of a premature happiness, she believed that the Saviour who was to come forth from her race to crush the head of the serpent would be the first son she would bring forth on the land of exile. Later, at the birth of Cain's brother, Eve's magnificent hopes had vanished; the child on whose head they rested had not justified them, and the desolate mother consecrated the memory of this grief by the name of Abel, which signifies vanity.

The two brothers, of different inclinations, chose also different kinds of life. The elder gave himself to agriculture, and the younger devoted himself to the pastoral life. It is certain that our first parents religiously observed the day of the sabbath, presented to God the first-fruits of their fruits and of their flocks, and offered sacrifices. They likewise instructed their children in the purest morality and in the principles of religion. After the example of the authors of their days, the two brothers did not fail to render their homage to the sovereign Master; they adored Him, prayed to Him, regularly offered Him a part of the goods which they received from His liberal hand. The Lord, on His side, loaded them with blessings, granted them graces to overcome their passions and to obey His laws; but they did not bring to them the same correspondence. An occasion presented itself which made each of them known and decided their lot.

They were already advanced in age. Cain had not lost the habit of offering to God the first-fruits of his harvests, and Abel the first-born of his flocks and the fat of his victims; but Cain's piety was as avaricious as Abel's was sincere and generous. The Lord, who sees the bottom of hearts, showed sensibly the difference that He made between the two offerings. He consumed those of Abel by fire from heaven, and, in reward for the religion of the young shepherd, He spread fruitfulness over his flocks, while He disdained those of Cain, and sterility desolated his fields. Jealousy tramples all justice underfoot. Instead of recognising the cause of

this disgrace, of humbling himself, of confessing himself guilty, Cain resolved to avenge himself on his innocent brother. The crime, once conceived in his heart, showed itself in the distorted features of his face. The Lord, who wished to bring him back to better sentiments and to save him, made him hear His voice: “Whence comes it,” He said to him, “that you are angry? Whence comes this pallor? why is your face gloomy and melancholy? If you do good, shall you not receive the reward of it? If, on the contrary, you do evil, will not your sin be always present to you like a monster ready to devour you, and will it not provoke my vengeance? It is still time; however violent the passion which agitates you, you can resist it.”

Not only does jealousy know no justice, but it is also inflexible: it listens neither to God nor to men. So the divine remonstrances made no impression on the envenomed mind of Cain. Then, despising the Lord, who wished to prevent his fault, trampling underfoot the cries of his conscience, he pretended to wish to take a walk with his brother: “Let us go out together into the country,” he said to him. Abel, charmed with this invitation, followed him in a spirit of peace: he was too gentle, too innocent to suspect evil designs in his brother; perhaps he was even happy to be able to dispel the sorrows with which he saw him tormented. Alas! scarcely is Cain a little distance from the paternal roof when he throws himself on his brother and immolates him to his fury. It is not known what instrument he used to consummate his fratricide. Painters ordinarily represent him to us armed with a jawbone; but painters, as is known, make large use of the liberty of feigning. Others claim that he struck him on the forehead with a stone. The Rabbis say that he tore him in pieces and literally rent all the members of his innocent body.

Figure of Jesus Christ, Abel died a virgin; the first of sacrificers, he offered to God an agreeable and pure victim; he was struck by his brother as Jesus Christ by His brethren; a shepherd of sheep, his blood spattered on his flock, as the blood of the divine Shepherd on the spiritual flock of souls. The murderer of Abel shall be a wanderer and fugitive on all the shores of the earth, bearing on his forehead the seal of the divine curse; no one shall be able to kill Cain, reserved for the vengeance of God alone; in the same way the deicide people, murderer of Jesus Christ, shall be a wanderer and fugitive in the whole universe: it shall bear amid the peoples, over all the fields of history, the seal of the curse which it called down upon itself. Reserved as the witness of the divine vengeance, it shall await the unknown hour of mercy, without ever dying as a race and without mingling its blood with the flood of the generations through which it passes.

The bas-reliefs of some sarcophagi represent Abel and Cain offering their sacrifices to God. Cain presents a sheaf, and sometimes a bunch of grapes which he holds on his hand, and ears of corn which are at his feet; Abel offers a lamb. — In his quality of shepherd, Abel is clothed in the tunic and the *penula*; Cain, on the contrary, as a husbandman, is half naked: it is known that, in antiquity, he who drove the plough was always without clothing. — A mosaic of the 6th century, at San Vitale in Ravenna, shows a very singular representation: it is Melchisedech offering to God his sacrifice of bread and wine, and, on the other side of the altar, Abel, he too raising his hands to heaven. The lamb offered to God by Abel is the figure of the Lamb of God who was one day to immolate Himself for the salvation of men; the sacrifice of Melchisedech, composed of bread and wine, is the figure of the Eucharistic sacrifice, which is the same as that of the divine Lamb. No doubt it was wished here to bring together these two figures of the same mystery, which were produced in history at more than two thousand years’ distance. One seems authorised to think so by these words of the canon of the Mass, in which this same comparison is expressed: “Vouchsafe, Lord, to look with a propitious and serene countenance, and to hold acceptable these oblations, as Thou didst vouchsafe to accept the gifts of Thy child, the just Abel, and the sacrifice of Thy patriarch Abraham, and that which Thy high priest Melchisedech offered Thee.

## Worship and Relics

Jesus Christ Himself, according to Saint Paul, took it upon Himself to place Abel at the head of the Just, of the Prophets and of the Wise, whose innocent blood must fall back upon the wicked who shed it, and upon

their children, imitators of their crimes. It is therefore surprising that Abel, so authentically canonised in the Old and New Testament, should have received no cult in the Greek Church, where cult has been publicly decreed to the Patriarchs and the Prophets, and that his name should not appear in any of the martyrologies of the Latins before the 10th century, nor even in the modern Roman one. Nevertheless, for a long time Saint Abel has been invoked in the litanies drawn up for the recommendation of the souls of the dying. Some other martyrologies have marked his memory on 25 March, as having been the first figure of Jesus Christ dying, whose death the ancients had fixed on that day. The Bollandists have adopted this date. He is put on 2 January in a Julian calendar. It is Pierre de Natalibus who marked him on 30 July.

In the neighbourhood of Damascus, two leagues from a bridge situated on the Sycus, one begins to discover the Mountain of Abel. If tradition is to be believed, it was in this place that Cain and Abel offered their sacrifices to God, and that, a little further on, Cain sacrificed his brother to his jealousy. Saint Helena had a church built in the place where his tomb was found. Only three columns of it remain; but time has respected them and left them entire. The tomb of Cain is three leagues from Damascus, on the road to Seyde.

We have made use, in composing this biography, of: the *Lives of the Saints of the Old Testament*, by Baillet; the *History of the Church*, by the abbé Darras; the *Commentaries on Holy Scripture*, by Dom Calmet; *The Bible without the Bible*, by the abbé Gainet; the *Holy Places*, by Mgr Mislin; the *Dictionary of Christian Antiquities*, by the abbé Martigny; and an anonymous book entitled: *Marvels of the History of the People of God*, Paris, Régis Ruffet, 1866.

## Saint Abdon and Saint Sennen, Persian Lords, Martyrs at Rome

*254. — Pope: Saint Fabian. — Roman Emperor: Decius.*

> *For the servants of God the heart of men is ferocious, and that of beasts shows itself humane.*
>
> *Saint Gregory the Great.*

We have already spoken of these generous Persians in the life of Saint Polychrone, bishop of Babylon and martyr, on 17 February; it is our duty to speak of them more amply on this day, on which the Church makes memory of their martyrdom in her office. They were illustrious by their birth and possessed, with great riches, the first dignities of the State; but their piety and their zeal for the Catholic faith surpassed still more the nobility of their blood, the abundance of their goods and the offices with which the kings of Persia had honoured them. The emperor Decius, a great enemy of Christianity, having won a signal victory over that king and having made himself master of several countries which belonged to him, Abdon and Sennen fell under his domination. What gave them the most pain was to see the cruelties which this emperor at once exercised against the faithful. They believed that it was on this occasion that they ought to show their sincere and true love for Jesus Christ; thus, without fear of incurring the indignation of their new sovereign, they applied themselves with all their power to strengthening the faithful, encouraging the confessors and burying the martyrs. They gave burial to Saint Polychrone and to several of his priests, deacons and clerics, who lost their lives in this persecution.

Decius, informed of these actions of charity, was greatly irritated at them. He sent to seize the two brothers and had them appear before his tribunal. He treated them at first with much gentleness and told them that the victory which he had won ought to teach them that the gods of the Roman empire were all-powerful, and that they held the fortune of peoples and kingdoms in their hands; that thus they ought to make no difficulty in adoring them and offering them incense and sacrifices. The Saints answered him wisely that his victory was in no way a proof of the power of his gods; that the very ones whom he adored were adored by the Persians who had been vanquished; that it was the one true God, creator of heaven and earth, and His Son, Jesus Christ, who gave victory to some and permitted others to be vanquished for hidden designs of His providence; that they recognised and adored Him alone, and that they would never adore any others. Decius

commanded that they be loaded with irons and put in a dark prison until he should leave the East to go to Rome to receive the honour of the triumph.

A short time after, the emperor learned of the death of Galba, whom he had left as vicar at Rome. This news made him hasten his return, and he brought with him his two prisoners to make of them one of the finest ornaments of his triumphal entry. When he had made them suffer this confusion in the presence of an immense crowd, he had them called before the senate in the state in which they were, that is to say, chained, but otherwise all covered with gold and precious stones; and, after having made known to the senators their nobility and their rare qualities, turning toward them, he told them that it depended only on them to recover their goods and the offices of which they had been stripped, and even to receive greater ones from the liberality of the Roman empire; that by sacrificing to the gods they would obtain all his favours and that he would regard them rather as his friends than as his subjects. Abdon and Sennen answered that they had consecrated and immolated themselves to the service of Jesus Christ; that they recognised no other God than Him and that they would never adore imaginary divinities which were only demons or idols. Thus they absolutely refused to offer incense on a tripod which Claude, priest of the Capitol, had brought. At this refusal they were led to prison, and the next day, Decius having abandoned their affair to the prefect Valérien, they were dragged into the amphitheatre to make them bend the knee by force before the statue of the Sun. But the Martyrs having spat upon it instead of adoring it, they were cruelly whipped with leaded cords; and, when they were bruised and covered with wounds and blood, two lions and four bears were let loose against them to devour them.

These animals, instead of doing them harm, lay down at their feet and made themselves their guardians. The prefect attributed this marvel to some illusion of magic; but he did not know how he would draw the Martyrs from there to make them undergo other punishments, for no one dared approach them, fearing these ferocious beasts. He sent gladiators there who, by the permission of God, slaughtered them and took away their lives; thus their beautiful souls flew to heaven to receive there the reward of their faith, of their detachment from all the things of earth and of their illustrious martyrdom.

Their bodies, by the command of Valérien, were drawn from the place of their execution and dragged to the feet of the idol of the Sun, where they remained three days without burial, to inspire fear in the Christians; but, at the end of this time, Quirin, subdeacon, who is said to have written their history, carried them off and buried them in his house, where, under the empire of Constantine the Great, they were discovered by divine revelation and transported with much honour to the cemetery of Pontien, which afterwards took the name of the two holy Martyrs. One still sees there, on an ancient piece of sculpture, the names and figures of our Saints, having on their heads a crown and a Persian cap. Their feast is celebrated on the day of their martyrdom, which was 30 July of the year 254.

They are represented in a group, on account of their community of faith, of country and of punishment; exposed to the wild animals in the amphitheatre. After a painting of the catacombs, they are seen crowned by Our Lord Himself.

## Worship and Relics

The historian Aymar de Piganiol de la Force wrote in the 18th century, in his *Historical and Geographical Description of France*: “It is believed that the bodies of the holy martyrs Abdon and Sennen have rested in the abbey church of Arles (Pyrénées-Orientales) since the end of the 11th century. This church is venerable for its antiquity. One sees there, outside the door, a tomb of very ancient structure, which has something so singular about it that it deserves to be spoken of. It is of rough grey marble, about six feet long by two wide and as many high, without counting the cover, which is ridged like that of ancient tombs, and which is joined by well-sealed iron cramps. This tomb is isolated, supported only by two square stones half a foot high; there is always water in it; it is drawn out with a cloth which is plunged into it by means of an opening which is at

one of the ends of the tomb, between the stone which closes it and that which covers it, and which is so small that one cannot pass more than three fingers of the hand through it, at the most. There are times of the year, as on the day of the feast of the Saints Abdon and Sennen, when more water is drawn from this tomb than it can contain. The tradition of this country holds that it was in this tomb that the relics of these Martyrs were deposited when they were brought from Rome. This tomb has never lacked water. There are times when it is more or less high: the pilgrims use it in their sicknesses, and their faith often relieves their infirmities."

The monastery of the Visitation of Autun also possesses relics of the Saints Abdon and Sennen; they come from the abbey of Saint-Jean le Grand. These relics had been in this latter abbey from time immemorial, in 1666. They came from Rome; the prior of Anzy (Saône-et-Loire), in 1669, under the pontificate of Clement IX, also obtained relics of our Saints, which were sent from Rome. They were saved from the impious fury of the revolutionaries in 1793. In 1856 they were carried from the church of Anzy to Autun, to bring them together with those of the Visitation. It was recognised that the bones followed on one another and completed one another, a great proof of authenticity. The relics of the Saints Abdon and Sennen which the church of Anzy possesses today are: 1st, a fragment of the middle part of a tibia of Saint Abdon; 2nd, the middle part of a fibula of Saint Sennen; 3rd, a fragment of the left radius, a fragment of a lumbar vertebra and a fragment of the left calcaneum of Saint Abdon, taken from the shrine of the Visitation of Autun, with the consent of the community, and united to the relic venerated at Anzy, to augment the sacred treasure of this parish. We have completed the narrative of Father Giry, principally as regards the relics, with the abbé Cucherat, *Life of Blessed Hugues of Poitiers*; and the abbé Cirot de la Ville, *Christian Origins of Bordeaux*.

## Saint Julitte or Julie, Martyr at Caesarea in Cappadocia

*303. — Pope: Saint Marcellinus. — Roman Emperor: Diocletian.*

> *A soul is great in riches when it puts itself above them, not by desiring them, but by despising them.*
>
> *Saint Augustine.*

Julitte, or Julie, was born at Caesarea in Cappadocia, today Kaïsarieh, on the Halys, near Mount Argaeus, and the native place of Saint Basil. She was distinguished for her virtue, her mind and her courage, and very rich in lands, in movable goods and in slaves. The emperor Diocletian, by a refinement of injustice and cruelty, had declared all Christians without exception, whatever their innocence, deprived of the protection of the laws of the empire and of all the privileges of citizens. By thus arming everyone against them, and by depriving them of all support for their defence, he thought to succeed in exterminating their very name. Relying on these abominable edicts, a powerful and violent man of Caesarea seized the goods of Julitte and appropriated the greatest and best part of them, and when she wished to claim her rights before the tribunal of the praetor, this wretch accused her of being a Christian: by this infamy he assured himself of the possession of the usurped goods, and he rid himself of the very person whom he had stripped of her possessions.

The judge, very glad to have a legal pretext for not receiving Julitte's complaint, said that, if she wished him to examine her affair, she must first publicly renounce the Christian religion. He had an altar and incense brought at once; he ordered her to sacrifice to the gods and to recognise their power. Julitte, for whom the faith was the greatest good, answered: "I am a Christian, and I do not offer incense to demons."

The judge insinuating to her that she would thus lose her cause and be stripped of all her goods, the generous Christian replied: "My goods may be taken from me, wretches may be enriched with them; but to obtain from me what is asked, never!" — "Sacrifice, or you will lose not only your goods, but your life." — "My life may also be taken from me; I will not offend my God to save it." — "Why lose thus your riches and yourself with them?" — "In losing all on earth, I shall find all in heaven." The praetor, irritated at such a resistance, which he did not expect, pronounced the forfeiture of Julitte's possession of her goods, and confirmed the property in them to the usurper. Then, seeing her unshakable in her faith, he condemned her to

the punishment of fire.

Julitte heard the sentence pronounced with joy, and gave thanks to God for it. At the same time she exhorted her brethren in the most touching manner to remain unshakable in the faith and to serve the true God with fervour. The pagans, astonished, could not understand how a person of her sex, her age and her rank made with such constancy the sacrifice of all the advantages which she had reason to hope for in the world; they admired above all the intrepidity with which she looked upon death.

All being prepared for the punishment, she placed herself on the pyre, where she expired. It appears that she was suffocated by the smoke; at least the flames, having risen around her in the form of an arch, did not touch her body, and the Christians drew it out entire. She was buried in the vestibule of the great church of Caesarea. Saint Basil, speaking of this precious treasure about the year 375, expressed himself thus: “It enriches with blessings the place where it is, and those who come there. There has been seen,” he adds, “near the place where it was deposited, a spring of very agreeable water coming forth, while all those of the neighbourhood are salt and unwholesome, so that this martyr, like an attentive mother, relieves all the inhabitants of the city. This water gives health and heals sicknesses. It is this same benefit that Elisha once granted to the inhabitants of Jericho, by changing into a sweet and agreeable drink the water of the place, which was salt by its nature. Men,” adds the Saint, “do not yield to women in the defence of the faith! Let the example of Saint Julitte teach you that the weakness of our nature does not prevent us from celebrating Christian generosity.” Saint Julitte is honoured on this day by the Greeks and the Latins.

*Acta Sanctorum*; Godescard.

## Saint Hymetière or Imetier, Monk of Condat

Saint Hymetière lived in the 6th century. He sanctified himself first in the abbey of Condat by the practice of the monastic virtues. Then the desire to win for Jesus Christ souls still slaves of superstition stirred him to carry the Gospel into some still unexplored region of the Jura. The monks were then the missionaries of Christian civilisation. When they had accomplished in a country the first work of clearing, and their establishment had taken an assured existence, they sent some of their number to accomplish the same work in other places, by cultivating the lands and instructing souls. Hymetière went therefore, a few leagues from Condat, to found a hermitage on the banks of the Valouse. This country, rather agreeable, contained however a bad and sterile soil. It was one merit more for Hymetière to make life and fertility spring up there. He probably had with him some companions of whom he was the head, and little by little dwellings were formed around his cell, and gave birth to the village which today bears his name.

Saint Hymetière died in that very place, and the eminent virtues which he had practised soon caused him to be honoured as a Saint. His precious remains were deposited in a chapel which was placed under his invocation, and transformed into a larger church from the following century. The places which he had inhabited are still full of his memory. There is shown, beneath the site of the former priory, the spring where he went to quench his thirst, and the naive faith of the faithful claims to see, on the edges of this spring, the imprint of the fingers of the pious hermit.

The cell of Saint Hymetière is named, in the 9th century, in a diploma of Charles the Bald. At that epoch, a priory of the Order of Saint Augustine occupied the place of the Saint’s humble hermitage. This priory depended on the church of Saint-Vincent of Mâcon, to which it had paid an annual due for a long time. Renaud, vassal of Guerrin I, count of Mâcon, having claimed the property of it on false titles, the emperor confirmed, by a diploma, the rights of the church of Saint-Vincent. This benefice was united, in the 13th century, to the chapter of Saint-Pierre of Mâcon. The relics of Saint Hymetière, who was in great veneration in the country, were preciously kept there. Miracles attested his powerful protection with God, and they became so numerous that the ecclesiastical authority ordered an inquiry to be made on the subject, according

to the forms of law.

The cult of Saint Hymetière has been perpetuated to our days in Franche-Comté. His feast is still celebrated there on 28 July in the diocese of Besançon, and on 30 July, under the double rite, in the proper of the diocese of Saint-Claude.

The parish of Saint-Hymetière is called the Great Parish, because it comprised in the 17th century several villages of which the holy religious was the patron. His relics, formerly kept in two symmetrical shrines, rest today in a new shrine of carved oak, which has been placed on the altar erected in honour of the Saint. The priory of Saint-Hymetière was destroyed in the wars of the 15th century; but the inhabitants have always faithfully preserved the memory of their patron, whom they still honour with a filial confidence, and every year his relics are carried solemnly in procession on Whit Monday, and remain exposed for several days to the veneration of the faithful. Devotion to the relics of the holy protector still draws, on those days, a great affluence of strangers to Saint-Hymetière, and, according to an ancient custom, children of weak constitution are especially recommended to him. Several ex-votos, which were formerly seen exposed in the church, attested the signal favours which the faithful had obtained by the protection of the Saint.

Extracted from the *Lives of the Saints of Franche- Comté*.

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[1] Clovis having become master of Auxerre, and knowing that the episcopal see of that city was vacant in consequence of the death of Saint Censure or Censoir (502), asked Gondebaud, king of Burgundy, to permit a holy priest named Eptade to leave his kingdom to come and sit in the episcopal see of Auxerre; but Eptade fled into the woods of the Morvan (a small country of old France, in Burgundy and the Nivernais, whose principal town was Château-Chinon). At Auxerre it had not been forgotten that a fire, which had lately broken out in the city, had been appeased by the prayers of an anchorite named Urse, whose cell was near the church of Saint-Amateur: he was proclaimed bishop and governed the Church of Auxerre six years and four months. He was buried at Saint-Germain, and his cult began immediately after his death. — *Gallia christiana nova.*

[2] We have given his life on 23 July.

[3] See his life on 17 July.

[4] See this day.

[5] See 17 July.

[6] See this day.

# 31 July

## Martyrologies

### Roman Martyrology

At Rome, the birth into heaven of Saint Ignatius of Loyola, confessor, founder of the Society of Jesus, illustrious for his holiness and his miracles, and very zealous to extend the Catholic religion throughout the world. 1556. — At Caesarea in Mauretania (today Cherchell, on the north coast of Africa), the martyrdom of Saint Fabius, who, refusing to carry the standards of the governor of the province, was first shut up for some time in a dungeon; then, after two interrogations, in which he persevered constantly in the confession of Jesus Christ, he was condemned by the judge to lose his head. — At Milan, in Lombardy, Saint Calimer, bishop and martyr, who, having been seized during the persecution of Antoninus, was covered with wounds, pierced with a stroke of the sword, and thrown into a well, where he consummated his martyrdom.[1] 2nd century. — At Synnada, in Phrygia Pacatiana,[2] the holy martyrs Démocrite, Second and Denis. — In Syria, a region of Asiatic Turkey, three hundred and fifty blessed monks, martyrs, who were killed by the heretics for the defence of the holy Council of Chalcedon. 514. — At Ravenna, in Italy, the death of Saint Germain, bishop of Auxerre, illustrious for his nobility, his faith, his learning and the lustre of his miracles: it was he who entirely delivered Great Britain from the heresy of Pelagius. 450. — At Tagaste, in Africa (today Tagilt, a ruined town of Numidia), Saint Firme, bishop and martyr, whom a generous confession of Jesus Christ has

rendered very glorious. 4th century. — At Siena, in Tuscany, the birth into heaven of Saint Jean Colombini, Institutor of the Order of the Jesuati, celebrated for his holiness and for his miracles. 1367.

## Martyrology of France, Revised and Augmented

In the diocese of Mainz, Saint Germain, bishop of Auxerre, cited in the Roman martyrology of this day. 450. — In the diocese of Trier, Saint Banthe or Banton, confessor, brother of Saint Béat, cited in the martyrology of France of 26 July, where we have said a few words of his life. After having been for a long time, with his brother, the most brilliant torch of the city of Trier, he went into the mountains of the Vosges to lead the eremitical life there. He ran with a firm foot and an even course the arduous road of perfection, during several years, and departed this life, not without miracles. His holy relics, deposited in a chapel of the metropolitan church, have procured relief and health to a number of sick. — At Metz, Saint Gosselin or Ansolm, bishop of that see and confessor. According to Du Saussey, he succeeded Saint Agatimbre, whose virtues he knew how to imitate, and held gloriously, for eighteen years, the episcopal see of Metz, having no care for his personal interests, but full of a pious zeal for those of his Church. 460. — In Burgundy, Saint Hymetière, monk of Condat and confessor, whose life we have given on the preceding day. — In the monastery of Moyenmoutier (*Medianum monasterium*, Order of Saint Benedict, under the invocation of the Blessed Virgin and of Saint Gregory, and founded in the diocese of Saint-Dié by Saint Hidulphe, archbishop of Trier, who was its first abbot), the Saints Jean, priest, and Bénigne, deacon, twin brothers and monks under Saint Hidulphe himself. They have already been mentioned in the martyrology of France of 21 July. About 720.

## Martyrologies of the Religious Orders

Martyrology of the Basilians. — At Tauriana, in Calabria, Saint Fantin, abbot, of the Order of Saint Basil. 4th century.

## Additions Made from the Bollandists and Other Hagiographers

At Tauriana, in Calabria, or at Syracuse, in Sicily, the Saints Fauce and Déodate or Dieudonnée, husband and wife and martyrs, parents of Saint Fantin, confessor, named in the martyrologies of 24 and 31 July, of 30 August and of 6 September.[3] Having been converted to the faith by their son, they incurred the hatred of the persecutors Diocletian and Maximian, and were beheaded. 3rd century. — At Pozzuoli, a town of Italy, in the province of Naples, Saint Onésime and his companions, martyrs. He was arrested in Gascony, where he was sowing the word of God with his disciples Alphius,

Philadelphe, Cyriu, Erasme and thirteen others. Brought before the president Nigellion, they generously confessed Christ and were beheaded. 3rd century. — At Rome, the birth into heaven of twelve blessed Martyrs who perished by the sword. — At Ravenna, in Italy, Saint Pierre, surnamed the Younger, bishop of that see and confessor. A Syrian by origin, he succeeded Saint Jean II in the episcopal see of Ravenna at the time when King Thierry was besieging that city: he had much to suffer from the exactions of that prince. He assisted at and subscribed the Councils held at Rome under Pope Symmachus, and showed himself there a great zealot for the orthodox faith and a declared enemy of the schismatic party. He built in his episcopal city, in honour of Saint Peter, his patron, a church which was long considered one of the marvels of Italy. It was in the midst of these works that death came to surprise him, and he was buried in that same basilica. 426. — At Constantinople, Saint Eudocime, surnamed the Just or the Younger. A Cappadocian by origin, he was born of noble parents; his father was called Basile and his mother Eudoxie. From childhood his budding virtues made it foreseen what he would one day be. His two favourite virtues were chastity and love of the poor. He died at thirty-two years, God not wishing to leave longer on earth a soul already ripe for heaven. Numerous miracles came to make his tomb illustrious. 9th century. — In England, Saint Néot, commonly called Saint Needs, monk of Glastonbury, in Somerset, and confessor. Of royal race, he left early the riches

of his father's house, and, making himself poor for the love of Jesus Christ, he shut himself up in a monastery which he edified by the example of all the virtues. He himself built an abbey, and his virtues drew there a great number of religious. About 877. — In Sweden, Saint Hélène of Skofde, martyr. She was of an illustrious family of Westrogothia, a country which had lately been converted to the faith by Saint Sigefrid. Devotion made her undertake a pilgrimage to Rome. On her return to her native land she was put to death by her own relatives, in her castle of Skofde or Scœude, in Westrogothia. Eight miles from Copenhagen, near the sea, is a church of her name where her body was formerly kept enclosed in a beautiful shrine. Saint Hélène was canonised, in 1164, by Pope Alexander III. 1160.

## Saint Germain, Bishop of Auxerre and Confessor, Destroyer of Pelagianism in Great Britain

*450. — Pope: Saint Leo the Great. — Roman Emperor: Valentinian III.*

> *He mingles his tears with the water he drinks; he seasons with ashes the bread he eats; he wears a rough hair-shirt on his flesh.*
>
> *Eulogy of Saint Germain.*
>
> *The life of Saint Germain of Auxerre is summed up in his apostolic labours: 1st, with regard to the peoples whom he edifies by the example of his virtues; 2nd, with regard to the Semi-Pelagians of Great Britain, whom he goes to visit and withdraw from error; 3rd, with regard to the powerful of the earth, to whom he inspires moderation and justice.*
>
> *Mgr Freppel, Sermons.*

The birth of Saint Germain was no less illustrious for the piety than for the nobility of his parents. His father was named Rustique and his mother Germanille: they were lords of the city and county of Auxerre. Germain's parents took great care of his education; after having made his first studies with success in the Gauls, he went to Rome to study eloquence and civil law. His progress soon put him in a state to plead with distinction before the praetorian prefect. He married a woman of very high nobility, named Eustachie. His merit having made him known to the emperor Honorius, he was raised by that prince to very honourable posts, and he had at last that of duke or general of the troops of his province, which obliged him to return to Auxerre.

In truth, no gross vices were remarked in him; but all his religion was limited to observing what the principles of natural probity dictate, and his virtues were purely human. He did not know that spirit of humility, mortification and prayer which is the basis of Christianity. He loved hunting passionately; and when he had killed some beast, he hung its head on the branches of a great tree which was in the middle of the city. This custom came at most from a fund of vanity; but as the pagans did something similar out of superstition, Germain was a subject of scandal to the faithful. That is why Saint Amateur, who then occupied the see of Auxerre, warned him of it several times; but the holy bishop was not listened to. At last, one day when the young duke was absent, he had the tree cut down. Germain, having been informed of it, fell into a great anger, and threatened the Saint with taking vengeance for the conduct he had held.

Meanwhile God made known to Saint Amateur that he would die soon, and that He destined Germain himself to be his successor. The Saint went at once to find Jules, prefect of the Gauls, who resided at Autun, to ask him for permission to put Germain among the number of the clerics; without this permission, no officer could change his state. Jules having granted it, Saint Amateur returned to Auxerre. He assembled at his house the principal men among the faithful, who followed him with the people; Germain came there too. Immediately the doors of the temple were shut by order of the bishop, who seized Germain, confers on him the clerical tonsure, clothes him in the ecclesiastical habit, and informs him that he is to be his successor. This example proves that immediately after the general persecutions clerics were distinguished from lay

people by the tonsure. Germain dared make no resistance, for fear of opposing the will of God.

Saint Amateur having died a short time after, on the first of May 418, the wishes of the clergy and the people united in favour of Germain, who was consecrated on 7 July by the bishops of the province. After the consecration he was no longer the same man. He renounced the pomps and vanities of the world, lived with his wife as if she had been his own sister, distributed his goods to the poor and to the Church, and embraced the austerities of penance. During the thirty years that his episcopate lasted, he forbade himself the use of wheaten bread, vegetables, salt, wine and vinegar. All his food consisted of bread made with barley which he had threshed and ground himself; he never took his meal except in the evening; often he ate only once or at most twice a week. His clothing was the same in winter and in summer. He wore the hair-shirt continually, and always had some relics on him. He exercised hospitality toward everyone, washed the feet of the poor, and served them at table with his own hands, being himself fasting.

His first sleep began with tears and was interrupted by sighs, profiting by the example of the prophet-king, who washed his couch every night with those salutary waters. But the almost continual prayer which he made during that time did not permit his poor nature to take much rest; and the assiduity of so cruel a mortification, which lasted all his life without any relaxation from the time he renounced the vanities of the world, obliges us to say that he was in a continual martyrdom, and the more rigorous in that the torments which he made his innocent flesh suffer did not end in a short time, like those of most of the martyrs, but lasted as long as his life.

These exercises of penance of which we have just spoken being so continual in Saint Germain, and his austerities so prodigious, it is not to be wondered at if he soon rose to the summit of Christian perfection, if his soul was filled with all the virtues and if so holy and admirable a life was promptly honoured with the gift of miracles.

One of the most remarkable effects of his humility was to hide with as much care as he did the gift of miracles which God had communicated to him very liberally. But an occasion presented itself in which he was constrained to show the world this heavenly grace.

A treasurer or receiver-general of the emperor, named Janvier, carrying to the coffers of the treasury the moneys which he had collected through the province, turned aside from his road to have the consolation of seeing the holy bishop in passing, who received without distinction all the guests and pilgrims who presented themselves at the episcopal house. As he was entering Auxerre, his bag fell without his noticing it and was picked up by a possessed man, who, having escaped from the hands of those who had charge of him, was running about the streets. Janvier, not seeing his bag, retraces his steps, makes inquiries everywhere, and having no news of it, presses Saint Germain to make him restitution of his money, as if he had deposited it in his hands. “Very well, my son, I will give it back to you,” answers the Saint; “give me a little time, and meanwhile do not fail to make inquiries on your side.” Three days passed without any clue to the theft being had, and the sadness was growing in the soul of the treasurer, who threw himself at the feet of the bishop, saying that he could not survive this loss which ruined his house and put him in danger of punishment if he could not satisfy the emperor, conjuring the Saint to have pity on him and to remedy his misfortune. Saint Germain consoled him again and made him hope that sooner or later he would give him back what he had lost. Seeing that all the means he had used had not succeeded, he had one of the possessed who were in the city brought to him, with the design of constraining the devil, who, being the author of thefts, could not be ignorant of this one, to reveal to him where the money was that was being sought. God willed that the very one should be brought who had picked up the treasurer’s bag. He pressed him with secret exorcisms; and the demon being unwilling to declare anything, he has him led to the church, judging that public prayers would be more efficacious than his own. He celebrated holy Mass with the ordinary fervour of his devotion; then, having exhorted the people to join their prayers to his, he prostrated himself before the altar. At the same time the demon raises into the air this unhappy possessed man, whose frightful voice resounded through the

whole church, crying like a criminal put to the torture: “You burn me, Germain; your prayer torments me; it is I who took the money, I am ready to make restitution of it.” His prayer being finished, he rises with the ministers of the altar and goes straight to the place called *Podium*, where the energumens were put. Having arrived there, he makes the possessed man declare the place where he had hidden the money, and immediately the demon went out of the body of this wretch.

After this miracle, which was wrought publicly, a great number of possessed were brought to Saint Germain; all the approaches to his house were ordinarily occupied by a crowd of sick people afflicted with all sorts of infirmities, who recognised no better physician than the charity of the holy bishop; which, although it was extreme toward these poor afflicted ones and carried him to give relief to each according to his need, he nevertheless exercised with so much skill that he attributed all the cures he worked either to the relics of the Saints which he wore about his neck, or to the sign of the cross, or to the holy water which he sometimes used, or to oil which he blessed and with which he anointed the sick parts, and sometimes to herbs which had no other virtue than to serve his humility, or even to his own skill, as if he had been a very experienced physician; thus covering by a truly Christian modesty the grace which God had given him of working miracles.

He worked them much more often, and with less reluctance, in favour of poor people and peasants, in the villages, where there was not so much cause to fear ostentation and the vain applause of men. He sometimes also rewarded by these extraordinary graces the charity and liberality of his hosts, who were often poor villagers, at whose houses he alighted more willingly than at those of the rich.

It seems that adversities and temptations are the most faithful companions of innocence, and that virtue is found only in contradictions and combats, just as the rose appears only among thorns. The demons used all imaginable artifices and brought all possible violence to triumph over his virtue and his courage, or to corrupt his innocence, which was the strongest shield he had in hand. They thought to take him by his weak side, by renewing in his imagination the ideas of the things which had formerly had the most power over his heart and which had taken from his soul the rich treasures of grace and virtues which he had received in baptism. They represented to him the dainty dishes and delicious wines of his table; the innocent pleasure of hunting, of which he had been so passionately fond; the honours and applause which Rome and all the Gauls had formerly rendered to his merit and his eloquence; the fine offices he had exercised; the riches he possessed at that time, and all the other advantages of his birth and his fortune, which put him far above all that he could hope for by the kind of life he was now leading. But as love is the greatest demon of nature, it is of it also that they made use to shake his constancy and to deal ruder blows to his courage.

These invisible attacks not having succeeded, they appeared to him in the form of horrible and frightful beasts, to distract him in his prayers, or to trouble his mind with sudden apprehensions and fears; crying and howling near him, each according to the property of the animals whose figure they had borrowed; adding to this infernal concert frightful threats, as if they would devour him. But Germain remained immovable and peaceful in the midst of all these furies, arming his heart with the impenetrable shield of faith, and holding himself firmly attached to the hope which he had in the cross of his good Master, which he used as a staff to drive away all these spirits of darkness. He sometimes said to them: “Is that all you know how to do, to disguise yourselves and transform yourselves into beasts, you who were the most faithful expressions of the first beauty, and who were creatures of light more brilliant than the stars of the firmament? You wished to place your seats on the mountain of the Testament, and affected the likeness of the Most High in power and in glory; and now you are lions, dogs, wolves and such deformed beasts? Go, accursed ones! The Lord is the protector of my life, and there are no monsters that can make me afraid. If it is my penance that kindles your anger and provokes your rage, I will make it more rigorous to increase your spite.”

At these words these infernal monsters fled, full of shame and despair, without however giving up the obstinacy of their malice, which led them to discharge a part of their rage on the flock, seeing that they had

been able to do nothing against the shepherd.

A sickness ran through the city of Auxerre, which attacked first the children and then all sorts of persons indiscriminately. It was a kind of quinsy, which made their throats swell and, taking away their breath, carried them off in three days, without the skill of the physicians being able to bring any efficacious remedy to it. At last recourse was had to Saint Germain, to beg him to have compassion on the public necessity and to turn away this scourge which was depopulating the whole city. He blessed oil and had it distributed through all the houses; the sick parts being rubbed with it, the swelling ceased at once, and gave passage to breath and to food. So present and infallible a remedy made it well known that there was something miraculous in it, and the demon, who went out a short time after from the body of a possessed person, was constrained to avow that he and his companions had spread this pestilence to avenge themselves for the signal victory which the bishop had won over them. To these virtues, domestic so to speak, Germain joined an ardent zeal for the worship of the Lord. He founded, opposite Auxerre, on the other side of the river Yonne, a monastery under the invocation of Saint Cosmas and Saint Damian, which afterwards bore the name of Saint Marien, one of its first abbots. Our Saint often visited this monastery, which was the theatre of a great number of his miracles. It was there that he delivered a man possessed by the demon: when he saw what grace was working in the heart of a pagan named Marcellin, he instructed him, baptised him, restored to him the use of a hand and an eye of which he was deprived; at last he made him a religious of the monastery, of which he later became abbot. He discovered the tombs of several martyrs. To him was due above all the discovery of the relics of a great number of saints who, under the persecution of Aurelian, had been put to death with Saint Prisque, otherwise Saint Bry, in a place called Coucy. The bodies of these generous soldiers of Jesus Christ having been thrown into a cistern, Saint Germain drew them out of it, and had a church built in their honour with a monastery, which later bore the name of Saints-en-Puisaye. He stripped himself of all his possessions to enrich the needy and the house of the Lord: thus become poor, he perpetuated the monuments of his charity and his zeal by the endowment of temples and monasteries. His rich donations, and those of several other prelates, prove that the great possessions of the Churches often came from the bishops who governed them. At that epoch the Pelagian heresy was infecting Great Britain.

Besides this heresy, there was yet another, of a certain Timothée, a native of the country, who maintained that, in the incarnation of the Son of God, the divinity had been changed into the human nature.

Add to all these disorders the corruption of morals and licentiousness, impurity, magic, envy, and above all hatred and vengeance, which reigned so universally that one could scarcely find a person who was in agreement with his neighbour. This is what the wise Gildas reports of it with many tears.

The deacon Pallade, who had been sent to the spot by Pope Celestine, and who was afterwards consecrated bishop with orders to pass into Scotland, could bring no efficacious remedy to the evil; he wrote of it to the sovereign Pontiff, and begged him to have pity on so many souls whom the poison of error was putting in danger of perishing. At the same time, the Catholics of Great Britain sent a deputation to the bishops of the Gauls to ask them for missionaries capable of defending the faith and opposing the progress of the heresy. The Pope named Saint Germain of Auxerre to go to the help of the Britons, and gave him the title of vicar apostolic. This nomination was made in 420, according to Saint Prosper. The bishops of the Gauls, having assembled for the same object, begged Saint Loup of Troyes to join Saint Germain to help him in the important mission with which he was charged. The two holy prelates thought of nothing more but setting out for Great Britain. They passed through the village of Nanterre, situated near Paris. Saint Germain saw Saint Geneviève there, gave her his blessing, and foretold the high degree of holiness to which she would attain. Geneviève, aged about fifteen years, showed a great desire to consecrate her virginity to God. The bishop of Auxerre led her into the church, where he received her vow after several solemn prayers, and he confirmed it by laying his right hand on her head.

Saint Germain and Saint Loup continued their road and embarked for Great Britain. It was then winter. The two bishops were assailed by a furious tempest. Saint Germain appeased it by invoking the name of the Holy Trinity and casting into the sea a few drops of oil, according to Constance, or of holy water, according to Bede. When they arrived in Great Britain, they saw an innumerable troop of people coming to meet them. The report of their holiness, their doctrine and their miracles was soon spread through the whole country. They confirmed the Catholics in the faith and converted those who were engaged in the heresy. The churches could not contain all the persons who ran to their discourses; they often preached in the midst of the fields. The chiefs of the Pelagians dared not appear before them, and even fled, for fear of being forced to come to a regular disputation. They blushed at last at a conduct which was their condemnation, and accepted a conference which was held at Verulam. A great multitude of people attended it. The heretics, who at first put a good face on it, appeared with much display and spoke first. They were left at liberty to discourse a long time. When they had finished, the two holy bishops answered with so much force that their adversaries were soon reduced to silence. The faithful then raised a cry of acclamation, to testify the joy they felt that truth had just won the victory over error. The assembly had not yet separated when a tribune and his wife presented to Saint Germain and Saint Loup their daughter, aged ten years and deprived of the use of sight. The holy bishops told them to present her to the Pelagians; but these joined the parents in order to obtain from the servants of God that they would pray for this young girl. Then Saint Germain, invoking the Holy Trinity, applied the reliquary which he wore at his neck to the eyes of the little blind girl, who at once recovered her sight. This miracle filled the parents and the whole assembly with joy. From that day the doctrine of the two holy bishops knew no more obstacles.

To render solemn thanksgiving to God, they went to the tomb of Saint Alban, the most illustrious martyr of Great Britain. Saint Germain had it opened and deposited in it a box which contained relics of the Apostles and of several martyrs; he then took some earth which appeared still stained with the blood of Saint Alban, carried it with him to Auxerre and put it in a church which he had built under the invocation of this Saint. Although all these successes of which we have just spoken were extremely happy and favourable for the mission of our two bishops, there was reason to fear that the heresy might come to revive more powerful and more pernicious than it had been before.

The tyrant Vortiger remained always in infamous practices and in the scandal of his incestuous marriage; which took away the hope of seeing perfect health in a body whose corrupted head could spread only evil influences.

Saint Germain, who wished to spare nothing for the good of his legation and for the salvation of this kingdom, resolved to speak to him with the zeal of a Saint John the Baptist; but seeing that his remonstrances profited nothing, he cited him before a council of bishops which he had assembled for the purpose. Vortiger came to it, not to avow his fault nor to put himself in the posture of a true penitent, but to avoid correction by a studied calumny, which was the blackest he could invent. He persuaded his wife, who was his own daughter, to complain in full assembly against Saint Germain, maintaining that he had had secret dealings with her, and that he had begotten a child of her after having abused her for a long time under pretext of religion and piety. But the holy Bishop at once cleared himself of this infamous calumny, and the king, furious to see his accusation brought to nothing, promptly withdrew from the assembly. The bishops who were present, seeing that God had taken in hand the cause of innocence, proceeded according to the forms against this contumacious man, and fulminated the ecclesiastical censures against him. On the other side, the people, who were excessively weary of his violences and could no longer bear the scandal of his debaucheries and his crimes, seeing also that they had not been able to dissuade him from making alliance with the pagans and the barbarians, withdrew from his obedience and recognised as true king his eldest son Vortuner, born of his first wife in a legitimate marriage, who was a generous, liberal prince, zealous for justice, and who in all things promoted the interests and honour of the Church. He had also a particular

affection for Saint Germain, whom he honoured as his father, and of which he gave him proofs on many occasions. To repair the calumny with which his father had wished to blacken his reputation, he gave him in perpetuity the land where he had received such an opprobrium, which was afterwards called Guartenian, which means, in the British tongue, calumny justly retorted; as M. du Chesne has remarked after Nennius, in his history of England.

The unhappy Vortiger, seeing himself excommunicated by the bishops and driven from his throne by his subjects, instead of humbling himself and recognising that this chastisement came to him from the hand of God, who disposes of sceptres and crowns according to His good pleasure, called to his help the Picts and the infidel Saxons, of whom he composed a large army to re-establish himself in his States.

Saint Germain and Saint Loup had not yet returned to France when the Saxons and the Picts invaded Great Britain. These barbarians were already ravaging the country: the Britons, having hastily assembled an army, invited the two Saints to come into their camp, hoping to find a powerful protection in their presence and in their prayers. The servants of God did what the Britons asked of them. They began by labouring at the conversion of the idolaters and the reformation of the morals of the Christians. There were several of the former who renounced their superstitions. They were disposed to receive baptism, as they desired, for the feast of Easter, which was soon to come. A kind of church was formed in the camp with interlaced branches of trees, and the catechumens were baptised there. The whole army then celebrated the feast with much devotion.

After Easter Saint Germain occupied himself with the means of delivering the Britons from the danger with which they were threatened. As he did not wish any blood to be shed, he had recourse to a stratagem: he put himself at the head of the Christians and showed on this occasion that he had not forgotten his former profession. He led his little army into a valley which was between two mountains. At the same time he ordered his soldiers, when they should see the enemy, to repeat all at once, and with all their strength, the cry which they should hear him utter. The Saxons and the Picts had no sooner appeared than the Saint cried three times Alleluia. The Britons uttered the same cry, which the echoes of the mountains sent back with a frightful noise. The barbarians, terrified, fled in disorder, throwing away their arms and leaving their baggage; several were drowned in crossing a river. This event happened, according to Ussérius, in the county of Flint, near a village called in British Guid-Cruc, and Mould in English. The place is still called today Macs Garrnon, or the field of Germain. The two Saints having thus fulfilled their mission returned to France, carrying with them the blessings and the regrets of all Great Britain. Saint Germain, on his return to Auxerre, saw with pain that his people were overburdened with taxes. Auxiliaris was then prefect of the Gauls and resided at Arles. The holy Bishop set out to go and find him. Everywhere he passed, the people ran in crowds to receive his blessing. When he was near Arles, the prefect came to meet him, although this was not the custom, and conducted him into the city. Auxiliaris was not long in perceiving that renown had not made him known such as he was. He could not sufficiently admire the majestic air of his countenance, the extent of his charity, the nobility of his discourses and the force of his words. He made him rich presents and begged him to restore health to his wife, attacked for a long time by a quartan fever. He obtained what he asked, and granted the Saint the diminution of the taxes.

Each step of Saint Germain was marked by miracles. At Tonnerre he raised to life one of his disciples who had made with him the voyage to England, and who had died in his absence; but this holy dead man having testified to him that he was too well off to wish to return to the world, he permitted him to fall asleep again and to die on the spot a second time. At Angoulême, while he was consecrating an altar, the crosses which he made on it with the holy oil engraved themselves in the stone as perfectly as if his finger had been a chisel or a graver which had cut them. At Brioude he learned by revelation the day of the death of the celebrated martyr Saint Julien, which the inhabitants of that place did not know.

Meanwhile the partisans of Pelagius began again to sow their errors in Great Britain. Saint Germain was recalled there in 448. He took as companion of his journey Sévère, who had been a disciple of Saint Loup of Troyes and who had just been named to the archbishopric of Trier. Their mission had the happiest success. They converted those who had been seduced by the heretics. The Pelagians, no longer finding any refuge in the island, left it for ever. One of the principal men of the country, named Elaphius, presented to the holy bishop of Auxerre his son, who was in the flower of his age, but who could not use one of his legs. The Saint touched the sick part, and cured the young man in the presence of a great number of persons.

Saint Germain, foreseeing that ignorance could not be banished nor reformation maintained except by facilitating, above all for the clergy, the means of instruction, established public schools in Great Britain. So "the Churches," as Bede observes, "preserved afterwards the purity of the faith and fell no more into heresy." Germain, having ordained Saint Iltut, priest, and Saint Dubrice, archbishop of Landaff, in South Wales, charged them with the care of several schools, which soon became celebrated for the number, learning and holiness of those who frequented them. There were as many as a thousand students in two of these schools, over which Saint Dubrice presided, and which were on the Wye, one at Hentlan and the other at Mochros. The names of those who most distinguished themselves there are found in the life of the holy archbishop, which had been written in the ancient registers of Landaff by Saint Théliau himself. Such at least is the opinion of several learned men. The schools at the head of which was Saint Iltut, and of which the principal were Llan-Iltut (today Lanwit), near Boverton, and Llan-Elty, near Neath, in the county of Glamorgan, enjoyed the same reputation. The children of the nobility of the island were sent there from all parts. Among the disciples of Saint Iltut are found Saint Gildas, Saint Léonore, bishop, Saint Samson, Saint Magloire, Saint Malo, Saint Paul, bishop of Léon, Daniel, who was made bishop of Bangor by Saint Dubrice, and who established in his episcopal city a seminary for the Britons. Paulin, formed also by the holy bishop of Auxerre, made a similar establishment at Whiteland, in the county of Caermarthen. It was there that Saint David and Saint Théliau studied. People were further indebted to the zeal of Saint Germain for the seminary of Llan-Carvan, near Cowbridge, and the celebrated school of Benchor, in the county of Flint.

The Saint was on his way back to his diocese when he received a deputation from the inhabitants of Armorica, who implored his protection. These peoples had drawn on themselves by a revolt the wrath of Aétius, general of the Romans, and they were on the point of undergoing the penalty they had deserved. Aétius had confided the care of chastising them to a man well capable of serving him: this was Eocaric, king of the Allemans, a ferocious and idolatrous prince. Saint Germain went promptly to find him and used every means to appease him; but the barbarian at first refused to listen to him. The holy Bishop, without being disconcerted, takes the bridle of his horse and stops him at the head of his army. Eocaric, astonished at this stroke of boldness, inspired by zeal, softens little by little and lends himself at last to proposals of peace; he even consents to spare the country and to withdraw his troops, provided that the rebels obtain pardon from Aétius or from the emperor.

Saint Germain took it upon himself to ask for it. He set out therefore for Ravenna, where the emperor Valentinian III resided. The marvels which he worked on the way are without number. At Alise, having lodged with a holy priest named Sénateur, he restored speech to a young girl who had been mute for twenty years. It was in this place that, some years before, the straw on which he had slept had had the power to deliver Agrestin from the demon who possessed him. At Autun, being at the sepulchre of Saint Cassien, martyr, he conversed familiarly with him, as if he had been living. Then he begged him to intercede for him and for all the people who accompanied him. In the same place he healed a young girl whose fingers were so attached to the palms of her hands that they could not be separated from them; and her nails, which it was impossible to cut, entered her flesh and made horrible wounds there. Another prodigy marked his passage across the Alps. The Roman road of the Graian Alps had been broken by a considerable landslide, which can still be recognised today in the parish of Séez. The holy Bishop of Auxerre found a group of travellers

stopped by the accident, among others a poor old man, lame and extremely laden; our Saint took his burden, put it on his shoulders and carried it to the other side of the torrent, then he came back and took the old man on himself as he had taken his bundle, and carried him in the same way to the other bank. The passage followed by the holy Bishop across the landslide is still called the road of Saint-Germain; and a chapel has been raised there in his honour. It is the goal of a pilgrimage for pains in the legs and for the undertaking of a journey. This same devotion has spread into several other parishes of the diocese. Having arrived at Milan on the day of a great solemnity which had called several bishops there, he entered the church during the celebration of Mass, and immediately a possessed man cried out: “Why, Germain, after having driven us from the Gauls and from Great Britain, do you still pursue us in Italy? Do you wish to banish us from all the places of the earth?” These words filled all the bystanders with astonishment and admiration. They looked on all sides to discover this Germain, and it was not difficult to recognise him, because, although he was poorly clothed, the lustre of his holiness, which appeared even in his face, made him sufficiently remarked. The bishops, approaching him, asked him his name and his rank, and he did not refuse to satisfy them. He said that he was called Germain, and that, in spite of his small merit, he was bishop of Auxerre. That was enough to draw upon him the respect of everyone: his name and the marvels which God had worked through him were so well known that there was no one who had not heard them spoken of with praise. The bishops rendered him all sorts of honours, and begged him at the same time to have pity on the possessed man, by whose mouth they had learned who he was: which they obtained.

On leaving Milan, the poor asked alms of our Saint, who asked his deacon what money remained to him for his expenses. “Three pieces of gold remain to me,” he answered. “Give them to these poor,” the Saint said to him. “And on what shall we live today?” replied the deacon. “God,” Germain said to him, “will feed those who have made themselves poor for love of Him. As for you, obey, and give to the poor the three pieces you have.” The deacon obeyed only in part; for, by a false prudence, he gave only two of them. Some time after, men on horseback came to them at full gallop, and having dismounted, threw themselves on their knees before the Saint and said to him: “The lord Léporius, our master, whose house is not far from here, is sick, and several of his household are so too; he conjures you to come and see him, or, if it is not convenient for you, at least to give him your blessing and to help him with your prayers.” The Saint, who had nothing dearer than charity, went to find the sick man, who received him with joy and with incredible honour. He remained three days with him and obtained for him from God health, together with that of all his family. When he wished to leave, the lord begged him to accept two hundred crowns to finish the rest of his journey. The Saint took them, and, putting them into the hands of his deacon, said to him: “If you had given to the poor the three pieces you had, this gentleman would have given us three hundred; but, because you kept one back to the prejudice of the poor, God has permitted that he should give only two hundred.” Thus this chaplain recognised that nothing was hidden from his prelate, and that it was in no way dangerous, in his company, to strip oneself of everything, abandoning oneself to the help of divine Providence.

When the blessed Germain was near Ravenna, he waited for night to enter it, in order to avoid the great honours that were being prepared for him. But all his skill was useless. Valentinian the Younger, as we have said, was then emperor, and governed the world with the empress Placidia, his mother. Saint Peter Chrysologus, so celebrated for his eloquence and his holiness, was bishop of Ravenna. The city, because of the residence of the court, was full of prelates, princes, lords and all sorts of persons of great merit. They all gave a marvellous welcome to our Saint, whom they knew to be an extraordinary man and of incomparable virtue. The empress sent him a great silver dish filled with delicious foods, but without meat, because she knew that the Saint had forbidden himself its use. He received it with thanksgiving, gave the silver dish for the poor, distributed what was in it to those who had come with him, and sent to the empress in gratitude a barley loaf on a wooden plate. This princess received this present with joy, and afterwards she had the plate set in gold and kept the bread, with which she healed several sick people.

One day, as the Saint was going through the city, surrounded by many people, he passed before the prisons. The criminals who were there, having been told of his passing, began to raise loud cries. The Saint prayed for them, and immediately the locks, the hinges, the bolts and the iron bars which closed this prison broke and gave all the prisoners liberty to go out. This miracle caused no prejudice to the public good: for he converted the criminals at the same time as he delivered them.

This miracle and many others so greatly increased the reputation of Saint Germain that he was continually surrounded by a crowd of sick who asked for their cure. There were also six bishops who did not leave him and who admired the austerity of his life no less than his miracles. It was at their instance that he raised to life the son of Volusien, secretary of the patrician Sigisvulte. He healed of the falling sickness the adopted son of Acholius, grand chamberlain of the emperor, and delivered him from a demon who tormented him. The affair for which Saint Germain had gone to Ravenna had all the success he promised himself; he obtained from the emperor and the empress his mother the pardon which the revolted Britons had asked. But their insolence having carried them to a new sedition, they made his cares and his kindness for them useless.

This great servant of God, a short time after, was warned that the hour of his deliverance was near: Our Lord, appearing to him in a dream, presented to him the holy Viaticum, and told him to dispose himself for a great journey. Germain asked Him what this journey was. “It is,” answered Jesus Christ, “that to your true fatherland.” Germain therefore informed the bishops who accompanied him of what he had seen and heard, and begged them to pray for him; a few days after, he fell sick. The whole city was alarmed at it; the empress went to see him; it was not without difficulty that she promised him to have his body carried back to Auxerre, as he asked. He died in peace on 31 July 450, after thirty years and twenty-five days of episcopate.

The least objects which had belonged to the Saint were disputed as the richest of inheritances. The empress wished to have his reliquary. The six bishops of whom we have spoken divided his garments among them. Acholius, who, as we have said, owed to him the cure of an adopted son, had his body embalmed. The empress clothed it in precious garments and gave a coffer of cypress wood to enclose it. The emperor furnished the carriages, with the travelling expenses of those who were to accompany it. The convoy was of the most magnificent; the number of torches was so great that their light was remarked in full day. The people ran in crowds to all the places through which the funeral procession passed, and testified their veneration for the servant of God. Some levelled the roads and repaired the bridges; others carried the body, or at least sang psalms. When they were at the passage of the Alps, they found there the clergy of Auxerre, who were coming to take the mortal remains of their pastor. At last the body arrived at Auxerre fifty days after the death of the Saint. It was exposed for ten days to public veneration, and it was buried on 1 October in the oratory of Saint-Maurice, which the holy bishop had founded himself. This oratory was afterwards changed into a church, which became a celebrated abbey of Benedictines and bore the name of Saint-Germain. His principal feast is celebrated on 34 July.

That is what the priest Constance has left in writing on the great Germain, bishop of Auxerre, by the command of Saint Patient, archbishop of Lyon. He dedicated this book to Saint Censurius, the third successor of our Saint; but, as he himself avows that he omitted many things in this life, a religious of the abbey of his name, called Eric, added to it, under the reign of Charles the Bald, two other books in which he relates a great number of marvels which this holy prelate worked during his life and after his death. We read there that, on a journey of Saint Germain to Orléans, the bells of the cathedral rang of themselves to inform all the inhabitants of his coming: Saint Aignan, who was its bishop, went to meet him with a numerous escort of clergy and people. The place where these two great men embraced each other and gave each other the kiss of peace was so celebrated that a church was afterwards built there in honour of Saint Germain. Moreover, as Saint Aignan was accompanying him out of the city, an afflicted widow brought before these blessed bishops the body of her only son, who had just expired, begging them with many tears to have pity on her and to give her back this child, the only support of her old age. There was then a holy contest between these two men of

God, each begging the other to perform this miracle; but at last Saint Germain, in his quality of stranger and guest, was obliged to yield to the instances of Saint Aignan. He prayed therefore and wept for the child, and his tears were so efficacious with God that at that very hour he came back to life. At the place of this miracle also a temple was built under the name of Saint-Germain. When the man who had been raised died a second time, he had himself buried in this holy place: in the time of Eric his tomb was still seen there, as well as the turf on which the Saint had prostrated himself to make his prayer, and which was surrounded with a balustrade. In the same diocese, Saint Germain, passing through a village where a rich and illustrious man was having a great church built, held up by his word the wall of this church, which, having bad foundations, shook all at once and was about to crush the workmen in falling: when it was dedicated, the founder wished it to be given the name of Saint Germain, who was already dead.

Two dry staffs which he stuck in the ground, one in the diocese of Tulle and the other in the Gâtinais, at once grew green again and changed into great trees, which were long called the hazel and the beech of Saint Germain.

Saint Aubin, bishop of Vercelli, when Saint Germain passed through that city on his way to Ravenna, begged him to consecrate the church begun by Saint Eusebius, first bishop of that see, and finished by himself. Our Saint promised that he would do it on his return; but, as he died at Ravenna, Saint Aubin, no longer counting on his promise, prepared to perform this ceremony himself. However, it was impossible ever to light the torches or the candles, whatever effort was made for it at various times and on various days. At last the funeral convoy of the holy deceased arrived, and then all these candles and torches lit of themselves by a divine power and filled the church with a supernatural brightness which could serve it as a dedication; then Saint Aubin cried out: “Truly, Saint Germain is faithful in his promises; he had promised to dedicate my church, he did not do it during his life, but he does it after his death.” Thereupon he went up to the altar, where he intoned the *Gloria in excelsis* and celebrated the divine Mysteries.

In the images of Saint Germain one sees near him an ass, fallen down and raising its head while looking at him. Here is the fact to which this alludes. Saint Germain, wishing to intercede for the insurgent Britons, had come, mounted on an ass, to Ravenna to ask their pardon of the empress Placidia. Placidia, learning that the Saint’s mount had just died, had wished to make him a present of a horse to replace it. “Let my ass be shown to me,” Saint Germain had answered, for the beast which brought me here will take me back. Seeing the carcass of the animal, he said to it: rise and carry me back to the house. Obeying this order, the beast had risen and had received the bishop on its back to take him back to his dwelling. There is here a new proof of the humility of the holy bishop, for he had been a great Gallic chief, and he knew perfectly how to handle a horse. One sees, in the present church of Saint-Germain, near Troyes, a window which recalls the life of the glorious Saint Germain. The first picture represents him advancing on Troyes with a numerous suite. In the distance one sees the summit of the principal buildings of a city and a group of persons coming out of the walls. Nearer the Saint, an individual lies on his back, feigning death, and at the feet of the Saint a beggar implores his charity. — The second picture represents the same procession with the Saint, but all retracing their steps. The deceitful beggar is on his knees; with one hand he gives back the purse so wickedly extorted, with the other he hides his face. His comrade rises before the Saint, who is at prayer. — The third picture represents the funeral convoy of Saint Germain. Enclosed in a coffin covered with the imperial mantle, his body is carried solemnly by the illustrious men of Ravenna; they are making for the road which is to bring it back to Auxerre. — The fourth picture represents the continuation of the convoy. At the head, the Pope accompanied by bishops and abbots; then the emperor and the empress, surrounded by eminent officials. — The fifth picture represents, in the trefoil which occupies the middle of the window, two angels carrying away the soul of Saint Germain under the figure of a child.

## Worship and Relics

Queen Clotilde, wife of Clovis the Great, had built over the tomb of Saint Germain the celebrated monastery of which we have already spoken, one of the most glorious sanctuaries that have ever existed, for the great number of holy bodies with which it is enriched. Clotaire I, son of Clotilde, and Ingonde, his wife, following the pious intentions of their mother, had a work of gold and silver raised over the tomb of the Saint, on which their names were engraved. Some centuries after, King Charles the Bald, son of Louis the Debonair, had the monument opened in which the remains of the blessed Germain were honoured, and found his members there still as entire as when they had been laid there for the first time. He had them embalmed anew and wrapped in very rich stuffs; after which he had them placed in their shrine, in a place still more elevated and more honourable, where they have always continued to work miraculous works for those who have implored their power. There remain in the tomb of Saint Germain at Auxerre only some pieces of cedar wood and some dust. The church of Saint-Eusèbe of Auxerre possesses his shroud in silk cloth, yellow and violet, with Roman eagles embroidered on it; the church of Saint-Etienne preserves some parts of his priestly vestments and his gloves. As for his bones, the Huguenots, at the taking of Auxerre in 1567, threw them on the public square. They were, it is said, gathered up by some pious persons, kept in the abbey of Saint-Marien, on the left bank of the Yonne, and discovered in that abbey in 1717 by the abbé Lebœuf, author of the *History of Auxerre*, who seems not to doubt the authenticity of these relics. However, the process of verification, begun, dropped, resumed, dropped again, is still pending before the episcopal court and will probably never be finished. It is the church of Saint-Eusèbe that at present possesses these doubtful relics. Saint Germain was formerly titular patron of several churches of England. A chapel was raised at Verulam, where the Saint had preached, and to which devotion drew a great number of English, when they were Catholics. A town of Cornwall bears the name of Saint-Germain. In the diocese of Troyes, the blessed Bishop of Auxerre is the patron of the parishes of Saint-Germain, Gyé-sur-Seine, Prunay and others. He is the patron of Auxerre, the invincible protector of that city, and, if he suffered the Calvinists to be its masters for some time, he has since driven them out entirely.

*The Life, Virtues and Miracles of Saint Germain*, by Dom Viole; Godescard; the *Nivernais Hagiology*, by Mgr Crosnier; *Lives of the Saints of the Diocese of Troyes*, by the abbé Defer; *History of the Church*, by the abbé Darras; Dom Ceillier.

## Saint Jean Colombini of Siena, Confessor, Founder of the Order of the Jesuati, in Italy

*1367. — Pope: Urban V. — Emperor of Germany: Charles IV of Luxemburg.*

> *Nullum præmium charitate pensatur; charitas enim virtutum omnium obtinet principatum.*
>
> *Nothing can be compared to charity, for charity is the queen of all the virtues.*
>
> *S. Isidor. Hispal., lib. ii de summ. Bono.*

We are going to see in this biography a new proof of the utility of reading the Lives of the Saints, since Saint Jean Colombini, as well as Saint Ignatius of Loyola, owed to this reading his entire conversion and the beginnings of his interior and perfect life. He was of the city of Siena (*Sena Julia*), chief town of a province in Tuscany, which has given so many great prelates and holy persons to the Church, and drew his origin from the illustrious house of the Colombini, which was one of the principal families of that city. When he was of an age to marry, he espoused a young person of quality named Biaise Bandinelli, of whom he had a son and a daughter, Pierre and Angèle. Thanks to his birth, his mind and his conduct, he passed easily through the first offices of the Republic, of which he even became gonfalonier. In this employment he was encumbered with many affairs which occupied him without respite from morning till evening, and he had scarcely time to take his meals; having one day returned home and not finding dinner ready, he fell into a great anger and harshly upbraided his wife. Biaise Bandinelli, who had much piety, excused herself gently, begged him to have a

moment's patience, and put the Lives of the Saints into his hands, that he might read something in them while waiting for dinner to be served. Signor Colombini, whom hunger, and perhaps some vexatious affair, had made most surly, rebuffed her and roughly threw the book on the ground. But, repenting at once of this action, he picked it up, and, having opened it at the place of Saint Mary of Egypt, who, after having been a celebrated sinner, had become a heroic penitent, he read her life, not only with admiration, but also with pleasure and satisfaction. Grace touched his heart at the same time. He was all at once changed into another man, and, his fervour growing from day to day, he began to give great alms, to frequent the churches and to apply himself to the exercises of reading, prayer and fasting. Then, as he desired always more to please God, he proposed to his wife to keep chastity and to live together as brother and sister. His wife, who was continually making very fervent prayers for the sanctification of her husband, had no difficulty in consenting to this proposal. From then on Jean led a very austere life. His bed was only a plank, on which he lay only a very small part of the night, employing the rest in prayer. Besides, he wore the hair-shirt and mortified his body until it bled by very rough disciplines. His dress answered to this state of penance: he left off gold, silver, silk and all that could distinguish him among the inhabitants of Siena, using no longer anything but mean and poor stuff, to make himself more conformable to the spirit of poverty of Jesus Christ.

He joined to all these virtues that of hospitality. Receiving into his house the poor, the pilgrims and the sick, he washed their feet, treated them delicately, put them to bed very comfortably, and gave them all the relief that an ingenious charity could inspire in him. One day, having perceived at the entrance of the great church a leper all covered with sores, he took him on his shoulders and made no difficulty about carrying him publicly himself through the greatest streets to his mansion. His wife was horrified at it; she could not bear him because of the stench, the filth of his sores and the pus which flowed from them; but our Saint, assisted by Dom François-Vincent Mini, a nobleman of Siena, who had joined himself to him for all his acts of charity, washed him, dressed his wounds, kissed his ulcers tenderly and put him to bed on a good bed, until it should be the hour to give him dinner. In this interval he went off to the church, recommending his wife to visit him, to see whether he had need of anything. This woman felt a repugnance for it; however, as she was very virtuous, she overcame it generously, and came to the room where this sick man was. But, having perceived at the door a sovereignly sweet and agreeable odour, she was seized with so great a respect that she never dared go further. She accused herself of indevotion and cowardice, and reproached herself, with many tears, for the disgust she had had for this suffering member of Jesus Christ when her husband had brought him to her. A short time after, Jean and François came back from divine service with some sweetmeats which had been given them for their sick man. Biaise told them what she had perceived, and they themselves breathed this odour, which was above all the perfumes of the earth. Having entered the room to learn the cause of it, they found no one there any more, because the leper had disappeared.

The blessed Jean saw clearly that this was a vision from heaven: some time after, Our Lord, in an ecstasy of our Saint, declared to him that it was neither an angel nor another creature, but He Himself who had taken the form of this leper, in order to testify to him how agreeable his charity was to Him. This favour made him conceive higher designs of perfection. That is why, his son having died and his daughter having consecrated herself in the monastery of Saint-Abonde, he distributed, with the consent of his wife, all his goods to the poor. Then, feeling himself inflamed with an extraordinary zeal for the salvation of souls, and ardently desiring to extend the reign of Jesus Christ, he applied himself with fervour to the preaching of the Gospel, going through the towns and villages to bring sinners to penance. Several virtuous men joined him in the same design, and produced marvellous fruits by the holiness of their examples and by the invincible force of their words. Such happy successes led Saint Jean Colombini to institute a new family of religious. When in 1367 Pope Urban V went from Avignon to Rome, Colombini went to meet him with his disciples as far as Corneto, to obtain from him the approbation of his society. On the way, at Viterbo, the travellers received the name of Jesuati, because, according to their habit, they said continually: Long live Jesus! Praise to Jesus Christ! It was, it is said, the children at the breast who first cried out: Here are the Jesuati! They obtained the

pontifical approbation only some months later, after having fully justified themselves from the suspicion of being in relation with the fanatical sect of the Fraticelli. Pope Urban fixed their costume, consisting of a white cassock and a brown mantle; he engaged them no longer to go through the countries in great bands, but to found fixed residences in the towns or the country.

The rule of Saint Benedict, modified, became the basis of their statutes. Later they adopted the rule of Saint Augustine. However, they did not constitute an Order properly so called; they formed only a pious congregation, and for this reason did not make solemn vows. In the very year of their recognition by the Holy See, Colombini died on a journey to Acquapendente, on 31 July 1367, after having instituted, to succeed him, his friend François Mini. The Jesuati, thanks to their edifying life, spread rapidly throughout all Italy, and beyond its frontiers, as far as Toulouse. They were at first all laymen; in 1606 the Pope permitted them to receive priests into their ranks. Besides prayer and the practices of mortification, the Jesuati occupied themselves above all with the care of the sick, with the preparation of remedies and of beneficent cordials, which caused them to be given the name of Fathers of the brandy. Little by little the congregation weakened, degenerated, and in 1668 Pope Clement IX abolished it, because it was no longer of great utility to the Church.

The Jesuate nuns maintained themselves longer; they had been founded by Catherine, cousin of Colombini, with an altogether ascetic aim.

Saint Jean Colombini might be represented caring for the sick in his own palace, and trampling under foot the riches of the earth, which he despised for the love of Jesus Christ.

His life is found written among those of the Saints of Tuscany. Paul Jiorise has also composed it, and Father Louis Beurrier, Celestine, has given us one in his collection of the *Founders of Congregations*. We have completed the narrative of Father Giry with the *Encyclopaedic Dictionary of Catholic Theology*, by Goschler. — Cf. *Acta Sanctorum*, vol. VII of July; Hélyot, *History of the Religious Orders*, vol. III; *Life of Saint Jean Colombini of Siena, Founder of the Jesuati*, written after the Bollandists by D. Frédéric Pœsl, priest of the Society of the Most Holy Saviour. Ratisbon, 1846.

## Saint Ignatius of Loyola, Confessor, Founder of the Order of Clerks Regular of the Society of Jesus

*1491–1556. — Popes: Innocent VIII; Paul IV. — Kings of Spain: Ferdinand; Philip II.*

> *All for the greater glory of God.*
>
> *When we sacrifice our interests to the service of God, He advances our affairs more than we should have done ourselves if we had preferred our interests to His service.*
>
> *Maxims of Saint Ignatius.*

Our Lord having established in His Gospel this maxim: “Let the worth of men be appreciated by their works, as the goodness of trees is known by their fruits,” what are we to think of the merit of Saint Ignatius, if we consider the inestimable goods which he himself and his Society have produced in the Church? How many thousands of persons are indebted to his zeal: some, for having been brought up from their youth in the fear of God and in piety; others, for having been led in the ways of justice and perfection until the hour of death; others, for having been drawn from the abyss of sin into which the passions of corrupt nature had plunged them; these, for having come out of the darkness of heresy to return to the bosom of the Church; those, for having recognised the superstition of paganism and idolatry and embraced the faith of Jesus Christ; and all, finally, for having avoided the snares of Satan and arrived at the harbour of salvation? What help have these holy religious not procured for the bishops, for the sovereign Pontiffs and for the universal Church, whether to reform the morals of the faithful, or to combat and overthrow heresies old and new, or to clarify Christian

truths, or to extend the kingdom of the Son of God into places where it had not yet been received? Does not our Saint count among his children and disciples an almost infinite number of Apostles, Martyrs, Doctors and Confessors who, animated by his word, or by his example, or by the rules which he left them, have carried the Gospel into all places of the earth, have shed their blood and suffered the most rigorous torments for the defence of religion, have taught the doctrine of the faith and passed their lives in the practice of the most eminent virtues of regular discipline? It is just, therefore, that we should here give his history with particular exactness, that Christians may know the merits of this great man whom God chose as the instrument of so many extraordinary works.

Ignatius was born in 1491, in one of the Basque provinces of Spain, which is called Guipuscoa.[1] His father was Dom Beltramo, lord of Ognez or Ognate and of Loyola, and head of a very ancient house, and his mother Doña Maria Saez de Licona y Balda, who was of no less illustrious birth. When he had come out of childhood, which he had passed very wisely in the castle of Loyola where he was born, his father, judging him suited to the court, made him page to the Catholic King Ferdinand V. This prince grew fond of him and gave him, on occasion, marks of his kindness; but Ignatius was not of a humour to remain idle and, having before his eyes the example of his brothers, who were distinguishing themselves in the army of Naples, gave himself with passion and eagerness to military exercises.

He soon became part of the army and yielded in courage to no officer. He did himself much honour by the conduct he showed at the taking of Najera, a town situated on the frontier of Biscay. Although he had had the greatest share in the victory, he would have none of the booty. He hated gaming; he had skill in affairs, and, though young, he excelled in appeasing the disputes which arose among the soldiers; he showed himself very generous toward his enemies; he loved poetry, and, without having any tincture of letters, he made fairly good Spanish verses, and it is said that he composed a little poem in praise of Saint Peter. The rest of his conduct was hardly edifying: he thought only of gallantry and pleasure; he followed in all his actions only the maxims of the world; he lived in this way until twenty-nine years of age. Then God opened his eyes, as we are going to relate.

He was in the city of Pamplona when the army of Francis I, led by André de Foix, lord of Lespare, came to invest it. He did at first what he could to prevent the inhabitants from surrendering; but, not having been able to cure their fear by his remonstrances, he withdrew into the citadel. The governor of this fort himself took alarm and wished to capitulate; but Ignatius broke off the capitulation and animated the officers and soldiers to hold firm and defend themselves. The attack and the resistance were furious: both sides fought with much courage and obstinacy. Ignatius was the one who encouraged the besieged and showed the most valour. But in the thick of the action, a ball grazed his left leg and broke the bone of his right leg, which put him out of the combat. The Navarrese, seeing him wounded, lost courage and surrendered at discretion; but the French, using their victory well, carried Ignatius to the quarters of their general, took care to have him dressed, and, when his leg had been set and the state of his wound permitted him to change his place, they had him carried in a litter to the castle of Loyola, which was not far from Pamplona. When our Saint had arrived, it was found that he had not been properly treated and that the bones of his leg had not been put back in their natural position. This obliged him to suffer a second operation of the surgeons, which caused him extreme pain; fever took him with such violent symptoms that his life was despaired of; so that he received the sacraments on the eve of Saint Peter and Saint Paul, to dispose himself to die; but the following night the prince of the Apostles appeared to him in a dream, touched him with his sacred hands and cured him of his fever. His vanity then led him to have a third operation performed, because, although in the second the two parts of the broken bone had been rejoined, there was nevertheless one which projected more than the other, which made a little lump on the leg and prevented the stocking and the boot from being drawn on well. During this long cure, Ignatius, obliged to keep his bed or his room, sought to dispel the tedium by reading. He would have preferred some profane histories or some romances; but they brought him the life of Our Lord Jesus Christ

and those of the Saints, in the Spanish language, the only one he then knew. By this reading, which his long idleness obliged him to take up again several times, grace stole into his soul. He began to see the corruption and danger of his worldly and sensual life, the folly of his ambition and his vanity, and the lies of the world, which promises true happiness without ever being able to give it. He resolved to chastise himself for it with a pitiless rigour and to begin a new life. The penance he planned was to go barefoot to the Holy Land, to clothe himself in sackcloth, to fast on bread and water, to sleep no longer except on the hard ground and finally to shut himself up in some frightful solitude where he might lament for the rest of his days those he had employed in satisfying the desires of corrupt nature.

But, as the wound of his leg prevented him from carrying out his great designs so soon, he supplied for it by all the mortifications of which he was capable in the state of his illness. He rose secretly every night, and, prostrate on the ground, he wept for his sins with very bitter tears. One night, he consecrated himself to Jesus Christ through His holy Mother with an extraordinary fervour, and swore them an inviolable fidelity; then he heard a great noise, the house trembled, the panes of his room broke, and there was made in the wall a rather large opening, which existed there for a very long time afterwards. Perhaps God wished to show by this sign that He accepted the sacrifice of His new servant. Moreover, the reading which he still continued to make, no longer out of curiosity as before, but from an ardent desire to form himself on the examples of Jesus Christ and the Saints, increased his fervour at every moment: and he was astonished himself to be no longer what he had been and to see himself transformed into another man. To strengthen him further in his good resolutions, the Virgin appeared to him one night holding the little Jesus in her arms and all surrounded with light. This apparition produced marvellous effects in his soul: it filled him with a heavenly unction which made the pleasures of the senses insipid to him; it purified his heart and tore out of it earthly desires and affections; it even freed his mind and effaced from it all images of sensual pleasures. From that moment Ignatius saw himself happily freed from the revolts of the flesh and from those importunate thoughts which sometimes torment even the most chaste persons. Dom Garcia, his elder brother, who by the death of Dom Beltramo had become lord of Loyola, suspecting our Saint's design, tried to keep him in the world; but Ignatius had definitely made up his mind. When he was cured, he mounted his horse, with no other apparent design than to visit the Duke of Najera, who had often sent for news of him during his illness and who was then at Navarelle, a small neighbouring town; the true goal of his journey was the pilgrimage of Montserrat, situated about a day's journey from Barcelona, where people came from all sides to honour a miraculous image of the most holy Virgin and to place themselves under her powerful protection. On the way he sent back two servants who had followed him, and at the same time made the vow of perpetual chastity, which he kept inviolably afterwards until death. He resolved also to take the discipline every night: which he always practised very faithfully, as long as his health permitted him; finally, he proposed to himself from then on to do all things for the greater glory of God, and never to have any other end of his thoughts, his desires, his words or his actions. It is this sentiment which made him take for the motto of his Order these fine words: *Ad majorem Dei gloriam*: "For the greater glory of God." Having arrived at a village which is at the foot of the mountain, he bought (for his design was to make afterwards the pilgrimage of Jerusalem) a long habit of coarse cloth, a girdle and sandals of cord, with a pilgrim's staff and a gourd, and put this equipment on the saddle-bow of his horse. The first thing he did, being in the church of this holy monastery, was to ask for an enlightened confessor who could instruct him in all the duties of a penitent and put him in the way of salvation. God having directed him to Dom Jean Chanones, a Frenchman by nation, a religious very celebrated for his experience in the direction of souls and for his holiness, he made him, during three days, his general confession with much exactness and an extreme sorrow for his sins. Then he disclosed to him all his designs as to his director, and laid before him the plan of the retired and austere life he wished to lead. This holy man, who himself lived very austerely, confirmed Ignatius in his resolution, prescribing to him nevertheless rules of prudence for his conduct, and disclosing to him the snares which the evil spirit might set for him in his first fervours.

Our penitent, being therefore resolved not to return to the world, made a present of his horse to the monastery, and hung up his sword and his dagger before the altar of the holy Virgin. In the evening he went secretly to find a poor man, and gave him his clothes; after which, having clothed himself in the sackcloth and girt himself with the cord which he had bought on the way, he returned to the church, where he passed the night in prayers and tears. It was the night of the Annunciation (1522). The next day he heard Mass and communicated very early in the morning; and, after his thanksgiving, he set off at once, so as not to be discovered by the pilgrims of his country. One cannot express the joy and vigour with which he walked, although he had already weakened his body by two days of watching and by a very rigorous fast. He had the staff in his hand, the gourd at his side, his head uncovered and one foot bare; for the other, which still felt its wound and swelled every night, he judged it proper to shoe. His occupation was to praise God for having delivered him from the captivity of the world, and to sing canticles in His honour; but scarcely had he gone a league when his joy was a little troubled: someone came to ask him whether it was true that he had given, the evening before, precious clothes to a beggar; for this poor man was suspected of having stolen them, and he had been put in prison for it. To deliver this innocent man, he avowed the truth, refusing only to tell his name, his rank and his country, the knowledge of which was not necessary to justify the beggar.

The first place where he stopped was the little town of Manresa, three leagues from Montserrat, which then had nothing considerable but a monastery of Saint Dominic and a hospital called of Saint Lucy, situated outside the gates and intended for pilgrims and the sick. He lodged in this hospital; there, besides the service which he rendered assiduously to the poor, he undertook an austerity which has hardly any example in the life of the celebrated anchorites. In effect, he fasted the whole week on bread and water, except Sunday, when he ate a few cooked herbs, after having thrown ashes on them; he slept little, and had no other bed than the ground; he wore continually the hair-shirt under his fine pilgrim’s habit, with an iron girdle. He took the discipline very roughly three times a day; finally, he cut off from his body all that could give it pleasure, and on the contrary made it suffer all that was capable of constraining it. The spirit of penance carried him still further; for, to punish the too great care he had had of neatness and the time he had lost in making himself polished and agreeable, he entirely neglected his person and let himself become like a savage: so that, when he appeared in Manresa to beg his bread, the children pointed at him and offered him various insults. Meanwhile, he was extremely assiduous in prayer, and, besides never failing at Mass, Vespers and Compline, he made regularly every day seven hours of prayer on his knees, during which he was so recollected that he seemed as it were immovable. He often visited the church of Notre-Dame-de-Viladordis, which is only half a league from Manresa, and, in these little pilgrimages, he ordinarily added to the hair-shirt and the iron chain which he wore a girdle of nettles or other prickly herbs. The demon, unable to bear so extraordinary a fervour, employed all his efforts to turn him from it, and above all he made a great disgust arise in his heart at the filth of the hospital and an extreme shame at seeing himself in the company of beggars; but Ignatius easily recognised the temptation, and, to overcome it with advantage, he became more familiar than ever with the poor and attached himself even to the service of the most repulsive sick. Meanwhile, the report ran in Manresa that the mendicant pilgrim, whom no one knew, was a man of noble condition who was doing penance, and who, having stripped himself at Montserrat, had taken a poor man’s habit to disguise himself. The modesty, patience and devotion of Ignatius made this conjecture very probable: so that the inhabitants of that place began to look on him with another eye. People came to see him out of curiosity, and admired him the more for having treated him more unworthily. Ignatius perceived it; and, to flee this new snare, which he believed the demon was setting for him, he withdrew six hundred paces from the town, into a dark and deep cave, which he found all covered with brushwood and with no other light than that which came from the cleft of the rock. The horror of this solitude inspired him with a new spirit of penance. There he ill-treated his body every day four or five times with a chain. He remained three or four days without taking any nourishment, and when his strength failed him, he had recourse to some roots which he found in the valley, or to a little bread which he had brought from the hospital. He did nothing but pray

and weep, and his sins often coming back before his eyes, he was always meditating new rigours against himself. These so excessive austerities often made him fall into faintness: and one day some people who discovered his retreat by dint of searching for him found him unconscious at the entrance of the cave. He was forced to return to the hospital. He fell ill there, and his fever became so violent that his life was soon despaired of. The demon then tempted him to vanity, and the temptation was so strong that Ignatius had difficulty in ridding himself of it; but, by the help of God, he represented to himself so vividly the sins of his past life and the little proportion there was between his penance and the pains of hell which he had deserved, that he repressed it and overcame it entirely.

He then came back to convalescence; but, instead of thoughts of vanity, he was tormented with such violent scruples, notwithstanding the general and particular confessions he had made, that he had not a moment of peace in his conscience. The sweetness and the spiritual consolations with which God had favoured him until then were changed into bitterness, and all his lights vanished, leaving him only doubts, anxieties and darkness.

In these great floods, which seemed bound to submerge him, he often threw himself on the ground, and remained there several hours with tears in his eyes and groans in his heart. He redoubled also his fasts and his austerities, hoping by this means to bring back the calm he had lost. As confession and communion are great remedies for this kind of temptation, he had frequent recourse to them, and he did not fail to disclose his pains, either to a religious of Montserrat who had been the first depositary of his designs, or to a Father of the Order of Saint Dominic, of the convent of Manresa, who was his confessor; but, not feeling himself relieved by all these means, he resolved at last to take no nourishment before having recovered the peace of his soul, unless he should see himself in danger of death. In effect, he fasted seven entire days, without drinking or eating, and yet without relaxing anything of his accustomed exercises; and as, doubtless by a miracle, he did not yet find himself much cast down, he would have prolonged it, if his confessor had not absolutely ordered him to break it. He found, in obedience to this order, the relief which he had not found in so many other remedies. His tranquillity was restored to him, and his exterior crosses were changed into extraordinary delights. He received thus as a reward for his fervour the grace of the discernment of spirits and an excellent gift of curing scruples; he afterwards met no troubled soul whom he did not relieve in its crosses, and to whom he did not restore the calm and serenity of conscience.

Besides these favours, he had also visions and visits from heaven altogether admirable. Being one day on the steps of the church of the Order of Saint Dominic, where he was reciting the Hours of Our Lady, he was raised in spirit and saw as it were a figure which represented to him clearly the mystery of the most holy Trinity. A short time after, another light manifested to him the designs of the divine wisdom in the creation of the world, and the order it followed in the execution of this great work. Another time he perceived without clouds the truth of the body and blood of Jesus Christ in the Eucharist; and again, on another occasion, all the mysteries of our faith were so perfectly disclosed to him that he said afterwards that, even if they were not written in the Gospel, the knowledge he had received of them at Manresa would suffice him to preach them throughout the world and to defend them to the last drop of his blood.

But of all the graces he then received, the most remarkable was a rapture which lasted eight days, having begun on a Saturday evening, and having ended only on the following Saturday at the same hour: he had no use of his senses all that time. He was thought dead, and would have been buried, if it had not been perceived that his heart was beating a little. His humility hid from the world the lights which were given him in this ecstasy, and he would never say anything of them, whatever instances his friends made to him. So many marks of holiness increased his reputation more and more: no one doubted any longer that he was an illustrious man hidden under a habit of penance. So, as he fell ill again, he was forced to lodge with a rich inhabitant of Manresa, who took particular care to restore him to perfect health. It was then that he had the inspiration to apply himself to the conversion and sanctification of souls, and that he began to propose to men

the ways of heaven, both in public and in private. He succeeded admirably in this design, and every day there were persons so touched by his exhortations that they generously renounced the pleasures and honours of the world to embrace the penitent and crucified life of Jesus Christ.

For their help, although he was neither lettered nor learned, knowing only how to read and write, he nevertheless composed, without the help of anyone, the admirable book of the *Spiritual Exercises*, which Pope Paul III afterwards approved with so much praise: this work contains, in effect, means so pressing and so efficacious for drawing souls from disorder and conducting them to the perfection of Christianity, that we have no surer or more useful method for it. After this work, seeing himself strong enough to undertake the journey to Palestine, of which he had first formed the project, and learning that sea traffic, interrupted by the plague of Barcelona, was beginning to be re-established, he took up again his first resolution, and added to his former views the design of labouring for the salvation of the schismatics and infidels of the Holy Land. He did not leave Manresa as he had left Loyola and Montserrat. He declared his journey to his friends; but, whatever offers were made to him, he would have neither companion nor money, so as to have consolation with God alone, and that all his support and resource might be in His amiable providence.

The time he remained at Manresa was about a year. When he arrived at Barcelona, he found in the port a brigantine and a great ship which were preparing to leave for Italy. God did not permit him to embark on the brigantine, which, scarcely out of the port, perished without a single passenger being saved. Here is the manner in which Providence served him. A virtuous lady, Isabelle Roset, having perceived his face all luminous while he was hearing the sermon in the great church, seated at the foot of the altar among the children, had an inspiration to have him called and to take him to dine at her house with her husband. She recognised in the conversation that he was a man of God, full of the eternal truths; and, not being able to keep him, she at least prevailed on him not to embark on the brigantine, which she did not believe strong enough to stand the sea, but on the great ship. He was received there out of charity, but on condition that he should bring what was necessary for him to live. Money was offered him from many quarters; but either he refused it, or he left it, after having received it through importunity, and he contented himself with providing himself with bread, which he had begged from door to door. The voyage was perilous, but it was not long, since he arrived in five days at the port of Gaeta, which is between Rome and Naples. From there he took the road to Rome, alone, on foot, fasting and begging, according to his custom. He arrived there on Palm Sunday of the year 1523, and left fifteen days after for Venice, having visited the stations and received the blessing of Pope Adrian VI. Some Spaniards, before his departure, tried to turn him from his journey to the Levant, representing to him the great difficulties which were to be met with that year, on account of the war, the famine and the plague which he would find almost everywhere; but, having been able to gain nothing on him, they forced him at least to receive seven or eight crowns to pay his passage, it not being possible, they said, that without this help he could ever arrive in the Holy Land. Ignatius, having taken them only with regret, did not keep them long; he had a scruple at not having abandoned himself, as much as he ought, to the care of the divine mercy, and at having relaxed something of the perfection of the poverty of which he wished to make profession; thus he at once distributed all this money to the poor, and reserved for himself only the fund of the providence of his God.

He received, as a reward for this confidence, extraordinary helps and consolations from heaven. One day when he had begun to pray in a deserted countryside, Our Lord appeared to him, animated him, strengthened him and promised to make him enter freely into Padua and Venice, although great difficulty was made about receiving strangers there on account of the contagion. The event showed the truth of this prediction and the solidity of this promise. He entered these two cities without a certificate of health, and almost without the guards perceiving that he was passing. When he was at Venice, he continued to beg his bread from door to door, and had no other house than the church, nor any other retreat at night than the square of Saint Mark, where he lay on the pavement. One night, when he was suffering much from so great a misery, Marc-Antoine

Trévisant, one of the wisest and most virtuous senators of that republic, who afterwards was doge and died in the odour of sanctity, heard a voice which said to him: “Thou art lying softly in a gilded chamber and in a delicate bed, and my servant is on the square, without bed, without clothing, without food, and abandoned by everyone.” At this voice this noble Venetian rose at once, and having gone out himself to look for the pilgrim whom the voice from heaven recommended to him, he found Ignatius in the state we have just described: he took him with him, treated him well, put him to bed as well as he could, that is to say as well as the humility of the Saint would permit, and offered him his house, his table and his purse for all the time he should remain in that city. The Saint thanked him for his charity; but, not being able to see himself so well received, he left his house to go and live with a merchant of Biscay whom he knew. Everything possible was done again to dissuade him from his great journey, because, Suleiman having taken Rhodes the preceding year, the Turks were roving freely over the seas and taking many slaves; but this consideration could not damp his fervour.

Having obtained from the doge, who was then Andrea Gritti, one of the wisest statesmen and greatest men of his century, a place in the Capitana of the republic, which was going to the island of Cyprus, he embarked on it on 14 July, notwithstanding a violent fever with which he had been tormented for some days. He did what he could on the way to repress the insolence and licentiousness of the passengers, using for this remonstrances, reprimands, and even very severe threats of the rigour of the judgments of God; but this was rather useless, and these hardened men were even planning to put him on some desert island, if the wind had not carried the vessel in a few hours to the port of Cyprus. From there Ignatius, having gone aboard the ordinary ship of the pilgrims, sailed toward Palestine, and arrived at last, after forty-eight days of navigation since his departure from Venice, at the port of Jaffa, from which he made his way in five days, on 4 September, to Jerusalem.

On seeing the city, he wept for joy and was seized with a certain religious awe which has nothing in it but what is sweet and consoling. He visited these holy places several times, and always did so with a profound reverence and a sensible piety. His design afterwards was to remain in that country, to labour for the conversion of the peoples of the East. But the provincial of the religious of Saint Francis, who had apostolic power to send pilgrims back to Europe as he should judge fit, would not let him stay there and even commanded him to return. The Saint believed himself obliged to obey him, and prepared for his departure, after having returned twice to the Mount of Olives: once to contemplate and kiss again the footprints of Our Lord which are imprinted there on the stone; the other time, to ascertain in which direction these footprints were turned, which he had not distinguished the other times. When he came down from this holy mountain, Jesus Christ, to whom his patience, his fervour and his devotions were extremely agreeable, appeared to him in the air and was pleased to serve him as guide. He left Jerusalem in winter, his legs and feet bare, and very poorly clothed. His first ship having taken him only to Cyprus, he found three others in that island which were ready to set sail toward Italy. One was a Turkish galleon, the other a great ship of Venice, and the third a very weak and ill-equipped bark. The Venetian captain would not receive him on board out of charity, whatever prayers the other passengers made to him, who assured him that he was a Saint; but the master of the little bark, who was more decent, received him on his gratuitously and for the love of God, and showed him much kindness. God then made it appear that His providence watches over the preservation of the Saints; for, of these three vessels which set out together with a favourable wind, only the one which carried Ignatius arrived safely at Venice; the Turkish galleon having perished at sea, and the Venetian ship having run aground on rocks.

Ignatius did not stop at Venice, and left it at once to return to Spain, where he wished to study in order to make himself more capable of labouring for the conversion of sinners and the direction of souls. Having taken the road to Genoa, he fell successively into the hands of the Spaniards and the French; but he was treated by them very differently: for the Spaniards, taking him at first for a spy and then for a madman, loaded him with blows; the French, on the contrary, showed him nothing but courtesies. At last, God giving

him everywhere marks of His protection, he arrived at Genoa and from there by sea at Barcelona, thus ending his pilgrimage at the place where he had begun it.

This great Saint was then thirty-three years old. Meanwhile, the desire to help his neighbour made him take definitively the resolution to apply himself to profane and sacred studies, that he might join the science of philosophy, of theology and of the holy Scriptures to the unction of the Holy Spirit with which his soul was penetrated. He studied first grammar under a virtuous person named Jérôme Ardebale, who taught it at Barcelona; but at the same time he took up again his former austerities, which his journeys and his long illnesses had made him somewhat diminish. He laboured also in secret for the salvation of souls; for, having learned that some young libertines were frequenting too freely the nuns of the monastery of the Angels, he made such wise remonstrances to these good sisters that they shut their grilles and their parlour, and put an end to the scandal which these conversations were causing in the city. This action drew upon him the hatred and persecution of these debauchees: one day they had him beaten nearly to death by two Moorish slaves; but Ignatius placed all his joy in suffering something for the glory of his Master, and he was always disposed to give his life for the salvation of souls and even of each person in particular. He saved a man who had hanged himself; as soon as he had prayed for him, he came back to life, asked for a confessor, gave great signs of contrition and penance, and then died in the peace of the Church.

After two years of humanities, the Saint, by the advice of his Master, went off to the university of Alcalá to give himself to higher sciences. He took with him three companions who wished to assist him in the practice of his good works, and he won at Alcalá a fourth, a Frenchman by nation, whom God filled with the same zeal. His friends having persuaded him to take at the same time lessons in logic, physics and theology, this put such confusion into his studies that he made little progress in them. His principal occupation was to teach Christian doctrine to children and the ignorant. He lodged at the hospital, begged his bread, was clothed, as were his companions, in a long robe of grey wool, always went barefoot and made profession of assisting the poor and of collecting alms for them. He laboured also for the conversion of the most debauched persons; and his remonstrances were so efficacious that he reformed in a short time all the youth of Alcalá, and even won to God some ecclesiastics who were entirely in disorder. Meanwhile he soon saw himself persecuted for Jesus Christ: he was charged with novelty, accused of error and heresy, put in prison and kept there forty-two days, without his allowing persons of great merit, who admired his holiness and the unction of his discourses, to exert themselves to deliver him; but at last his innocence was recognised, he was sent away absolved and with a public testimony of his virtue, of the integrity of his morals and of his doctrine; this testimony was confirmed by the archbishop of Toledo, whom he went to find at Valladolid, to give him an account of his conduct and to implore his protection.

The archbishop of Toledo having advised him to go and finish his studies at Salamanca, whose university was one of the most celebrated in the world, he followed this advice, and went there with his companions. He produced there the same fruits as at Alcalá, gaining in a short time many persons to God; but he suffered also the same persecutions, we mean calumnies, outrages and irons. However, Our Lord always drew him out of them gloriously, and his judges, prejudiced as they were, were obliged to approve his doctrine and to admire his humility, his patience and his other altogether heroic virtues. The little progress which he made in these places in his studies, and above all the little liberty given him to labour for the salvation of his neighbour, made him resolve, by inspiration of God, to leave Spain and to come to Paris, where a great number of strangers of all sorts had come to study. He arrived there at the beginning of February of the year 1528, and lodged in the college of Montaigu, where he took up the humanities again for some time, and from which he afterwards went to follow the lessons in philosophy at the college of Sainte-Barbe. His great poverty made him suffer much and obliged him sometimes to ask alms, sometimes to take his meals at the hospital of Saint-Jacques with the poor, sometimes to make journeys into Flanders and England, to receive there the assistance of the Spanish merchants who were there; but he suffered much from various persecutions which

were stirred up against him on account of some students whom he drew from licentiousness and led to frequent prayer and the sacraments and to give themselves to good works. Divine Providence having thus delivered him in a very glorious manner from all these tribulations, he was received master of arts with applause and after a very rigorous examination. He then did his theology in the school of Saint Thomas, at the Jacobins, where he drew the lights which he afterwards spread in his sermons and his exhortations, full of doctrine and of force.

Meanwhile the time came when God willed to give to His Church, by means of Ignatius, the help of the Society of Jesus. He inspired therefore first six excellent young men to join him to labour without respite for the salvation of their neighbour. The first of this band was Pierre Lefèvre, of the village of Villaret, in Savoy. The second, François-Xavier, a gentleman of the kingdom of Navarre. The third, Jacques Laynez, of the village of Almazan, in the diocese of Siguenza. The fourth, Alphonse Salmeron, from the neighbourhood of Toledo, in Castile. The fifth, Nicolas Alphonse, of Robadilla, which is a small place near Valencia. The sixth, Simon Rodriguez, of Azévédo, in Portugal: all have since become very illustrious by their doctrine, their holiness and the great services they have rendered to the Church. On the day of the Assumption of Our Lady, of the year 1534, all seven assembled in the church of the monastery of Montmartre, of the Order of Saint Benedict, near Paris, where, after having confessed and communicated, they made a vow in a loud and distinct voice to undertake, at a time which they prescribed, the journey to Jerusalem for the conversion of the faithful of the Levant; to leave all that they possessed, except what should be necessary for them for the voyage; and, in case this journey should become impossible for them, or they should not be permitted to remain in the East, to go and throw themselves at the feet of the vicar of Jesus Christ, that His Holiness might dispose of them entirely for the service of the Church and the salvation of souls.

From that time Ignatius put all his care into maintaining the fervour of his companions and their mutual union, until they should have finished their course of theology and the term which he had given them for going to Venice, in order to pass into the Holy Land, should have arrived. This was 25 January of the year 1537. He laboured also to fortify the faithful of Paris against the heresies of Luther and Zwingli, which some German doctors were spreading secretly on all sides. This did not prevent him and his companions from being suspected of novelty on account of the austere and reformed life they led and the close union they had together. But he justified himself admirably from this suspicion before an apostolic inquisitor who was at Paris, and who, having read his book of the *Exercises*, could not sufficiently praise its doctrine and that excellent method which he used to bring souls to God.

Before leaving for Italy, he saw himself obliged to make a journey into Spain, both to re-establish his health, which he had ruined by new and almost excessive austerities, and to settle the domestic affairs of three of his Spanish disciples, who might have let themselves be shaken in their vocation if they had been at home to settle them themselves. When he approached the castle of Loyola, all the clergy of the town of Aspetia, which is very near it, came in procession to meet him. He escaped as best he could from so great an honour, and withdrew to the hospital of the Magdalene. His brother and his nephews ran there and conjured him to come and lodge at the castle, telling him that it was his house and that he would be its master; but he excused himself and begged them to leave him with the poor. A fine bed was brought to him, and his brother sent him delicious dishes every day; but he gave these dishes to the sick, ate only bread which he begged from door to door and slept only on the bare ground. In the three months that he stayed so near Loyola, he went there only once, and even that only after his sister-in-law had begged him with great instance and by the Passion of Our Lord Jesus Christ. He taught Christian doctrine to the poor and to children; he preached for all sorts of persons, and was listened to with such satisfaction that, the churches being too small to contain all the people who ran to them, he was obliged to preach in the open country. One cannot express the good he did by his excellent instructions. He said that he had come to this place to repair the scandals which he had formerly caused; he repaired them in an admirable manner. He gave two farms which belonged to him from the

inheritance of his parents to a poor man who had formerly been put in prison and condemned to a fine for a theft of fruit which Ignatius, when young, had committed in a garden with other madcaps of his age. Luxury and immodesty disappeared among the women as soon as he had preached on this subject. The day on which he spoke against gaming, all the gamblers threw their cards and dice into the river, and no one in the town handled any for more than three years. He exterminated blasphemies and perjuries, converted several courtesans and made some ecclesiastics who were living in licentiousness change their conduct. He made also with his goods several very useful foundations; thus, among others, he charged his heirs to give every Sunday, in the church of Aspetia, twelve loaves to as many poor in honour of the twelve Apostles. He founded for the help of the shamefaced poor a confraternity of charity, to which he gave the name of the Blessed Sacrament. He established or renewed the custom of saying the *Angelus*, of praying at noon for those who are in a state of mortal sin, and in the evening for the dead. Finally, during the three months that he remained in his country, he did more good there than any other preacher would have done in three years. His reputation became so great that people crowded to see him and to touch the hem of his robe. He worked several miracles: he delivered a possessed man by the power of the sign of the cross, and he cured a man who for several years had often fallen in fits of epilepsy.

Ignatius, having done in Biscay what his zeal had inspired him to do there, went into the countries of his disciples and in a short time settled all their affairs. Then he embarked promptly for Italy and went at once to Venice, where he laboured as elsewhere to win souls to God, and overcame also a terrible persecution. Meanwhile the college of his disciples at Paris had been increased by three other excellent workers, whom Pierre Lefèvre, who governed the first ones in the absence of Ignatius, had received to complete the number of ten. The first was Claude Le Jay, of Annecy, in Savoy; the second, Jean Codure, of the diocese of Embrun, in Provence; the third, Pasquier Brouet, of that of Amiens, in Picardy. These three men made the same vow as the others in the very church of Montmartre, and all together left Paris on 15 November 1536, to go and find their holy institutor. When they had arrived, the season not being suitable for navigation, they distributed themselves among the hospitals of the city, where they gave great assistance to the sick. From there Ignatius sent his companions to Rome to receive the pontifical blessing, and on their return he received with them, except three who were already priests, the holy Orders up to the priesthood. One cannot believe with how much fervour he prepared himself to celebrate his first sacrifice. He took for it much more than a year, not believing that it was too much time to put himself into the state of purity and devotion which so awe-inspiring a mystery demands. He even withdrew for forty days into an old hovel exposed to all the winds; there, fasting, watching and praying continually, he asked God to make him worthy to approach His altars, and begged also the holy Virgin to give him to her Son as a perpetual servant.

The war which broke out between the Venetians and the Turks having made the voyage to Palestine altogether impossible, Ignatius nevertheless remained the rest of the year with his companions in the States of Venice, according to the vow they had made to wait for a year for a time favourable to navigation. Then this wise captain distributed his men in the most famous universities of Italy, to combat the errors which were beginning to insinuate themselves there, to inspire piety in the young men who were studying there, and to associate some of them to themselves. As for himself, feeling himself urged to ask the Pope for the establishment of his Society, he took the road to Rome with Father Lefèvre and Father Laynez. It was on this journey that, having begun to pray in a ruined chapel which he came upon on the road from Siena to Rome, he saw the eternal Father presenting him to His Son, and this adorable Son laden with a heavy cross, who, after having received him from the hands of His Father, said to him these words: “I will be propitious to you at Rome.” The sight of the cross astonished him, but the promise of Our Lord consoled him and filled him with confidence and strength. He was very well received by Pope Paul III, who wished his companions to teach, one scholastic theology and the other holy Scripture, in the college of the Sapienza, and who permitted him himself to labour throughout the city at the reformation of morals by means of the spiritual exercises and Christian instructions. Several persons of great merit put themselves under his direction and wished to have

him as guide and director of their conscience. Some learned and zealous persons associated themselves one day with him to continue to labour in combating vice and establishing the kingdom of Jesus Christ. These happy advances made him conceive the design of erecting his Society into a Congregation, to make it firmer, more venerable, and consequently of greater utility in the world. He summoned for this purpose all his companions who were dispersed, and who had already filled a great part of Italy with the high reputation of their holiness and their doctrine.

They arrived only after the Pope had left to go to Nice, which delayed the execution of this design; but this delay did it no harm. While awaiting the return of His Holiness, all these great men began to preach in the most celebrated churches of Rome; and the fruit they produced by their sermons was so marvellous that a notable change was soon seen in the morals of the faithful; luxury and debauchery diminished, and the frequentation of the Sacraments, which was no longer in use, was re-established on the model of the first centuries of the Church. Moreover, Ignatius made advantageous use of this delay to trace, with his companions, the rules of his new Institute; he was helped by an extraordinary light of the Holy Spirit, which made him know what was most expedient for a company devoted to the salvation of souls and the service of the neighbour. Meanwhile this holy band underwent a terrible tempest raised against it by the malice of a heretical priest to whom these generous Fathers opposed themselves; but it was promptly appeased, because, by a providence of heaven, those who had been the judges of Ignatius when his virtue had been attacked in Spain, at Paris and at Venice happened to be at Rome, and all unanimously bore witness to his holiness and his innocence. His accusers were obliged to retract and to avow their imposture: the governor of Rome, by order of the Pope, drew up a sentence in due form, which contained the praise of the accused priests and justified them entirely. As soon as they had thus recovered their honour, they began again with a new zeal to labour for the relief and salvation of their neighbour. They found the occasion for it above all in the dearth of provisions which desolated Rome in the year 1539. The streets were full of poor who were dying of hunger and had not even the strength to drag themselves from door to door to ask for bread. Our holy priests undertook to assist them. They took them in their arms or on their shoulders, carried them themselves into their house, and, without having other help than that of divine Providence, which furnished them abundantly with provisions, clothing and money for so charitable a work, they fed them, clothed them and lodged them for a long time, up to the number of four hundred. This example awakened also the charity of the rich of the city, so that a fund was gathered sufficient for the subsistence of three or four thousand persons whom the famine reduced to extreme misery. Spiritual helps were joined to corporal ones, and these poor found that they had gained much by this famine, because our holy priests instructed them in the principles of good morals and taught them to pray to God, to confess and to live as good people.

Meanwhile Pope Paul III, wishing to proceed to the confirmation of the Society, ordered three cardinals to examine its institute and rules. These appeared at first to be very much opposed to it, particularly Cardinal Barthélemy Guidiccioni, one of the wisest and most virtuous of the sacred college; he believed that it was better to reform the ancient congregations than to make new ones, according to the decree of Innocent III at the Council of the Lateran, and of Gregory X at that of Lyon. But Jesus Christ, who had promised Saint Ignatius that He would be favourable to him at Rome, faithfully fulfilled His promise and so changed the mind and heart of this cardinal that he was the first to approve the institute of his Society; and the Pope himself, after having read its constitutions, cried out: “The finger of God is in this affair”: *Digitus Dei est hic.*

Before it could be concluded, companions of the Saint were asked for on all sides with such instance that he was obliged to spread them through the world. The principal mission was that of Saint Francis Xavier in the Indies, which we shall relate in the life of that Apostle of the New World. At last the society of Ignatius was approved by Paul III on 27 September 1540, and took the name of the Society of Jesus, because it was under His standards and with His special assistance that it was to labour to repress heresies and to re-establish the purity of the faith and the good morals of Christendom. The first thing that was done afterwards was to

proceed to the election of a general, who was to be perpetual and had absolute authority, according to the Constitutions of the Order. The Fathers of the Society who were in Italy assembled at Rome for this, and those who were outside Italy gave their votes in writing. They named Saint Ignatius. But they could never constrain him to submit to this election; he represented to them that there were in the Society persons who surpassed him in doctrine, in prudence and in virtue; they ought not therefore to stop at him; besides, he felt himself entirely incapable of the weight of this charge and did not believe that he could in conscience take it upon himself. The Fathers who were present were well convinced of the contrary; nevertheless, so as not to afflict the Saint, they agreed to proceed to a new election after four days of prayers. But this second election was entirely like the first and the votes in writing. Ignatius, however, resisted still, until a learned theologian of the Order of Saint Francis, who had been his confessor before the confirmation of his Order, and to whom he declared all his weaknesses in the secret tribunal of penance, told him that he could not resist his election without resisting the will of God.

Having therefore yielded to the eager desires of his children, he made his profession publicly, binding himself by the vows of poverty, chastity, obedience and dependence on the Holy See for all sorts of missions; then he received that of the other religious with the same vows. There was only this difference, that he addressed his promise immediately to the Vicar of Jesus Christ as to his superior, and that his companions addressed theirs to himself as to their general and their head. The first act of his generalate was to teach the catechism to children for forty days in Santa Maria della Strada, which had been given him as a church. He produced incredible fruits there, and it is after his example that the superiors of the Society also teach catechism when they enter on their charge. He then drew up, for the good government of the Order he had just founded, regulations in which the Spirit of God, who is a Spirit of wisdom and holiness, appears admirably.

Nothing can be added to the prudence and holiness with which he governed this whole great body; for if God had given him singularly the grace of the discernment of spirits to know in what manner each member of this body ought to be led, He had also given him a happy alliance of firmness with gentleness, to correct without irritating, and to reprove without causing a mortal wound. He left Rome only twice: once to reconcile the inhabitants of San Angelo with the inhabitants of Tivoli, against whom they had taken up arms; the other time to reconcile Duke Ascanio Colonna with Joanna of Aragon, his wife, who were extremely at variance: he succeeded perfectly in both undertakings. He made also, by the help of heaven, other very important reconciliations; above all that of Dom John III, king of Portugal, with Pope Paul III and with Cardinal de Silva, bishop of Viseu. The good he did in Rome by relieving all sorts of miseries is so manifold that a whole volume would be needed to describe it. He had a house built there for the Jews who should be converted, and he himself converted several who embraced the Catholic faith with ardour. He founded another for the libertine women and girls who should leave their disorder without wishing to be religious; for those whose conversion was so perfect that they were willing to embrace the regular life already had the monastery of the penitent women, under the title of Saint Mary Magdalene. This new house was called that of Saint Martha. The Saint himself led these public sinners there; and, as he was told sometimes that he was wasting his time and that these unhappy women never converted themselves with a good heart: “Even if I prevented them from offending God only once,” he answered, “I should think my trouble well employed.” His charity extended further to four or five other establishments. The first was for girls whom their great poverty and the abandonment of their parents or their bad education exposed to the peril of losing the treasure of their chastity; he built a monastery for them under the name of Saint Catherine. The second and the third were in favour of the orphans of both sexes, who until then had been extremely abandoned and deprived of the spiritual and corporal assistance they needed. The fourth was that of the German College, for which he showed an incredible zeal, being persuaded that it was impossible to re-establish the Catholic religion in Germany unless care were taken to bring up in Rome children of that country, to go afterwards and govern the parishes and bishoprics there and defend religion against the enemies of the Church. It is to him that we

are indebted for the holy device of the prayers of the Forty Hours on the days of carnival, to withdraw the faithful from the debaucheries which are ordinarily committed at that time.

At last the blessed Ignatius, after so many labours for the honour of Jesus Christ and for the salvation of His members, desiring nothing more than to be with Him, began to pray to Him, with continual sighs and groans, to grant him the grace of withdrawing him from his exile, to go and sing His praises eternally and to enjoy in repose and without any trouble His divine presence. Our Lord heard his prayers and even made known to him in advance, in a particular revelation, that He had granted them. In a letter which he then wrote to Eléonore Mascaregnas, who had been governess of the king of Spain Philip II, he took leave of her for ever and informed her that he would write to her no more; but that, being in heaven by the mercy of God, he would not fail to recommend her to Our Lord. Having therefore fallen sick toward the end of July of the year 1556, and seeing that this blessed moment was near, he confessed and communicated, as he was accustomed to do when he could not say Mass. On the 30th of the same month, toward evening, although the physicians who were treating him were all of the opinion that his illness was in no way dangerous, he called Father Polanque, who was his secretary, and, having made those who were in his room go out: “My hour,” he said to him, “is come; go and find the Pope and ask him for his blessing for me, that my soul may have more assurance in this terrible passage. Tell His Holiness also that if I go to a place where my prayers can avail anything, as I hope from the divine mercy, I shall not fail to pray for him, as I have done when I had most to pray for myself.” The secretary, not being able to believe, after the assurance of the physicians, that the matter was so urgent, begged the Saint to be pleased to let him wait until the next day to execute his order; the Saint, not wishing to make it appear, by too much eagerness, that he had had a particular revelation of the time and hour of his death, permitted it. Meanwhile he disposed himself more and more for death and passed the whole night in continual elevations of his mind toward God. The next day the secretary had only time to go and speak to the Pope. His Holiness showed much grief at the loss which the Church was about to suffer of a subject so useful and who was still rendering it so great a service, and sent him his blessing with a plenary indulgence. Thus the glorious founder of the Society of Jesus, being aged sixty-five years, of which he had passed thirty in the world, nineteen in his pilgrimages and his studies, and sixteen since the foundation of his Society, rendered his blessed spirit into the hands of his Creator, to receive from Him the immortal crown which so many holy actions had merited for him. His Order was then divided into twelve provinces and had at least a hundred colleges. Several of his disciples had already shed their blood for Jesus Christ, and others had died in the fatigues of preaching the Gospel, of baptising the infidels, of disputing against the heretics, and of journeys for the establishment of the kingdom of God. He left a happy posterity, which continues throughout the earth to ruin idolatry and heresies, to reform the morals of Christians, to bring up children, to instruct the ignorant, to visit prisons and hospitals, to relieve the poor and to procure an infinity of other goods to the Christian world. Never did the Roman empire extend its conquests as far as Ignatius, by his children, has extended his for the glory of their sovereign Master.

Another work would still be needed to make the necessary reflections on his virtues. He had the gift of tears and the gift of prayer in a very eminent degree, and he passed a great part of the day and the night in these exercises. God spoke to him continually at the bottom of his heart, and he listened to Him with a marvellous repose and relish. The least thing raised him to God and made him enter into a marvellous contemplation of His greatness and His perfections. He often had raptures and ecstasies, and he was always, in praying, so recollected and so attentive that he seemed as it were immovable. All his undertakings and all his actions are so many marks of his great love toward God, and he was so inflamed with it that he desired nothing else than to serve so good a Master, without regard to himself and to his own interests, which made him take these words for his motto: *Ad majorem Dei gloriam*: “To the greater glory of God.” As for his charity toward his neighbour, it appears by the inexpressible desire he had for the salvation of all the world, by the tenderness and goodwill he had for his enemies and for those very persons who undertook to destroy him and to ruin his Society, by his zeal to preserve peace even at the expense of his interests and those of his houses, by his

gentleness toward his disciples and by his readiness to excuse the most culpable actions or temptations. He had such low sentiments of himself that there are few saints who have carried humility so far. He regarded himself only as the last of creatures, and, if the good of the Church and of his neighbour could have permitted it, he would have wished to be trampled underfoot by everyone, or to be driven shamefully from the company of men. It is in this sentiment that he did what he could not to be general, and that he afterwards employed all his skill to have himself discharged of this burden, of which he fled the honour and lustre more than the weight.

The state of mendicity to which he often reduced himself shows sufficiently the love he had for poverty. We have already remarked that he received, from the time of his conversion, a great gift of chastity, and that he kept it inviolably and without contrary movements all the rest of his life. The admirable letter which he composed on obedience shows the esteem he had for that virtue, and how much it was at his heart; and, besides desiring to practise it continually, even by divesting himself of the office of superior, he practised it in effect on a thousand occasions in which he submitted his judgment to that of his inferiors. Nothing was capable of shaking his confidence in God; it seemed, on the contrary, that it increased with the difficulty of affairs, with the abandonment of men, with the privation of all help and with the most unhappy events. Finally, as not only these religious, but also those outside, and among others the great Philip Neri, founder of the Oratory of Rome, regarded him as a saint, so he was truly a saint, who possessed eminently the harmony of all the virtues.

His body was first buried in the church of the professed house, at the foot of the high altar, on the Gospel side, and, that very day, he cured of scrofula the daughter of Signor André Nerucci, who had been afflicted with it for five years. It was afterwards transported, in 1587, into the new church called the Great Jesus, *il Giesu*, and placed in the principal chapel, at the right side of the altar, with this inscription on the stone which covers it: “To Ignatius, founder of the Society of Jesus”; *Ignatio Societatis Jesu fundatori.*

The signal miracles which have since been worked, both at his tomb and at Barcelona by the power of his hair-shirt, and in other places, and which are found to the number of two hundred, with authentic testimonies, in the process of his beatification, obliged the Holy See at last to put him among the number of the saints: which was done on 12 March of the year 1622, by Pope Gregory XV. The Roman martyrology speaks of him with a very fine eulogy composed by Urban VIII. He has this glorious prerogative attributed to Saint Augustine by Saint Jerome in his Epistle lxxx, that all the heretics have hated and persecuted him, and that they have tried to fill the world with invectives and calumnies against him. But, as he was the faithful servant of God and the obedient child of the Church, he has this happiness, that all good people revere and praise him, and give a thousand thanks to God for having sent him in these latter times for the support and propagation of the Christian religion.

In the images which represent Saint Ignatius of Loyola, one sees Jesus Christ appearing to him laden with a cross. At the moment when the Saint was going to Rome with two companions to have his Order approved by the sovereign Pontiff, he entered alone into a little ruined sanctuary, which, repaired today, bears the name of Santa Maria della Strada; he wished to recommend there to God the work which lay nearest his heart. He saw there Jesus Christ presenting him to His Father, and he heard distinctly these words: “I will be propitious to you at Rome.”

At other times one finds in his image the name of Jesus surrounded with rays or flames. This name is in the air or on a book. One may see in it an allusion to the zeal of Saint Ignatius for the glory of God, or an allusion to these words of Our Lord Himself: “I am come to cast fire on the earth, and what will I but that it be kindled?”

Having related above the foundation of the Society of Jesus, we are going to speak briefly: 1st, of its extension in the various countries of Christendom; 2nd, of its constitution; 3rd, of the abolition and

re-establishment of the Order.

1st. Extension of the Order, from its creation to its abolition. In the very lifetime of Saint Ignatius, Henry VIII, king of England, had torn his country and his people from the Church. Ignatius had been able to oppose to it only prayer. However, Brouet and Salmeron were more fortunate in Ireland, which they abandoned only at the last extremity and when the island was absolutely forbidden to them. But, in spite of these persecutions, the Jesuits continued to venture to land on this inhospitable island. During this time other Jesuits were labouring with indefatigable ardour in Italy for the improvement of morals and the reform of the clergy. In 1606 the republic of Venice, then in conflict with the Holy See, having risen against ecclesiastical immunities and encroached on the jurisdiction of the Church, ordered the Jesuits, so well known for their attachment to the Holy See, to obey the decrees of the senate or to leave the republic. These, faithful to their principles, had to leave the city. Their house was immediately invaded, and the law claimed to have discovered there the strangest things. At this same epoch the king of France Henry IV, occupying himself seriously with bringing the Jesuits back into his kingdom, wished to know whether they were guilty or not. His ambassadors could obtain no explanation from the senate. After long negotiations the reconciliation took place, without however bringing about the reinstatement of the Jesuits. In 1656 Pope Alexander VI submitted the affair anew to the Senate, which ended by voting the admission of the Jesuits, who in fact returned on 19 January 1657. From then on the Society of Jesus remained peaceful, numerous and active in Italy. In France, the nationality of the first Jesuits and the monopoly of the University were from the beginning two obstacles to the progress of the Order. For ten years they lived in Paris without having either house or church of their own. At the end of that time, Guillaume Duprat, bishop of Clermont, gave them a house in which, under the name of Fathers of the college of Clermont (today the college of Louis-le-Grand), they fulfilled their laborious ministry in silence and without any exterior show. The opposition of the Sorbonne was very prejudicial to them. They became the object of daily discussions; people preached against them, insulted them in the streets, and finally the bishop of Paris, Eustache de Belley, forbade them all ecclesiastical functions in his diocese. They withdrew without reply to Saint-Germain, and obtained from the munificence of the bishop of Clermont a college in the little town of Billom, chief town of a canton in the Puy-de-Dôme, where from the beginning they counted more than seven hundred pupils (1557). The bishop of Pamiers likewise gave them a college in Guyenne, and the Cardinal de Tournon a third college in the town of Tournon. Their affair having been brought before the assembly of the States of Poissy, they were at last legally admitted throughout France in 1561. From then on they lived in conformity with the spirit of their Order, without being disturbed. In 1564 they opened at the college of Clermont their courses in philosophy and literature; they obtained a rare success. But a new rector of the University, on entering on his functions, ordered the Jesuits to close their school. They obeyed. Their pupils were less docile, and their murmurs decided the ministry to authorise anew the opening of the courses. The doctors of the University then thought of means of accusing the Jesuits publicly, and, while waiting for the occasion, spread in secret the most signal calumnies against the Society. But the Jesuits won their cause, and the majority of the parliament voted in their favour. Re-established from then on in their rights, they continued to prove their zeal by their preaching and their writings. They thus passed through times of troubles and civil wars.

Henry III having died under the dagger of Jacques Clément, the Huguenots found the occasion excellent for renewing their calumnious imputations and making the Jesuits pass for regicides. They published letters and fragments of sermons attributed to this or that Jesuit, or, what was more convenient, to the Jesuits in general. But their innocence shone out especially in the trial of Jacques Clément. Not one contemporary writer accused them of any participation whatever, direct or indirect, in this crime. As for the part they took in the League, it is established that they never associated themselves with it, but that they laboured with incomparable zeal for the recognition of King Henry IV by the people and by the Roman court. They were remarkable for the reserve, order, dignity and moderation of their sermons. In spite of this wise and prudent conduct, the parliament and the University resolved to hasten the fall of the Jesuits before Henry IV had

himself taken the direction of the affairs of the State. The University renewed their trial, but Sully stopped the whole procedure. Unhappily the attempt of Chatel, who had studied with the Jesuits, sufficed to make them responsible for his crime. Father Guéret was accused, but the tribunals most hostile to the Jesuits, finding not the least indication of guilt, had to pronounce his acquittal. However that may be, Father Guignard died on 7 January 1595 at the hands of the executioner, not as a criminal, but as an innocent victim of the vengeance of the parliament; the goods of the Jesuits were confiscated; they were forbidden their habit, the education of children and public teaching; libels paid for with their money were launched against them in profusion, proclaiming them factious men and seducers of youth. Henry IV had difficulty in approving this iniquitous sentence, far from having, as has been said, made it valid for all France by a special edict. The king on the contrary protected the Jesuits as much as he could. They continued their evangelical labours in various provinces, such as Languedoc and Guyenne, where the parliaments were not hostile to them. Thus it was by a decree of the parliament of Paris of 29 December 1594, and not by a royal edict, that they were banished from a portion of France.

In 1603 Henry IV published an edict by virtue of which they were re-established in all their goods and recalled throughout the kingdom, on condition that they should swear obedience and fidelity to the king and to the authorities of the kingdom; that they should submit to the laws of the State; that they should not found new colleges, inherit real property or accept successions except with the consent of the king. They then received houses and colleges in many towns which had not yet had Jesuits. But it needed a firm and persevering will on the part of the king to have this edict of recall registered by the parliament, which resisted for a long time. The king honoured them with his confidence, built them a magnificent college at La Flèche and restored that of Dijon. However, the Jesuits did not remain long in repose. On 14 May 1610 Henry IV was assassinated by Ravaillac, and this abominable crime was again imputed to them, with as much iniquity as relentlessness; but no one at court believed in their complicity, and the queen-mother left them all her confidence. Their innocence was established by the acts of the procedure, which they presented in 1611 to the queen with a justificatory memorial, without anyone rising up against the authenticity of these acts. In spite of the incessant intrigues, the underhand manoeuvres and the violent diatribes of the Protestants, Louis XIII was extremely favourable to them, and Cardinal Richelieu energetically took up their defence. Louis XIV had the same inclination for them, as had Mazarin and Louvois. But this high favour never reduced their adversaries to silence. The Fathers were attacked principally by Pascal in the *Provincial Letters*, which Voltaire, Voltaire though he was, blamed and accused of falsehood. In spite of the influence and authority they enjoyed, people thought they could make them responsible for the persecution of which the Jansenists were the object, for the dragonnades, for the revocation of the Edict of Nantes, etc., etc. Finally, under the reign of Louis XV, the Jesuits succumbed to the attacks of the Encyclopaedists and the Jansenists, as we shall show in the sketch of the abolition of the Order.

Germany received the Jesuits in 1551; it was Ferdinand of Austria who first called them into his States. They obtained from the duke of Bavaria a chair of theology at the university of Ingolstadt. They preached at the court and in the city of Vienna, at Mainz and at Cologne. Soon afterwards Cardinal Farnese, legate of the Pope, persuaded the German bishops to found seminaries for the education of their clergy and to entrust them to the direction of the Jesuits. From 1559 they established themselves in the capital of Bavaria, where a magnificent college was built for them. It was the same at Cologne in 1556, at Trier in 1561, at Augsburg in 1563, at Ellvangen, at Dillingen, Würzburg, Aschaffenburg, Mainz and in many other German towns. The Society of Jesus spread very rapidly throughout Germany, and in the very lifetime of Saint Ignatius it already had twenty-six colleges and ten residences there. This number increased from year to year, and soon there was no longer a town of Germany of any importance which did not possess a college of Jesuits. The zeal they displayed everywhere soon made them so odious to all the sects that, as early as 1588, their enemies wrung from Prince Christopher Bathori a decree of expulsion from the principality of Transylvania. At the end of seven years, however, they were recalled. In 1630 a new persecution arose; their college of Clausenbourg

was pillaged; some Fathers were wounded, and one of them killed. In the space of twenty years they were forced to flee three or four times. At last, in 1687, the emperor Leopold happily made use of the Jesuits to restore Catholicism in Transylvania. In Hungary they were harshly persecuted; but the emperor having put an end to the political disorders, the bishops founded new colleges and entrusted them to the Jesuits, who soon became as numerous in Hungary as in Austria. The same lot was reserved for the Jesuits in Bohemia. Having become the object of the special hatred of the Protestants and the victim of their fury, they had to abandon the country; but they returned there, under the protection of the emperor, following the events of 1620. They had much to suffer in Moravia and in Upper Austria until the day when Catholicism was re-established and consolidated there.

As soon as war broke out between Charles V and Francis I, all Spaniards were forced to leave France. The Spanish Jesuits went to Brussels and spread rapidly through the Low Countries. They created a college at Louvain, which became later one of the greatest establishments of the Order. They obtained another college at Antwerp, and little by little they were able to establish themselves in several other towns of the Low Countries. They were not fortunate in Russia. In Portugal and in Spain their history takes on importance only at the moment of their real ruin.

2nd. Constitution of the Society of Jesus. Its constitution, as to its essence and its base, was given to it by Saint Ignatius. Laynez and the other generals determined the organisation in its detail more particularly and adapted it to circumstances. This organisation is mixed. Supreme authority resides in the hands of the professed, who form the body of the Society. The General Congregation, that is to say the representatives of the Order elected by the professed, elects the General, who must reside at Rome and is subject only to the Pope. The authority of the general is unlimited, in the sense that the council of assistants given to him has only a consultative voice. However, this authority is restricted in other respects, for he is obliged to follow the fundamental laws of the constitution. He can, it is true, dispense from them in particular cases, but he has in no way the right to abolish or modify the constitutions of the Order.

After the general come the Provincials, who are dependent on no one in the exercise of their power and are bound to render account only to the general. After the provincials come the Superiors of the professed houses, the Rectors of the colleges, and the Superiors of the residences or of the affiliated colleges. All these offices are renewed every three years, whereas the dignity of the general is for life.

The authority of the general, the provincials and the superiors is restricted further in that they have at their side a certain number of consultors or Assistants and an Admonitor.

He who is admitted into the Society no longer belongs to his family; he is subject solely to the direction of his superiors and to the rules of the Order. The Postulant is admitted after some serious trials and after sufficient explanations have been given on the difficulties of his vocation. The Novice lives for two years in the deepest retreat, wholly given over to his reflections and to prayer. He is still free at the end of this time and is bound by no vow. This term elapsed, he is put to study, and he spends two years in the study of rhetoric and belles-lettres, three years and often more in that of philosophy and the physical and mathematical sciences. These studies finished, he must himself teach in a low class and, in the space of five or six years, go through all the classes up to the highest. It is only at the age of twenty-eight to thirty that the Jesuit begins to study theology, for four to six years, and at the end of this study, rarely before the age of thirty-two, he is ordained priest. At the end of each year there is a severe examination, and no one may go up into a higher class unless he has shown himself capable of it. At the end of this whole long course of studies there is a new and very serious examination on all the parts of philosophical and theological knowledge, and the result decides in part the future admission of the subject to the profession of the Order. Thus prepared by a long practice of life and by varied and solid studies, the Jesuit is subjected to a new time of probation. He is, in truth, ordained priest, but he cannot yet exercise functions; he is obliged to return to the novitiate and to renounce for a whole year every kind of study and every exterior relation. This time is called the school of

the heart. His solitude is interrupted only by some catechisms given to little children and some missions given to the country people. Only then is the Jesuit admitted to grade, that is to say to the last vow as professed or spiritual coadjutor. The essential difference between these two classes consists in this, that the professed alone constitute the body of the Society properly so called. There are therefore four classes in the hierarchy: 1st, the Professed, who make, besides the three ordinary vows, the fourth vow of absolute obedience to the Pope: it is from their ranks only that the general and the superiors are chosen; 2nd, the spiritual Coadjutors, who are the co-operators of the professed in teaching and preaching, and the temporal Coadjutors, that is to say the lay brothers who do the manual work and fulfil the lowest functions; 3rd, the Scholastics, that is to say all those who are pursuing their studies and have not yet received grade; 4th, the Novices.

All these members live, according to the class to which they belong, in professed houses, colleges or novitiates.

3rd. Abolition and restoration of the Society. The Order of the Jesuits had for more than two hundred years displayed a fruitful and brilliant activity in all the countries of Europe, and founded a multitude of missions among the pagans of the whole earth, when it was struck by a formidable double catastrophe in the Iberian peninsula and in France, a catastrophe in consequence of which the Order was abolished by the authority of the Church. In France the Encyclopaedists, with a view to annihilating Christianity, resolved on the ruin of the Jesuits and found powerful auxiliaries at court. The weapons they used were falsehood, calumny and pamphlets. On 5 January 1757, an attempt at assassination having taken place against King Louis XV, the Jesuits were at once accused of complicity; but not the slightest trace of complicity on their part could be discovered. Meanwhile came the news of the abolition of the Order of the Jesuits in Portugal. The famous Sébastien-José de Carvalho, better known under the title of marquis de Pombal, had put into circulation every kind of pamphlet directed against them; immense riches in Uruguay and Paraguay were attributed to them, and it was spread everywhere that they were threatening the world with universal domination. Pombal exploited these calumnious rumours marvellously. The Jesuits were violently driven from the Portuguese missions in America; and to give an appearance of legality to iniquitous measures, Pope Benedict XIV was pressed to give orders to visit and reform the Order, which, it was said, had completely fallen away from its pious and holy statutes. Some time afterwards it was claimed that in the night of 3 to 4 September 1758 an attempt at assassination had been made against the king, and the Jesuits were designated as the authors of this crime; hence their banishment from Portugal and the abolition of their Order in that kingdom, in 1759. Scarcely had the news of this abolition reached France when at once the kingdom was flooded with a multitude of pamphlets paid for by the ministry. They were represented as men dangerous to the State, stirring up nothing but trouble and sedition everywhere. Such was the state of minds in France when it was learned that Father Lavalette, procurator of the house of the Jesuits at Martinique, had made unhappy operations, had been declared bankrupt and excluded from the Order. This disobedience to the formal prescriptions of the Holy See, and especially of Benedict XIV, had the most disastrous consequences. The enemies of the Jesuits knew how to exploit it in every way and had a lawsuit brought against the whole Society before the Parliament. The general of the Order, and the Order in his person, were condemned. The loss of this lawsuit was most disastrous for the Order. Its immediate consequence was that the confraternities, pious associations and retreats of the Jesuits were abolished as dangerous to the State. On 6 August 1761 the parliament hastened to publish a decree which forbade Frenchmen entry into the Society, ordered the closing of its colleges and declared incapable of the service of the State whoever in future should follow their teaching. Louis XV annulled the decree of the parliament at the beginning of 1762; but the latter refused to register the royal decree, and the king saw himself obliged to withdraw it. On 6 August 1762 the parliament gave a new decree by virtue of which the Order of the Jesuits was abolished as impious and sacrilegious in its doctrine and dangerous to the State in its practice; the vows were proclaimed null, and command was given to the members of the abolished Society to abandon their houses and lay aside their habit. Most of the

parliaments followed the example of that of Paris, with the exception of those of Franche-Comté, Alsace, Flanders and Artois. The Pope and the episcopate declared themselves for the maintenance of their rights, and justice seemed this time about to come to light, when the Jansenists and the philosophers took up their old manoeuvres again and pushed them further than ever. The archbishop of Paris, Mgr de Beaumont, having taken them under his protection and having published a pastoral letter in their favour, was exiled to La Trappe. At Brest a Jesuit was hanged; at Paris a secular priest who had dared to take up their defence was hanged.

In 1764, seeing that the bishops were employing them in the pastoral ministry, it was demanded of them that they should declare on oath that they considered their Order harmful and guilty, a demand which, with a few rare exceptions, they courageously resisted. An edict surreptitiously wrung from the king in November 1764 confirmed all the parliamentary iniquities and declared the Order definitively abolished, granting its members authorisation to live as private persons in the kingdom. This edict decided Pope Clement XIII to speak in his turn, and on 7 January 1765 he promulgated the bull *Apostolicum*, which approved the Society of Jesus anew. But the tempest unleashed against the Jesuits did not confine itself to France and Portugal; it had its echo in Spain, in Naples and in Sicily. A sedition having taken place in Spain, it was imputed to the Order of the Jesuits, and in the night of 31 March 1767 they were expelled from the kingdom. More than six thousand Jesuits were crammed into ships and deported to the States of the Church; Spanish soil was forbidden them under pain of death. Thus, without accusation, without inquiry, without judgment, the Order was exiled and despoiled of its goods, and all these iniquitous measures were approved by the so-called pragmatic sanction of Charles III of 3 April 1767. In vain did Cardinal Braschi, who later became Pope Pius VI, demonstrate the falsity of the letters which had served as the text of accusation; in vain did Clement XIII complain, in a letter addressed to Charles III, of the iniquitous treatment with which an innocent Order was struck: the consummated iniquity was maintained. The same lot befell the Jesuits in Sicily and at Naples, where on 6 November, by order of the prime minister, the marquis de Tanucci, they were seized, embarked and deported to the States of the Church, just as at Parma, from which they were sent away on 7 February 1768, in spite of the paternal and energetic protests of Clement XIII.

The Order remained innocent in the eyes of the Catholic world, covered as it was by the protection and confidence of the Holy Father. However, Pope Clement XIV, beset on all sides by the courts, ordered in the month of October 1772 the closing of the Roman college, forbade the Jesuits teaching, preaching and confession, and had the archives of their houses put under seal. The same measures were taken in other towns of the States of the Church. Thus little by little was prepared the brief of suppression *Dominus ac Redemptor noster*. Clement XIV condemned the Order, according to his own words, only “for love of peace, and to re-establish good understanding between the Holy See and the various cabinets of Europe.” Frederick, king of Prussia, forbade that the brief be officially communicated to the authorities of Silesia, and made known to the Holy See through his chargé d’affaires that he was resolved to maintain the Jesuits, because they were the best priests of his kingdom. Catherine, empress of Russia, acted in the same way toward the Jesuits of her States, and when Pope Pius VI ascended the throne, she asked him for the reinstatement of the Order, which the Pope, in spite of his goodwill, could not yet grant. Meanwhile the Jesuits strove to preserve the spirit of their Order under the name of Clerks of the Sacred Heart and Missionaries of the Faith.

Pope Pius VII, at the express request of Paul I, re-established the Society for all Russia in all its former rights and privileges, and authorised it to elect a general in place of the vicar general it had had until then. Ferdinand IV, king of Naples, asked for their re-establishment and offered to return to them all the goods which had been taken from them. The Pope granted his request by his brief of 31 July 1804, and a novitiate was erected at Naples. On 7 August 1814 the Bull *Sollicitudo omnium Ecclesiarum* solemnly revoked the brief of Clement XIV and re-established the Society in all Catholic countries. Belgium and Ireland tolerated them; Naples, Sardinia and Modena entrusted to them the teaching of youth; Ferdinand VI re-established

them in Spain in the possession of their goods: the revolution of 1820 drove them out; the restoration of 1823 brought them back. The revolution of 1830 restricted their privileges; in 1835 they were definitively sent away from the kingdom.

In France they were at first tacitly tolerated, and they were legally re-established in 1822; but the government of the Bourbons was constrained by the Chambers in 1828 to restrict the influence of the Society, to submit their houses of education to the University and to watch them closely. After the July revolution the University had the teaching of youth forbidden them, and in 1845 Gregory XVI consented that the Jesuits should be amicably sent away from France. They were nevertheless tolerated there as individuals; they were even left a certain number of houses, and the government pretended not to notice that they continued to receive novices there and to exercise the pastoral ministry in all the dioceses where people hastened to call them. The Republic of 1848 replaced them under the common law and let them enjoy the same liberty as all other citizens. Since then they have opened many colleges in France; they have there besides a great number of residences for the ministry, several novitiates, houses of studies and of retreat; they also direct some seminaries.

Portugal sent them away in 1833, and Brazil refused to admit them. They were re-established in Switzerland, then expelled from that country. They met with little opposition in England; however, only Jesuits of English origin are tolerated. They established themselves in Malta in 1845 and spread actively through the States of America as in the East Indies. On the other hand their situation was overthrown in Russia. In 1813 they were expelled from Saint Petersburg and Moscow; in 1820 from all Russia and Poland, because they were considered the greatest obstacle to the projected union of the Russians and the Poles in the schismatic Greco-Russian church. They are generally not disturbed in the States of the Austrian monarchy. M. de Bismarck has just violently expelled them from all the States of Germany subject to the Prussian yoke. After having persecuted the Jesuits, he is persecuting the German Catholics: thus Providence punishes them for having collaborated in the foundation of a heretical and tyrannical empire.

### Writings of Saint Ignatius of Loyola

Saint Ignatius composed the book of the *Spiritual Exercises*, which Louis de Ponte regards as, so to speak, an immediate revelation from God, and which, on the testimony of Saint Francis de Sales, has converted more sinners than it contains letters; it has the character of everything Saint Ignatius did, and is above all a religious act. It is as it were the guide and the light of Christian souls who seriously wish to assure their salvation: it teaches them in effect to know themselves, to seek the true end of life, to flee sin, to attach themselves to the cross of Jesus Christ, to accept sorrows and sacrifices courageously, and thus, hardened and enlightened by meditation on the great truths of the faith, to be penetrated with divine love and to abandon themselves fully to that Father who is in heaven and wills us to be there near Him. In a word, “the book of the *Spiritual Exercises*,” says Father de Ravignan, “is a manual of retreat, a method of meditation, and at the same time a collection of thoughts and precepts suited to direct the soul in the work of interior sanctification and in the choice of a state of life.”

Besides the *Exercises*, we have some *Letters*, some *Maxims and Sentences*, and finally his *Constitutions*. Everywhere the style is vigorous, lively, urgent and full of images. We have drawn his life from the Rev. Father Pierre Ribadeneira, who was a witness of many of the things he wrote, and who learned the rest from several persons very worthy of credit. We have also made use of the excellent *Life of Saint Ignatius* by the Rev. Father Bouhours, and of the *Encyclopaedic Dictionary of Catholic Theology*, translated by Goschler.

## Saint Firme, Bishop of Tagaste, in Africa, and Martyr (4th century)

Baronius, in his *Annals*, has made the eulogy of our generous bishop. Before him Saint Augustine, in his book *On Lying*, addressed to Consentius, had spoken of him in these terms: “A man was found whom his virtues and his learning raised to the episcopal see of Tagaste (today Tagilt or Soukarras, a ruined town of Numidia and the native place of Saint Augustine). Firme was his name: he bore it well, and his acts always answered to it. People were accustomed to repeat in his praise: ‘Our bishop is firm in name, but firmer still in will: *Firmus nomine, firmius voluntate*.’

“An occasion presented itself in which this proverbial firmness of the pious and learned bishop could be seen shining in its full light. A man, pursued by the hatred of the idolatrous emperors who were the predecessors of the great Constantine of happy memory, came to take refuge in the house of Firme: the latter covered him with his shield and declared himself his protector. This man was called Octavien. An order of the emperor soon arrived, enjoining the pious and compassionate bishop to deliver up his protégé. Firme answered the imperial agents: ‘I can neither lie nor deliver up a man: now, I have promised this man to withdraw him from the cruelty of your master.’ The envoys of the emperor reported the words of the Saint to their chief. The charity of Firme cost him his life: there were no tortures which he did not endure at the hands of the idolatrous emperor; but his generous confession has covered him with glory, and his memory will live through all the ages. Brought before the emperor, he inspired the prince with such admiration that he obtained without difficulty the pardon of his protégé.”

*Acta Sanctorum*, 31 July.

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[1] A Greek by birth and of an illustrious family, he was brought up at Rome, then went to Milan (Lombardy), where he was admitted, by Blessed Castritien, archbishop of that see, into the clergy of the Faustinian basilica. His virtues soon acquired him such a reputation that at the death of Castritien he was elected, with a unanimous voice, to succeed him. Not content with preaching Jesus Christ in his diocese, he undertook to evangelise all Liguria. His zeal cost him his life. His body, deposited in a basilica dedicated under his invocation, was discovered in the 15th century, and transferred into the basilica of Milan. — *Ambrosian Breviary* of 1635.

[2] Or rather in Phrygia Salutaris. — In the 4th century of Jesus Christ, Phrygia was divided into Phrygia Salutaris, to the north, cap. Synnada; Phrygia Pacatiana, to the south, cap. Laodicea; Isauria, to the south of the latter; Lycaonia, to the south-east of Pacatiana.

[3] Cf. *Martyrology of the Bollandists*, on 24 July; Roman martyrology, on 30 August; and martyrology of the Basilians, on 6 September. Saint Fantin of Thessalonica (30 August, 6 September) appears to be the same as Saint Fantin of Tauriana (24 and 31 July). Ancient Tauriana is today called Seminara: it is a small town of 6,000 inhabitants, in Calabria Ulteriore I.

[4] Guipuscoa formed part of the country of the Cantabrians. Subdued with difficulty by the Romans under Augustus, it passed successively under the domination of the Goths, of the Moors, of the kings of Navarre and of the kings of Castile (from 1200).

# 1 August

## Roman Martyrology

At Rome, on the Esquiline hill,[1] the Dedication of Saint Peter in Chains. 439. — At Antioch in Syria (today Antakieh), in Turkey in Asia, the martyrdom of the seven Maccabee brothers, who were put to death with their mother under King Antiochus Epiphanes. Their relics have been transported to Rome and placed in the church of Saint Peter in Chains. 164 B.C. — At Rome, the holy virgins Faith, Hope and Charity, who obtained the crown of martyrdom under the emperor Hadrian.[2] 137. — Again at Rome, on the Latin Way, the holy martyrs Bon, priest, Fauste, Maur and nine others, of whom mention is made in the Acts of Saint Stephen, pope. — At Philadelphia, in Arabia, the holy martyrs Cyrille, Aquilas, Pierre, Domitien, Ruf and Ménandre, who were crowned on the same day. — At Perge, in Pamphylia, the holy martyrs Léonce, Atte, Alexandre and six others, labourers, who were beheaded during the persecution of Diocletian, under the governor Flavien. 4th century. — At Girona, in Catalonia, the birth into heaven of Saint Félix, martyr, who, after various sorts of torments, was torn with blows of the whip by order of the governor Dacien until he had rendered his invincible soul to Jesus Christ. 304. — At Vercelli, Saint Eusèbe, bishop and martyr, who, for having confessed the Catholic faith, was banished by the emperor Constantius to Scythopolis, and from there into Cappadocia; afterwards, having returned to his church, he was martyred there by the Arians, his

persecutors. His memory is particularly honoured on 15 December, the day on which he was consecrated bishop. 370. — In the diocese of Paris, Saint Justin, martyr.[3] 287. — At Vienne, in Dauphiné, Saint Vère, bishop.[4] 136. — At Winchester, in England, Saint Ethelwold, bishop of that see and confessor. 984. — In the territory of the Lieuven (*Lisvinus* or *Lexuinu pagus*, part of Upper Normandy), Saint Némèse, confessor.

## Martyrology of France, Revised and Augmented

At Vienne, in Dauphiné, Saint Nectaire, thirteenth bishop of that see and confessor, already cited in the martyrology of France of 5 May. 375. — At Soissons, Saint Bandry (*Bandaridus*), also called Bandared and Bauderik, bishop of that see and martyr, whose life we shall give on 9 August. 566. — At Corbeil (Seine-et-Oise), formerly of the diocese of Paris, now of the diocese of Versailles, Saint Exupère or Spire, first bishop of Bayeux and confessor. 140. — At Bourges, Saint Arcade, archbishop of that see and confessor. He succeeded Saint Honorat and inherited the virtues of his illustrious predecessor. Very learned in the science of Christian perfection, he directed several great persons in this way, among others the holy abbot Patrocle, whom, because of his virtues, he raised to the dignity of deacon. Arcade was one of the lights of the Council of Orléans. He was buried in the church of Saint-Ursin, and God has glorified his tomb by several miracles. About 545. — In the diocese of Nantes, Saint Friard, recluse and patron of labourers, and Saint Secondel or

Second, deacon and solitary. 577. — At Marchiennes (Nord), in the diocese of Cambrai, Saint Jonat, disciple of Saint Amand and abbot of the ancient monastery of Marchiennes (*Marchianae*, Order of Saint Benedict). 691 or 695. — In the diocese of Tarbes, Saint Sever, parish priest of a parish of Bigorre. He made himself admired above all by his charity toward the poor; Saint Gregory of Tours praises him for his alms. His relics, transferred to the abbey of Rustan, caused it to be called thenceforth Saint-Sever de Rustan (*S. Severus de Rustango* or *de Russitano*, Order of Saint Benedict). The town which formed around it bears the same name. Date uncertain. — In the former abbey of Saint-Sauveur d'Anchin (*Acquiscindum*, *Aquicignus*, Order of Saint Benedict), in the diocese of Cambrai, the venerable Alard, first abbot of that monastery. He was called from the abbey of Hasnon (*Hasnoniense*, Order of Saint Benedict), in the same diocese, to govern that of Anchin, by Gérard II, bishop of Cambrai and Arras (1079). The gentleness of his character, his deep humility, the care with which he followed all the exercises, even the solicitude he brought to the management of temporal affairs, all contributed to develop the Christian spirit in that house. He was buried under the first marble of the basilica of Sainte-Marie d'Anchin. 1087. — In the diocese of Valence, the blessed Bertrand de Garrigue, missionary. 1230. — At Ghent, in Belgium, feast of the elevation of the body of Saint Bavon or Allowin, anchorite and patron of that city. He is named in the Roman martyrology on 1 October, under which day we shall give some details of his life. — Again at Ghent, translation of the relics of Saint Guénolé (*Winwaloëus*), abbot and founder of the monastery of Landevenec, in Brittany. He is also called Guingalois, Wennolé, Guignolé, Waloy. We gave his life on 3 March. — In Haute-Savoie, in the diocese of Annecy, the blessed Pierre Lefèvre du Villaret, first priest of the Society of Jesus. 1546.

## Additions Made from the Bollandists and Other Hagiographers

At Lucca and at Modena, in Italy, Saint Pérégrin, also called Pélégrin and Pellegrini, hermit. He was a prince sprung from the royal blood of Ireland: he renounced from his youth the possession of his States and even abandoned his country to live in perfect detachment from visible things. After having visited the Holy Places in Palestine, he withdrew to a spot in the Apennine mountains, near Modena, and led there for forty years a very austere life. It is from him that the chain of the Apennines took the name of Monti di Santi Pellegrini. 643. — In Holland, the blessed Josse de Schoonhoven, Carthusian, martyred by the persecutors of the 16th century. — At Antioch, in Syria, Saint Eléazar, martyr. Year of the world 3834. — At Rome, with the holy martyrs Bon, Fauste and Maure, cited in the Roman martyrology of this day, Saints Calomniose, Jean, Exupère, Cyrille, Basile, Théodore, Cartule and Honorat, martyrs. 3rd century. — At Perge, in Pamphylia,

with Saints Léonce, Atte and Alexandre, of today's Roman martyrology, Saints Mnésithée, Cyriaque, Ciudée, Menée, Catune and Euclée, martyrs. Under Diocletian. — At Girona, in Catalonia, Saint Romain, martyr, companion of Saint Félix of Girona, cited in the Roman martyrology of this day. 304. — At Rome, the holy martyrs Seconde or Secondine, Donatule, Secondole, Maxime, Juste; and Saints Manandre, Profune, Silvain and Donat, likewise martyrs, cited in the martyrology of Saint Jerome. — At Aquila, a town of the kingdom of Italy, in Further Abruzzo, Saint Juste, virgin and martyr. After she had endured for a long time the horrors of a foul prison, she was exposed for three days on a pyre; but the flames respected her, and her executioners were obliged to take her life with arrows. Under Diocletian probably. — In the diocese of Ferrara (*Forum Allieni*), in the kingdom of Italy, Saint Lion or Léon, bishop of that see and confessor, whose body was transferred to Voghenzo (*Viguentix*). 4th century. — At Glower or Gower, in the principality of Wales, in the west of Great Britain, Saint Kined or Kinelh, confessor and hermit. Of illustrious birth, he left his riches, put on a monk's habit and passed his life in the solitudes of the country of Wales. His body formerly rested at Glower and was held in great veneration there. 6th century. — In the same principality of Wales, Saint Almède, virgin and martyr; a church has been dedicated under her invocation in that region. 6th century. — At Verona, on the Adige, in Venetia, Saint Marie, virgin, surnamed Consolatrix, sister of Saint Annon, bishop of that see. Her body rests in a church dedicated under her invocation at Verona. It is a monument which the gratitude of the inhabitants of that city raised to her for having delivered them from the scourge of famine. 8th century. — In the ancient and celebrated Benedictine abbey of Vallombrosa (*Vallis Umbrosa*), founded in 1060 in the grand duchy of Tuscany by Saint Jean Gualbert, feast of the translation of the relics of the blessed Rodulphe, Rustique, Erice, Albert Jérôme, Mélior, Bénigne, Orland, Thésaure and Michel. 1604.

### Movable Feasts of August

The Sunday after the feast of the Assumption, Saint Joachim, father of the most holy Virgin.[5]

The Sunday after the Octave of the Assumption, Feast of the most pure heart of the blessed Virgin Mary.

The first Sunday of August, in the diocese of Bayeux, Saint Spire or Exupère, whose life we give on this day. — The second Sunday of August, in the same diocese, octave of Saint Spire or Exupère. — The Sunday within the octave of the Assumption, in the diocese of Autun, feast of Saint Symphorien, martyr, patron of the diocese, whose life we shall give on the 22nd of this month. — The first Sunday of August, in the diocese of Séez, feast of all the holy bishops of that Church.

## The Seven Maccabee Brothers, Their Mother and the Holy Old Man Eleazar, Martyred at Antioch in Syria, in Turkey in Asia

*161 and 164 before Jesus Christ. — King of Syria: Antiochus IV, Epiphanes.*

> *When one thinks of the goal with great love, one enters upon the course with great courage.*
>
> *Saint Augustine, Sermons.*

Although these illustrious brothers, says Saint Augustine, suffered martyrdom several centuries before the birth of Jesus Christ, they nevertheless endured it for the faith of Jesus Christ. The merit of these martyrs must indeed be great, for the Church to have inserted their memory in her ecclesiastical office, an honour which she has paid neither to Jeremiah, nor to Isaiah, nor to any other martyr of the written law; not even to Abraham, nor to Moses nor to David, although the first was the stock of the people of God; the second, the great lawgiver of the Old Testament; and the last, the head of the royal family from which Our Lord was pleased to draw His temporal origin. It is therefore our duty to instruct the faithful today on the quality of the sufferings of these glorious martyrs, and on the generosity with which they, with their holy mother, endured death for the observance of the law of God and of the traditions of their fathers.

Antiochus IV, surnamed Epiphanes, or the Illustrious, and ironically Epimanes, or the Madman, king of Asia, having made himself master of Palestine, and having taken Jerusalem, from which he carried off all the sacred and profane riches, and having had more than a hundred thousand of its inhabitants slaughtered, formed the detestable design of destroying entirely the religion of the Jews by forcing them everywhere to adore idols and to trample under foot the law of Moses. Having therefore returned to Antioch, he sent into Judaea the most barbarous of his officers, with an order to profane the temple of Solomon which was at Jerusalem, and that which the Samaritans had built on Mount Gerizim (Palestine), dedicating the first to Olympian Jupiter and the other to Jupiter the Hospitable; and, moreover, to compel, by every kind of torment, what remained of the faithful among the Jews to renounce Judaism and embrace the religion of the Gentiles. This impious officer forgot nothing for the execution of this order: he established on every side idolatrous judges and lieutenants who forced the weakest to immolate victims on the altars of the idols, and made a horrible butchery of all the faithful who resisted their tyranny. Among these martyrs were found two holy women: for having despised the prohibition to circumcise their children, they were dragged publicly through the city, with these children hanging at their breasts, and afterwards flung down from the top of the walls. These four innocent victims thus gloriously shed their blood for the honour of the true God. Holy Scripture does not say, nor does Josephus, whether this city was Jerusalem or another city of Judaea. However that may be, several of the faithful having withdrawn into grottoes and caves to celebrate the solemnity of the Sabbath there, they were denounced to Philip, governor of Jerusalem, who had them burned alive, without their daring to defend themselves, because of the respect they bore to that holy day, on which they persuaded themselves that it was not lawful to take up arms.

But those who showed the greatest generosity, and whose combats and victories the Holy Spirit has described to us most fully, were Eleazar, an old man ninety years of age, and seven brothers still very young, with their mother, named Salomona, or Salome, who had brought them up and strengthened them in the fear of God and in the love of His commandments. Eleazar was a priest of the race of Aaron and of the family of Jarib, the most considerable of the priestly families; a man who had grown old in the worship of God and in the study of the law and of the holy Scriptures, in which he had become very learned; and it is for this reason that it is said in the second book of the Maccabees that he was *de primoribus scribarum*, one of the first among the scribes. His virtue, his learning, his dignity, and the authority given him on the one side by his white hair, and on the other by the majesty of his bearing and the grace of his face, brought it about that, out of respect, he was taken to Antioch; it was hoped that, being in the royal city, he would more easily be brought to comply with the prince’s wishes. Great instances were made to him for this, and his friends, who were among the chief men of the court, employed all their authority to win him and overcome his constancy and resolution. Eleazar resisted them courageously and protested that neither loss of goods, nor torments, nor death would ever bring him to renounce his duty and abandon the law of his sovereign Lord. An attempt was made by violence to make him swallow pork, the use of which was forbidden to the Jews as an unclean meat, but it was not possible to overcome his constancy. At last he was condemned to death, and was led to the place of public executions. Then his friends, moved by a false compassion for him, told him that it was very easy for them to save his life, provided he would only pretend to eat meats immolated to the gods. But this great man, who was not ignorant of the infamy and impiety of this dissimulation, answered on the spot that he preferred to die rather than make himself guilty of so shameful and scandalous a sacrilege; “for,” he said, “what example should I give by it to the young, and how many there would be who, believing that Eleazar, at the age of ninety, had embraced the superstition of the Gentiles, fearing besides to lose a few moments of this passing life, would themselves engage in this impiety, and would draw down by that means on my old age an eternal reproach and curse. But even if my example should be contagious to no one, would God be ignorant of my dissimulation, and could I ever, dead or alive, escape the rigour of His just punishments? I shall therefore die with constancy and with joy for the law of God, and I shall leave in dying, to the young, an example of fidelity, so that no torment may be able to make them abandon the religion of their fathers.” This

answer so embittered his false friends that they abandoned him to the executioners, who put him to death by several very cruel torments. As for the seven young brothers whose memory the Church keeps today, the historian Josephus says that they were of the village of Susandre, and that the eldest was named Machabée, the second Abel or Aber, the third Machir, the fourth Judas, the fifth Achaz, the sixth Areth or Arath, and the seventh Jacob. They were nevertheless all called Maccabees: whether because of the eldest, or because this name, which means in Hebrew a person who fights generously, suited them very well. Saint Gregory of Nazianzus calls Eleazar, of whom we have just spoken, their father; but this must be understood rather according to the spirit than according to the flesh, that is, that he was their master and these young children his disciples: since Holy Scripture, which speaks of them immediately after describing Eleazar's martyrdom, nowhere indicates that they were his children. They were also taken to Antioch, and the king undertook himself to win them and force them to abandon the law of God. He used at first promises and threats, assuring them that if they would only eat pork he would load them with favours and make them very powerful in this kingdom; but that on the contrary, if they refused to obey him, he would put them through unheard-of torments, the rigour of which they could never bear. All his speeches being unable to shake them, he commanded that they be whipped with rods and thongs of ox-hide. The eldest took the word and said: "What need is there to put us to the question? We tell you openly that we are servants of the true God, and that we shall die rather than transgress His law." This firmness so embittered the king that, having had pans and great cauldrons of copper heated, he commanded first that the tongue and the extremities of the feet and hands be cut off this generous confessor who had spoken first, and that all the skin of his head also be torn off, in the presence of his mother and all his brothers. After which, seeing him still breathing, though mutilated of his principal members, he had him thrown into one of these red-hot pans or cauldrons, where he suffered a long time in a most cruel manner.

His torment, far from astonishing his younger brothers, on the contrary inflamed their courage, and they were seen in a holy impatience to imitate his generosity and to give, like him, their lives for the hope of an eternal reward. They even exhorted one another in the presence of the tyrant and strengthened themselves with these words from the canticle of Moses: "The Lord will have pity on His servants, and will console them."

The first being dead, the executioners took the second, and, after taking off the skin of his head with the hair, they asked him whether he was waiting to obey until he had been tormented in his whole body and in each of his limbs. "Your torments," he answered, "will gain nothing on me, and will not bring me to an impious and sacrilegious obedience." They treated him therefore as they had treated his elder: and, when he was near dying, addressing Antiochus, he said to him: "O villain, and most impious of all men! thou takest from us now our life by the power God has given thee; but that sovereign Judge of the living and the dead will one day give it back to us with advantage, since it will be to live eternally and die no more, because we lose it only for the upholding of His holy laws."

The third was then seized, and they asked him for his tongue and his hands to cut them off. "It is from heaven," answered this generous child, "that I have received these members, and I am indebted for them to God, who gave them to me: therefore I surrender them and lose them gladly for the observance of His commandments, being moreover assured that He will give them back to me happily changed and become incorruptible." So he presented them without delay, and with so much constancy and firmness that the king himself and his officers were quite surprised.

After his execution, in which he showed an admirable contempt of death, the fourth was put to the torture. As his tongue had not been cut out, being about to give up his soul, he apostrophised the prince, and said to him: "It is far more advantageous for us to die by thy hands, to rise one day with a glorious resurrection, than to suffer what thou shalt endure then for thy crimes; for thou shalt not rise again to life, but to death, and thou shalt have no other portion than the torments of hell, which shall never end."

The executioners seized the fifth at once and made him pass through the same tortures; casting his eyes on Antiochus, he said to him: “Do not think, on seeing us delivered to thy cruelty and exposed to thy torments, that God has abandoned our nation: wait a moment and thou shalt see how by His infinite power He will raise up our lowliness, and will chastise thee thyself with thy posterity for the greatness of thy crimes.”

The sixth passed through the same rigours, and, when he was near expiring, being filled like his brothers with the spirit of prophecy, he spoke to the tyrant and said to him: “Deceive not thyself, wretch, and do not think that there is no justice in heaven to avenge our death and to punish thy cruelties; our sins have drawn down this scourge; but God, who has sustained us in an admirable manner in the midst of so many torments, will know how to chastise thee in thy turn; not as a father, as He has chastised us, but as a stern judge who will make thee feel what it is to fight against Him.”

In the midst of these bloody spectacles, there was nothing more marvellous than to see the patience and generosity of their mother: far from losing courage on seeing her seven children taken away and slaughtered in a single day, she consoled herself, on the contrary, in the hope of the immortal life with which she knew they would be rewarded by the hand of God. She even exhorted them one after the other in her native tongue, and, full of wisdom and of a courage more than manly, she said to them: “It is not I, my dear children, who gave you the spirit, the soul and the life which you enjoy, nor who formed your members and the parts of which your body is composed. I did not even know what was happening in my womb when you were conceived; but you are indebted for these benefits to the Creator of the world, who knows how to give to all things the origins that befit them; and it is He also who, in His mercy, will give back to you the spirit and the life which you now despise for the holiness of His laws.” Meanwhile Antiochus, all covered with shame and consumed with spite at seeing himself vanquished by these six generous children, thought it was due to his honour to win at least the seventh, whom the weakness of his age seemed to make incapable of resistance: he made him therefore a thousand fair promises, and assured him even with an oath that he would make him rich and happy if he would yield to his wishes. But the child, in no way degenerating from the constancy of his brothers, protested that he would do nothing of the kind and that he would die faithful to his God, according to the example his brothers had given him. The tyrant, being unable to gain anything of him, had the mother brought near; and as apparently he had not understood what she had said to her children, because he did not know her language, he exhorted her at length to give good counsel to this last son who remained to her, that he might live with her in happy tranquillity and in the enjoyment of the many goods which he wished to give them. The mother answered that she would counsel him what was most advantageous to him: and, at the same moment, having bent down to him, and mocking the cruel tyrant, she said to him: “Be courageous, my dear son, and do not make me, by inconstancy and pusillanimity, the mother of an unbeliever and a sacrilegious man. Remember that I carried thee nine months in my womb, and that I nursed thee three years with the milk of my breasts: I took particular care of thy education, and I then brought thee up with much pains to the age at which thou now art. All the gratitude I ask of thee is that thou look at heaven and earth and all the creatures they contain, and that, recognising by this the infinite power of God, who drew man and all these things from nothing, thou remain inviolably attached to His service. By this means thou shalt be worthy of thy brothers, who have preceded thee in martyrdom; and, if I lose thee for the present life, I shall recover thee with them on the day of mercy and justice when God shall render to each one according to his works.”

Hardly had she finished these words when the child cried: “What are you waiting for, executioners, why do you delay making me suffer? I obey not the king’s commandments, but the ordinances of the law which was given us by Moses. As for thee, unjust and impious prince, who hast invented so many cruelties against the Hebrews, thou shalt not escape the rigours of God’s avenging hand. If we suffer some passing evils in punishment of our offences, it is only a correction and chastisement of a father; He who chastises us will soon be propitious to us, and, having reconciled us to Himself by His goodness, will fill us with His blessings

and raise us from our humiliation. But thou, cruel and barbarous tyrant, who surpassest by thy malice the iniquity of all other men, flatter not thyself with vain hopes. God sees thy crimes and has the power to chastise thee, and doubt not that He will do so in all the extent of His fury and indignation. It is true that my brothers have endured some torments; but at last they are quit of them and now enjoy a perfect repose in the expectation of eternal life. It is not so with thee, since God's justice prepares for thee, for thy pride, just punishments from which all thy power will not be able to exempt thee. Know then that, in imitation of my brothers, I gladly give my body to death for the upholding of the laws of our holy religion, and learn from me, at the same time, that the just anger which God has conceived against our nation will be extinguished by my torment, as well as by that of my brothers, who have gone before me." The king was strangely irritated to see that this holy mother had acted against his orders and that this generous child had become even stronger and more resolute by her remonstrances than he was before. He therefore had him treated even more cruelly than the others, but he died in these holy dispositions and without anything having been able to be gained on his constancy. After these seven children, their mother was also put to death; but she was already dead seven times by the death of these precious pledges whom she loved more than herself; or rather she had already won seven crowns and seven lives by strengthening her children to prefer the eternal and incorruptible life to the fragile and uncertain moments of a temporal life. Saint Augustine admirably extols the merit of this holy woman when he says, speaking of her and her children: "If these generous souls endured death so constantly before the passion of the Son of God, without being animated by the sight of His cross and the example of His sufferings, what would they not have done if Jesus Christ had suffered before them and they had felt bound to give Him body for body, blood for blood and life for life!" The historian Josephus tells us a few circumstances of the execution of this glorious mother which are not in Holy Scripture; and, after saying that she was called Salomona, which is the same name as Salome, he adds: "She was stripped, fastened by the hands to the top of a post, both her breasts were cut off, and, after being cruelly torn with lashes over her whole body, she was cast into a cauldron of boiling oil, where, praying for pregnant women, she gave up her pure spirit to God, to be carried to limbo and laid in the bosom of Abraham."

These illustrious martyrs of the Old Testament have been praised by the greatest doctors of the Church. Saint Gregory of Nazianzus made an oration full of force and eloquence in their honour. Saint Ambrose has also treated of them very elegantly in his book *On Jacob and the Happy Life*. We have sermons of Saint John Chrysostom, of Saint Augustine, of Saint Gaudence, bishop of Brescia, of Saint Leo the Great and of Saint Maxime on their subject. Saint Jerome speaks of them in his treatise *On Ecclesiastical Writers*; Théophile of Alexandria, in one of his Pastoral Letters, and Saint Bernard in his epistle xcviii. Finally, the Christian Church has inserted them in her martyrology and in her "ecclesiastical office" by a privilege wholly singular to them. Saint Isidore, in his *Book of Allegories*, gives as the reason that the seven Maccabees, with their mother, have more particularly represented the persecutions and torments of the Church and of her children, filled with the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit; and Saint Bernard says the same in the epistle which we have cited, namely, that the martyrdom of the Maccabees had more relation, by all its circumstances, to the martyrdoms of the New Testament than that of the Prophets who were put to death by the malice of the Jews.

Their precious remains, deposited first at Antioch, went to enrich Constantinople in the time of the empress Helena; a little later, Eudoxia, wife of Valentinian III, had them transferred to Rome into the church she was erecting there under the name of her patroness, and which today bears the title of Saint Peter in Chains. But if this city, capital of Christendom, possesses a part of their relics, it is certain that the city of Cologne, in Lower Germany, possesses other very considerable parts, especially their sacred heads, which were transferred there under the emperor Frederick Barbarossa by Regnault, his chancellor and archbishop of that metropolis. They are seen in a church dedicated under their name, above the high altar. Other oratories have been built in their honour; there is one at Vienne, in Dauphiné, in the middle of the cathedral cloister, which is said to have been built from the birth of the Church, by the command of the apostle Saint Paul, when he passed through the Gauls on his way to Spain, or on his return.

The martyrdom of the Maccabees is represented on a painted glass of the Catacombs. This page of Holy History inspired Raphael to a few drawings in which the character of the heads is united with the suavity of the lines, and which were marvellously reproduced by Marc-Antoine. The subject of the mother of the Maccabees exhorting her children to martyrdom was treated by Antoine Dieu, a French painter of the 17th century. One should also recall the various artists of the 15th and 16th centuries whose compositions were engraved for the first editions of the Bible called the Bible of Royaumont.

The history of the Maccabees is not found only in the canonical Scriptures; the historian Josephus, on the testimony of Saint Jerome (*De Script. eccles.*), had also addressed an account of it to Polybius of Megalopolis. — Cf. *Les Femmes de la Bible*, by Mgr Darboy; Baillet; Godescard.

## Saint Exupère or Saint Spire, First Bishop of Bayeux and Confessor

*140. — Pope: Saint Hyginus. — Roman Emperor: Antoninus Pius.*

> *It is above all the mark of the Saints to prefer nothing to the salvation of souls, neither honour, nor glory, nor anything whatever.*
>
> *Saint John Chrysostom.*

The Memoirs of the Church of Bayeux teach us that Saint Exupère, who is commonly called Saint Spire, and whom that Church recognises as its first bishop, was one of those happy missionaries whom Saint Clement, pope, disciple of Saint Peter, sent into the Gauls with Saint Denis the Areopagite, to announce there the coming of the Son of God. He was a Roman, of a very noble family, and had been trained in all the sciences that can cultivate a fine mind. The country which fell to him in the distribution of the provinces of the Gauls for the preaching of the Gospel was that part of ancient Neustria which is now called Lower Normandy. He went there with joy; and, having entered Bayeux, which was already its capital, he laboured there with such zeal that he soon saw the success of his labours, that is to say, a number of faithful large enough to compose a flourishing Church. He therefore had an oratory built there, where the new Christians assembled, and where he himself celebrated the holy Mysteries every day and distributed the bread of life, which is Jesus Christ in His sacrament, and the bread of the word of God. This oratory was dedicated in honour of the holy Virgin, and it is believed that it stood on the very spot where the cathedral is today, which still recognises her as its patroness and titular.

Three things contributed much to this happy success of the new apostle’s preaching. The first was the purity of his morals and the holiness of his life; for one saw in him a man who lived in a body as if he had none; who made no more account of riches and of all the grandeurs of the world than of the dust he trod underfoot; who fled honours with more care than the proud show eagerness to procure them; who bore insults and persecutions with an invincible gentleness and patience, and whose life was a continual prayer and fast. The second was his zeal and the marvellous force of his word; for, besides being naturally eloquent and having further perfected this gift by study and practice, God gave him such ardour and fire in preaching that one had to be extremely hardened not to yield to the solidity of his reasons and the vehemence of his exhortations. The third, finally, was the power of working miracles which he had received from God; for there was no sickness which resisted his command, nor any corporal or spiritual need which he did not remedy by the power of the name of Jesus and of the sign of our salvation and of our redemption. One day, seven possessed persons having been brought to him, after a long prayer which he made to God with tears in his eyes and prostrate on the ground, he delivered them by the power of this salutary sign: which was the cause of their conversion and of that of five hundred persons who had witnessed so striking a miracle. Of this number was the count of Noroy, named Régnobert, who profited so well by the excellent lessons of his master that he soon became himself an excellent preacher of the Gospel, and, having been raised to the priesthood by Saint Spire, was afterwards his successor and second bishop of Bayeux. It is related that one day a blind pagan, hearing a sermon of Régnobert, was converted and had himself led to him to be instructed more perfectly and

to receive baptism. Régnobert contented himself with catechising him; but, as for baptism, he wished him to receive it from the hands of Saint Spire. He therefore took him by the hand to lead him to the holy prelate; but, while he was holding him, his sight was miraculously restored, and he had no more need of a guide to walk. This miracle frightened Régnobert, making him fear that the honour of it would be attributed to him, but marvellously consoled Saint Spire, who was delighted to see his double spirit flow back upon his disciples.

This great bishop delivered seven other demoniacs with the same weapons he had used for the first. But the demons withdrew with such terrible cries that all the spectators were terrified and fell to the ground half dead. This fall was salutary to them. They learned by it to fear God and to preserve themselves from damnation, where one is for a whole eternity in the hands of these monsters, whose rage against men is so frightful. Thus those who were not yet of the flock of Jesus Christ detested the errors of paganism and earnestly asked for holy baptism. The chief of these new converts was Zenon, lord of the country, who afterwards advanced with such great strides in the ways of perfection that he was soon judged worthy of the priesthood and of the dignity of archdeacon, which he discharged holily: the Church has placed him in the catalogue of the Saints.

For the rest, it must not be thought that Saint Spire always remained in Bayeux: having the whole maritime country of Neustria for his jurisdiction, he did not fail to carry the light of the faith to every side of it. It was in these evangelical labours that he spent his life until a happy old age. When he saw himself near death, he called his children around him and, in imitation of Our Lord, exhorted them to union among themselves, to charity for their neighbour, to zeal for the salvation of souls and to the true love of God, and recommended them in a manner full of tenderness to the heavenly Father, whose children they were more than his, since he had begotten them in Jesus Christ only that they might have God for their father. Then, having received the Sacraments with an extraordinary reverence and devotion, and seeing the Angels come down from heaven to lead his soul into glory, he addressed these beautiful words to the sovereign Lord who was sending them: “O my God! Eternal Light, Fountain of all piety and King of all this universe, in whom I have believed, whom I have loved, and whose holy doctrine I have announced, I pray You to look with a favourable eye on the prayer of all those who shall have recourse to You through my intercession, so that all Your creatures may bless You for ever and ever.” The clerics who were present answered: Amen. And at the same instant the spirit of the blessed Spire separated from his body, to go and enjoy eternally the possession of his God.

Saint Régnobert, his disciple, taking care of his body, had it buried on a hill outside the town, where the faithful built a little chapel in his honour; it was changed in the course of time into a parish church; no one has ever been buried there: when it was attempted, this ground, out of honour for Saint Exupère, rejected the trusts that people wished to commit to it.

## Cult and Relics

The body of Saint Spire was raised by one of his successors, who put it in a shrine and transported it into the cathedral church of Bayeux, where it remained until 863. At that time the Neustrian faithful, fearing that the Normans, who were laying waste all their coasts, might lay their sacrilegious hands on such precious relics, themselves carried them to a castle of the Gâtinais called Palluau, together with those of Saint Leu or Loup, bishop of Bayeux. Eighty years later a count of Corbeil, named Haymon, with Elisabeth, his wife, had them brought with great magnificence into their town of Corbeil, where they built a church in their honour and established there a secular abbot and twelve canons for the perpetual celebration of the divine offices. Haymon wished to be buried in this church, and his tomb is also shown there, with his effigy in white marble and various monuments and testimonies of piety. The counts his successors and our most Christian kings granted great privileges to this chapter; as did also the sovereign Pontiffs and the bishops of Paris in what concerns the spiritual. At the beginning of the 17th century the number of these chapters was increased by

the annexation of the chapter of the royal and collegiate church of Notre-Dame de Corbeil to that of Saint-Spire, so as to leave the church of Notre-Dame to the inhabitants as their parish. King Henry IV had letters patent issued for this in 1602, but they were registered by the parliament only in 1611, a year after his death.

Wonders have made the pilgrimage of Saint-Spire so celebrated that one ordinarily sees in his church a great concourse of people who come to implore his help. There were still other translations of his relics and of those of Saint Leu, to put them in new and more magnificent shrines: one in 1317, under the reign of Philip the Tall; another in 1454, under the reign of Charles VII; and a third, very solemn, in 1619, under the reign of Louis XIII; and, as they were all made on the fifth Sunday after Easter, which precedes the feast of the Ascension of Our Lord, the principal feast of Saint Spire and Saint Leu is kept every year on that Sunday. The shrines are taken down from the eve for ten days; Matins are said at ten o'clock in the evening and Mass at midnight, and the procession is made during the day at nine o'clock in the morning; then the shrines are carried by wise and virtuous men who compose a Confraternity of bearers, to whom Pope Gregory XIII granted very fine indulgences.

The shrine of Saint Spire is also taken down for droughts, floods and fires. In the year 1648, fire having broken out in the powder mills of Essonne and threatened Corbeil, which is near by, that town was preserved from this misfortune by the shrine of Saint Spire, which was set against the fury of the flames.

From the year 950 to the year 1791, Corbeil possessed the entire body of this illustrious pontiff, whom it never invoked in vain: it received from him great help and precious consolations. And so the consternation was general in 1793, when his precious remains were profaned and given to the flames in a public square of the town.

Two notable relics could be withdrawn from profanation and destruction: the lower jaw and a bone of the forearm. The first is deposited at Corbeil, and the second is in the church of Bayeux, where the custom has been re-established of carrying it, with the other relics of the cathedral, in the solemn procession of the Assumption.

The church of Saint-Exupère is still venerated as the place of his burial and of that of the holy bishops his successors, and it still contains the sarcophagi in which their bodies were laid. Several of them, and in particular that of Saint Exupère, were profaned and broken at the time of the Revolution. Now they are protected and enclosed within an underground chapel, where they have remained in their place.

We have completed this biography by means of local Notes supplied by M. Girard, parish priest of Corbeil, and by M. Le Conte, honorary canon of the cathedral and parish priest of Saint-Exupère at Bayeux.

## The Dedication of Saint Peter in Chains, or the Feast of the Chains of the Prince of the Apostles

*439. — Pope: Saint Sixtus III. — Emperor of the West: Valentinian III.*

> *Dirupisti, Domine, vincula mea.*
>
> *Lord, You have broken my bonds.*
>
> *Psalm cxv, 17.*
>
> *Felices illi nexus, qui de manicis et compedibus in coronam mutandi apostolum contingentes martyrem reddiderunt!*
>
> *Happy bonds, which held captive the hands and feet of Saint Peter; they won him an immortal crown, and of an Apostle they made a Martyr!*
>
> *S. Aug., in serm. xxix de Sanctis.*

The Church instituted this feast not only to give thanks to God for the signal favour which He did to the assembly of the faithful of Jerusalem when He gave back to them this Prince of the Apostles, whom King Herod, surnamed Agrippa, had had bound with two chains, waiting until the feast of the Passover was past to put him to death; but also in order to honour these chains, with which the precious members of this great Apostle had been bound. She knows well that he himself esteemed them more than all the treasures of the world, and that he preferred the quality of captive and of one chained for Jesus Christ to that of Prince of His people and Head of all His disciples.

Saint Luke relates, in the Acts of the Apostles, that this Herod, nephew of the second through his father and grandson of the first, wishing to gain the affection of the Jews, after having had the head of Saint James the Greater, brother of Saint John the Evangelist, cut off, had Saint Peter arrested and sent to prison, with the design of having him executed publicly, before a great crowd assembled at Jerusalem, as soon as the feast of the Passover should be past. Fearing that he might escape his cruelty, he was not content to have him shut up; he had him bound with two chains to the walls of the prison where he was, and gave him into the keeping of soldiers who answered for him. Meanwhile the Christians of the city and its surroundings felt this blow keenly, and, knowing how necessary this Apostle was to the Church, which, scarcely born, saw itself exposed to such terrible persecutions, they sent up their prayers and sighs continually toward heaven, beseeching their sovereign Pastor not to permit His flock to be so soon deprived of him whom He had given it for His vicar. This prayer was granted: on the very night on which Peter was to be executed, as he was sleeping peacefully in his chains between two soldiers, besides the other guards who were on watch before the door, the angel of the Lord came down from heaven and filled the whole prison with a great light; and, having found him asleep, he struck him on the side and said to him: “Arise quickly.” At the same time the chains fell from his hands, and he rose. The angel added: “Gird yourself and put on your shoes.” He did so. The angel said to him again: “Put on your cloak and follow me.” He obeyed and followed him. Yet he thought that it was only a dream, and did not think that he was really being delivered. But when they had both passed the first and the second guard-posts, where no one noticed that they were passing, they came at last to the gate which led to the city, which was a gate of iron, and at once this gate opened without anyone putting a hand to it. The angel went on to the end of the street, and then vanished and appeared no more. Then Peter, having come to himself, cried out: “Now I know that God has truly sent His angel and that He has delivered me from the hand of Herod and from all the expectation of the Jewish people.”

All the faithful received an incredible joy from this deliverance; they gave many thanks to God for it, and, having procured the chains with which the Apostle had been bound, they kept them religiously in the treasury of the church of Jerusalem as a most precious relic. It is for this great benefit that today’s feast was instituted. One ought to honour in it the pains and sufferings of Saint Peter, the calm and tranquillity which he had in his prison and under his bonds, the constancy and joy with which he awaited the stroke of death, and the evenness of mind which appeared in him both in the humiliation of his imprisonment and in the glory of his deliverance. One ought also to thank Our Lord for the favour He did His flock in giving it back so good a shepherd, for the miracles He worked to deliver him, and for the great fruits He made him produce afterwards, both among the Jews and among the Gentiles, for the perfect establishment of Christianity.

Saint Peter had still other bonds than those with which he was chained at Jerusalem; for, having come to Rome to preach the Gospel there, and having won to Jesus Christ a great number of persons of the three orders which composed that city, we mean senators, knights and simple inhabitants, the emperor Nero had him seized and commanded that he be put in prison and chained. It is of these last chains that Saint Alexander, pope and martyr, was speaking when, seeing Saint Balbine show a singular respect for the chains with which he himself had been bound, he exhorted her to seek rather the chains of the apostle Saint Peter: which she did, with much success and consolation. But it is at once of those which the Apostle wore in the prisons of Jerusalem and of those which he wore in the prisons of Rome that Saint Augustine speaks when he

says that “all the Churches of Jesus Christ make much more account of them than of the purest and most precious gold.” It is again on these chains that Saint John Chrysostom, or rather Saint Procle, one of his successors in the see of Constantinople, made a fine discourse, which is reported by Simeon Metaphrastes and by Surius on the first day of August, in which he says, among other things, that “Peter regarded them as a royal ornament; that he found himself much better adorned by them than by necklaces of pearls and garments of purple and silk, and that he had an extraordinary joy in seeing himself bound by them, because he knew that these chains would procure him an immortal crown in heaven.” What gave occasion to this feast was the dedication of a church under the name of Saint Peter in Chains, and the great miracles which were worked by means of the chains. Here is what ecclesiastical History teaches us about it: The empress Eudoxia, wife of the emperor Theodosius the Younger, had gone to Palestine to visit the holy places consecrated by the mysteries of our redemption; Juvénal, patriarch of

Jerusalem, made her a present of the two chains with which the Prince of the Apostles had been bound in the prison of Herod. This princess received them with extraordinary respect and joy (439); then, regarding them as precious relics, she reserved one for the city of Constantinople and sent the other to her daughter Eudoxia, who two years before had married the emperor Valentinian III. Eudoxia received her mother’s present with great esteem. As she was at Rome, she brought it to the sovereign Pontiff, in order to share her joy with him. The Pope, grateful, wished to show her for his part the chains with which Saint Peter had been bound at Rome. A great miracle then took place: these two chains, having been brought near each other, joined of themselves so perfectly together that they seemed no more than a single chain forged by one workman. Eudoxia, admiring this wonder, took care not to ask for her relic back; but, leaving the whole of this long chain to the Church, she had a beautiful temple built to place it in and expose it to the veneration of the faithful. This temple was at first called Eudoxia, from the name of its foundress; but since then it has been called Saint Peter in Chains, and it is a cardinal’s title. The chain which Eudoxia carried to Constantinople was also received with every kind of veneration, and a church was likewise built there to serve it as a sanctuary. Thus the dedication of these two houses of God took place almost at the same time; but that of the church of Constantinople was fixed on 16 January, while that of the church of Rome was set on 1 August. By this means a pagan feast was abolished at Rome which was kept on that same day for the dedication of the temple of Mars and for the birthday of the emperor Claudius. God has shown by signal miracles that He approved the cult of these sacred bonds and that they were worthy of much veneration; for, by touching them or having them placed on one’s head, people received the cure of several diseases and relief in very great evils. The Popes, when they wished to make a considerable present, sent a little of the filings of this precious iron, as several Epistles of Saint Gregory the Great inform us. Sometimes they sent these filings set in a key of gold or silver: those who received it were accustomed to hang it around their necks, to preserve themselves, by the protection of Saint Peter, from the fatal accidents of this life. It is thus that the same holy Pontiff acted toward Childebert, king of France, for whom he had much respect and a singular affection, as is seen in Epistle vi of book v, which he wrote to him on this subject. In Epistle xxiii of the following book, which he addresses to Théotisle, a most noble patrician lady, sister of Maurice, emperor of the East, with a similar present, he relates that a Lombard lord, having mocked one of these keys and having tried to break it to have the gold, was at that very hour seized by the devil, who treated him with such fury that he cut his own throat with the knife with which he meant to cut the key, and died on the spot. Saint Gregory also sent some to Anastase, patriarch of Antioch, to Recarède, king of the Visigoths of Spain, and to other persons, ecclesiastical and lay. We read also in ecclesiastical History that several persons of distinction asked the Pope for some of these filings, and that Justin I, emperor of the East, sent ambassadors to Pope Hormisdas to obtain from him a particle of the chains of Saint Peter as the most precious thing he could ask for, so widespread was the veneration of these relics in all places at that time. Pope Vitalian, about the year 657, sent a particle of the holy chains to the queen of Northern England, wife of Oswin. Evald, archbishop of Vienne, received a particle *de Vinculis Apostolorum* from Pope Constantine; Saint Gregory III sent a key with the

same relic to Charles Martel; Saint Leo III made the same gift to Charlemagne; Saint Gregory VII to Acon, king of Denmark, and afterwards to Alphonse, king of Castile.

However, so that the holy chains might not be too much damaged, the Popes gradually ceased to detach particles from them, and then they contented themselves with letting them be kissed, with having objects of devotion touched to them, and at most with giving some pieces of the linen bands in which they are constantly wrapped when they are not exposed to the veneration of the faithful. This is what is still done in our days. Nevertheless Benedict XIV, about the middle of the last century, wished to renew the ancient custom in favour of the cathedral of Bologna, his native city, to which he gave a key of gold containing some of the holy filings. From all that we have just said, it is seen that the holy chains are no longer entire. One of them is composed of twenty-eight links, the last of which, in the form of an S, holds the shackle which clasped the Apostle's neck. The other chain, joined to the first by the wonder we have related, is formed of five links: four smaller than the others, and the fifth, in the form of an S, to which are attached a larger round link and a bar of iron which unite the two chains. It is probable that in the prison this bar of iron was sealed into the wall on one side and on the other held the chain to which the apostolic captive was attached.

Some of the links, detached at various times from the holy bonds, have been lost in the vicissitudes of time. We have, however, certain knowledge of most of them, since even in our days they are venerated in different countries of the world, and at Rome itself. In fact, the notable church of Saint Cecilia, in the Trastevere, possesses seven links, which, according to tradition, were sent by Adrian I in 772 to Didier, king of the Lombards, when the holy Pope was seeking to appease and soften this disloyal and cruel monarch in favour of Italy. Cardinal Sfondrati obtained from Pope Clement VIII, about the year 1592, leave to take these links from the church dedicated to the Prince of the Apostles on the lake of Como, where they were kept, and he carried them to Rome to this church of Saint Cecilia. The city of Avignon, which had the happiness of possessing the apostolic See for seventy years, had five links of the holy chains.

In the year 949 a count whom the emperor Otto the Great cherished was possessed by the devil in so violent a manner that he tore himself with his teeth. The emperor, having compassion on his misery, had him taken to Pope John XIII to have the exorcisms performed over him; but scarcely had the chain of Saint Peter been put on his neck when the evil spirit, unable to bear its power, was forced to leave his body, uttering frightful cries. Théodoric, bishop of Metz, first cousin of the emperor, who was present at this marvel, was so touched by it that he at once laid his hand on the chain and protested that he would never let it go until he had been given a link of it for his church. The emperor begged the Pope to satisfy the devotion of Théodoric, who brought the link he had obtained to his city of Metz, where he placed it in the abbey of Saint-Vincent, which he had had built. He also put there some hair of Saint Peter, and many other relics which were given to him. The list of them may be seen in Sigebert, religious and master of novices of that monastery. These precious relics disappeared in 1793.

There was also at Rome a chair of Saint Paul. According to the testimony of the same Saint Gregory, in book iii of his Register, epistle xxx, addressed to the empress Constance, it worked many supernatural cures. But the Church judged it fitting to keep a feast only of the bonds of Saint Peter, to mark his pre-eminence above the other Apostles, and to recall that it is to him principally that the key of the kingdom of heaven, with the power of binding and loosing, was given. Several holy doctors have spoken honourably of these sacred bonds. Among the sermons of Saint John Chrysostom one is found on this subject, which Cardinal Baronius considers to be rather by Saint Procle or by Saint Germain, his successors. The author treats there at great length of the imprisonment of Saint Peter, of the pains he endured in the prison through the inhumanity of the soldiers who guarded him, of the glory of his deliverance and of the incomparable benefit which the whole Church received from it. He also gives him excellent epithets, which show the eminence of his dignity and the prerogatives of his see. He calls him the Mouth of Jesus Christ and of his brethren; the Interpreter of the secrets of God; the Master of the heavens and of the faithful, whose doctrine is so sure that one cannot err in

following it; the Pillar of the spiritual Israel, the Solidity of the Apostles, the Strengthening of those who doubt, the Glory of the Church, the Honour of the Disciples, the Ornament and support of those who have true sentiments, the Reconciliation of sinners, the great Miracle of the world, the Splendour of theologians, the heavenly Spirit and the most pure Dwelling of the most holy Trinity. This same Doctor then compares the chains of our holy Apostle with his shadow, and says that, if it had so much power that all those over whom it passed were cured, whatever sickness they were afflicted with, his chains, which are something solid, and which received a particular virtue from the holiness of his members and the power of his hands, workers of so many miracles, must be much more salutary. Saint Augustine, in Sermon xxviii on the Saints, also uses the same comparison. “If the shadow of Peter,” he says, “was so salutary, how much more will be the chain with which his body was encircled? If the empty appearance of his image could have the power to restore health to the sick, what power then will not bonds have which were pressed upon his sacred members? If Saint Peter was so powerful before his martyrdom, how much more must he be now that he has triumphed over the attack of the demons?” Then he cries out: “O fortunate chains, which from handcuffs and fetters have been changed into crowns and diadems, by making the Apostle a martyr! O blessed bonds, whose captive was dragged to the torment of the cross, not so much to be executed there as to be consecrated there!”

During the great calamities of Rome and of the Church, the Popes have the holy Chains exposed, and they are carried in procession into other basilicas, as took place at the end of the last century. Pope Pius VI, of venerable memory, exposed to the perfidies of the French Republic, ordered that the holy Chains, with the achéropite image of the Saviour and that of the holy Virgin which is at Sainte-Marie *in Porticu*, should be carried on 17 January 1798 to the Vatican basilica and from there to Saint Mary Major and to Saint John Lateran, from which they were brought back on 5 February to the Eudoxian basilica, in which they remained exposed for five days to the veneration of the faithful.

Another solemn exposition of the holy Chains took place in the month of August of the year 1814. In 1837, when Rome was invaded by cholera for the first time, Gregory XVI ordered that the holy Chains should be exposed, together with the other notable relics, with the aim of preserving his people from the scourge; and, if the cholera did enter Rome, it was of shorter duration there and less deadly than in the other capitals of Europe.

Our holy pope Pius IX, who is also bound in the bonds of persecution, bears a great devotion to the Chains of Saint Peter. He has had them placed in a magnificent reliquary of gilded metal, a gift of his apostolic munificence. These venerable relics are shut up during the year in the Eudoxian sacristy, at the back of a cupboard formed in the wall. This cupboard is closed first by a curtain of red silk, then by a grille of gilded metal, and finally by a door of bronze richly sculptured by the celebrated Pallajoli. Three keys lock the door of the cupboard, as well as the grille, and these keys are kept by three different authorities: one by the sovereign Pontiff, another by the cardinal titular of the Basilica, and the third by the Reverend Father Abbot of the Canons Regular of Saint John Lateran, who serve the Basilica.

The feast of the Chains of Saint Peter is celebrated, as we have said, on 1 August, the anniversary of the wonder of the joining of the two Chains, as of the dedication of the Eudoxian basilica. The Popes, in establishing this solemnity, had as a secondary aim to sanctify by the cult of the Prince of the Apostles the first days of August, formerly consecrated by the pagans to the memory of Augustus and to the feasts of the goddess Hope. The holy Chains are exposed to the veneration of the faithful several times during the year: on 1 August, the day of the feast, and during the whole octave; then on the fifth day after the feast of Saint Peter and Saint Paul, and on the first Monday of Lent.

On those days one of the Canons Regular, vested in surplice and stole, presents the Chains to the faithful to kiss, and, touching their necks with the collar by which Saint Peter was chained, he pronounces the following words: *Per intercessionem beati Petri Apostoli liberet te Deus ab omni malo. Amen.*

“By the intercession of blessed Peter, apostle, may God deliver you from all evil. So be it.”

Having spoken of the Chains of Saint Peter, it remains for us to say a word about the confraternity recently established in their honour.

In 1864 there arrived at Rome from France a quantity of watch-chains of a new kind, of pretty form, which were sold at a low price. They bore at one end a little globe which represented a cannon-ball.

Many persons, young people above all, bought them and wore them without scruple, as one wears so many other objects of this kind which come to us from fashion; they were far from suspecting what they signified.

It was a perfidious trap which the revolutionaries were setting for honest persons and good people.

When the emissaries of evil saw their chains sufficiently spread, they divulged that they were symbols of the alleged “slavery in which Rome was groaning under the yoke of the papacy,” and that the mysterious little globe represented the bombs of the assassin Orsini, the same who conspired against Napoleon III to force him to bring about Italian unity. Such a revelation, although made in a low voice, was enough for every honest person to throw away this seditious sign with horror, and since then it has been seen worn only by a small number of individuals openly attached to the revolution.

Nevertheless, the aim of the sect had been attained; it could be believed that the Romans shared its perfidious aspirations in accepting these famous chains, to which, for the first time, the name of Orsini chains was given. That was an impudent lie which obtained no credit; and, as evil often produces good, it was the cause of a fine idea, which perhaps, with the help of God, will produce some good results. Indignation suggested to some young Romans that they should take occasion of this fact to increase the devotion of the faithful toward one of the most venerable monuments of Papal Rome, that is to say, to propagate and revive more than ever the cult of the Chains of Saint Peter by making facsimiles of them to serve as watch-chains. In the same way the ancient Christians and the holy women of the first centuries loved to bear witness to their love for Our Lord, for the holy Virgin and the Saints by wearing their images and their emblems engraved on rings, precious stones and other ornaments. The sovereign Pontiff blessed this idea and deigned at once to grant the fullest facilities for examining the holy Chains and taking a drawing of them.

The work was put in hand, and, after some obstacles had been overcome, an exact facsimile suitable for forming a watch-chain was obtained.

While the undertaking seemed to have succeeded, it had to undergo, like all good things at their beginning, struggles as unexpected as they were obstinate; for a moment it was on the point of being abandoned. However, the Chains of Saint Peter have modestly but firmly withstood the storm: they are beginning to spread, they are sought after by the most distinguished persons, and the most noble and elegant ladies do not hesitate to bear witness to their devotion to Saint Peter and to the Holy See by wearing on their rich garments the iron Chain of the first Vicar of Jesus Christ.

The confraternity is placed under the patronage of the Immaculate Conception of the most holy Virgin Mary, and of Saint Peter, prince of the Apostles. The aim of the Confraternity is to propagate as far as possible, and in all places, the cult of the sacred Chains of the Prince of the Apostles and devotion to the Holy See; to pray, according to the intention of the sovereign Pontiff, for the needs of the holy Roman Church, the conversion of the faithful and of sinners, and the extirpation of heresies and blasphemies.

Each of the members must procure an iron facsimile of the Chains of Saint Peter: this facsimile will be adorned with a little cross like that which served for the crucifixion of the Prince of the Apostles.

This facsimile must have touched the sacred Chains of Saint Peter; there will be joined to it a printed attestation, signed by the Most Reverend Father Abbot of the Eudoxian Basilica and bearing the embossed stamp of the said abbey; this printed paper will serve as certificate of enrolment.

Each member must wear this facsimile on his clothes, in the manner he judges most suitable. To avoid counterfeits and abuses, the facsimiles will be distributed only by persons duly authorised for this purpose.

Here are the prayers and pious practices to be performed by the members:

1st. To recite each day, in whatever language, and at the intention indicated in article 1, § 2, a *Pater*, an *Ave* and a *Gloria*, with the invocation: Saint Peter, pray for us;

2nd. To approach, wherever one can, the holy sacraments of Penance and the Eucharist on the following days: 18 January, feast of the Chair of Saint Peter at Rome; 29 June, feast of the martyrdom of Saint Peter; 1 August, feast of Saint Peter in Chains, the day chosen as the principal feast of the Confraternity;

3rd. To visit, on those days or on one of the days of the Octave of Saint Peter, the church called the Eudoxian Basilica, raised in honour of the Chains of the Prince of the Apostles;

4th. For members outside Rome, to visit, as above, a church or public chapel dedicated to Saint Peter, if there is one in the place where they live; failing that, each to visit his parish church;

5th. On the announcement of the death of a member, to recite for the repose of his soul the psalm *De Profundis*; those who do not know this prayer may replace it by another.

Numerous indulgences have been granted by His Holiness Pius IX to the members of the Confraternity.

The Confraternity of the Chains of Saint Peter was inaugurated at Toulouse on 1 August 1870, in the church of Saint-Pierre. The parish priest of that parish was named director of this affiliation by letter of Monseigneur the archbishop, dated from Rome (during the council) on 20 June of the same year. This nomination was confirmed on 14 July by the Reverend Father Abbot of the basilica of Saint Peter in Chains at Rome, general president of this archconfraternity. A depot of little Chains of Saint Peter which have come from Rome, each accompanied by its authentication, is established in the sacristy of the parish of Saint-Pierre at Toulouse.

To belong to the confraternity and enjoy its privileges, one must wear on one’s person one of these little chains and have oneself enrolled in the register which is open in the same church.

The faithful may learn, from all that we have just said, how honourable it is to suffer something for Jesus Christ; for, although only the bonds of Saint Peter are honoured on earth by a particular feast, this feast nevertheless makes known to us that all the pains which we endure patiently in this life will be rewarded in heaven with an incomparable glory which will never end.

We have made use, to complete this biography, of the *History of Saint Peter*, by the Abbé Maistre; of the *History of the Holy Chains*; and of a work published at Rome on the Confraternity established in their honour.

## Saint Friard, Recluse in the Diocese of Nantes, Patron of Labourers, and Saint Secondel or Second, Deacon and Solitary

*557. — Pope: Benedict I. — King of France: Chilperic I.*

> *Attach yourself to solitude; it is as it were the mother of prayer and of purity; and there exercise yourself each day in the reading of the holy books and in the examination of your own heart.*
>
> *Saint Bonaventure.*

Friard came into the world about the year 511. His parents were poor labourers of the parish of Besne (Loire-Inférieure), in the diocese of Nantes, in Brittany, but they had the fear of God and faithfully observed His commandments. Following their example, our Saint gave himself early to piety and made considerable progress in it in a short time. He fasted and prayed with fervour, devoutly frequented the sacraments of Penance and the Eucharist, assisted with joy at the divine offices, and one saw in him nothing but examples

of chastity, modesty and humility. His ordinary occupation was to plough the land and work in the fields to earn his living. At the hours of the meal, which he finished in a short time, often contenting himself with a little bread and water, he withdrew apart and knelt down to pour out his soul before his God. In the thick of his work he did not lose the remembrance of His presence: he always had his mind raised toward Him and some verses of the psalms in his mouth. He hardly spoke with men, but his ordinary converse was with his sovereign Lord. The admirable purity with which he was endowed made it impossible for him to bear in his companions any lascivious and indecent action or word. When they fell into such, he reproved them for it forcefully, and, if they did not correct themselves, he withdrew from their company, for fear of having his sight or his hearing sullied by anything indecent. He often made the sign of the cross on himself and on all the things he handled, and nearly always had on his tongue these words of the Royal Prophet: *Adjutorium nostrum in nomine Domini, qui fecit caelum et terram*; "Our help is in the name of the Lord, who made heaven and earth."

Meanwhile his fellow workers, who had hardly any piety, mocked his devotion and made jests about it among themselves. One day, when a swarm of wasps, having risen up in the field, forced them to flee without being able to continue the harvest, because of the stings and the bleeding wounds which they received from them, they said to him mockingly: "Well, Friard, you who make so many signs of the cross on your eyes, your ears and your mouth, and who even imprint it on the roads by which you must pass, why do you not drive away by this sign these troublesome insects which prevent us from reaping?" Friard, judging that the glory of God and the honour of the Cross, which he saw despised, required him to do something extraordinary on this occasion, knelt down and earnestly prayed Our Lord to grant that these flies might trouble them no more. He felt at once that his prayer was granted, and said to his companions: "Come, let us go back to work; these insects will do us no more harm." They followed him, and scarcely had he made the sign of the cross and said *Adjutorium nostrum in nomine Domini* when the wasps withdrew into a hole in the ground, from which they came out no more. This miracle began to make him esteemed, and made such an impression on his companions that they no longer dared to mock him, but on the contrary admired his virtue and spoke well of it to everyone.

Another day he fell from the top of a tall tree; this fall, during which he repeated his habitual prayer, *Adjutorium nostrum in nomine Domini*, did him no harm. Full of gratitude toward God, who protected him so visibly, he resolved to serve Him in solitude. He communicated this design to Saint Félix, bishop of Nantes, who approved it and gave him two companions: the abbot Sabaudus, who had formerly held offices at the court of Clotaire, king of France, and a deacon named Secondel. Friard withdrew with them into an island of the Loire named Vindunet,[1] where he began the toilsome exercises of a true hermit. Sabaudus did not persevere with him; for, growing weary of no longer being abbot and of no longer having the satisfactions which his prelacy had formerly given him, he went back to his cloister; but a short time afterwards he was murdered: Saint Gregory of Tours says that the cause of it could not be learned. Secondel had more constancy, and Friard led with him a life so pure and so perfect that they seemed angels rather than men. Their cells, however, were not far apart, and they spoke to each other only rarely, for fear that mutual conversation might lessen their application to God and the fervour with which they rose continually to heaven.

Meanwhile the devil found means to deceive Secondel; for, having appeared to him in the form of Jesus Christ, he managed to persuade him that he had already arrived at the state of perfection and that he ought to leave his hermitage to go and labour for the salvation of souls, assuring him that he would confirm his word by great miracles. Secondel went out without communicating anything of it to Saint Friard, and went off to preach the word of God throughout the neighbourhood. At the same time he worked several cures which seemed miraculous and which drew to him the esteem and admiration of everyone, so that he was proclaimed everywhere as a great Saint. This success puffing up his heart more and more, he crossed back to the island

to share this good news with our Saint. But Friard, who was enlightened from on high, and who besides noticed in him quite worldly manners which he had already contracted through his dealings with men, at once recognised the artifice of the devil. He therefore said to him, sighing and weeping: “Woe to you, my brother; for assuredly the tempter has deceived you. Go, return to your cell, humble yourself before God and do penance for this fault.” These words dispelled the whole cloud with which Secondel’s mind had been covered; he himself perceived the illusion to which he had yielded, and, feeling within himself that his evangelical labours had had no other effect than movements of vainglory, he groaned over it from the depth of his heart, threw himself at Friard’s feet and begged him to intercede with Our Lord that this levity might be forgiven him. “Let us pray together,” Friard said to him, “and God, who is infinitely merciful, will not fail to be propitious to you.” They therefore set themselves to prayer; the devil, having again taken the appearance of Our Lord, appeared once more to Secondel and gave him a severe reprimand because, against his order, he had abandoned the help of so many souls who were perishing in order to return to his hermitage. But this holy deacon did not let himself be seduced a second time. “I know,” he said to the devil, “that you are not Jesus Christ, my Saviour, but a seducer who wants to make me lose the crown of perseverance; if you want me to change my mind, imprint on your forehead the saving sign of the cross, which Jesus Christ always loved, and you will give me reason to believe you.” The devil did nothing of the kind, and, Secondel having made the sign of the cross on himself, he vanished. But he was not slow to return: for, having had himself accompanied by a troop of evil spirits as wicked as himself, he came back to him and beat him so cruelly that he left him half dead. That was the last effort of this enemy of men against the blessed deacon: for from that time he troubled him no more and left him in peace. Secondel therefore persevered several years in his profession and, after having long wept over his levity, died holily, full of years and of good works. His body was buried in the church of Besné, where he has worked several miracles. He is its second patron.

As for Saint Friard, who survived him, after he had rendered him the duties of burial, he returned to his hermitage and shut himself up there. One day, walking about the island, he found a branch of a tree which the wind had brought down. He picked it up, and it served him as a staff for several years. But when it was entirely dry, he planted it again and watered it carefully. At last it took root, bore flowers and fruit, and became so fine a tree that people came to see it out of curiosity. He noticed this and, fearing vainglory, had it pulled up: in this he was no less admirable than in the miracle he had worked of giving it life, dry as it was. Another time, having come upon another tree laden with flowers which the wind had uprooted, he took pity on it and prayed God that so many beautiful flowers might not be lost. Then he cut off all its roots with his billhook and, having sharpened it at the foot, he stuck it in the ground. His confidence in God was not in vain: at that very hour the tree put forth new roots and, drawing the sap of the earth, kept its flowers as long as was needed, and bore very fine fruit the same year. These wonders and many others drew a great number of persons to his cell to recommend themselves to his prayers, and he did not fail to give them salutary instructions to set them in the way of eternal happiness.

At last the time of his reward arrived; he was attacked by a violent fever and knew that he was going to die. He told those who were assisting him, and, indicating to them the day on which this happiness was to come to him, he begged them to announce it to Saint Félix, his bishop, that he might be pleased to assist him at that last hour. Saint Félix was then so occupied that, not being able to go, he sent word to the Saint that he begged him to wait a little, and that as soon as his affairs were dispatched he would not fail to come to his cell. It is thus that these friends of God disposed of the time of life and death as if they had been its absolute masters. The messengers having returned to Saint Friard, who seemed to be near expiring, brought him Saint Félix’s answer. “Let us rise then,” he said, “and wait for our brother”; and at the same time the fever left him, and he rose as if he had no longer been ill. When Saint Félix was free, he came to see him, according to his promise. Then this heavenly man, who groaned within himself at the delay of his happiness, made him a loving complaint about it and said to him: “O holy Priest, you make me wait a long time, and you greatly delay the

journey which I must make to eternity." The fever seized him again at once; he lay down, received from the blessed bishop the kiss of peace and all the helps which the Church gives to the dying, and, the following morning, fortified with the Sacraments, the episcopal blessing and prayer, he rendered his soul into the hands of his Creator. It was on 1 August 577. At that very instant his cell trembled and was filled with a very pleasant odour. Saint Félix and his clerics celebrated his funeral and had his body carried to the church of Besne, the place of his birth, where God has honoured him with several miracles.

Saint Friard is the patron of labourers, as is Saint Isidore, whose life we gave on 10 May.

He is represented watering a shrub. This shrub was, as we have seen, a staff used by the Saint. This staff, planted by him and watered, produced fruit. This marvel having drawn a great concourse, the Saint feared the consideration which would come to him from it and cut down the shrub.

### Cult and Relics

His relics, having since been raised from the ground, were carried in part to the cathedral of Nantes; the rest remained in this church of Besne, of which he is the principal patron. There are still preserved today, in the church of Besne, diocese of Nantes, a part of the relics of Saint Friard and of Saint Secondel, his friend and the companion of his solitude. These relics, which are not very considerable, are enclosed in two reliquaries of gilded wood. One also sees there the tombs of the two Saints, which are in the form of coffins, of a single stone. About a kilometre from the parish church there is a little oratory which is said to have been built on the site occupied by the cell of Saint Secondel. Quite near this oratory, the tradition of the country pointed out a portion of heath which is said to have formed the little garden which the pious companion of Saint Friard cultivated with his own hands. Monseigneur the bishop of Nantes, in his last pastoral visitation, bought this land, of which he made a gift to the parish council; and today a stone statue of Saint Secondel rises in the middle of the garden, a few steps from the oratory of which we have just spoken.

In the Proper of the diocese, approved at Rome in 1857, authorisation was obtained to make the commemoration of Saint Secondel on 29 April, and the feast of Saint Friard, of the rite of double minor, on 2 August. These are the two days assigned to the feast of the holy Confessors by the immemorial tradition of the parish of Besne, where their cult has remained very popular.

The relics of Saint Friard which were possessed at the cathedral of Nantes before the Revolution have been lost.

We have drawn this life from Saint Gregory of Tours and from what Father Alexandre, of Morlaix, wrote in his *History of the Saints of Brittany*, from the old manuscripts of the same church of Besne. We have completed it with local Notes owed to the kindness of the abbé F. Richard, vicar general of Nantes, now bishop of Belley. — Cf. *Lives of the Saints of Brittany*, by Dom Lobineau.

## Saint Ethelwold, Monk of Glastonbury, Bishop of Winchester, in England, and Confessor

*984. — Pope: John XIV. — King of England: Ethelred II.*

> *Divina sapientia vera est scientia.*
>
> *Divine wisdom is the true knowledge.*
>
> *Sextus the philosopher, Sent. cccxcii.*

Saint Ethelwold, who came of a respectable family, had for his native place the city of

Winchester. Animated from his childhood by an ardent desire to live only for God, he prayed the Father of lights to make known to him an experienced guide who could lead him in the ways of salvation. He found

him in the person of Saint Dunstan, abbot of Glastonbury. Having addressed himself to him, he received the monastic habit from his hands. He sought nothing more than the true wisdom, which he knew to be preferable to all treasures, and for the acquisition of which everything must be sacrificed. Prayer, tears and work made all his delight, and he directed all his efforts toward that estimable good which God Himself invites us to procure. It was recognised from the zeal with which he laboured to perfect himself that the Holy Spirit already reigned in his heart. He also showed much ardour for the study of the sciences which relate to religion, because this study formed an essential part of his duties. Saint Dunstan, who soon recognised his merit, made him dean of his community.

In 947 King Edred rebuilt and richly endowed the abbey of Abingdon, which had been founded by King Clissa in 675 and since then considerably enlarged by Ina. Ethelwold was chosen to govern this abbey, which was in Berkshire. He established there a perfect regularity, which afterwards served as a model to several similar establishments. He brought a master of chant from Corbie and adopted the observances of the monastery of Fleury, then celebrated for the holiness of those who dwelt in it. Osgar, one of his disciples, had spent some time in that monastery in order to bring back to England what he should have seen practised in France.

The fury of the Danes had caused the greatest ravages in Great Britain; scarcely any religious houses were to be seen there any longer, and there were no monks left except at Glastonbury and at Abingdon. The young were badly brought up; ignorance had taken the place of learning, and people were destitute of all the means suited to enlighten minds and make hearts virtuous. These deplorable circumstances aroused the zeal of those who were concerned for the glory of God, and above all of Saint Dunstan, Saint Ethelwold and Saint Oswald. These three great men applied themselves with all their strength to restore the taste for study and to make letters flourish again. Saint Ethelwold was consecrated bishop of Winchester by Saint Dunstan, who had been placed in the see of Canterbury. He had many abuses to reform. He began by bringing back to their duty the ecclesiastics whom ignorance, still more than corruption, made violate the most sacred rules. The efforts of his zeal were nevertheless useless in regard to several. The secular canons of his cathedral showed themselves incorrigible; he drove them out after assigning them the means of subsistence, and put in their place the monks of Abingdon, of whom he was at once bishop and abbot. There were three of them who took the habit and remained attached to the service of that church. The following year the holy bishop again took the monastery of Winchester from the secular canons who occupied it and substituted for them monks who were governed by an abbot. He had the monastery of the nuns in the same city, dedicated under the invocation of the Holy Virgin, repaired. Having bought from the king the lands and the ruins of that of Saint-Audry, in the isle of Ely, which had been burned by the Danes a hundred years before, he built on the same spot a celebrated abbey of men, which experienced the effects of the liberality of King Edgar, and which was afterwards known by the name of the isle in which it was situated. He also had that of Thorney, in Cambridgeshire, whose ruins he had likewise bought, rebuilt in 970.

It was with his help and under his direction that Adolphe, chancellor of King Edgar, made the acquisition of the land of the abbey of Peterborough in order to rebuild it with the greatest magnificence. This house had been founded in 646 by Péada, first Christian king of Mercia. It had, however, been completed only by Wulphère and Ethelred, brothers of that prince, and by Kinéburge and Kinewith, their sisters, who wished to be buried there. It had subsisted with a great reputation for holiness until the year 870, when the Danes destroyed it. Adolphe, who was rightly regarded as its second founder, had his only son, who died in infancy in the year 960, buried there. He then gave all his goods to the monastery, took the habit there and was elected its abbot.

Although Saint Ethelwold occupied himself strenuously with the sanctification of others, he did not on that account neglect his own salvation. He exercised himself in the practice of all the virtues and referred everything to the glory of God. Humility and charity animated all his exterior actions. He knew that without

these virtues it would profit him nothing to distribute his goods to the poor, and even to deliver his body to the flames. He knew too that the fervour of devotion must be nourished and increased in the heart, because otherwise it slackens and loses its activity, much like an arrow shot from a bow, whose force diminishes little by little and which falls at last to the ground. He therefore joined interior exercises to exterior functions, so that the one and the other might sustain and strengthen each other. His blessed death took place on 1 August 984. He was buried in his cathedral, beside the high altar. Several miracles having been worked through his intercession, his body was raised from the ground and laid solemnly under the altar. This ceremony was performed by Saint Elphège, the immediate successor of Saint Ethelwold.

Godescard and *Acta Sanctorum*.

## Blessed Bertrand de Garrigue, Missionary in Languedoc

*1230. — Pope: Gregory IX. — King of France: Saint Louis.*

> *Faithful disciple of Saint Dominic and imitator of his virtues, he laboured all his life for the edification or the instruction of his neighbour, for the service of the Church and the glory of God.*
>
> *Touron, Eulogy of Blessed Bertrand.*

Blessed Bertrand de Garrigue, whose memory is held in benediction among the inhabitants of Bouschet, was born in the 12th century, in the Comtat Venaissin. Having consecrated himself to the service of the altar and wishing to labour for the salvation of souls, he went to Languedoc at the time when the Albigenses were causing the greatest ravages there. Saint Dominic, who had just been elected head of the missionaries in that country, found in Bertrand a courage proof against every trial and a charity which labour could not dishearten nor scandal weaken. The mission had need of such workers; it received as much help as consolation from the ever-persevering fervour of this worthy minister of Jesus Christ.

A motive of zeal had made him labour without interruption until the year 1215; the same motive led him to make the sacrifice of his liberty by receiving the religious habit from the hands of Saint Dominic and devoting himself for the rest of his days to the functions of the holy ministry. As if he had only then begun to live for his neighbour, for the service of the Church and for the glory of God, he increased his austerities, his fasts and his prayers, and redoubled his vigilance over himself, in order to arrive at perfect holiness through the mortification of the senses and the holy rigours of penance. That is why the historians call him a man of eminent holiness and of inflexible rigour toward himself. The idea which Father Bertrand had of the sovereign holiness of the Master whom he had the honour to serve made him regard the slightest faults as very great infidelities; he wept continually for his sins with so lively a sorrow and such an abundance of tears that Saint Dominic, fearing perhaps that there was some excess in this, and wishing to test his disciple, ordered him to moderate these exterior marks of repentance and to weep henceforth only for the conversion of sinners. Father Bertrand’s obedience was prompt, because his humility was sincere. The ordinary companion of Saint Dominic, he more than once deserved to be the witness of his miracles. Like him, he spoke on one occasion a language which he had never learned; and on another occasion, travelling with this great Saint, he saw an abundant rain fall on either side of them and flood all the roads without their own garments being wetted by a single drop of water. During the life of Saint Dominic, Bertrand kept on all these facts the silence that had been commanded him; and when he believed he ought to speak of them to give glory to God, he attributed nothing to himself; he did not even make known the share he had had in this last favour.

After having governed for some time the community of Saint-Romain, and having since contributed to the foundation of the celebrated convent of Saint-Jacques at Paris, he was elected in 1221 first provincial of the province of Provence, then united with that of Toulouse. Without ever interrupting the exercise of preaching, he fulfilled the duties of his office with all the attention, zeal and love of regularity that could be expected of

a man wholly filled with the spirit of God. In the course of his missions he passed through Bouschet and wished to make the word of God heard by the Nuns of Cîteaux, who had a very flourishing monastery in that village. It was there that the Lord was waiting for him to reward his apostolic virtues. He was struck there by a mortal sickness and ended his holy life there by a precious death in the year 1230.

His body was buried in the church of the abbey with all the pomp which his great reputation deserved and the regrets due to his memory. Guidenois, cited by Malvenda, says that it was found entire and without any corruption twenty-three years after his death; he asserts that in his time various miracles were worked at his tomb and that the inhabitants of the region honoured him under the name of Saint Bertrand. This cult has continued to our days. There is even preserved carefully today in the church of Bouschet an ancient statue which is said to be that of this great servant of God.

*Lives of the Saints and Blessed of the Diocese of Valence*, by the abbé Nadal.

## Blessed Pierre Lefèvre[1] du Villaret, First Priest of the Society of Jesus

*1546. — Pope: Paul III. — King of France: Francis I.*

> *To prove that genius is of divine race only, it sometimes turns its gaze away from the palaces of kings, seems to forget the great cities, and decides that the man of its right hand, whom it has conceived in its thought, shall see the light of day in an unknown village and shall command his father's flock before commanding men.*
>
> *Eulogy of Blessed Pierre Lefèvre.*

Blessed Lefèvre saw the light of day on 13 April 1506, in a wretched cottage of the Villaret, a little village placed between two churches of Our Lady, that of Entremont and that of the Grand-Bernard, in the diocese of Annecy (Haute-Savoie). He was given in baptism the name of Pierre.

As a young shepherd, he often came to put himself under the protection of Notre-Dame de tous les Saints d'Entremont.[1] His piety was so tender and his morals so pure that the angel of the Lord took him by the hand in the fields of the Villaret to set him on the road to the sanctuary. He made his first studies at the college of La Roche, and he went on to continue them at the university of Paris.[2]

Pierre Lefèvre met at Paris Ignatius of Loyola, Francis Xavier and the first companions of the founder of the Society of Jesus. It was he who received their vows at Montmartre on the day of the feast of the Assumption, 1534.

Ignatius had Rome for his portion, with the general government of the new society; Xavier was sent to the Indies and to Japan; Lefèvre upheld the faith in Germany and founded several colleges.

When the council of Trent opened, he was named theologian of the Pope for the great assembly; but he died at Rome on the 1st day of August 1546. He left such a reputation for holiness that Saint Ignatius and Saint Francis Xavier, his intimate friends, began to invoke him and with one accord gave him the title of Blessed.

The cottage of the Villaret in which Father Lefèvre was born was so worn by time that it fell down from age; but fourteen years after the death of our great man, two members of his family raised a chapel on the ruins which still remained, and it was Saint Francis de Sales who consecrated its altar, in 1607.

Here is what he says about our Blessed in his *Introduction to the Devout Life*: "The celebrated Pierre Lefèvre, first priest, first preacher, first professor of theology of the holy Society of Jesus, and first companion of blessed Ignatius, who was the founder of that Society, coming back one day from Germany, where he had laboured much for the glory of God, and passing through this diocese, where he was born, related that, having crossed several heretical countries, he had always found it very good to salute, on arriving in a parish, the angels who protected it, and that he owed visibly to this practice his having escaped the snares of the heretics and having found souls so gentle and so docile to receive the doctrine of salvation:

which he said with so moved an air that a lady, then very young, who had heard him relate this fact himself, repeated it only four years ago, that is to say more than sixty years afterwards, with an extreme feeling of piety. For my part, I was much consoled last year to consecrate an altar in the very place where God caused this holy man to be born, in the little village of the Villaret, in the midst of our most inaccessible mountains."[3]

The chapel of the Villaret has been completely repaired in these last years. The parish priest of Saint-Jean de Sixte, who is its rector, must go there at least forty-five times each year to celebrate the holy sacrifice. The abbé Ducis, the learned and laborious archivist of Haute-Savoie, found in the first days of 1872 the authentic proof of another chapel which had been dedicated to blessed Pierre Lefèvre, together with blessed Amédée IX of Savoy, at Annecy, in 1660, in the General Hospital of the Provence, quite near another chapel where Saint Francis de Sales had received the vows of Saint Françoise de Chantal and of her first two companions, in 1610. This ecclesiastic, zealous for the glory of the saints of God, hastened to send an approved act of it to the Reverend Father Boero, postulator of the cause of blessed Pierre at Rome. We have borrowed what precedes from the various notes which the abbé Ducis was kind enough to send us and from the work of the abbé Grobel entitled *Notre-Dame de Savoie*.

## Saint Jonat, Abbot of Marchiennes, in the Diocese of Cambrai (691 or 695)

When Saint Amand had founded (about 643) the monastery of Marchiennes (*Marchianae*, Order of Saint Benedict) on the lands which Saint Adalbaud, husband of Saint Rictrude, had granted him, he placed there, to direct the new religious, one of his disciples named Jonat, who answered perfectly to his confidence. Nothing is found in the authors that makes known his early years: his country, his family, his entry into religion, all has remained unknown. This circumstance, which is met with in the life of nearly all the disciples of Saint Amand, comes no doubt from the fact that most of them were foreign and captive children whom the charitable missionary had redeemed from slavery and had had brought up in some tranquil solitude. All the authors confine themselves to praising the wisdom and the virtue of Jonat. As a religious, he was the model of his brethren; as abbot, he directed them with a prudence which is to his praise as it is to that of Saint Amand, who had formed him. Some words met with in very ancient acts would seem to suppose that he sometimes accompanied the missionary in his apostolic journeys. "These two holy men," it is said there, "shining in the house of the Lord like brilliant stars, drove before them the deep darkness of idolatry and sin. By their examples and their prayers, they had the happiness of bringing many souls into heaven."

When Saint Rictrude, after the death of her husband, withdrew to the monastery of Marchiennes with her two youngest daughters, Saint Jonat was again charged with their direction and with that of the persons who came to the holy widow to embrace the religious life. The counsels of his experience, the gravity of his morals and the holiness of his conduct exercised a very happy influence in the monastery and in the whole region, where his name long remained in veneration. To complete the praise of this venerable abbot, and to supply as far as possible the silence of the authors, let us recall further these words of an ancient hagiographer: "Jonat was chaste in body, humble in mind, of a gentle and peaceful exterior, affable and amiable toward all. A particular grace shone on his brow like a reflection of his virtues and drew hearts invincibly to him." He died at the monastery of Marchiennes on 1 August 691, or, according to others, 695. His body rested in the church of the abbey.

*Acta Sanctorum Belgii*, translation by the abbé Destombac.

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[1] The Esquiline hill, called today the hill of Sainte-Marie-Majeure, is one of the seven hills of Rome, to the south of the Quirinal and to the north of the Caelian hill. It was enclosed within the city by Tullus Hostilius, third king of Rome (671–639 B.C.). It was there that criminals were executed. It gave its name to the Esquiline Gate, one of the western gates of Rome, called today the Porta San Lorenzo.

[2] These three Virgins were sisters. Saint Sophie, their mother, who is named under 30 September by the Roman martyrology, probably gave them the names under which they are known, out of devotion and love for the theological virtues. The Greek menologies give the

three sisters the names of Pistis, Elpis and Agapé: these are three Greek words which answer to the French words; it is the same with Sophie, which signifies Wisdom. And so we readily believe that these names are less proper names than appellative names. The Breviary of Strasbourg (1478) places the feast of Saint Sophie and her three daughters on 10 May, which was the day of the translation of their relics into Alsace. Pope Adrian granted these relics to Remy, bishop of Strasbourg, who transported them into his diocese and deposited them (777) in the abbey church of Eschau, which he had just founded. One still sees today, in the parish church of the same place, behind the high altar, a stone tomb in the form of a shrine, raised on pillars, which is said to contain the bodies of Saint Sophie and her three daughters. — Cf. *Acta Sanctorum* and Godescard.

[3] Some hagiographers, the continuators of Godescard among others, think that this Saint Justin is none other than Saint Just or Juste of Beauvais, martyr, honoured on 18 October. We shall give his life on that day.

[4] The martyrology of Vienne gives him the title of martyr, says that he was a disciple of the Apostles and the fifth bishop of the Church of Vienne, to which he was sent by Pope Alexander, and that he governed it for twenty-two years. — *Acta Sanctorum*.

[5] See his life on 26 July, with that of Saint Anne.

[6] It is difficult to say which this island is; it is no longer known by this name.

[7] Or better, Pierre Favre: the first companion of Saint Ignatius was indeed called Favre and not Lefèvre. There are no Lefèvres or Favres in Savoy. Lefèvre is only the translation of the Latin *Faber*, made by people who had not seen the birth certificate of the second of the Jesuits.

[8] Notre-Dame de tous les Saints d'Entremont. — Entremont, as its name indicates, is a narrow gorge between the gorges of Faucigny (*Fauces*): the Augustinian Canons of Notre-Dame d'Abondance (see the life of blessed Ponce de Faucigny) took possession of it in the name of God and of the Virgin Mary in the first half of the 12th century. The priory which they first established there was erected into an abbey in the year 1154. At a time which it has not been possible to determine, the abbey of Entremont was fortunate enough to procure a whole treasure of relics of the Apostles and of a great number of Saints. The popular chronicles of the country say that the horse which carried the precious burden of these relics, going ahead of its driver, made straight for the abbey church. As the doors were shut, it struck with its hoof, and at once they opened of themselves. The pious idea was conceived of having some of these relics inlaid in a statue of Mary, which from then on became the object of a quite particular devotion under the name of Notre-Dame de tous les Saints d'Entremont. The statue of Notre-Dame d'Entremont and its relics happily escaped the revolutionary storm of the last century, and the devotion of former days has survived the years. Pilgrims flock to the foot of the blessed statue, particularly from the Assumption to the Nativity of Our Lady, a period during which a plenary indulgence is granted to devout visitors.

[9] Father Le Juy, who was, like Father Lefèvre, one of the first members of the Society of Jesus and one of the principal theologians of the council of Trent, was born at Ayse, in Faucigny, and had also made his first studies at the college of La Roche (arrondissement of Bonneville, Haute-Savoie).

[10] *Introduction to the Devout Life*, part 2, ch. 16.

# 2 August

## Martyrologies

### Roman Martyrology

At Nocera degli Pagani (*Nuceria Alfatema*), a town of Italy, in the Principato Citeriore, the blessed death of Saint Alphonse-Marie de Liguori, bishop of Sant'Agata dei Goti, founder of the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer, illustrious for his zeal for the salvation of souls, by his discourses, his writings and his examples; fifty-two years after his death (1839) he was canonised by Pope Gregory XVI. 1787. — At Rome, in the cemetery of Callistus, the birth into heaven of Saint Stephen I, pope and martyr, who, during the persecution of Valerian, although soldiers had entered the church to put him to death, remained firm and intrepid before the altar where he was saying Mass, and finished the holy Mysteries which he had begun; after which he was beheaded on his throne. 257. — At Nicaea, today Isnik, in Bithynia, the martyrdom of Saint

Théodote and her three sons. The eldest, named Evode, boldly confessing the name of Jesus Christ, was first bruised with blows of a stick by order of the consular Nicétius; then Théodote and the three brothers were burned alive by sentence of the same judge.[1] 4th century. — In Africa, Saint Rutile, martyr, who, after having often escaped the rigour of the persecution by passing from one place to another, and having even sometimes bought himself out of danger at a price in money, was one day arrested unexpectedly and brought before the judge's tribunal, where he suffered several torments: at last he was thrown into the fire, and was crowned with a glorious martyrdom. 211. — At Padua, a fortified town of the kingdom of Italy, Saint

Maxime, bishop of that see and confessor, who ended happily a career made illustrious by many miracles.[2] 2nd century.

## Martyrology of France, Revised and Augmented

In the diocese of Beauvais, anniversary of the inauguration of the chapel of Notre-Dame de Bon Secours. 1637. — In the diocese of Tarbes, pilgrimage to Notre-Dame de Médous. — In the dioceses of Blois and Chartres, Saint Bohaire or Béthaire (*Betharius*), bishop of the latter see and confessor, celebrated for his love for his diocesans. About 623. — In the diocese of Nantes, Saint Friard, recluse, patron of labourers, whose life we gave on the preceding day. — In the same diocese, memory of Saint Stephen, pope and martyr, cited in the Roman martyrology of this day. — Near Morlaix, in the diocese of Quimper and Léon, anniversary of the foundation of the chapel of Saint-Jean du Doigt, in honour of some particles of relics of the Precursor brought into Brittany in the 15th century. In the journey which Queen Anne of Brittany made to Morlaix in 1505 and 1506, she went to visit the church and the relic of Saint John. There is still shown near Morlaix a stone cross, called the Cross of the Queen, which was set up at the spot where the queen got down from her litter to complete the rest of the journey on foot. The church of Saint-Jean du Doigt (Finistère, arrondissement of Morlaix, canton of Lanmeur) still possesses the relic of Saint John, and it is still a much-frequented pilgrimage. About 1437. — In Brittany, feast of all the holy confessors of the faith who perished in that region during the troubles of Calvinism. 1562 and 1593. — In the diocese of Autun, anniversary of the erection of the Confraternities for the construction of churches. In the 12th century, the construction of the basilicas raised to the glory of God and dedicated to the holy Virgin was the greatest object of popular devotion. Vast confraternities, which put their efforts and their treasures in common, had been formed in various places to pay to the Church the debt of their gratitude. The Confraternities of the Lodgers of the good God and of the Freemasons[3] were of this number. Men and women, rich and poor, aspired to the honour of belonging to them, and no one was admitted unless he had, by a humble confession, been reconciled with God, and unless at the same time he made a vow to obey the superior of the Congregation and to assist the sick brethren according to the rules of charity. 12th century. — At Templeuve (Nord), in the diocese of Cambrai, Natalie-Joseph Doignies, in religion Sister Natalie of Jesus, born on 2 August 1778 at

Mondiaux (arrondissement and canton of Valenciennes), foundress of the Congregation of the Daughters of the Child Jesus, an order specially devoted to the work of the instruction of the poor and approved by Mgr the bishop of Cambrai. She died at Templeuve, aged nearly eighty. Her body, brought back to Lille, was buried at Loos (Nord). The Congregation of the Daughters of the Child Jesus then comprised seventy-seven establishments. 1858. — At Apt (*Apta Julia*), in the diocese of Vaucluse, Saint Auspice, first bishop of that ancient see, whose feast is kept at Avignon only on 9 August, under which day we shall give his life. — At Soissons, Saint Bandry, bishop and confessor, already named on the preceding day, whose life we shall give on 9 August. 566. — At Toul, in the present diocese of Nancy, finding of the bodies of Saints Alchas, Celsin, Auspice (450–487) and Ours (after 487), third, fourth, fifth and sixth bishops of that ancient see. — In the whole Order of Saint Francis, dedication of Our Lady of the Angels, or of the Portiuncula. 1222.

## Martyrologies of the Religious Orders

Martyrology of the Dominicans. — At Pénafield, a town of Spain, in the intendancy of Valladolid, Blessed Jeanne d'Aza, mother of Saint Dominic, a woman of eminent virtue, who fell asleep in the kiss of the Lord at Calahorra (*Calagurris*), in the intendancy of Lagrono (Old Castile). 12th century.

Martyrology of the Franciscans. — At Assisi, in Umbria, the dedication of the church of Saint Mary of the Angels, also called of the Portiuncula, a church greatly venerated by Saint Francis, who made it the head of his Order and who obtained there from Our Lord Jesus Christ, through the intercession of the Virgin Mother of God, a plenary indulgence for all the faithful. The vicar of Jesus Christ, Honorius III, by the order of Our

Lord, and Gregory XV extended it to the other churches of the Seraphic Order. Innocent XI decreed that it should be applicable to the dead. 1222.

Martyrology of the Augustinians. — At Rieti, a town of the kingdom of Italy, Blessed Jean de Rieti, of the noble family of Améria, choir religious of the Order of Hermits of Saint

Augustine, who shone by a rare simplicity of heart and fell asleep in the Lord on 1 August.[4] 1347.

### Additions Made from the Bollandists and Other Hagiographers

At Osma (*Uxama*), a town of Spain, in the intendancy of Soria (Old Castile), Saint Pierre of Osma, a native of Berry, who was successively monk of Cluny (*Cluniacum*, Order of Saint Benedict), in the diocese of Autun, archdeacon of Toledo, in Spain, and bishop of Osma. About the middle of the 12th century. — At Biandra, near Novara, a fortified town of Italy, in the former Sardinian States, Saint Sérénus or Sérène, bishop of Marseilles and confessor, whose life we shall give on 9 August. There is at Biandra a chapel of his name. — At Croyland or Crowland, a town of England, in the county of Lincoln, Saint Etheldrite or Alfrède, virgin and recluse. Daughter of Offa, king of the Mercians, and of Queen Quindrède, she refused to marry Ethelbert, king of the East Angles, in order to live in solitude. Her relics were lost during the ravages of the Danes. About 834. — At Ekhstaedt, a town of Bavaria, in the circle of the Begen, Saint Guudechar or Gunzo, also called Guudekar, Guedakar, Gundekard and Guntaker, bishop of that see and confessor, a great zealot for religion and for the salvation of souls. A multitude of miracles are related of him which proved his holiness in a striking manner. 1075. — At Kilmore, in Ireland, in the county of Cavan, Saint Fredlemid or Félimi, bishop of that see and confessor. 6th century. — At Verona, in Venetia, Saints Félix and Nicet, martyrs, cited in the martyrology of Saint Jerome. — At Nicomedia, today Isnikmid, a town of Bithynia on the Propontis, seven anonymous Martyrs, cited in the same martyrology. — At Guimaraens, in Portugal, in the province of Minho, Blessed Gautier (*Gualterus*), confessor, disciple of Saint Francis of Assisi. Under the pontificate of Honorius III and the reign of Alphonse II, about the year 1218, he was sent to that town with several companions by the illustrious founder of the Friars Minor. The king and queen of Portugal, persons of great piety, permitted the newcomers to build chapels in which to give their missions. Gautier had raised, with the resources of the faithful, not far from Guimaraens, a celebrated oratory where his preaching and his miracles won to Jesus Christ a great number of the inhabitants of the country. It is related that after his death there flowed from his tomb for long years (1236–1280) a precious liquid which cured every kind of infirmity. His body was raised from the ground in 1280; in 1573 a confraternity was erected in his honour; a chapel was built under his invocation, and his body was transferred to it in 1577. About 1236.

## Saint Stephen I, Pope and Martyr

*257. — Roman Emperors: Valerian and Gallienus.*

> *The enemy may well, by his persecutions, afflict the just; subdue them, never.*
>
> *Hugh of Saint-Victor.*

It seems that God gave this great pontiff to His Church only to pacify it in its troubles, to sustain it in its persecutions and to strengthen it by the example of his martyrdom. He was the son of Julius, a citizen of Rome. Having embraced the ecclesiastical state, he so distinguished himself among the clergy of the Roman Church that the holy popes Cornelius and Lucius, his predecessors, seeing themselves exposed successively to martyrdom, entrusted to him, as to their archdeacon, all the treasures of the Church. He was placed after them in the chair of Saint Peter in the year 254, under the empire of Valerian and his son Gallienus. It was a time of great tribulation: the Church was on the one side shaken by a very formidable tempest over the baptism of heretics; and on the other she saw herself persecuted more than ever by the malice and cruelty of the idolatrous princes and magistrates.

Here is what gave occasion to this dispute over the validity of the baptism of heretics. The Cataphrygians and the Novatians rebaptising all the Catholics who were perverted and entered their sect, some bishops of the East took it into their heads that they ought in exchange to rebaptise all those who came into the bosom of the Church after having been baptised by heretics. For this they held a council at Iconium, in Phrygia, where prelates of Cilicia, Cappadocia, Galatia and the neighbouring provinces, having assembled, adopted the same opinion and declared that none of the sacraments conferred by heretics ought to be held valid: that is to say, neither baptism, nor the imposition of hands or confirmation, nor ordination; and that therefore they must necessarily be repeated when anyone became a Catholic. This was a novelty until then unknown in the Church: from the time of the Apostles it had always been recognised that the faith of the minister is not necessary for the validity of the Sacraments, but that it suffices that the essential things be observed and that the minister have the intention of the Church, and, for the sacraments of Confirmation and Order, that he also have the episcopal power, without which he cannot be their lawful minister. Saint Stephen, having learned the decisions of these ignorant or over-zealous bishops, conceived extreme grief at them, and, so as not to share in their sacrileges, cut them off from his communion, as persons who were abandoning the apostolic traditions and the sound doctrine which had been inviolably held in the Church. It is even said that, to make them feel the more the perversity of their dogma, which tended to cast doubt on the validity of all baptism and of every other sacrament, he would not see the deputies whom they sent him, nor allow the faithful to have any communication with them.

Meanwhile other councils were held on this subject, both in the East and in Africa, and several other bishops, whom their learning and their piety made very worthy of esteem, defined the same thing as the council of Iconium, among others the great Saint Cyprian, who was as it were the soul of all the synods of Africa. They wrote their opinion to Saint Stephen and tried to persuade him, by many reasons, that baptism conferred by heretics could not be good. But this great Pope, whom God had placed in His Church as an unshakeable rock against which all the waves of these false opinions were to break, remained firm in the defence of the ancient doctrine, and by a single word which he answered to these prelates he overthrew all their reasonings, quashed all their definitions, brought all their projects to nothing and obliged them at last to return to the true opinions which they had left, as Saint Dionysius of Alexandria, Saint Jerome and Saint Augustine inform us. “Let nothing be innovated,” said this holy Pontiff, “but let us keep to tradition, holding good the baptism conferred by heretics, and contenting ourselves with reconciling by the imposition of hands, that is to say by penance, those who return to the bosom of the Catholic Church.” He supposes, nevertheless, that the heretics have observed the things necessary for baptism, that is to say that they have used natural water for it, and that they have given it with the invocation of the name of the most holy Trinity. That is why it was ordained, at the first council of Arles, that heretics who were converted should be questioned on the creed, and that, if it was recognised that they had been baptised in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, they should not be rebaptised, but that they should be baptised if it was found that this form had been omitted. During this dispute Saint Stephen also applied himself with incredible zeal to sustain the faith of the faithful in Rome and to increase their number by the conversion of the pagans. The emperors then made an edict by which they granted the confiscated goods of the Christians to all who should denounce them, so that none of them might escape, and that avarice itself might lead some to betray their brethren and to reveal them to the judges in order to have their goods. The Pope, being informed of this edict, assembled the priests, the clerics and the laity, and exhorted them to prepare themselves, by prayer and by contempt of temporal goods, to withstand this furious tempest which was threatening them. A priest named Bon took the word and told him that they were all disposed not only to lose their goods but also to shed their blood for the cause of Jesus Christ. Everyone applauded this answer, which gave an incredible joy to Saint Stephen; then he hid himself in one of the catacombs which served as a refuge for the Christians on such occasions; in one day he baptised a hundred and eight catechumens, confirmed them by the sign of the holy Mystery, say the Acts of his martyrdom, and offered for them the Sacrifice, in which they participated. At the same time, knowing that

the time of his death was approaching, he set in order the affairs of his flock and charged with them three priests, seven deacons and sixteen inferior clerics, who were as it were the cardinals of his Church.

Then Némésius, who was a tribune, came to him and implored him to give sight to his daughter, blind from birth. Stephen promised him to do what he desired if he would believe in Jesus Christ. The father believed; he was catechised and baptised, and his daughter, who was baptised too, on coming out of the baptismal font, where she was given the name of Lucille, received the light of the body. On the same day sixty-three pagans were converted and asked for the Sacrament of regeneration with such insistence that the holy Pope could not refuse it to them. This number grew further from day to day: so that Stephen, who went from cave to cave to celebrate Mass there and hold the assemblies of the faithful, saw himself continually obliged to confer baptism. Meanwhile Némésius having been arrested with his daughter Lucille, as well as Sempronius, the steward of his house, and summoned before Olympius to declare what all his property consisted of, this faithful officer declared that he had none left and that he had distributed everything to the poor. Olympius pressed him to adore a statue of Mars, threatening him with the greatest torments if he did not obey; but Sempronius, looking at the idol with indignation, said to it: “May Our Lord Jesus Christ, Son of the living God, break you and scatter you!” And at that very hour it melted like lead in a crucible, or like wax exposed to a great fire. Olympius was extremely surprised at this miracle, and, passing from astonishment to reflection, he began to doubt the truth of his gods and to conceive an inclination for the Christian religion. He spoke of it to Exupérie, his wife; she was of the opinion, like him, that they should be converted. This they did, with their son Théodule and their whole family; and at the same time they broke their idols, of which they had a whole room full. Saint Stephen, being informed of it, came to them, instructed them more perfectly in the faith, encouraged them to perseverance and conferred on them the Sacrament of regeneration. They all afterwards received the crown of martyrdom with a joy that cannot be expressed, and this holy Pope, who had begotten them in Jesus Christ, also gave them burial. Twelve clerics of his Church were likewise martyred before him in this persecution: the first was the priest Bon, who had so courageously protested to Saint Stephen that he was ready, with all his brethren, to endure death for Jesus Christ. The others were Saints Fauste, Maure, Primitif, Calomniose, Exupérance, Jean, Cyrille, Théodore, Basile, Castule and Honorat.

After the execution of these generous ecclesiastics, Saint Stephen was taken and led before the emperor Valerian. This prince, whom magicians had greatly embittered against the Christian religion, asked him whether he was not that seditious man who was troubling the State and turning the people from the worship of the immortal gods. “I do not trouble the State,” answered the Saint, “but I exhort the people to leave the service of demons to adore the true God.” “You blaspheme,” said Valerian, “but you shall pay by your death for the insult you do to our gods.” At the same time he had him led to the temple of Mars to be beheaded if he would not offer a sacrifice there. The holy Pontiff, having arrived there, set himself to prayer, and his prayer was so efficacious that he drew down from heaven thunder and lightning which overthrew a part of the temple. This crash so terrified the soldiers and the executioners appointed for the execution that they all fled and left the blessed Pontiff alone with the Christians who had followed him. Seeing himself at liberty, he led his dear sheep to the cemetery of Lucine, where he exhorted them anew not to fear the torments which end with life. And, to strengthen their courage further, he went up to the altar to offer there the august sacrifice of our Redemption. Valerian, learning where he was, sent guards there to take his life. Their tumultuous entry into the church did not disturb him; he went on to finish the holy Mysteries peacefully, hoping to be sacrificed himself after having sacrificed his Saviour. Mass being finished, he sat down in his episcopal chair as if to exhort the people, and then these soldiers, without respect either for the holy place or for the dignity of his person, cut off his head on his own throne, on 2 August of the year of Our Lord 257. He had held the see four years, two months and ten days: in two ordinations, in the month of December, he had made seven priests, five deacons and three bishops to govern various Churches. Saint Vincent of Lérins, in his Commentaries, made an excellent eulogy of his steadfastness; it was all the greater because his zeal to

preserve the ancient doctrine inviolate had adversaries very considerable for their piety; but it was just, says this learned Father, that he should surpass his brethren as much by the firmness and zeal of his faith as he surpassed them by the authority of his see. His reputation for holiness was everywhere so great that the Greeks put him in their Menology and their calendar so as to keep his feast every year, and that the heretical Donatists, whose repeated baptisms he had condemned in advance, never dared to attack his reputation. His body, with the chair on which he had been beheaded, which was all crimsoned with blood, was placed by the Christians in a cave, in the cemetery of Callistus on the Appian Way, on 12 August 257; but it was transported on 17 August 762, under Saint Paul I, into the church of Saints Stephen and Sylvester which that Pope had built, and which is called today San Silvestro *in capite*, because the head of Saint John the Baptist is kept there. His relics were transferred to Pisa in 1682 and deposited in the church which bears his name. Since then his head has been transported to Cologne, in Germany. His memory is very celebrated in the town of Saint-Mihiel (Meuse), where a church is consecrated in his honour. The notaries of the Roman Church took care to collect his Acts, which Surius has given us in two forms, having taken them from Simeon Metaphrastes, who had translated them into Greek, and from Cardinal Baronius. In the Notes of the latter are seen the other authors who have spoken of him. All our martyrologies make mention of him.

He is represented with a sword plunged into his breast.

Cf. *The Acts of the Martyrs*, by the Rev. Benedictine Fathers of the Congregation of France; the *History of the Church*, by the abbé Darras; Dom Ceillier.

## Dedication of Our Lady of the Angels, or of the Portiuncula, at Assisi, in the States of the Church

*1122. — Pope: Honorius III. — Emperor of Germany: Frederick II.*

> *The concession of the indulgence of the Portiuncula is a testimony: 1st, of the goodness of God toward Saint Francis of Assisi; 2nd, of the favours of Mary toward this same Saint; 3rd, of the charity of the Saint toward sinners.*
>
> *Masson, Orat. sacrés (collect. Migne).*

The Orders of Saint Francis everywhere celebrate this feast with great solemnity: first, in memory of the dedication of the church of Our Lady of the Angels, situated at the gates of the town of Assisi, in Umbria, the first church which was given to them and the first inheritance they possessed in the world; secondly, in thanksgiving for their own establishment, because it is in this same temple that they had their birth and were founded by the glorious patriarch Saint Francis; thirdly, in gratitude for the celebrated plenary indulgence which Jesus Christ our Saviour, and after Him the sovereign pontiff Honorius III, His vicar on earth, granted to all who should visit this place of devotion on this day. But the faithful also honour there the holy Virgin under the august title of Queen of the angels, which is given her not only by Saint Bernard, Saint Bonaventure, Saint Bernardine of Siena and several other holy Doctors, but also by the universal Church, which so often salutes her in this manner: *Ave, Regina caelorum; Ave, Domina Angelorum*: “Hail, Queen of the heavens; I revere you, Mistress and Sovereign of the Angels.”

For a better understanding of these reasons, it must be known that Our Lord, having touched the heart of Saint Francis of Assisi with an extraordinary grace and having said to him three times by the mouth of the crucifix: “Go, Francis, and repair My house, which is falling entirely into ruin,” this great Saint, who did not altogether understand the mystery of this voice, applied himself first to repairing three material churches which he found almost ruined and demolished in the country of his birth. The first was that of San Damiano, in Assisi itself, for the repair of which he was not ashamed to beg alms in a town where he had formerly passed for one of the richest, and to carry stones and mortar instead of the rich stuffs which he had been accustomed to handle in his employment as a merchant. The second was that of San Pietro, at some distance

from the same town, which he restored with all the more affection because he had more devotion to the great apostle Saint Peter. The third, finally, was that of Our Lady, in the suburb, which his veneration for the holy Virgin made him respect singularly. Saint

Bonaventure tells us that this one was already called Our Lady of the Angels and Our Lady of the Portiuncula, because it was situated in a little field which the Benedictine religious of Mont-Sabace regarded as the least inheritance of their monastery. Some authors have believed that these names were given to it after the establishment of the Order of Minims, because Saint Francis was often visited there by the angels in the company of Our Lady, their sovereign and their mistress, and because it was at the beginning the only possession which his children had on earth; but it is more fitting to rely on the testimony of Saint Bonaventure, who believes these names to be older, although it is quite probable that these same names were afterwards confirmed to this church for the reasons which these authors bring forward. After the Saint had restored this third church, he cherished and loved it more than all the other places in the world. It was there, says the same holy doctor, that he began with humility the evangelical life which he inspired in his whole Order; it was there that he made that great progress in virtue which caused him to be regarded as the marvel of his age; it was there that he happily consummated the great work of his perfection and found the end of his labours. God showed to a holy person, in a revelation, the abundance of blessings which would come forth from this church for the consolation of the Christian people. He saw before its doors and around its walls an infinite number of blind persons who, on their knees and with their hands raised toward heaven, implored with loud cries and many tears the effects of the divine mercy; and at the same instant a light came down from on high which gave them back their sight and filled them with consolation and joy.

We shall explain more in detail, in the life of the same Saint Francis, the things which took place in this church and in the little house which he had built beside it to lodge his brethren. Being the first of the Order and the one most esteemed by the holy patriarch, it became a sanctuary of marvels and a wholly heavenly place, where this seraphic man received inexpressible consolations and graces. And so it cannot be believed how much it was frequented by the devotion of the people. People went there from all sides, and the ordinary stay which the blessed patriarch made there drew to it not only his children, who did not believe they shared sufficiently in his spirit unless they had been to Our Lady of the Angels, but also many secular persons of every kind of state and condition. Nothing poorer could be seen, either in its structure or in the quality of its ornaments, which were neither of gold, nor of silver, nor of silk, nor of any other precious metal or stuff; but the power of God filled it, and one breathed there an air of devotion which ravished the hearts of those who entered and enriched them with the spirit of penance and an ardent desire to serve God.

Our Saint, being at prayer one day in his cell, was ordered by an angel, on God’s behalf, to go as soon as possible to this sanctuary, because Our Lord and His most holy Mother, with an innumerable multitude of blessed spirits, were waiting for him there. He went there as soon as possible and in fact found there this adorable company, which gave him a thousand testimonies of friendship and goodwill. Our Lord told him that He accepted his zeal for the salvation of souls and the tears he shed for their conversion and sanctification; and that, to show him how much his vows and prayers had charmed His heart, He gave him leave to ask for sinners whatever he pleased. Saint Francis, under the impression of such majesty and such admirable sweetness, was ravished out of himself; but, having come to himself, he said to the Saviour: “Since You are willing, my lovable Father, to grant my desires for penitent sinners, I beg You that all who shall come into this church after having sufficiently confessed their sins to the priests may obtain the plenary indulgence for ever, without anything remaining for them to pay at the severe tribunal of Your justice; and I pray at the same time the holy Virgin, Your Mother and the advocate of the human race, to serve me as mediatrix to obtain this favour from You.” Our Lord said to him: “What you ask, Francis, is something very great; but I grant it to you, and I promise you even to grant you things still more considerable. However, I desire that you go and find the Pope, My vicar, to whom I have given the power of binding and loosing, and

that you ask him for this favour by My order." The religious who were in their cells around the church heard this whole colloquy, and even saw the splendour which filled this sanctuary and the angels in human form; but no one dared to leave his room or enter the church where these great marvels were taking place. On the very next day the Saint, having taken Brother Massé de Marignan as his companion, set out for Rome and went to find the Pope to ask him for the grace of this same indulgence. The Pope at first refused an indulgence so ample and so easy to gain; but when Saint Francis had declared that he had come on God's behalf and that the indulgence was granted by Our Lord, who is infinite in His mercies, the sovereign Pontiff yielded to his prayer. The Saint, full of joy, returned to Assisi, but without taking the bull or having the day fixed on which this so considerable indulgence could be gained, leaving that to Providence and wishing to let it complete what it had begun.

Two years later this great Saint, feeling himself tempted one night by the devil to relaxation, under pretext of preserving his life and of not being his own murderer, rolled himself so long, his body naked to the waist, in the midst of brambles and thorns, that he made himself an infinity of wounds and covered his body with blood. At that very hour he saw himself surrounded by a great light; and although it was in the month of January and the cold was very sharp, the drops of his blood which had fallen on the brambles were changed into very beautiful white and red roses; a company of angels came at the same time to congratulate him on his victory and ordered him to go promptly to the church, because Jesus Christ and His holy Mother were waiting for him there. He gathered twelve white roses and twelve red roses, and, feeling himself miraculously clothed in a heavenly garment of admirable whiteness, he entered the church of Our Lady of the Angels, where he found his sovereign Lord with His lovable Mother, who showed him great tenderness. The Saint, after having adored Jesus Christ and thanked Him for the inestimable graces with which He was so good as to load him, humbly begged Him to declare to him the day of the indulgence which He had granted him and the manner in which He wished it to be published. Our Lord answered him that, as for the day, He wished it to be that on which His Apostle Saint Peter had been delivered from the prison of Herod and freed from his bonds; that, as for the manner of publication, he was to return to the Pope and bring him some of the roses which he had gathered in the midst of the forest, and that he would undoubtedly have the indulgence which He was giving him published.

Saint Francis, on this assurance, returned to Rome accompanied by three of his disciples, and, having set out to the Pope the will of the Son of God, and having shown him, in testimony of the truth of what he said, the roses he had brought, whose beauty and fragrance were admirable and above the sweetest roses of spring, he obtained what he asked, namely: that there should be in perpetuity a plenary indulgence in his church of the Portiuncula, from the first Vespers of the day of Saint Peter in Chains until the evening of the following day, for all those who, being contrite and having confessed their sins to the priest, should enter it devoutly and make their prayers there. The Pope wrote to seven bishops of Umbria and the neighbouring regions to assemble all at Assisi on the first day of the following August and to publish this indulgence. They did in fact assemble, and, in spite of the mandate of His Holiness, they wished to limit the indulgence to ten years; but they could never pronounce anything but what Our Lord had ordained, which they themselves took for a great miracle. Thus the indulgence of the Portiuncula was published.

Since that time the sovereign pontiffs Sixtus IV, Leo X, Paul V and Gregory XV have not only approved and confirmed it, but have also extended it to all the churches of the First and Third Order of Saint Francis, and have granted to the nuns of the same institute the power to gain it in their houses. Pope Urban VIII, by a bull of 31 July of the year 1624, declared that the indulgence of Our Lady of the Angels or of the Portiuncula was not suspended in the year of jubilee. Saint Bridget having gone there to gain it, Our Lord appeared to her and assured her of the truth of this indulgence, as she relates in her revelations; the concourse of Pilgrims since the concession of this indulgence is immense; it is said that it sometimes reaches a hundred thousand persons. This plenary indulgence of the Portiuncula is one of the most precious favours that have come forth

from the divine mercy. When one has confessed and communicated, one can gain this indulgence as many times as one visits the churches to which it is attached, praying for the intentions of the sovereign Pontiffs, from the hour of first Vespers until the evening of 2 August (decree of 22 February 1847); this indulgence is applicable to the souls in purgatory (brief of 22 January 1867). Save for a particular indult, it exists only for public Franciscan churches, not for the internal chapels of convents (decree of 16 June 1819). When a church has been abandoned by the Franciscans, it loses this privilege (1856). But there is an exception for France, where Pius VII confirmed or granted anew this privilege to all the churches which had belonged to the Franciscan friars or nuns (20 June 1817). In France this indulgence may also be gained on the Sunday following 1 August (4 May 1819).

The heretics, and among others the impious Chemnitz, have flown into strange rages against this grace and have tried to make it pass for a fable; but this is not to be wondered at. It is because, by the history of this same grace, three truths of our faith are confirmed: the first is that of indulgences; the second, that of the confession of sins which must be made to the priest; the third, that of the sovereign Pontiff, to whom Jesus Christ has given the power of binding and loosing. For these three truths are contained in the revelation which Our Lord made to Saint Francis. And so Cardinal Bellarmine, who refuted so learnedly the lies of these impostors, showed against them that this indulgence of the

Portiuncula was very solidly established. This may be seen in the second book *On Indulgences*, last chapter. Baluze also reports two authentic testimonies of it in book iv of his *Miscellanies*.

Cf. Ribadeneira and *Notre-Dame de France*; among the panegyrists: La Selve, de Sanctis; Lejeune; Masson; Fromentières; Damascène; Bourdaloue; Houdry; Baillet; La Tour; the abbé Villy; the abbé C. Martin, *Mois de Marie des prédicateurs*.

## Saint Alphonse-Marie de Liguori, Doctor of the Church, Bishop of Sant'Agata dei Goti, Founder of the Order of the Redemptorists

*1787. — Pope: Pius VI. — King of Naples: Ferdinand IV of Bourbon.*

> *God wills that we be saved, but as conquerors. Life is a continual war; as long as we are in it, we must fight, and to conquer we must pray.*
>
> *Maxim of Saint Alphonse de Liguori.*

Here is one of the Saints whose life demands a considerable place in this Collection: he lived almost in our own time; he unites the zeal of an apostle with the austerity of a Trappist, and the learning of a doctor of the Church with the humility of a publican; his *Moral Theology*, examined and approved by the Holy See, has made his name celebrated throughout the world, but above all in France, where it has, so to speak, cleared the road to heaven of many brambles and many thorns sown by the fierce temper of the Jansenist heresy. It seems that everywhere piety no longer speaks to Our Lord in the sacrament of His love, and to the holy Virgin His divine Mother, except through the books of Saint Liguori; all the virtues he recommends shine out in his life; his history and his works are one and explain each other; finally, his spirit has survived him; it still animates the Congregation of the Redeemer, and the Saint, in the person of his children, still in some way evangelises our countryside.

Our Saint was born on the day of the feast of Saint Cosmas and Saint Damian, in 1696, at Marianella, near Naples, and received in baptism the names of Alphonse-Marie on the following feast of Saint Michael. A few days afterwards the venerable Saint Francis de Girolamo, of whom we spoke on 11 May, having come to his father's house, blessed the child; then, turning toward the mother, he said: "This child will live to a very advanced age; he will not die before his ninetieth year; he will be a bishop and will do great things for Jesus Christ." We shall soon see how the event justified this prediction. He was instructed by his excellent mother in the practice of virtue and the knowledge of the divine law; and by his obedience, his docility and his piety

he answered perfectly her most ardent desires. Among his companions he was affectionate and modest, and full of respect and submission toward his elders.

One trait, among a multitude of others, revealed to them above all the secret of his virtue. With a view to procuring some honest recreation for their young people, the Fathers of the Oratory had taken them to a country house. There Alphonse is invited to play at bowls; he excuses himself for some time on the pretext that he does not know the game, never playing any; at last he yields to the insistence of his companions and, in spite of his inexperience, wins the game. Then, either from vexation at having lost or from indignation at thinking himself deceived by Alphonse's first refusal, one of these young men allows himself coarse words; at this language the holy child cannot contain himself and answers in a moved voice: "What! is it thus that for the most miserable sum you dare to offend God! Here, there is your money (and he threw it at his feet); God preserve me from winning any at that price!" At once he disappears, fleeing into the darkest walks of the garden. This flight, these words, this severe tone, far above his age, struck all these young men, and the guilty one above all, with a kind of stupor. Meanwhile they had resumed their games; night was approaching and Alphonse did not reappear; they become anxious about it and, all setting out together to look for him, they find him in a secluded spot, alone and prostrate before a little image of the holy Virgin which he had fastened to a laurel: he seemed wholly absorbed in his prayer, and they had already been around him for a moment without his noticing them, when the one who had offended him, not master of himself, cries out forcefully: "Ah! what have I done? I have ill-treated a Saint!" This cry draws Alphonse out of his ecstasy, and at once, full of confusion at having been thus discovered, he takes his image and rejoins his companions, deeply touched by so beautiful a piety. This event struck them extremely: not only did they relate it to their parents, but they hastened to publish it everywhere with all the liveliness of their youthful admiration.

The tenderness which his parents had for Alphonse did not allow them to part with him in order to place him in a public college. It was in his father's house, under skilful masters, that he received his whole education. Joining great penetration of mind to a happy memory, he gave himself successfully to the study of Latin, Greek and philosophy.

He applied himself with such ardour to the study of canon and civil law, for the profession of which his father destined him, and he made such astonishing progress, that he needed a dispensation of three years and some months to be able to take his examination for the degree of doctor in these two faculties, being still only in his sixteenth year (1713). The study of these sciences in no way diminished his devotion, above all toward Our Lord present in the Eucharist, and toward the Virgin His mother; every day he visited the church where the office of the Forty Hours was being held, during which the Blessed Sacrament is exposed with great pomp to the veneration of the faithful. On these occasions he was remarked for his regular assiduity, his recollection and his fervour, and he kept his eyes constantly fixed on the object of his love. Three ecclesiastics who were accustomed to frequent the same churches felt themselves seized with a holy desire to imitate the rare piety of the young cavalier, whose name they long sought in vain to discover. He also contracted the habit of visiting the hospital of the incurables, toward whom he fulfilled all the duties of charity which their needs required, with so much affection and kindness that it was easy to see that in their persons he honoured Jesus Christ Himself as present. He carefully avoided the company of persons of the other sex and fled everything that could have harmed the virginal innocence of his soul; never, unless his father forced him, did he visit the theatre or other places of amusement, although he took much pleasure in passing the evening in the society of some men of learning who met at the house of one of his friends. His example had so powerful an influence on a slave whom he had as a servant that the latter resolved at all costs to become a Christian, and died some time afterwards in sentiments of extraordinary piety.

Alphonse embraced the profession of the law and rose in a short time to so high a degree of reputation that the most difficult and complicated cases were entrusted to him from all parts of the kingdom; but he never allowed his zeal for his clients or his diligence in the pursuit of business to make him deviate from the

strictest justice or from the practice of the most exemplary virtue. He heard Mass every morning before going to the courts and punctually observed all the fasts and other precepts of the Church; he approached the sacraments every week, and did not fail each year, by a spiritual retreat, to repair the faults of the past twelve months and to renew the fervour of his good resolutions.

The favour with which the emperor Charles VI, who governed Naples at that time, regarded his family, and the high rank to which it was visible that he would rise in the magistracy, made the first families conceive the desire of allying themselves with him by marriage. A sermon which he heard about this time, in which a cavalier had been depicted condemned to hell who had afterwards appeared to a lady of his acquaintance, produced a strong impression on the whole audience, and principally on Alphonse, who from then on gave himself more entirely to God, visited the hospital more frequently, and formed the resolution of going no more henceforth to the theatre and of attending each day the office of the Forty Hours: which he punctually put into practice. But here is the circumstance which fixed his determination to renounce all the affairs of the world.

In a feudal lawsuit between two powerful princes, he had been charged with the defence. He devoted a whole month to preparing his proofs and studying the case; and on the day of the hearing he won the applause and approval of the immense audience which the importance of the case and his reputation had drawn. The president was on the point of pronouncing a judgment in his favour when the counsel of the opposing party, instead of attempting a reply, begged him with a smile to examine the brief again. He consented without the least hesitation, counting on the force and clarity of the reasons he had alleged in support of his case; but what was his surprise when he discovered in the brief a simple negative which he had not noticed at first, and which overthrew from top to bottom the very bases of his reasoning! Accustomed as he was to handle the cases he undertook only with the most scrupulous good faith, he was ashamed and confused, fearing that the fault would be attributed to him; but the whole audience justified him with one accord, and the president tried to reassure and encourage him by pointing out that, in the ardour of the defence and the desire for success, such mistakes often happen even to the most upright men. Suddenly, however, shame and confusion were painted on his face, and, after having generously avowed that he had been mistaken and having asked pardon of the judges, he modestly took his leave; and as he went out he was heard to utter these words: “Deceitful world, I know you; you will deceive me no more.” Back at home, he shut himself up for three days in his room and shed many tears before his crucifix. During that time he resolved to leave the profession of the law and to consecrate himself to the ecclesiastical state; he took the advice of his directors, and they approved his resolution. But when he addressed himself to his father to make him consent to his desire, he obtained from him only harshness, reproaches and a refusal.

Alphonse went to seek some relief for his sorrow in the exercise of his ordinary charity toward other unfortunates. One day when he was in the hospital of the incurables, the house seemed to him suddenly as if overturned from top to bottom; he thought he heard a voice saying to him forcefully: “What have you to do in the world?” He regarded this at first as imagination, but as he went out his eyes were struck by a dazzling light, and amid the noise of the hospital, which seemed to him to be collapsing, the same voice again made itself heard, repeating to him unceasingly: “What have you to do in the world?” Then, no longer doubting that God was asking him by this to hasten his sacrifice, he felt himself animated by a supernatural courage, and, offering himself as a holocaust to the divine will, he cried out like Saint Paul: “Lord! here I am; do with me what You please.” And, speaking thus, he enters a neighbouring church: it was that of the Redemption of captives, where the adoration of the Forty Hours was taking place that very day. There, prostrating himself before the adorable Victim, he begs It to accept the offering of himself; then suddenly he unfastens his sword and goes to hang it at the altar of Our Lady of Mercy, as an authentic pledge of his inviolable engagement to the divine will. Father Pagano, his spiritual director, then gave, after mature examination, his definitive approval, and Alphonse’s resolution to devote himself to the service of the altar was irrevocably fixed. The

difficulty was to obtain his father's consent. The latter employed his relatives and his friends, even an abbot of the Benedictines, to turn his son from his resolution. Their efforts having been useless, the father had recourse to the bishop of Troja, Mgr Cavalieri, his brother-in-law; but this worthy prelate took up the defence of his nephew. "I too," he said to the father, "left the world; I renounced my right of primogeniture; and you wish after that that I should advise the contrary? Ah! I should be too guilty." These remonstrances at last wrung from the father a sort of consent which permitted Alphonse to embrace the ecclesiastical state, provided that he always lived in his father's house, without ever entering the Congregation of the Oratory. Even so, when it came to carrying it out, he put it off from one time to another. There was even the pretext of lack of money, used so as not to buy the things necessary for an ecclesiastic's outfit. But Alphonse provided for everything himself, and one day he appeared unexpectedly before his father in clerical dress. At this sight the father utters a great cry and, as if beside himself, throws himself on his bed in a dejection impossible to describe. He remained a whole year without so much as speaking a word to his son.

Thus, at the age of twenty-seven, our Saint renounced all the attractions and all the distinctions of the world; and the person who had been destined for his wife, imitating his example, became a nun in the convent of the Most Blessed Sacrament at Naples, where she gave, during her life and at her death, so many proofs of virtue that her life was afterwards written by the Saint himself.

As the Israelites made the vessels of the Egyptians serve for the worship of God, so Alphonse turned to the service of the Church all his learning and all the talents of which the world is proud, and especially the talent he had for music and poetry; he composed several fine airs with the aim of inspiring love and adm iration through pious and devout songs, in place of the profane and unseemly songs which were in fashion and in which people ordinarily took delight.

In the morning he gave himself ardently to the study of theology and religion, attended all the exercises of piety practised in the house of the missionaries of Saint Vincent de Paul, went to confession, heard Mass and received Communion, and frequented the sacraments regularly. Every afternoon he visited and relieved the sick at the hospital, heard a sermon in the church of the Oratorians, and then went to pay his devotions to the Blessed Sacrament in the church where It was exposed; he remained there several hours, until It had been replaced in the tabernacle, and then returned home. Toward evening he frequented the house of a pious ecclesiastic where conferences on subjects of piety were held; moreover, he belonged to a pious association whose members, like those of the confraternity of Saint John at Rome in our own day, made profession of consoling criminals before their execution, preparing them for death and assisting them on the scaffold. The cardinal-archbishop of Naples admitted him to the tonsure on 23 September 1724, and to the four minor orders on 23 December of the same year. It was a subject of astonishment and edification to the whole city to see a man placed in so high a rank, before whom so brilliant a career lay open, fulfilling the most humiliating duties of his new office, going through the streets to gather the children and lead them to church, where he knew how to make himself like one of them, and applying himself to inculcate in them the mysteries and truths of religion; during Lent above all he neglected nothing to prepare them to approach the holy tribunal of Penance with the proper dispositions at the time of the coming Easter.

If this holy conduct was the admiration of heaven and of those who on earth judge all things in the light of heaven, the world he had just left took pleasure in covering him with contempt and ridicule: Alphonse became the talk of the public, and his vocation was condemned as the senseless step of a light and inconsiderate mind. In the magistracy as at the bar, the disapproval was all the stronger because more esteem and consideration had previously been accorded him; people seemed to repel him as if he had dishonoured the order to which he had belonged, so far that the first president, who had loved him tenderly when he was an advocate, had his door closed to him when he became an ecclesiastic. This magistrate, however, came back to better sentiments before he died. In his last illness he received Alphonse's visit with much consolation. "Ah!" he cried one day on seeing him enter, "how happy you are, my excellent friend, in the

choice you have made! how sweet it would be for me, at this last moment, to be able to bear myself witness of a like sacrifice made in my young years, in spite of the world, for the good of my poor soul! Pray for me, Alphonse; I commend myself to your charity; save an unfortunate man who is about to appear before God and for whom the world has already passed away." Our Saint received the order of subdeacon in the church of Santa Restituta on 22 September 1725; and immediately afterwards, in order better to prepare himself to work in the Lord's vineyard, he entered a Congregation formed for the purpose of giving missions, or series of sermons, in the kingdom of Naples, to instruct the people and advance them in virtue. His function was to teach the catechism to the children; and in a short time his kindness and gentleness so won all hearts that they ran after him when he went away and begged him to stay with them. On 6 April of the following year he was ordained deacon and obtained at the same time the faculty of announcing the word of God. He preached his first sermon in the church of his own parish during the exposition of the Forty Hours, in honour of Jesus present in the august Sacrament: the fervour and unction with which he spoke were a source of profit and edification for the faithful; then he was invited to preach now in one church, now in another, particularly during the prayers of the Forty Hours. But his continual labours soon caused him a dangerous illness, from which he escaped only through the intercession of Our Lady of Mercy, a statue of whom was brought beside his bed, and who saved his life at the very moment when he was about to give up his soul. As soon as he had recovered, Cardinal Pignatelli had him ordained priest on 22 December 1726. From that moment his life was nothing but a continual preaching and exhortation to virtue; from the altar, where he received the bread of angels, source of all strength, he went to preach the law and the love of God to the people of the city and kingdom of Naples, producing everywhere miraculous conversions among abandoned sinners and the most notorious of both sexes, whose change was announced by the practice of the most exemplary virtue. People of all classes came to hear him. A great man of letters, a famous satirist, never missed. Alphonse said to him one day in jest: "Your assiduity at my sermons announces some hostile intention to me; are you by chance preparing something against me?" — "Certainly not," answers the other; "you are without pretension, and no one expects fine phrases from you; one could not attack you when one sees you thus forget yourself and reject all the ornaments of man so as to preach only the word of God; that would disarm criticism itself."

Meanwhile his father never said a word to him and avoided going to hear him. One day, however, he lets himself be swept by the crowd into a church: he is surprised and almost annoyed to find Alphonse in the pulpit there; he stays nevertheless, and behold, this terrible father is disarmed: a sweet unction and an ineffable light have entered his soul at the voice of this son whom he has treated so harshly. He cannot help exclaiming as he goes out: "My son has made me know God." He feels all the injustice of his conduct, shows his regret for it to Alphonse and asks his pardon.

This priest, to whom God granted such grace for the conversion of souls, did not yet dare, although he had been ordained a year, to sit in the tribunal of Penance, so high an idea did he have of that ministry. Cardinal Pignatelli had to enjoin him, in virtue of holy obedience, to use the faculties he had for hearing confessions. Alphonse humbly obeyed, and from then on bore incalculable fruit in the confessional, no less than in the pulpit. He did not confine himself to directing a little flock of his own choosing, but received without distinction all who presented themselves, to the point that the day could not suffice him and he spent part of the night hearing them. In his old age he never ceased to recommend this ministry as the most profitable for everyone: "By it," he often said, "sinners make their peace with God immediately, and the evangelical workman has nothing of his merit to lose through the seductions of vanity." He could not bear those confessors who receive their penitents with a frowning and forbidding air, nor those again who, after hearing them, send them away with disdain as unworthy or incapable of the divine mercies. However severe he was toward himself, he had, above all toward sinners, an inexpressible gentleness: the manner in which he dealt with them was something infinitely attractive: without compromising as to sin, he was all heart and all charity toward the sinner. So in his sermons he never separated the justice of God from His mercy, persuaded that this was the means of bringing souls to penance; the same principle, or rather the same sentiment, guided

him in the confessional: he remembered that, if he was the judge of his penitent, he was also his father, and that it was a ministry of reconciliation, not of rigour, that had been entrusted to him.

He expressly condemned the rigorism of certain gloomy and scolding minds, whose harsh morality is diametrically opposed to evangelical charity. “The more a soul,” he said, “is sunk in vice and engaged in the bonds of sin, the more one must try, by dint of kindness, to tear it from the arms of the devil in order to cast it into the arms of God; it is not very difficult to say to someone: Go away, you are damned, I cannot absolve you; but if one considers that this soul is the price of the blood of Jesus Christ, one will have a horror of such conduct.” He said moreover, in his old age, that he did not remember ever having sent away a single sinner without absolving him, much less having treated one with harshness and bitterness. Not that he gave absolution indifferently both to those who were well disposed and to those who were ill disposed; but, as he himself tells us, he gave sinners the means of leaving their state, and while he showed them the greatest charity and filled them with confidence in the merits of the Saviour, he always succeeded in inspiring them with a sincere repentance. He used to say: “If you do not show a charitable interest in the soul of your penitent, he will not leave his sin.”

The Saint knew how to unite gentleness with a just severity in imposing penance: his principle was to oblige to nothing that would not certainly be fulfilled, and not to burden souls with obligations which they accept only with repugnance and which for that very reason they will readily abandon. The penances he ordinarily gave were to come back to confession after a certain time, to frequent confession and Communion, to attend Mass every day meditating on the Passion of Our Lord, as also to visit the Blessed Sacrament and the holy Virgin, to recite the rosary and other similar things, which were so many means he gave for leaving sin. As for macerations, he counselled them but did not prescribe them. “If the penitent,” he said, “is truly contrite, he will embrace mortification himself; but if it is made an obligation for him, he will leave the penance and keep the sin.” By this gentle conduct he made sinners fond of the sacrament of Penance and succeeded in tearing them from iniquity. Thus a multitude of people of all classes, above all among those whose life had been most criminal, returned to God under the direction of our Saint and afterwards edified even more than they had scandalised, although some of them had, before their conversion, displayed the most revolting immorality. He arrived at so consoling a result by recommending to them the mortification of the passions and of the flesh and meditation on the eternal truths. “By meditation,” he said, “you will see your faults as in a mirror; by mortification you will correct them: there is no true prayer without mortification, and no mortification without the spirit of prayer. Of all those I have known who were true penitents, there are none who were not very zealous for these two exercises.” He also employed, as a great means of returning to God, frequent Communion and the daily visit to the Blessed Sacrament. Nothing can equal the idea he had of this devotion. “What delight,” he used to say when he was still a layman, “what delight to be prostrate before the holy altar, to speak there familiarly to Jesus, enclosed for love of us in the august Sacrament; to ask His pardon for the displeasure one has given Him, to set out one’s needs to Him as a friend does to his friend, and to ask Him for His love and the abundance of His graces!” Such was the invariable system of Alphonse’s conduct toward his penitents, whom he sought above all in the class of the poor people. He did not reject persons of high rank; he even thought it important to receive them because of their authority and their example; but he never granted them any kind of distinction, and the attraction of his charity carried him especially toward the souls, too often abandoned, of people of the lowest condition; so he was sometimes seen in the public squares and other most frequented places, as if in pursuit of the poorest, such as lazzaroni and others of that kind: he sought to have himself surrounded by them, and then led them to come and receive the grace of the Lord in the sacrament of Penance.

This was not yet enough for his ardent charity: he conceived the idea of gathering, during summer evenings, a part of his penitents in some solitary place away from the city; he chose in succession different public squares near churches, and there, amid a crowd of people of the lowest class, he was seen taking pleasure in

teaching them the first principles of religion. Some holy priests and pious laymen wished to associate themselves with this good work, which soon grew greatly; but the devil thwarted it: the civil authority soon took fright at this gathering, and it had to be given up. The ecclesiastics who belonged to it did not separate for all that, and the desire for mutual edification led them to meet with Alphonse several times a month in the house of one of them. They ordinarily spent at least a whole day there, giving themselves to all the exercises of the religious life, such as the recitation of the office, adoration of the Blessed Sacrament and corporal penances.

Meanwhile our Saint had not lost sight of the instruction of the common people. For this purpose he divided a great number of these poor people among several of his most zealous and best-instructed penitents, whom he made into so many catechists. These little gatherings multiplied ever more, and soon they were no longer held in private houses but, with the approval of Cardinal Pignatelli, in chapels and oratories. From this afterwards came what is called at Naples the instruction of the chapels, a good work which is still kept up today, so great has its usefulness appeared. There are at present in the city of Naples nearly eighty of these gatherings, of a hundred and thirty to a hundred and fifty persons each. It is always priests who preside over them. They do not confine their zeal there to teaching the first elements of religion, but administer the sacraments of Penance and the Eucharist, direct the exercises of piety, which are very numerous on feast days and Sundays, and neglect nothing that can lead to virtue: and they succeed. This work has long been a subject of consolation for the archbishops of Naples, and it produces among these poor people men very eminent in holiness. It has spread in Europe, and principally in Belgium, from which it passed into France under the name of the Holy Family. An apostolic man, a missionary of China, Father Matthieu Ripa, came to Naples, bringing with him from his missions four young Indians; his aim was to form them for the exercise of the holy ministry, and thereby to reinforce the European missionaries who were in their country: he even obtained from the emperor and from Pope Benedict XIII authorisation to establish for this purpose at Naples a college where he was to receive new pupils who would come to him from the Indies.

An establishment of this kind keenly interested Alphonse through the hope of the good that was to result from it; he saw in it besides a retreat suited to the ministry he was exercising, which seemed to him hardly compatible with his residence in his father’s house: he therefore asked to be received into the new college as a boarder. He even had the thought of devoting himself to the missions of India and China; but his director was of the opinion that God was calling him to the missions of his native land. Meanwhile Alphonse preached and heard confessions every day, principally in the church of the college of the Chinese, and always with admirable success. To the outward word he joined the most fervent prayers, fasts and extraordinary mortifications, to draw down on sinners the grace of conversion. All the bishops of the kingdom of Naples would have liked to have in their diocese an apostle who stirred up repentance and compunction in every heart; they pressed him keenly to give the mission to their people. Numerous conversions of sinners long buried in iniquity, as well as a general renewal of the spirit of faith and piety, everywhere marked his labours.

His tender patroness, the holy Virgin, rewarded his zeal by appearing to him in the sight of an immense crowd of people gathered in the church of Foggia to hear a discourse on his favourite subject: the intercession and protection of Mary. From her face a ray of light, like the rays of the sun, was reflected on that of her devout and pious servant; all the people witnessed it and cried out: “A miracle! a miracle!” All commended themselves with great fervour, shedding abundant tears, to the Mother of God; several women even of evil life were seized with so profound a repentance that they mounted a platform which is in the church and began to take the discipline, crying with all their strength: “Mercy!” then, on leaving the church, they withdrew into the house of the Penitents of that city. Alphonse, in his juridical attestation, deposed that during the sermon the whole crowd of which his audience was composed, and he himself, had seen the holy Virgin under the form of a young person of fourteen or fifteen years, who turned this way and that in the sight of all who were present.

While he was preaching the mission in the town of Scala, he was invited by the nuns of the Holy Saviour to preach during the novena preceding the feast celebrated there in honour of the crucifixion of Our Lord. Among these nuns there was one of holy life, favoured with several supernatural graces, named Sister Marie-Céleste Costarosa, who had founded or reformed several convents. One day when she was at the confessional, conversing with the Saint on spiritual subjects, she said to him: "God does not will that you remain at Naples; He calls you to the foundation of a Congregation of missionaries who will procure spiritual help for the souls of those who are now destitute of every means of instruction." These words threw Alphonse into great affliction and great trouble of mind: for he did not yet know whether such was the will of God, and saw himself surrounded by difficulties, without companions who could help him in his undertaking; he prayed fervently to the Father of lights to enlighten his understanding and make known to him His divine will; and, after consulting several persons celebrated for their discernment of spirits and of proven virtue, he was convinced that God willed him to carry out the design of founding a new Congregation of missionaries. As soon as his intention became known at Naples, there were several who, fearing to lose so zealous a missionary, or in view of the difficulties that seemed to oppose his undertaking, strongly disapproved of the design. He met keen resistance on the part of the cardinal-archbishop and of several ecclesiastics who, considering all the good worked through him at Naples, could not bring themselves to believe that God expected still more of him. His father assailed him with his tears and representations, conjuring him not to abandon him; and Alphonse admitted afterwards that this was the most violent temptation he had experienced in all his life, and that God alone had made him capable of overcoming and resisting it. To avoid new assaults, he secretly left Naples at the beginning of November 1732 and went, with only a few companions, to Scala, where the bishop had already invited him to open the first house and to begin the foundation of the Order. He went to live with his companions in a miserable house with a little garden belonging to it: he obtained permission to convert one of the rooms into an oratory, where, on 9 November of the same year, after singing a votive Mass of the Holy Spirit followed by the *Te Deum* in thanksgiving for the favours he had already received from God, he laid the foundations of the new Congregation, then called of our divine Saviour, whose members were to employ themselves in preaching and in bringing the help of religion to the poor peasants who, living in cottages scattered through the countryside or in little villages and hamlets, are often deprived of all the benefits of instruction and of the frequenting of the sacraments. His first companions were twelve in number: ten priests and two advocates not yet admitted to orders; and besides, a lay brother who served them: he was called Vitus Cursio, and was a rich inhabitant of Acquaviva who, having renounced all his earthly goods as a result of a vision he had had at Naples, had chosen this humble employment in the new Order. The life of these first Fathers has rightly been compared to those of the holy penitents of whom Saint John Climacus speaks in his mystical *Ladder*. Their house was small and inconvenient, their beds a simple straw mattress spread on the floor; for all food they generally had a dish of insipid and disagreeable soup with a small portion of fruit; their bread was black, not even leavened, owing to the inexperience of the lay brother who made it, and so hard that it had to be pounded in a mortar before it could be eaten. This miserable food, which they took kneeling or stretched on the pavement, they made still more nauseating by sprinkling it with some bitter drug; several of them even, before eating, licked the pavement with their tongues. They took the discipline three times a week. To mortification they joined a true spirit of fervour in prayer. Besides the office, which they recited in choir, they assembled three times a day to pray for half an hour and to read the lives of the Saints. A quarter of an hour was assigned for a visit to Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament and to Our Lady; but they remained a great part of the day and night in prayer before the divine Eucharist. They attended Mass with the most edifying piety and recollection. Their only time of relaxation was an hour after dinner, which they spent in spiritual conversation or in speaking of the deeds of the Saints. But Alphonse, who was the soul and the mover of all these pious exercises, surpassed all his brethren in his mortifications, his fervour and his exact practice of recollection and silence; and, to hide the rigour with which he took the discipline, he often withdrew into a storeroom or cellar, where, as is generally believed, Our Lady appeared to him several times. Yet they did

not forget the principal object of their institute: through the effect of their preaching and apostolic labours at Scala and in the places round about, the whole diocese took on a new face, and a great number of extraordinary conversions took place.

The number of his colleagues having considerably increased, Alphonse resolved to give stability and regularity to his congregation by drawing up a rule to direct it; but here a difficulty arose which he did not expect, resulting from the different way in which several points of their new rule were viewed by his companions. Some were of the opinion that, besides the missions, they should open schools for the instruction of the poor in secular learning; others opposed the strict and rigorous poverty which they had observed until then; while some others, on the contrary, thought that a still more complete renunciation of all temporal property should be required of all who entered the Order. Alphonse did everything to convince them that true poverty was an essential point of their rule, and that opening schools for the poor, although it was a work of charity, would serve only to distract them from the sole object of their foundation, the spiritual instruction of the poor. His reasons remained without effect; he was abandoned by all his companions except two, one of whom was not in sacred Orders, and the other was the lay brother already mentioned. His enemies then began to triumph and to represent his undertaking as presumptuous and rash; as for him, he continued, in spite of their mockery and invective, to hope that God would soon furnish him with companions, all the while blessing His merciful hand for having sent him this humiliation. New companions came to him in crowds from all sides; so that in 1735, three years after the foundation of his Order, he was in a position to open three houses, including the first one at Scala. Everything appearing to him established on a firm footing, he resolved to implore the divine light to assist him in drawing up the rules which were to be observed and the vows which were to be made by the members of his Order. He addressed fervent prayers to the Holy Spirit, accompanying them with an austere fast and rigorous mortification, and took the advice of the persons most eminent for their learning and piety. Under their direction, aided by the grace of God, he composed the rules and constitutions of his Order, to which he gave the name of our divine Saviour. He then made a touching discourse to his companions, in which he begged them, as disciples of Jesus Christ, to imitate His perfect holocaust to His natural Father and to offer themselves to Him as a sacrifice for the salvation of souls, promising an exact observance of the rules he proposed to them. He prescribed many prayers and the pious exercise of a holy retreat to implore the divine assistance; and finally, on 21 July in the year 1742, in a poor chapel near Ciorani, in the diocese of Salerno, after singing the Vespers of Saint Mary Magdalen, patroness of the Congregation, they made their profession, which, besides the three ordinary vows of poverty, chastity and obedience, contained two others: the first, never to accept any dignity, office or benefice outside the Congregation, unless by express command of the Pope or of the superior general; the second, to remain in the Order until death and to ask dispensation from it only of the Pope or of the superior general. The brethren then proceeded to the election of a superior for the whole Order, and Alphonse was elected unanimously, with the title of superior rector.

The reputation of Alphonse’s admirable virtue and holiness spread every day more widely through the country and the neighbouring regions; and several houses of the Order were founded in different towns of the kingdom. This is what determined him to obtain the confirmation of his institute by the Holy See: for this purpose he deputed one of his companions to go and lay the constitutions he had drawn up at the feet of the immortal pontiff Benedict XIV, who then occupied the chair of Saint Peter. After mature examination he gave the brief approving them, on 25 February 1749. He confirmed Alphonse in the office of superior and granted the Order a great number of favours and privileges; but he willed that its name be changed from that of our divine Saviour to that of our divine Redeemer, to distinguish it from the Congregation of the Canons Regular of our divine Saviour. From that moment the Order grew rapidly, and houses were founded in the States of the Church as well as in the king dom of Naples. Alphonse had to struggle against many obstacles in the efforts he made to establish it in various places; and he used to say that God worked a continual miracle in his favour by furnishing him with the means of founding new houses and maintaining those that

already existed; for, finding himself without money to accomplish it, he placed all his hope in God, and was never deceived.

He surpassed all his companions in exactness in observing all the rules and obligations of the Order; and when one knows the rigour of the disciplines he gave himself and the austerity of his fasts and mortifications, one cannot help asking how he could live. He contented himself with a small portion of soup and bread with some fruit, which he never took on Saturdays and on the vigils of the feasts of Our Lady. He continually wore rough hair shirts, with little iron chains and a girdle of camel's hair. Besides the time assigned to prayer by the rule, he rose very early to meditate on the truths and mysteries of religion, and kept his mind so closely united to God that his prayer suffered no interruption and never ceased. He consecrated all his actions to the glory of God, toward whom he often turned his heart by fervent outpourings and burning aspirations of love; when he celebrated Mass or recited the office of the Church, his whole person breathed an air of piety and edification. He regulated the affairs of the Order and provided for all its needs with the most untiring diligence and zeal. He worked to inspire in his brethren the love of humiliations, contempt and sufferings, in imitation of our divine Redeemer, whose name they bore, and he strongly represented to them, by word of mouth and in writing, the necessity of living in conformity with the vows they had made and with the spirit of the institute they professed. The superiors bound themselves by oath not to permit the members of the Order to possess anything of their own; not to permit them, in a word, anything that could in the least breach their vow of poverty. He would interrupt the composition of his works and every other occupation to attend to what concerned his brethren: "When it happens," he wrote to them, "that someone comes to speak to me, or writes to me about his affairs or those of the Order, I leave everything… I wish it to be well known that whoever treats me with this kind of confidence binds me more strongly to him, and let all hold for certain that I leave everything when I have to render service to any one of my brethren and my children. I feel more eager to assist any one of them than to do anything else. That is the good which the Most High asks of me in preference to any other, as long as I hold this office." When anyone fell ill, his affection and solicitude in consoling him then redoubled; he went to visit him and took care that his food was well prepared and suitably seasoned. He would not send back to his family a sick man suffering from consumption, saying that the sick brethren were useful to the Congregation by their prayers and by furnishing the others with the means of practising the works of mercy. "We are their father," he said, speaking of the sick, "and the Order is their mother. Since they left father and mother to consecrate themselves to God, we must fulfil toward them all the duties of charity."

As the office of preaching, instructing and hearing the confessions of the poor was the principal end of the Congregation, he took care to prepare his novices, by long practice and long experience, for the apostolic ministry. He had an aversion for improvised discourses, flowers of rhetoric, rounded periods, and brilliance and pomp of expression. "If the poorest people do not understand me," he used to say, "what is the good of calling them to church? Wills are not moved, and our preaching remains without fruit. I may have to render account for anything else, but not for my sermons; I have always preached so as to make myself understood by the most ignorant good woman." Let us beware, however, of thinking that he was opposed to the study and use of the art of oratory in preaching. "The less rhetoric one knows," he observed with reason, "the less one is able to accommodate oneself to the simplicity of the apostolic style. The Greek and Latin Fathers were masters in this art; that is why they knew so well how to put themselves within reach of all and, when the circumstance required it, to use it to advantage. If art is lacking, the sermon will be insipid and without order; and, instead of penetrating the mind or heart of the audience, it will inspire them only with disgust and aversion for the preacher." To encourage the study of the art of oratory, he published two letters on popular eloquence, which he sent to many bishops, priests and heads of religious Orders. He put no less zeal into pressing his brethren to give themselves to the study of moral theology. "If you do not know it," he told them, "you lose yourselves and you send your penitents to hell: this study ends only with life itself." He condemned too much laxity and too much severity as equally fatal for souls; if he learned that any of his

priests had fallen into one of these excesses, he had no more rest or consolation. He inculcated the necessity of using great precaution and great prudence with habitual sinners and relapsing sinners. “Pay close attention,” he said, “to how you absolve this class of sinners. Their tears, if they shed any, are deceitful; they do not weep out of hatred for sin, but to force you to give them absolution so as to begin again.” He recommended not sending them abruptly from the confessional, but showing them tenderness and sympathy, making them understand the misery of their state, and persuading them that amendment is not impossible if they will have recourse to the grace of God and to the protection of the holy Virgin.

But as the capital point of his Order was to instruct the poor people of the country parishes, scattered in the least frequented parts of the land, he made it his constant occupation for thirty years to visit all the provinces, all the towns and villages of the kingdom, catechising the children, hearing confessions and preaching to the people. When he had come in sight of the place where the Mission was to be given, he recited the litanies of the Blessed Virgin and other prayers to draw down the blessings of heaven. He then went to the principal church; and, after adoring the Blessed Sacrament, he went up into the pulpit and invited the people in the most pressing manner to profit by the grace of God in the spiritual exercises of the days that were to follow.

Every day, morning and evening, the missionaries preached for the adults and catechised the children. On the first three evenings they went through the most populous streets, crucifix in hand, inviting the inhabitants to remember their last ends and to come and hear the word of God. Alphonse, who gave the principal sermon in the evening, used to take the discipline with a thick cord three times during the mission: once during the sermon on sin; the second time during the sermon on hell; and the third during the sermon on scandal; and when the women had left the church after the evening sermon and only men remained, a sermon on compunction was addressed to them to stir them to take the discipline themselves. After these sermons, three or four more days were spent in the way of devotion, as Alphonse called it; and during that time the preachers insisted on the necessity of prayer and on the passion of Our Lord, which he depicted in terms so touching that all present shed tears of love and tenderness.

There were also other sermons for the instruction of the children, the young men, unmarried women and widows, and for married women too; these sermons were suited to the needs and way of life of each. The retreat ended with a general Communion; and, after a sermon on perseverance, the blessing was solemnly given to all the people. On the last day of the way of devotion, in order to leave in minds an ineffaceable memory of the Passion, Alphonse erected a Calvary, as he called it, at the entrance of the village or town. With four companions, each carrying like him a heavy cross on his shoulders, he advanced toward the place where they were to be erected, and, after planting them in the ground, he proposed a pious meditation on the mysteries of the Passion, which produced a profound impression in the hearts of all present. During the Mission he obliged his priests to remain seven hours every morning in the confessional, including the time of Mass; and they could not leave it without the superior’s permission. They were forbidden to receive any present or reward whatever, and their table was restricted to the most frugal food, which was supplied by the charity of the bishop or of one of the inhabitants. It was enough for him to appear in the pulpit to stir up sentiments of piety; and several conversions took place from having seen his bearing and gestures, even from afar. In the confessional he received poor and rich with the same affectionate sentiments of compassion, and knew how to suggest to them motives so powerful that they never hesitated to confess their sins freely, without false shame preventing them from willingly undergoing a moment’s confusion to procure for themselves a more lasting pardon and peace.

To secure the fruit of the missions he prolonged them to fifteen and even thirty days, until he had produced a complete reform among the people; and during the stay he took care to form pious confraternities among the members of the various ranks of society, so that, by mutual good examples and practices of devotion, the effects of the Mission might be solid and lasting. God rewarded his zeal with several prodigies. One day, during a Mission being given at Amalfi, someone going to confession at the house where Alphonse was

staying found him there at the very moment when the sermon was to begin in the church; having finished his confession, this man went straight to the church and, to his great astonishment, found Alphonse already somewhat advanced in his sermon. This circumstance greatly astonished him; for on leaving he had left Alphonse occupied in hearing the confessions of other persons in his house, and had not seen him go out by the only door through which it was possible to pass to reach the church. So the rumour spread in the town that Alphonse was hearing confessions at home at the same time as he was preaching in the church. When he was preaching on the protection of the Blessed Virgin and exhorting his hearers to have recourse to her with confidence in all their needs, he suddenly cried out: “Oh! you are too cold in your prayers to our holy Lady! I am going to pray to her for you.” He then throws himself on his knees in the attitude of prayer, his eyes raised toward heaven; and all who were present saw him raised more than a foot in the air and turned toward a statue of the Blessed Virgin which stood near the pulpit. The face of Our Lady cast rays of light which were reflected on the face of Alphonse, who was then in ecstasy. This spectacle lasted about five or six minutes, during which the people cried: “Mercy, mercy! A miracle, a miracle!” And everyone burst into tears. But the Saint, rising, cried out in a loud voice: “Rejoice, the Blessed Virgin has heard your prayer.” Before the missionaries left the town, Alphonse foretold that there would be an earthquake the next day, and the event confirmed the truth of his words.

These apostolic labours and these miraculous deeds filled the whole kingdom with the fame of the Saint’s holiness and learning; the king and the higher clergy resolved to raise him to the episcopal dignity. He was first named to the archbishopric of Palermo; but by his fervent prayers and mortifications he succeeded in obtaining from God that he should not be forced to accept that dignity. A short time afterwards, the bishopric of Sant’Agata dei Goti having become vacant, Pope Clement XIII named him to it, from the personal knowledge he had of his merits and without any recommendation having come to him from elsewhere. Alphonse wrote the most pressing letters to several of his friends and to the Pope himself, in which he set out his incapacity, his advanced age, the weak state of his health and his vow to accept no benefice, and begged to be relieved of so heavy a burden. On the evening when he had received his letter, the Pope was inclined to reassure him by granting his request; but the next morning he ordered his secretary, Cardinal Négroni, to inform Alphonse that it was his positive will that he accept the bishopric. The cardinal asked whether His Holiness had not told him, the previous evening, that he was inclined to yield to his earnest entreaties: “That is true,” replied the Pope, “but the Holy Spirit has since inspired me to do the contrary.” As soon as Cardinal Spinelli, to whom Alphonse had written on this subject, learned what the Pope had said, he immediately exclaimed: “It is the will of God; the voice of the Pope is the voice of God.” When Alphonse received Cardinal Négroni’s letter, he bowed his head and said: *Obmutui, quoniam tu fecisti; gloria Patri*, etc.: “I was dumb, because You have willed it so; glory be to the Father,” etc.; then, placing the letter on his head, he repeated several times these words: “God wills that I be a bishop; well! I shall be a bishop. The Pope has ordered it; I must obey.” The fears which the res ponsibility and duties of his new dignity inspired in him threw him into so violent a fever that his life was despaired of. The Pope was deeply grieved on learning of the danger he was in, without however changing his resolution with regard to him. “If he dies of it, we send him our apostolic blessing; if he recovers, we wish to see him at Rome.” Alphonse recovered and set out at once for Rome. His brethren, grieved at the loss of such a father, addressed themselves to the Pope through the Congregation of cardinals charged with the affairs of bishops and religious Orders, and obtained that he be confirmed in his office of superior of the Order, on 25 May of that year 1762. On his arrival at Rome, the Pope having left for Castel Gandolfo, the Saint resolved to visit the holy house of Our Lady of Loreto. He celebrated Mass every morning in that venerable sanctuary and spent several hours in contemplation of the goodness and love of the eternal Son of God, who for us deigned to dwell in that humble and poor abode. His face shone with love when he kissed all the objects that had belonged to the holy Family; it was a source of edification and piety for his companions to witness his fervour and the veneration with which he honoured that sanctuary, consecrated by the presence of a God made man.

Back in Rome, he was received by the Pope and the cardinals with every kind of mark of esteem and veneration. He was consecrated bishop in the church of Santa Maria sopra Minerva on 20 June 1762, in the sixty-sixth year of his age. He made his preparations for departure and left Rome immediately to go to his diocese. He stopped a few days at Naples to settle the affairs of his Order, and took the road to Sant'Agata in spite of the representations of his friends, who told him that it was extremely dangerous to go there at that season of the year. He was received with great demonstrations of joy by the people, who had already conceived a high opinion and high esteem of him from the reputation for virtue and holiness that had preceded him there.

He had declared his opinion and traced rules of conduct for bishops in the fulfilment of the duties of their office in a small volume he had published on that subject: the rest of his life was nothing but a copy, line for line, of what is written in that book. He continued to practise, in his dress, in the furnishing of his palace and in his manner of living, the same rigorous poverty that had distinguished him in the Congregation. The sacred vessels he used as bishop were of the poorest; little silver was to be seen in them; and that little silver was devoted to the relief of the poor, as well as a carriage and two mules which had been given him by his brother, and which he later sold for the same purpose. He slept, as before, on a straw mattress, and his apartments were so completely bare of furniture that when by chance a stranger came to visit him, he was obliged to borrow beds, linen and dishes for his use; and on several occasions his charity left him unable to meet even the most modest expenses. His food was of the commonest, and he mixed into it besides wormwood and other bitter herbs: so much so that the poor who flocked to him refused to eat what he left them of it. He had only a few servants, whom he treated on every occasion with the greatest kindness and gentleness. His mortifications seemed to increase in rigour and in number; and one day his secretary was obliged to force the door of his room and tear the discipline from his hands, for fear that the violence of the blows he was giving himself would cause his death. He spent a great part of the night in prayer, after having been occupied all day with the affairs of his diocese. One of the canons of the cathedral begged him one day to take a moment's rest until his headache had passed; he replied that if he waited for that, he would never be in a state to get back to work, because his headache never left him.

In the care with which he fulfilled the duties of his office, he showed himself a perfect imitator of the zealous and untiring Saint Charles Borromeo. During the thirteen years of his episcopate he was never absent from his diocese even for the space of three months, as the council of Trent permits; he absented himself from it only for a very short time, on three occasions of urgent necessity: twice for the affairs of his Order; the other, by express command of his directors, because of his health. He worked to reform morals and to stir up a true spirit of piety throughout his diocese, by his private discourses no less than by his sermons and missions. Each year he visited half of his diocese, and before beginning his visitation he made a novena with his people to bring down the Lord's blessings on his labours. During the visitation he refused every kind of present, however slight its value, saying that it was contrary to the canons. He heard the confessions of those who expressed the desire to him and addressed instructions to the people. If there were sick persons who had not received the sacrament of Confirmation, he hastened to go and administer it to them in their homes, in spite of inclement weather, the bad state of the roads and all the other difficulties that might be met; and as long as his health permitted, he took care to visit all the sick at home. He never undertook anything relating to his diocese without first having implored the divine light by fervent prayers; in affairs of major importance he distrusted his own judgment and sought the advice of other bishops, on whom he placed his confidence. But what he desired above all was to inspire in his clergy a spirit of piety, learning, morality and zeal for the honour of religion; for this purpose he put back in force the regulations of the canons of the synods or of his predecessors concerning the dress and conduct of ecclesiastics. He applied himself to making them the model of their flock and charged priests of irreproachable life to inform him of the faults they committed in the observance of their duties, so that they might be corrected on the spot. He carefully examined all who presented themselves for the reception of holy Orders and to obtain benefices; not content with making those

who came to ask for faculties to hear confessions undergo a severe and rigorous examination, he himself instructed them for several days in the practical part of that important duty; these faculties granted, whoever had obtained them was obliged to come back after a certain time to undergo a second examination and obtain their confirmation. He established conferences once a week in all parts of his diocese on questions of moral theology and commanded all ecclesiastics to attend them under severe penalties; he attended them regularly himself, and when his health forced him to keep to his bed, he wished the conference to be held in his room. He composed his *Dominicale*, or abridged course of discourses for Sundays, for the use of his priests in their sermons and explanations of the Gospel of each Sunday; and his *Selva*, or materials for sermons and instructions for the use of priests in their spiritual retreats and private reading, accompanied by practical instructions on the exercises of the missions. He watched no less diligently over the students who were destined for the ecclesiastical state; he visited his seminary twice a week and neglected nothing to strengthen in their still tender hearts the love of piety and the desire to consecrate themselves entirely to the Lord. He composed pious airs which they were to sing during their recreation time. He did not wish them to leave the seminary during the holidays, for fear that they would lose their habits of diligence and regularity and take on the spirit of the world.

One will easily conceive with what zeal he worked to root out scandals from his diocese and to spread morality and piety among his people. He expelled from it a troupe of actors, for fear that their manner of living would corrupt his flock, and proceeded with the same firmness against all who led a scandalous life, without regard for their rank or the influence they had at court. He converted several public sinners by his gentle and persuasive eloquence and procured for them a retreat and means of subsistence, for fear that poverty would make them return to their corrupt ways; but he drove from his diocese those whom he found incorrigible. Having learned that one of these lost women had taken advantage of his absence to come back, he was deeply grieved, and when he was asked the cause of his sorrow, he answered: “It is because I am bishop”; and at that very instant, without considering the danger to which his return exposed him, for it was for reasons of health that he had left his diocese, he came back to Arienzo, had the woman brought before him and spoke to her with such force and energy that she fell at his feet, renounced her evil habits from then on and withdrew into a house of refuge, where she became a model of sincere conversion and exemplary life.

The zeal and charity of the holy bishop were constantly directed toward the instruction and spiritual advancement of his flock. He built and repaired churches, formed new parishes and provided funds for the upkeep and subsistence of the priests to whose care he entrusted them; he introduced the praiseworthy practice of proposing at the first Mass in the morning a meditation on the passion of Our Lord and other subjects suited to the needs of the people; he ordered that the exposition of the Blessed Sacrament be held every evening and that pious prayers be recited in honour of Our Lord who is present there; and on Saturdays he never failed to proclaim the glory and praises of Our Lady, so that all hearts might burn with love and devotion for her. He established confraternities among his flock as means suited to bring the faithful to frequent the Sacraments and to come and hear the word of God; he kept up the spirit of their foundation by preaching often. One evening when, during a retreat, he was preaching to the men’s confraternity of Arienzo on the protection of the holy Virgin, he was suddenly rapt in ecstasy; his face shone with such brightness that the whole church was lit with an unaccustomed light, and he cried out: “See how the holy Virgin comes to pour out graces among us! let us pray to her, and we shall obtain all that we ask.”

When Alphonse took possession of his see, he resolved to administer its temporalities in such a way that, except for a modest sum necessary for his subsistence and other indispensable expenses, all the revenue would be for the poor. For this purpose he reserved for himself only the income his father had left him, and gave all the rest to the poor, who crowded the doors of his palace every evening; he could not bear anyone to go away dissatisfied with him, and when he went out he was surrounded by troops of beggars, to whom, without exception, he gave some help either with his own hands or through others; what is more, he ordered

his steward to distribute bread and money every Saturday at the door of his palace to all who presented themselves. But, not content with these public charities, he obliged his priests to give him exact lists of all persons who were in need and whom shame prevented from asking. He gave them monthly pensions or sent them help in money, linen or other necessities. He sought out priests who were unable to say Mass or who were in extreme poverty, as well as the poor sick and aged who were unable to work, widows burdened with large families, and orphans deprived of their parents, in order to assist them; in a word, the needy of every class were supported by his charity. He took particular care of poor young girls; he provided for all their necessities and, if they came to marry, he paid them a dowry and furnished their house. He sent money to poor prisoners in their prison, helped their families, or freed them from prison by coming to terms with their creditors. It was found, on calculation, that the sums he spent on works of charity far exceeded all the expenses of his household and those required by his rank, as well as the wages of all his servants. He administered justice free of charge and maintained at his own expense a priest to defend poor priests and other persons in the ordinary courts of justice. These charities reduced him to such poverty that he was often obliged to borrow the means of paying the expenses of his table. One day, when a person had come to ask him for seven ducats to satisfy a creditor who was threatening prison, he did not have even so modest a sum at his disposal, and undertook to pay it by instalments from month to month; and as about two instalments remained to be paid when he resigned his bishopric, he paid everything before leaving the diocese. But this was nothing in comparison with his charities in the great famine that afflicted all Italy in 1764. He sold the carriage and the mules which had been given him by his brother, and did not spare even his pastoral ring and his gold crosier. He reduced his table to a portion of bread and soup, to which he sometimes added some fruit, and engaged his household to do the same for the good of the poor. Having nothing else left that he could dispose of, he was on the point of selling his rochet and his watch; but his servants represented to him that he needed it to regulate his time. He obtained from his brother and from one of the members of his clergy help in grain and beans, which he distributed, sa without losing time, to the poor. He earnestly recommended charity to the civil authorities, to ecclesiastics and to religious communities, and severely reprimanded the superior of a convent who had shown parsimony in his alms. One day he found his room full of poor people asking for his help: “My children,” he said to them with tears in his eyes, “I have nothing more to give you; I have sold my carriage, my mules and everything I had; I have no more money, and I can no longer find anyone willing to lend me any.” At these words they began to weep, and after mingling his tears with theirs, he went into another room and left his servants to distribute alms to them.

During the whole time that he was bishop of Sant’Agata he had much to suffer in his bodily health; on three occasions his illness reduced him to a state of the most extreme weakness; and yet he continued to fulfil all the duties of his office and to provide for all the needs of his diocese. The untiring zeal with which he worked to procure the good of his flock led him to preach every day during a novena held in the month of August to obtain rain in a time of drought. This exercise, after a long illness, the heat of the season and his natural weakness brought on a general rheumatism which paralysed the movement of all his limbs and bent his head so far that it was no longer possible for him to say Mass, or even to lie down, without discomfort. It was discovered after his death that the six vertebrae of the neck, with the cartilages found there, had become one single solid bone. But after several months of cruel pains and sufferings, the fever accompanying the rheumatism left him, and the wound which had been caused by the bending of his head, and which, as seemed likely, was going to turn gangrenous and soon cause his death, healed; but his head remained so bowed upon his breast during the last seventeen years of his life that he could drink only a few drops at a time, and was consequently unable to say Mass. He still continued to preach and to attend the examinations of those who presented themselves to receive holy Orders or to obtain faculties to hear confessions, and the ecclesiastical conferences of his clergy. Some time afterwards, however, he followed the advice of some learned theologians, who declared to him that he could very well say Mass and receive the chalice seated and assisted by a priest in stole and surplice; but he refused to follow the advice of certain others who wished to

persuade him to have recourse to the Pope to obtain permission to use a tube for the purpose, saying that he would rather not say Mass at all than solicit a privilege reserved to the sovereign Pontiff.

For a long time he had desired to renounce the episcopal office, which obedience alone had constrained him to accept. He consulted several men of learning and prudence; and with their consent he wrote to Pope Clement XIII and set out to him the reasons which had determined him to take this step; but the Pope answered him that his name alone sufficed for the good government of his diocese. He likewise addressed himself to the following Pope, Clement XIV, who wrote to him, by way of whole answer, that a single prayer made by him on his bed for the good of his diocese was of greater weight in God's eyes than a thousand visitations and a thousand strokes of the discipline given to the drawing of blood. He therefore continued to administer his diocese, awaiting, as he said, the accession of a new Pope to be relieved of it. On 21 September 1774 he fell into a peaceful sleep which lasted until the next day, when suddenly he rang his bell. His servants ran to him in alarm and asked him what was the matter; for he had been two days without eating or speaking: "That may be," he replied, "but do you not know that I was assisting the Pope who has just died?" Some days later it was learned in fact that Clement XIV had died precisely on the day and at the very hour when Alphonse had called the people of his household to announce his death to them. As soon as he learned of the election of Pius VI, he wrote him a letter full of humility; and after some days' delay he received a favourable answer, in which the Pope deplored the circumstances obliging the Saint to resign, adding that he accepted his resignation, acknowledging the strong and just reasons he had alleged. As soon as the Saint received the Pope's letter, he cried out: "God be praised, for He has taken a mountain off my shoulders!" In his petition he had not asked for a pension; but the Pope assigned him an annual pension of eight hundred ducats on the revenues of his bishopric. He set the affairs of his diocese in order and, toward the end of July 1775, amid the lamentations of his flock, he withdrew to the house of his Order of Saint-Michel degli Pagani, saying, as he climbed the steps: *Gloria Patri*: "This cross that I wear on my breast, which was so heavy when I climbed the steps of the palace, has now become light, very light."

The Fathers of the house had furnished a room for him; but he asked to be allowed to live like the rest of the brethren; and in everything, as far as his health permitted him, he conformed to the rule of the Order as if he had been only a simple religious. He observed the same rigid poverty, so as to have the means of assisting the poor, toward whom he always displayed the same tenderness and compassion that had made him the father of the poor of his diocese. In spite of his infirmities he preached every Saturday and every Sunday in the church of Saint Michael and in other places in the neighbourhood, for the edification of all who heard him. Always animated by the same zeal for the salvation of his neighbour, he continued to compose and publish spiritual works for their instruction. One of these books, entitled *The Wonderful Conduct of Divine Providence in the Sanctification of Souls through Jesus Christ*, was dedicated by him to Pope Pius VI, who wrote him a letter in which he thanked him, he said, more than if he had offered him one of those objects to which the world attaches the most value. He encouraged the missionaries of his Congregation in their labours and joined them by his prayers; he was never happier than when he learned that a mission had succeeded well.

From 9 November 1779 he was unable to say Mass and had to content himself with receiving holy Communion every morning until his death. In every other respect he continued to observe the same rigour of mortification as to the quantity and quality of his food: having everything removed from his table that was not, as he said, the ordinary food of the poor, that is, what was not of the most insipid kind. His confessor, whom he obeyed in everything, forbade him the use of the discipline and his other habitual practices of bodily mortification; which led him secretly to hand over to his servant the box containing his instruments of penance, to be destroyed. It pleased God that his virtue should be put to the hardest trials. He was assailed by such strong temptations against the faith that he was heard throughout the house, uttering cries, stamping on the ground and calling Jesus and Mary to his help: for he was a true son of the Catholic Church. His doubts troubled him even in his sleep. He had no less to suffer from the torments caused him by his doubts and

scruples of conscience; whence it often happened that he sent for one of his directors at a late hour of the night; or that, after having his doubts written on a piece of paper by the lay brother who stayed at his side, he sent them to his director. But from the moment he had received from them the order to keep his mind in peace, he was perfectly calm and tranquil, because he had already laid down as a principle, in one of his books entitled *The Peace of Scrupulous Souls*, that in such a case the only rule to follow was perfect obedience to a prudent and enlightened confessor: and that is indeed what he always taught in precept as in practice. He submitted in everything, even in the least important points, to his confessor and to the superiors of the house where he lived; so that his whole life was a perfect model of obedience. In the last years of his life he was afflicted with deafness, with an almost total loss of sight, and with a hernia which caused him continual pain and the most acute sufferings. He could not remain lying down, and he had to be propped up with pillows so as to have a little rest. When his illnesses grew worse, he answered those who inquired about the state of his health: “Death is pressing me close, but I have no other desire than God alone: God alone! God alone!” In bodily sufferings, as in his interior pains, he was the perfect copy of the model he had already traced for the instruction of others. In his book *On Conformity to the Will of God* he had represented the patience with which one endures one’s own afflictions as the highest degree of virtue. Likewise he sought to stir up in his soul sentiments of the most lively faith in the doctrines and mysteries of our holy Church, as he had encouraged and exhorted others to do in his works. Such were his *Truths of the Faith* and *The Triumph of the Church, or History of Heresies*, written against the false political and religious principles of the Deists and Materialists of the last century; his *Dogmatic Essay against the So- called Reformers*, which is a defence of the doctrinal decisions of the holy council of Trent; and his *Victories of the Martyrs*, whose examples he proclaimed to encourage the faithful to remain firm and ready to die for the faith. He worked with no less energy, by his writings and sermons, and still more by his example, to kindle in all hearts a fervent faith and piety toward Our Lord in the Blessed Sacrament. Sometimes, as if in his transports of love he had seen Jesus with the eyes of the body, he would cry out: “Cast your eyes on Him, see how beautiful He is, love Him!” To spread this love throughout the world he published his *Visits to the Blessed Sacrament for Every Day of the Month*. One Good Friday, finding himself unable on account of his health to receive this precious pledge of divine love, he was so afflicted by it that a violent fit of fever came upon him, which, in spite of a bleeding he was made to undergo, did not cease until he had received Communion the following day. He displayed his tender affection for the Passion of Jesus in his sermons and in the three books whose titles are these: *Reflections on the Passion*, *The Love of Souls* and *Darts of Fire*. He recommended to his missionaries the practice of preaching to the people on the Passion of Jesus as a more effective means of producing lasting conversions among sinners than the most terrible meditations on the judgments of God: “Because,” he said, “what love cannot do, fear will not be able to do either; and when a soul is attached to Jesus crucified, it no longer has cause to fear.”

To spread the love of Jesus in His holy childhood, which was one of his favourite devotions, he composed his *Novena for Christmas*. He also preached with extraordinary fervour on the devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus, whose office he introduced into his diocese. We have already spoken of his tender affection for the holy Virgin. One day when his director happened to express to him the confidence he had that she would appear to him at least at the hour of his death, as she had often deigned to appear to several of her servants: “Know,” said Alphonse, “that in my childhood I often conversed with Our Lady, and that she has directed me in all the affairs of the Order.” His director asked him several times what she had said to him, but he never obtained from him any answer but this: “She told me so many beautiful things! she told me so many beautiful things!” He declared the holy Virgin the protectress of his Order and sought to encourage devotion to her as a powerful means of obtaining divine grace. “Reformers,” he said, “represent devotion to Mary as injurious to God; they deny her the power she enjoys and attack her powerful intercession; it is therefore our duty to show, in the interest of our hearers, how powerful she is with God and how much it pleases Him to see her honoured.” These sentiments of devotion toward the holy Virgin are found expressed in his *Glories of*

*Mary*. After Mary, it was for her chaste spouse Saint Joseph that he felt a particular devotion, and also for Saint Teresa, whose names he placed with those of Jesus and Mary at the beginning of everything he wrote.

As proof of his profound veneration for the Pope, the visible head of the Church, the representative of Jesus Christ on earth, we need only cite his *Vindictae pro suprema Pontifias potestate adversus Juslinum Febronium*, composed to refute the Jansenist opinions put forward by that author. With the same aim he wrote three other treatises in Latin: the first, to prove and defend the infallibility of the Pope in his decisions on faith and morals; the second, to establish his supremacy over the ecumenical Councils as over the others; in the third, entitled *De justâ prohibitione et abolitione librorum nocux îectionis*, he upholds the Pope's right to prohibit the reading of books dangerous to faith and morals, and refutes the opinion of those who claimed that such reading was lawful. "I am ready," he writes in one of his letters, "to shed my blood in defence of the supremacy of the Pope; for take away this prerogative from him, and the authority of the Church is reduced to nothing!" "Without this supreme judge," he says on another occasion, "without this supreme judge to settle controversies, the faith is lost. This judge does not exist among the heretics, and that is what causes confusion and diversity of opinions among them; for each is his own judge."

With what firm confidence did he not cry out: "My Jesus, You died for me; Your blood is my hope and my whole salvation!" On this confidence in the mercies of the Lord he rested as on an anchor of salvation, in his temptations and interior troubles no less than in all the difficulties against which he had to struggle to tear himself from the world and to found and establish his Order, in spite of his poverty and the malice of his enemies. We dare not speak of his tender love for God. In his work entitled *The Practice of the Love of Jesus* he has brought to light that divine love which was the principal spring of his whole existence; and as for his charity toward his neighbour, it will suffice to say, in addition to the proofs already given, that he assigned to each day of the week a particular class of his fellow men, for whom he ordered the members of his Order to offer their prayers to God. Every evening the bell was to ring in all their houses to invite those who lived there to recite the psalm *De profundis* for the souls in purgatory, whom the Saint, throughout the whole course of his life, strove to deliver by prayers, indulgences, mortifications, and especially by offering the holy sacrifice of the Mass for them. Another proof of the spirit of peace and charity with which he was filled toward his fellow men is that, although he was of a naturally lively and choleric character, he knew so well how to restrain himself that reproaches and affronts never drew from him a single harsh answer. His humility equalled his other virtues. When his friends spoke to him of the conversions he had brought about and of the good order he had established in his diocese, he interrupted them and referred everything to God. One day, too, a religious who was a friend of his, entering his room, saw him raised in the air, his arms stretched out toward the images of Jesus and Mary; but no sooner had the Saint seen him than he was covered with confusion and said to him: "What! you here? I enjoin you to speak of this to no one." He likewise sought to hide a miracle he had worked in giving the use of speech to a young man who had never been able to utter a single word. The Saint made the sign of the cross on his forehead and gave him an image of the holy Virgin to kiss, ordering him to say what this image represented; the young man answered on the spot: "The holy Virgin."

It was in practising these virtues and working all these marvellous effects that the holy man reached the end of his earthly course. On 13 September 1786 he said to a Carmelite father who used to come and visit him every year in that month: "Father Joseph, next year you will find me dead, and we shall not see each other again on this earth; pray for me to the Lord and to Our Lady of the Seven Sorrows." On 18 July of the following year he was attacked, independently of his habitual ills, by a violent dysentery and an acute fever, so that he saw clearly that his end was near. It pleased God to deliver him from his usual scruples and anxieties of conscience, so that he might leave this world in peace. He confessed frequently during his illness and received the holy Eucharist every morning. His religious relieved one another in turn at his side and suggested pious thoughts and acts of virtue to him. On the 23rd of that month it was judged necessary to

administer to him the holy sacrament of Extreme Unction, and two days later he received Communion as Viaticum with such fervour and so ardent a desire to receive Our Lord that he repeated every moment: “Give me the body of Jesus Christ; when is Jesus going to come? Give me Jesus Christ.” At the moment when the priest brought him the Blessed Sacrament, he cried out in the fullness of his joy: “Come, my Jesus!” After receiving It, he remained a long time plunged in deep meditation and making acts of thanksgiving. His religious begged him to give them his blessing and to pray to God for them; he raised his hand and blessed them, saying: “May the blessing of Almighty God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, descend upon you and remain for ever!” Then he blessed all the houses and all the Fathers of his Congregation, the capital and his former diocese, and added with redoubled fervour: “I bless the Fathers of this kingdom and the States of the Pope, the king and all the generals, the ministers and the judges who will invoke the Saints and act according to justice!”

Four days before his death he was seized with such violent convulsions, and the gangrene already spoken of had reached such a degree of increase, that he lost the use of speech; but he continued to accompany his religious in the prayers they recited for him, and opened his mouth with much joy and satisfaction to receive the Blessed Sacrament. When the holy names of Jesus and Mary were pronounced, he seemed to recover new strength; and when, on the very eve of his death, an image of the holy Virgin was presented to him, he opened his eyes and fixed them on that worthy Mother of the Son of God, whom he had always revered and loved as his mother; his face appeared all radiant with joy and love. Shortly afterwards he fell into his agony; but he remained so calm and so peaceful that the Fathers who were around him did not perceive that he was about to breathe his last. While his religious were reciting fervent prayers for him and shedding abundant tears, he pressed the crucifix and the image of the holy Virgin firmly to his breast, and thus passed to the glory of Jesus and the peace of the Saints on Wednesday, 1 August 1787, at the age of ninety years, ten months and five days.

The next day his body was buried with extraordinary pomp in the church of Saint-Michel degli Pagani, amid the tears and lamentations of the town of Nocera degli Pagani and of the whole kingdom of Naples. It pleased God to manifest the glory to which He had raised His servant by a vision with which He favoured a Carmelite nun in the diocese of Melfi. She was praying in the chapel of her convent when she heard a clear and distinct voice commanding her to tell her confessor that she had seen the venerable Alphonse de Liguori surrounded with splendour and glory. “I see no one!” she answered; but immediately afterwards she saw, as she herself twice attested on oath: “The Servant of God in a globe of light and splendour, to which,” she said, “I see no light in this world that I can compare; all I can say of it is that it was like a brilliant sun reflected in the purest crystal: the holy prelate was so joyful and so beautiful that his flesh resembled the white of the finest ivory; my soul was, so to speak, stifled with joy at it.” The Saint gave her several pieces of advice for her spiritual conduct and concluded in these terms: “My daughter, keep yourself always in purity of heart, and let your heart always be for God alone; be always resigned to Him, resigned to suffer for Him as much as pleases Him, and to remain always on earth as if you were no longer there.”

He was declared venerable by Pius VI in 1796, nine years after his death; beatified by Pius VII on 6 September 1816; and finally Pius VIII signed in 1830 the decree of his canonisation, which was carried out by Gregory XVI on 26 May 1839. Lastly, by a decree of 23 March 1871, His Holiness Pope Pius IX, approving and confirming the favourable opinion given unanimously by the cardinals of the sacred Congregation of Rites under the date of 11 March, raised him to the rank of the doctors of the universal Church.

He is sometimes painted with a monstrance in his hand, before which he prays, to mark his devotion to the Blessed Sacrament. In some of his images he is seen raised from the ground, his face divinely lit by brilliant rays proceeding from an image of the holy Virgin. This recalls that one day, preaching to the people of Amalfi on devotion to the holy Virgin, his face was suddenly lit by rays issuing from an image of the Mother

of God which stood not far away.

## CULTE ET RELIQUES. — ÉCRITS.

The body of the Saint now rests in a magnificent shrine under the high altar of the church of the Redemptorist Fathers of Saint-Michel degli Pagani. The sovereign pontiff Pius VII, out of a sentiment of veneration for this great Saint, gave orders that the three fingers of the right hand of this illustrious doctor, the thumb, the index finger and the ring finger, be sent to Rome; these are the Pontiff's words: "Let them come to Rome, those holy fingers which have written so well for the glory of God, of the Virgin Mary and of religion."

Our most holy Father Pius IX, on a journey in the neighbourhood of Naples, went to venerate the precious remains of Saint Liguori and detached from the body a rib, which he shared with the superior general of the Redemptorists of Rome; this allowed some churches to acquire in part the possession of so rich a treasure. We have seen a considerable fragment of it in the chapel of Sainte-Geneviève, beside that of the body of that Saint, in the church of Saint-Eustache in Paris. The parish church of Chevrières, near Pont-Sainte-Maxence and Compiègne (Oise), also possesses several portions of this rib of Saint Liguori; they are enclosed in a fine shrine which adjoins that of Saint George, the principal patron, and both are exposed in the sanctuary.

The works of Saint Alphonse de Liguori are, on morals: 1. *Theologia moralis*; 2. Several extracts or abridgements of the *Moral Theology* have been made for the use of pastors; the best known is *Homo apostolicus*, 3 vols.; 3. *The Guide of Confessors*; 4. *Treatise on the Probable Opinion*.

On dogma and controversy: 1. *Treatise on the Faith against the Heretics*, dedicated to Benedict XIV; 2. *History of All the Heresies, with their Refutations, or Triumph of the Church*; 3. *Truth of the Faith, or Refutation of the Materialists, Deists and Sectaries who deny that the Catholic Church is the only true one*. He added to it a dissertation on the power of the Pope and the refutation of the book *De l'Esprit* by Helvétius; 4. *Victories of the Martyrs*, with supplements: the sacrifice of Jesus, the prayers of the Mass, exhortations addressed to a religious, instructions for students, the choice of a state of life, etc.; 5. *Reflections on the Truth of Revelation and on the Passion of Jesus Christ*; 6. *The Admirable Ways of Providence toward Sinners*, with some supplements on the love of God, devotion to Mary, and counsels of confidence; 7. *Treatise on the Just Prohibition of (Bad) Books*; 8. *On the Immaculate Conception of Mary*. These two treatises are also found in his great work of *Moral Theology*; 9. *Refutation of Some Works Directed against the Veneration Paid to Mary* (also found in the *Glories of Mary*), and another refutation against those who dissuade from the frequent use of Communion (added to the *Guide of Confessors*); 10. Various *Theological Dissertations* on the last judgment, purgatory, Antichrist, the signs that will precede the end of the world, the resurrection, the state of the just and of the reprobate, etc.; 11. *The Fidelity of Vassals toward God is a Sure Sign of their Submission toward their Princes*; 12. *Vindicte contra Febronium*, in which he proves the attachment he bore to the Catholic Church and to the Holy See; 13. *Sermons for Sundays and Feast Days*, with a supplement on preaching, missions and vocation; 14. *Collection of Preaching and Instructions*. His works of piety are: 1. *Selva*, or Collection of materials, discourses and instructions for ecclesiastical retreats; 2. *On Negligence in Attending Holy Mass and the Divine Service*; 3. *Ceremonies of the Mass*; 4. *Translation of the Psalms*, highly esteemed; 5. *Instruction to the People on the Precepts of the Decalogue*; 6. *The True Spouse of Jesus Christ, or the Holy Nun*; 7. *Preparation for Death*; 8. *The Way of Salvation*; 9. *Meditations on the Eternal Truths*; 10. *Spiritual Exercises for Eight Days*; 11. *The Practice of the Love of Jesus Christ*; 12. *Visits to the Blessed Sacrament and to the Blessed Virgin*; 13. Short works on Communion, cases of conscience, conversing with God, the will of God, prayer, the Passion of Jesus Christ, etc.; 14. *The Glories of Mary*; 15. *Novena for Christmas*, with sermons and meditations; 16. *Novena of the Sacred Heart*, and one for Saint Joseph; 17. *Novena for the Departed*; 18. *On the Warnings of Providence in Public Calamities*; 19. *Collection of Letters*.

Most of these works have been translated and reprinted in France. *The Practice of the Love of Jesus Christ* has been especially relished by pious souls, and the editions of this excellent work are very numerous. The *Visits to the Blessed Sacrament*, which enjoy so justly acquired a reputation, have long been widespread there. It was Father Doré, a Jesuit from Lorraine, who first published a translation of them. The complete works of Saint Alphonse de Liguori were printed at Paris (1834) in 30 vols. in-8° and 30 vols. in-12, with a French translation of the writings composed in Italian. A new edition is appearing at this moment, with a translation by the Rev. Father Dujardin, at Tournai, published by Casterman (1858).

*Life of the Saint*, by Cardinal Wiseman. — Cf. *Esprit des Saints*, by the abbé Grimes.

## Notre-Dame de Bon-Secours, in the Diocese of Beauvais

### Inauguration of the Chapel and Pilgrimages. 1637. — Pope: Urban VIII. — King of France: Louis XIII, the Just.

*Cilius cœlum cum terra peribit, quam Maria aliquem serio se implorantem sua ope destituât.*

*Heaven and earth will sooner be seen to perish than Mary refuse her help to one who implores her sincerely.*

*Louis de Blois, in Speculo spirit., c. 12.*

The celebrated chapel of Notre-Dame de Bon-Secours, one of the most remarkable in the diocese of Beauvais, was built in the enclosure of the monastery of the Capuchins, situated outside the fortifications of the town of Compiègne, by Father Boniface, a religious of that monastery, as a result of a vow he made to the holy Virgin, if she preserved the town from the horrors of an assault and the convent from pillage, at the time of the invasion of French soil by the Spaniards. The building having been finished on 1 August 1637, the next day the whole town was summoned to its inauguration. It was consecrated amid general rejoicing, and the picture of the Virgin before which Father Boniface had obtained the deliverance of the town was carried there in procession; it was placed in the middle of the altar of the chapel, where it has always remained since. The inhabitants of Compiègne came gladly to pray in this new sanctuary. From the following year, 1638, the bishop of Soissons authorised Mass to be said there; and in 1639 the Holy See granted for seven years a plenary indulgence to be gained there on 25 March. This double favour gave new lustre to Mary's sanctuary; pilgrims came in greater numbers; miracles were obtained there, and the public voice proclaimed Father Boniface's Virgin Notre-Dame de Bon-Secours. At that sweet name all hearts flew toward her altar. People hastened there from all sides, from the court as well as from the town and the countryside.

The Pope's nuncio himself came there several times to celebrate the holy mysteries, and, following such august footsteps, the crowd thronged there every day. The holy Virgin answered this confidence and showed herself truly Our Lady of Good Help. Marvellous cures were worked at her sanctuary, and every mouth celebrated them.

As this holy chapel had been built in haste sixteen years before and was already threatening ruin, the Capuchins resolved to replace it with another, larger and more convenient. As soon as the religious' design became known, the queen, the young king, the mayor, the aldermen and all the inhabitants promised their help; and on 8 June 1653 the authorities of the town, invited by the Capuchins, came to lay the first stone; the work was pushed forward briskly, and in September 1654 everything was finished. The bishop of Soissons came to bless it, accompanied by his coadjutor, and attached forty days of indulgence to it.

Mary rewarded with signal favours the zeal which all had shown for the erection of her sanctuary. A child of three, Elie Lebel, lame from birth, could not even stand upright. His mother goes to pray to Notre-Dame de Bon-Secours, and at once he is completely cured. A little girl of five and a half, Marie Béjot, had at her ankle an ulcer, resulting from smallpox, which never ceased day or night to make her suffer. All the physicians had pronounced the illness incurable. The mother has a novena of Masses said to Notre-Dame de Bon-Secours.

From the first day the child is better; the next day the improvement increases; and the novena was scarcely finished when the child was walking and the ulcer had disappeared. The death of Father Boniface, founder of the holy chapel, which occurred about that time, was itself regarded as a miracle of Mary's goodness; he had always asked to die on a Saturday; and in fact, finding himself worse one Saturday morning, he had a Mass said at Bon-Secours to obtain that he might die that day. Toward three o'clock in the afternoon he has the litanies of the holy Virgin recited for him; and before the end of these litanies he expires, answering: *Ora pro me*. In 1737 the devotion to this holy chapel, though always sustained for a century, received a new impulse from the fine ceremony which then took place for the renewal of the vow which the town of Compiègne had made in 1637 on the occasion of the plague. This ceremony lasted three days. On the first, all the magistrates, led by the Capuchins, who had come to fetch them at the town hall, went in procession to the abbey of Saint-Corneille; and from there, with all the secular and regular bodies, to Notre-Dame de Bon-Secours. There, kneeling on the steps of the altar, they pronounced the vow in the name of the whole city; the *Te Deum* was then sung, after which they returned in procession to Saint-Corneille. On the other two days there were High Mass, Vespers, a sermon, Benediction, more than fifteen hundred Communions, and countless pilgrims from all the surrounding district. A contagious disease was then reigning in the town; it ended at the moment when the vow was pronounced.

Two years later, in 1739, the pious queen Marie Leczinska came to Bon-Secours to make her prayer; and in 1763, having returned there, she remained in prayer for half an hour, after which, on leaving, she recommended the religious to pray for her soul, and not for her body. Following the queen's example, all the great ones of the age were seen prostrate in this venerated sanctuary. All classes of society, townspeople as well as country people, thronged every day before the holy image. Besides their individual visits, the magistrates and principal inhabitants of

Compiègne made a solemn visit there three times a year, all assembled together; it was ordinarily on 20 January, 25 March and 16 August.

Thus the devotion to Notre-Dame de Bon-Secours flourished without interruption, when in the month of April 1791, by virtue of the law of the National Assembly suppressing all convents, the holy chapel was sold. The purchaser was going to pull it down; but an honourable man was found, jealous to preserve for the town the sanctuary of its patroness, who had the courage to buy it and to have it served by a faithful priest.

In 1815 it was repaired and embellished, in gratitude for the protection with which Mary had covered the town in 1814 against the Prussians who wished to make themselves masters of it; and on 1 April 1816 the vow was renewed in a magnificent procession, which the presence of the allied armies had not permitted to be fulfilled the previous year. In 1817, on the occasion of a mission held in the town, the holy image was carried through the streets amid the holily joyful songs of all the inhabitants. A few years after the revolution of 1830, the chapel kept the confidence of the faithful, who flocked to it more than ever, above all at the time of the novena of 25 March. In 1846 Pius IX granted it the favour of a privileged altar; and in 1861 he added a plenary indulgence, not only for one day a month, at each person's choice, but also for the feasts of the Immaculate Conception, the Nativity, the Annunciation, the Purification and the Assumption, with an indulgence of 300 days for each visit made to this blessed sanctuary.

Encouraged by this mark of interest, Christian souls gave Notre-Dame de Bon-Secours, in 1864, magnificent chandeliers with fine stained-glass windows in which the litanies of the Virgin are symbolised; and the faithful seemed to redouble their zeal in coming there to offer their homage to Mary, especially during the novena of 25 March and throughout the month of May.

Extracted from *Notre-Dame de France*, by the curé of Saint-Sulpice.

## Notre-Dame de Médous, near Bagnères-de-Bigorre, in the Diocese of Tarbes

*Advocatam habere vis ad Christian? ad Mariant recurre: exaudiet utique Matrem Filius.*

*Do you wish to have an advocate with Christ? Have recourse to Mary; most certainly the Son will hear His Mother.*

*S. Bernard, Serm. de Nat. B. M. V.*

At the entrance of the valley of Campan, near Bagnères-de-Bigorre (*Aqux Convenarum*, Hautes-Pyrénées, on the Adour), there once stood a monastery renowned for a holy image of the Virgin, Notre-Dame de Médous, *sancta Maria de melle dulci*. The convent, formerly inhabited by Capuchins, has been destroyed; the venerated statue still exists; saved during the Revolution by popular piety, it now adorns the high altar of the church of Asté. This statue, brought, it is said, from Italy, has qualities of the first order and bears the stamp of the Italian masters of the 17th century. The divine purity of the Virgin's head, the majesty of her pose and the harmonious breadth of the draperies point to a chisel that knew how to draw its inspiration from the drawings of Raphael. Amid the profound destitution of our Pyrenean provinces in respect of the artistic works of the Renaissance, one is happy to find again, in a village church, a marble that would not be unworthy to appear in one of the fine basilicas of Rome.

Médous had powerful protectors in the noble viscounts of Asté, later dukes of Gramont, who offered this statue to the chapel of the neighbouring monastery. These opulent lords liked to adorn the churches with works of art.

We shall not gather all the oral traditions connected with the cult of the Virgin of Médous. But here is a marvellous fact, authentically established, the proofs of which still exist in the archives of Bagnères.

In the year preceding the contagion with which the town of Bagnères was afflicted, that is, in the year 1588, the winter was so harsh that the river Adour froze. One could walk on the ice: it had to be broken with effort around the mills in order to grind the corn. Bread grew hard and resisted the knife; people were obliged to put it back in the oven to thaw it; and never, before or since, had such ice been seen. The same year the rain fell in such abundance that the water entered all the houses of the town and rose above the bridge of the Adour. On Easter eve the snow fell in such quantity that no one could enter or leave the town, no one could walk in the streets, and the animals being taken to market died on the way. On the eve of Saint John it hailed so strangely that the hail killed the birds, maimed the trees and broke the roofs. All the waters of the rivers and fountains of Bagnères, ordinarily so clear, were infested with a sort of strange animalcules, and neither men nor animals could drink them until they had been clarified.

A short time before the contagion, trout of extraordinary length, leaving the bed of the Adour, moved about in the gutters of the streets, and never had these fish been seen so enormous or in such great numbers. The dogs and cats did nothing but utter plaintive and lamentable cries, night and day, inside the houses and out of doors. Now at that time there lived at Bagnères a poor woman endowed with great virtue, named Domenge Liloye. She was born at Beaudéan. Having become a widow, she lived in the town, in the quarter at the foot of the Pouey, with her daughter Andrelle, aged thirteen or fourteen.

The holy widow scarcely appeared in public except to go to Mass or to the processions. She had a quite particular devotion to Notre-Dame de Médous; she went to the chapel making the journey barefoot, and sometimes even dragging herself on her knees. Andrelle often followed her. And everyone admired the devotion and mortifications of mother and daughter.

One day the Virgin appeared to her in the chapel of Médous and ordered her to warn the priests and consuls of Bagnères to do penance and to set themselves to prayer to disarm the anger of heaven. A great misfortune was threatening them; they were to try to avert it by public supplications and by processions to the church of Médous.

Liloye spoke to the inhabitants of Bagnères of what Our Lady had announced to her; but they took no account of these warnings. A short time afterwards the plague broke out in the town. Five-sixths of the people were carried off. None survived but those who had sought their safety far away in flight. All the rest perished. A whole year had passed since the scourge had ceased when the inhabitants returned to their purified and newly whitewashed houses.

One of the principal ladies of the town, Simone de Souville, nicknamed Mourelle, allowed herself to mock Liloye for the frights she had caused with her visions, and she kept telling her that the plague had struck only those who were too poor to have themselves cared for. The holy widow answered that she had said only what the Virgin herself had commanded her to say. Liloye had not ceased to frequent the church of Médous. She struck her breast with a stone to ask God, through the intercession of His mother, for mercy for the people of Bagnères. When she went to Médous, if the door happened to be shut, she knelt down and prayed: at once she saw the door open, and she could finish her prayer at the foot of the altar. A few days after the mocking words of Simone de Souville, Notre-Dame de Médous appeared to her again and said to her: “Go and warn Simone de Souville that the scourge will soon reappear; this time it will spare the poor and strike only the rich. She herself will be the first victim; let her think, then, of preparing herself to die well.”

Liloye told her of the Virgin’s words, and soon afterwards the plague reappeared at Bagnères, and Simone de Souville was the first to succumb, and she was buried at the Montjoie on the road to Campan, which since then the people of Gerde call the Montjoie de Mourelle.

As a great number of persons were perishing of the contagion, the people of Bagnères vowed to go in general procession to Notre-Dame de Médous, and the plague at once ceased. In this procession all the inhabitants of the town came in haste, great and small. At their head walked Liloye and her daughter, dressed in white, barefoot, a candle in their hands. The Dominicans renewed the procession for nine days; the town of Bagnères continued it every year on the 2nd of the month of August, and the neighbouring parishes also went in procession to Médous to ask the Virgin to bend the anger of God and draw down on the country the blessings of heaven.

Extracted from *Pèlerinages des Pyrénées,* by Gustave Bascle de Lagrèze.

## Saint Bohaire or Bethaire, Bishop of Chartres and Confessor

### (about 623).

Bohaire was born in Rome. From his youth he left his homeland and came to Chartres, where his virtue and learning soon shone with a bright lustre; but the esteem of men frightened his humility, and solitude offered him a refuge against the temptations of vainglory. Bishop Pappole, yielding to his austere desires, allowed him to choose a retreat in any place whatever in the diocese of Chartres and to set up his cell there freely. Bohaire therefore came and settled on the banks of the Cisse, a short distance from Blois, and built there a little chapel which Pappole dedicated under the title of Saint George, martyr. Clotaire II drew him, against his will, from this retreat to make him his chaplain. After the death of Pappole (594), the clergy and people elected him bishop of Chartres; but a new order from the king was needed to oblige him to submit to this dignity, which, far from flattering him, seemed to him a fearsome burden. Bohaire had not been mistaken in his Christian estimate of the difficulties and perils of the episcopate. Cruel persecutions tried his virtue. In his time Thierry, king of Burgundy, ravaged the city of Chartres and carried the principal inhabitants into captivity. The pontiff shared the lot of his people; he gave all he possessed to pay the ransom of the most notable prisoners, and sacrificed even the treasure of his church to stop the slaughter, pillage and burning. Loaded with chains and led before the barbarian king, this good shepherd begs him to take his life as well, if need be, but to spare his dear flock. Thierry, touched by this act of devotedness, feels himself inclined to clemency, falls at the feet of the worthy bishop and promises him not to afflict him any more; the persons of

his suite likewise welcome the man of God, embrace his knees and implore the help of his prayers. This sudden change, or rather this supernatural impression of divine grace, saved a city threatened with the most frightful misfortunes. Thierry kept his word, put a stop to the violence, restored security to the alarmed people of Chartres, repaired the harm he had done and restored the property of the church.

Bohaire lived a certain number of years more amid the people who owed him their deliverance. He died about the year 623 and was, according to tradition, buried at his hermitage on the banks of the Cisse. The oratory of Saint George which he had erected in that valley became a parish church under the invocation of its founder. His relics remained there the object of public veneration; and even today they are exposed in a 15th-century shrine of carved wood. This delicate work bears the religious stamp of its period; the artist, drawing inspiration from the memories of the past, has reproduced the principal circumstances of a significant legend, among others the scene in which the humble anchorite, leaving his retreat with regret, makes his way toward the deceitful court of Clotaire and seems to foresee his coming tribulations.

*Saints de Blois*, by A. Dupré.

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[1] The Greeks keep their feast on 29 July. The martyrologies of Saint Jerome mark on 2 August another Saint Théodote, martyred at Caesarea in Mauretania (*Julia Caesarea*), today Cherchell, on the northern coast of Africa, with her children, who are reckoned as seven. It is very probable that it is the same. Saint Théodote of Bithynia had, under her name and that of her children, a celebrated church near Constantinople, built in the time of the emperor Justin I the Elder (450–527) by Count Justinian, his nephew and successor. — Baillet.

[2] The finding of his body and his canonisation may be referred to the year 1053, and the two most celebrated translations of his relics to the years 1502 and 1562. His body rested, when it was discovered, in the church of the convent of Sainte-Justine, with those of Saint Julien, Saint Félicité and the holy Innocents. — *Acta Sanctorum*.

[3] The Freemasons, so far removed today from the principles of their origin, formed a celebrated confraternity, whose statutes were approved by several bishops and by the sovereign Pontiffs, who granted them important privileges. Born on the banks of the Rhine at the time of the construction of the cathedral of Strasbourg, the confraternity of the Freemasons spread principally in Germany, where its members built a great quantity of Christian monuments (*Christian Archaeology*, by the abbé Bourassé).

[4] His cult was approved by Gregory XVI in 1832.

# 3 August

## Martyrologies

### MARTYROLOGE ROMAIN.

At Jerusalem, the Finding of the body of Saint Stephen, first martyr, and of Saints Gamaliel, Nicodemus and Abibas or Abibon[1], according to the revelation God made of it to a priest named Lucien, in the time of the emperor Honorius[2]. 415. — At Constantinople, the birthday in heaven of Saint Hermel, martyr. — In a region of India bordering on Persia, the martyrdom of the holy monks and other faithful whom King Abenner, persecutor of the Church of God, put to death by various torments. — At Naples, Saint Aspren, who, having been cured of a dangerous illness and then baptised by Saint Peter, was ordained bishop of that city. 97. — At Autun, the death of Saint Euphrone, bishop of that see and confessor. 485. — At Anagni, Saint Peter, bishop, who, having become illustrious first by his regularity in keeping all the observances of the monastic life and then by his pastoral vigilance, fell peacefully asleep in Our Lord. 1105. — At Philippi in Macedonia, Saint Lydia, seller of purple, who was the first to receive the Gospel which the apostle Saint Paul preached there[3]. 60. — At Beroea in Syria, the holy women Marane and Cyre, recluses. About 445.

### MARTYROLOGE DE FRANCE, REVU ET AUGMENTÉ.

In the dioceses of Strasbourg and Metz, the Blessed Bennon, canon of Strasbourg, bishop of Metz and solitary in Switzerland. 940. — In the dioceses of Cahors, Toulouse and Saint-Brieuc (provided that 3 August is a Sunday; otherwise the feast is transferred to the following Sunday), the finding of the body of

Saint Stephen, first martyr, titular patron of these Churches and of the whole diocese. 415. — In Auvergne, in a place formerly called Divajac, the translation of Saint Flamine, virgin and martyr, executed at Nicomedia under the emperors Diocletian and Maximian. She was honoured at Clermont in the church of Saint-Allyre. She is invoked for diseases of the eyes. She is mentioned in the martyrology of France on 2 May. 5th century. — At Arles, Saint Eone, bishop of that see and confessor, predecessor of the illustrious Saint Césaire of Arles. We shall give the life of Saint Eone on 30 August, the day the diocese has chosen for celebrating the feast of its former pastor. 502. — At Le Mans, the Blessed Geoffroy II de Loudon, bishop of that see and confessor. 1255. — At Béverlet or Béverlit, in the Low Countries, the venerable Georges, surnamed the Just, a cloth merchant. — On Mont Valérien, near Paris, the venerable Jean du Houssey, recluse. 1609. — At Vaison (Vaucluse), in the diocese of Avignon, the venerable Pierre Demaison or Desmaisons (*Petrus de Casa*), general of the Order of Carmelites and bishop of the former see of Vaison. He was born at Limoges toward the end of the 13th century, took the Carmelite habit in the convent of that city, and was there successively professor of philosophy, professor of theology and preacher. In 1304 he was elected, at the general chapter of his Order held at Barcelona, provincial of the province of Aquitaine; six years later he was raised to the generalate in the general chapter assembled at Valenciennes. In 1333 he held a general chapter at Nîmes, in which he erected two provinces of his Order, that of Rome and that of Tuscany. He held another at Brussels in 1336; another at Limoges in 1339; and a third at Lyons in 1342. The same year Pope Clement VI named him titular patriarch of Jerusalem, and afterwards administrator of the bishopric of Vaison. He died after having fulfilled the episcopal functions with as much zeal as wisdom, and after having been recognised, even before his episcopate, as one of the finest ornaments of the University of Paris. His tomb is in the former cathedral of Vaison. Joseph-Marie Suarez, one of his successors, had an inscription placed on this tomb in which he attributes miracles to him. Pierre Demaison left some works, whose titles are these: *Super Sententias*; *Sermones de tempore, de B. Virgine, de Sanctis*; *Super politica Aristotelis*. 1348. — In Belgium, Martin Beccaert, a young theologian, who felt himself drawn to the Society of Jesus by the piety toward the Mother of God with which he saw it animated. He was distinguished by his tender devotion to Mary and died piously. 1621. — At Antwerp, the establishment of the Dominicans. 1243.

## ADDITIONS FAITES D'APRÈS LES BOLLANDISTES ET AUTRES HAGIOGRAPHES.

At Anagni, a town of the Ecclesiastical States, the Blessed Geoffroy, bishop of Le Mans and confessor, cited in the martyrology of France for this day. 1255. — At Melrose, a village of Scotland on the Tweed, in the county of Roxburgh, Saint Walthen or Waltheof, commonly Saint Walène, abbot of the celebrated monastery of Melrose, founded in 1136 by David I for monks of Cîteaux, rebuilt between the reigns of Robert Bruce and James IV, and pillaged at the time of the Reformation. Second son of Simon, earl of Huntingdon, and of Mathilde, a kinswoman of William the Conqueror, Walthen was from his childhood singularly drawn to the exercises of religion. Early on he left the court and Scotland and went into the county of York, where he made profession among the Canons Regular of Saint Augustine at Nostel, near Pontefract, in the monastery of Saint Oswald. Soon he was obliged to accept the priorate of Kirkham, in the county of York. Attracted by the reputation for holiness which the Order of Cîteaux enjoyed, he took the habit of that Order in the monastery of Wardon, in the county of Bedfort. Four years after his profession at Wardon he was elected abbot of Melrose. In 1154 he was elected archbishop of Saint-André, but out of humility he refused to accept that dignity. After an altogether heavenly life he fell peacefully asleep in Our Lord. 1160. — At Constantinople, Saint Dalmace or Dalmat, archimandrite of Constantinople, and Saint Fauste, his son, monk. 440. — At Rome, the holy martyrs Diogène, Étienne and Albin, cited by Saint Jerome. — At the Benedictine monastery of San Silvestro of Nonantule, founded about the year 752 by Anselme, duke of Friuli, in the diocese and duchy of Modena in Italy, the Blessed Grégoire, abbot. 933. — At Lucera, in the former kingdom of Naples and in the present Capitanata, the Blessed Augustin de Gazothe, of the Order of Friars Preachers and bishop of Zagrab. The Bollandists relate that, his health being much broken, his prior wished

to make him eat some fowl; but our Saint having made the sign of the cross over the dish presented to him, the bird, recovering at the same time its life and its feathers, flew away as if dismissed. The same hagiographers say in praise of our Blessed that, having one day kissed the hand of the sovereign Pontiff before whom he was presenting himself, the latter noticed that a sharp pain which had afflicted him for a long time had ceased at that very instant. Augustin was, toward the end of his life, transferred to the see of Lucera, where he ended his course. 1323.

## The Finding of the Body of Saint Stephen, First Martyr, and of Saints Nicodemus, Gamaliel and Abibas or Abibon

*415. — Pope: Saint Innocent I. — Emperor: Theodosius the Younger.*

> *Ultor nempe Deus non méritai netia Sacris opprobrium pensât honoribus. Claros prodigiis ac venerabiles Ipsos vel tumulos facit.*
>
> *Santeul.*
>
> *The way in which the Lord glorified the body of His martyr reminds us of the respect we owe to our own body.*
>
> *The abbé C. Martin, Panégyr.*

This second feast in honour of Saint Stephen was instituted on the occasion of the discovery of the relics of this first martyr of the Church. His body had always remained hidden, when it pleased God to make his holiness shine forth in the most perceptible manner, both in heaven and on earth. No one even remembered the place where he had been buried, and it was not known that he lay under the ruins of an ancient tomb twenty miles from Jerusalem. It was at Caphargamala, where there was a church served by a venerable priest named Lucien. Here is how the discovery of the relics of Saint Stephen came about:

On Friday, 3 December of the year 415, in the sixth consulate of Honorius and the sixth of Theodosius the Younger, toward nine o'clock in the evening, the priest Lucien was sleeping in the baptistery, where he was accustomed to lie in order to guard the sacred vessels of the church. Being half awake, he saw a venerable old man of marvellous stature and beauty. This old man had a long white beard, with a garment of the same colour edged with gold plates and strewn with crosses; he also had in his hand a golden rod. Having approached Lucien, he called him three times by his name and ordered him to go to Jerusalem and tell Bishop John to come and open the tombs where his relics were, and those of some other servants of Jesus Christ, so that many might thereby obtain mercy from the Lord. Lucien asked him his name. "I am," he said, "the Gamaliel who instructed Saint Paul in the Law. To the east of this tomb is Saint Stephen, whom the Jews stoned outside the western gate of their city. His body remained exposed there a day and a night, without the birds and beasts daring to touch it. The faithful took it away during the night by my order and carried it to my country house, where I placed it in my own tomb, on the eastern side, after having celebrated his funeral for forty days. Nicodemus, who came to see Jesus by night, is there too, in another coffin. When his attachment to the Saviour had caused him to be excommunicated and driven from Jerusalem by the Jews, I received him in my country house and kept him there until the end of his life. I buried him honourably beside Stephen. I also buried in the same place my son Abibas, who died before me, at the age of twenty. His body is in the third coffin, which is the highest, and in which I myself was placed after my death. Ethna, my wife, and Sémilias, my elder son, who would not believe in Jesus Christ, were buried in another place, which is called Capharsemalia."

Lucien feared that excessive credulity would make him pass for an impostor. To make sure whether this vision had God for its author, he asked for a second and a third; and to merit this grace he persisted in fasting and prayer. On the following Friday Gamaliel appeared to him in the same form and told him to obey. He made known to him the merits of the Saints whose relics he was revealing to him, under the emblem of four baskets which he showed him: three were of gold and the other of silver. Of the golden baskets, two were

filled with white roses and the other with red. The silver one was full of saffron, which gave off a very sweet fragrance. Lucien having asked what these baskets signified, Gamaliel answered him: “They are our relics. The red roses represent Stephen, who is at the entrance of the tomb. The second basket designates Nicodemus, who is near the door; the silver one represents my son Abibas, who left this life without having stained his innocence: it touches mine.” He disappeared after speaking thus. Then Lucien awoke and gave thanks to God. He still continued his fasts. On the same day and at the same hour of the third week, Gamaliel appeared to him again and reproached him for his negligence in carrying out the orders he had given him. He added that the discovery of his relics and those of the other servants of God would put an end to the drought that was then afflicting the world. Lucien, seized with fear, promised that he would no longer delay to obey.

He therefore went to Jerusalem after this third vision. Bishop John, to whom he related what had happened to him, wept for joy and told him to go and look for the relics of the Saints, adding that he would find them under a heap of large stones near his church. Lucien answered that he thought the same. Back at home, he had the inhabitants of the village assembled the next morning to search under the heap of stones. While he was going to see the place where they had dug, he met Migèce, a monk of holy life, who told him that Gamaliel had appeared to him and had charged him to warn him that they were digging in vain in that place. He added that Gamaliel had spoken to him thus: “We were laid there at the time of our funeral, and, in accordance with the ancient custom, this heap of stones was meant to serve as a monument to the grief of our friends. Look elsewhere, in a place called Debalalia.” “Indeed,” said Mégèce, continuing to relate the vision he had had, “I found myself suddenly in the place indicated, and I saw there an old tomb in which there were three beds adorned with gold. One, higher, contained a young man and a person of years; the other two each contained a man.”

Lucien, having a new proof of the truth of the vision he had had, left the heap of stones and went to the place which had just been indicated to him. When he had had the earth dug, he found the three chests, with a stone on which the following names were engraved in large characters: Cheliel, Nasuam, Gamaliel, Abibas. The first two are Syriac; they amount to those of Stephen, or Crowned, and of Nicodemus, or Victory of the people. Lucien at once informed Bishop John of what had just happened. The prelate, who was then at the council of Diospolis, came on the spot with Eutonius and Eleuthère, bishops, the one of Sebaste and the other of Jericho.

Scarcely had the chest or coffin of Stephen been opened when the earth trembled; a very pleasant fragrance also came forth. There was a great number of persons there, several of whom were afflicted with various illnesses. Seventy-three sick persons recovered their health on the spot. Bishop John decided that the relics of Saint Stephen, who had been a deacon of the church of that city, should be carried to Jerusalem. Those of the other Saints remained at Caphargalama. The body of Saint Stephen was reduced to ashes, except the bones, which were found entire and in their natural position. Some of his blood was also found there. A small part of the Saint’s relics was left at Caphargalama. The rest was enclosed in the coffin and carried to the church of Sion in Jerusalem with the singing of psalms and hymns; an abundant rain then fell, which restored to the earth the fertility of which it had been deprived by a long drought. The ceremony of this translation took place on 26 December, the day on which the Church has always since celebrated the feast of Saint Stephen: but on 3 August the discovery of his relics is commemorated; this is no doubt because some church, perhaps that of Ancona, was dedicated on that day under the invocation of Saint Stephen.

The body of Saint Stephen remained for some time in the church of Sion. The empress Eudoxia, wife of Theodosius the Younger, having made a second journey to Jerusalem in 444, built under the Saint’s invocation a magnificent church about a stadium from the city, near the place where he had been stoned, and asked that his relics be transferred there. She herself was buried in this church after her death, which occurred in 463. Several churches at once asked for a portion of the relics of Saint Stephen, and a great number of miracles were worked by their power. Saint Augustine relates that a person who had been present at the

martyrdom of Saint Stephen took one of his bones and afterwards carried it to Ancona in Italy, where from then on there was an oratory of this Saint. When the Christians had the freedom to build churches, a celebrated one was erected in honour of Saint Stephen near Ancona. Saint Gregory the Great mentions it in his dialogues.

After the discovery of which we have just spoken, a great number of churches of Europe and Africa wished to be enriched with some portion of the relics of the holy Martyr. Avit, a Spanish priest then living in Palestine, obtained from Lucien a little of the ashes of the Saint's body and some small fragments of bone, which he sent to Palconius, bishop of Braga, his birthplace, in order thereby to console the church of that city, which was groaning at the sight of the ravages caused by the incursions of the Goths and Vandals. He had them carried by Orosius, who was leaving to return to Spain.

Paul Orosius, a learned Spanish priest, was from Tarragona. He went first to Africa, then to Palestine, to consult Saint Augustine and Saint Jerome on some difficult passages of Scripture. His name is celebrated in the writings of these two Fathers of the Church. He left Palestine in 416 with the precious treasure with which he was charged. He landed in Africa to pay a visit to Saint Augustine, after which he set sail for Minorca. The devastations of the Goths preventing him from crossing into Spain, he returned to Africa, where, on the advice of Saint Augustine, he wrote the history of the world since the creation. This history is divided into seven books; its style is clear and flowing. It is shown in it, against the pagans, that the misfortunes then afflicting the world did not come from the contempt into which the old superstitions of idolatry had fallen, and that men in different ages had often experienced similar calamities. Orosius, before crossing back to Africa, left the relics of Saint Stephen at Magone (today Mahón), one of the two towns of the island, until it should be possible to send them on to the bishop of Braga, with the letter Avit wrote him, which we still have. Sévère, bishop of Minorca, came from Jammona (today Citadella) to Mahón with the intention of receiving the relics and of holding conferences with the Jews, who were very numerous in that town. The sight of these relics, joined to the zeal of the Christians, worked an astonishing prodigy. In the space of eight days, five hundred and forty Jews, including Théodore, their patriarch, were converted and asked for baptism. Only some women showed a little more obstinacy; but in the end they too gave way. These converted Jews built a church at their own expense and with their own hands. We still have the circular letter in which Bishop Sévère recorded the history of this marvellous event.

On the very day when Evode, bishop of Uzalis, was reading Sévère's letter to his flock, there arrived at the chapel of the holy martyrs Félix and Gennade, situated near the town, some splinters of the bones of Saint Stephen and a phial containing some of his blood. Monks from Palestine had procured these relics. Evode went to receive them with great joy. A young man who had broken his foot in a fall and had kept to his bed for several days was cured after imploring the intercession of Saint Stephen, and went to the chapel of the martyrs to thank God there. The celebration of the holy Mysteries ended, they went in procession to the town. The people, divided into several groups holding candles and torches in their hands, sang psalms and hymns. When they had arrived at the principal church, they laid the relics there and placed them on the bishop's throne, which was covered with a veil. A blind woman recovered her sight by applying this veil to her eyes. Then the relics were placed on a bed which was enclosed in a kind of cupboard, in which there was an opening through which linen cloths were made to touch them, receiving thereby the power to heal the sick. The faithful came to visit them from very far away, and a great number of miracles took place. Evode had the list of them written by one of his clerics. It was read publicly on the feast of Saint Stephen, and after the reading of each miracle the persons cured were called and made to pass one after another through the middle of the church. The people, seeing them, wept for joy and redoubled their acclamations. Among those who were thus made to pass were three blind men who had recovered their sight, and a man of Hippo named Restitude, who had been cured of a paralysis. Those present seemed rather to see the miracles than to hear them related. The bishop Evode of whom we speak was an intimate friend of Saint Augustine. He approved

and published two books of the *Miracles of Saint Stephen*, which had been written by his order and are ordinarily cited under his name. It is said there that before the oratory where the relics of Saint Stephen were at Uzalis there was a veil on which the Saint had been represented carrying a cross on his shoulders. In this history of the miracles of Uzalis mention is made of some dead persons raised to life. Saint Augustine speaks of one of them in almost the same terms. A child, he says, still at the breast, died without having received baptism. His mother, seeing him lost for ever, runs to the oratory of Saint Stephen and makes the following prayer: "Holy Martyr, you see that I have lost my only consolation. Give me back my child, so that I may find him again before Him who crowned you." After her prayer, which was long, the child came back to life, and he was heard to cry. He was carried at once to the priests, who baptised him. He then received the anointing, the imposition of hands and the Eucharist; for it was then the custom to give confirmation and Communion immediately after baptism, when that sacrament was administered solemnly. God soon called this child to Himself. His mother carried him to the tomb with as much confidence as if she had gone to lay him in the bosom of Saint Stephen. These are Saint Augustine's own words.

No lesser prodigies took place at Calama, a town of Numidia fifteen Roman miles from Hippo, whose see was occupied by Saint Augustine. Possidius, a disciple of that holy doctor, was then bishop of Calama. There was in that town a chapel of Saint Stephen, which was enriched with a portion of the holy Martyr's relics, for which they were indebted to Saint Possien. Euchaire, a Spanish priest living at Calama, had long been tormented by the stone; but no sooner had he applied the relics of Saint Stephen to himself than he found himself cured. Some time afterwards he died of another illness, and they were already about to carry him to the tomb; but those who were around him having put on his body a tunic which had been brought from the Saint's chapel, he came back to life. Several sick persons, afflicted with various illnesses, also recovered their health. Saint Augustine, who was writing at that time, says that more of these cures took place at Calama than at Hippo, where nevertheless he had counted seventy. Among other prodigies that happened at Calama, he insists principally on the conversion of a pagan named Martial. He was a man of rank and one of the principal inhabitants of the town. He abated nothing of his obstinate attachment to idolatry, even in his last illness. The strongest reasons were used in vain to convince him. His son-in-law, who was a Christian, had prayed for him a long time before the shrine containing the relics of Saint Stephen; he brought home to him some of the flowers adorning that shrine and, full of confidence in the Saint's intercession, put them by the sick man's pillow. It was then evening. Day had not yet appeared when Martial was asking to speak with Bishop Possidius, who was absent, having gone to Hippo to pay a visit to Saint Augustine. The priests, informed, came to see the sick man, instructed him and baptised him. Martial, from the moment of his baptism until his last breath, never ceased to repeat the words with which Saint Stephen ended his life: "Lord Jesus, receive my soul."

Bishop Projecte carried some relics of the same Saint to Tibilis, otherwise called *Aguse Tibilitanæ*, an episcopal town fifteen miles from Hippo. As he was passing through Cirta, a blind woman, having had herself led to these relics, recovered her sight.

Lucilius, bishop of Sinique or Sinite, near Hippo, carrying the relics of the same Saint in procession, was suddenly cured of a fistula, which never returned, although it had tormented him for a long time and he was awaiting the surgeon to have the operation performed.

In a village called Audura, a child at play was crushed under the wheel of a cart drawn by oxen and died in violent convulsions. His mother having carried him before the relics of Saint Stephen, he came back to life without any mark remaining of the accident that had befallen him. A nun of a neighbouring village called Gaspaliana was also raised to life through having been covered with a tunic that had been made to touch the same relics. All these miracles are related by Saint Augustine.

The Church of Hippo received a portion of the relics of Saint Stephen in 425. With what respect Saint Augustine received them is seen from the letter he wrote to Bishop Quintien, who was about to receive a

small portion of them. “Your Holiness,” he said to him, “knows how much you are obliged to honour these relics, as we have done.” It appears that he preached his 317th sermon on the very day he received them. He says in it that the relics of which he speaks consisted of a little dust from the Saint’s body, enclosed in a box. He teaches the people that an altar has been raised, not to Saint Stephen, but to God over the relics of Saint Stephen. For fear that the ignorant might fall into superstition by not sufficiently distinguishing the master from the servant, he repeated, whenever the occasion arose, that it is God who works miracles through the Saints, and that it is to Him we must refer them, as well as the graces we receive through the intercession of the Blessed who reign in heaven. Two years had not yet passed since the facts related above had occurred when he wrote his last book of *The City of God*, in which he says that he had received the account of nearly seventy miracles worked at Hippo by the relics of Saint Stephen, besides several others of which he knew no record had been made. Among the latter he speaks of the raising of three dead persons. One was the son of a tax-collector named Irénée. Everything was already ready for his funeral, and they were about to bury him. But he came back to life when he had been anointed with the Martyr’s oil, which must no doubt be understood of the oil of the lamp burning before the relics of Saint Stephen. The other was the daughter of a Syrian named Bassus. She recovered life through having been covered with a garment which her father had made to touch the Saint’s shrine. Saint Augustine was an eyewitness of most of these miracles, among others of the following.

There were in a considerable family of Caesarea ten children, seven boys and three girls. Having been cursed by their mother on account of their bad conduct, they were seized one after another, from the eldest to the youngest, with a trembling in all their limbs which disfigured their whole body. In this sad state they wandered here and there in different places. The second of these children was cured while praying in a chapel of Saint Lawrence at Ravenna. The sixth and the seventh arrived at Hippo in 425. They were called, the one Paul and the other Palladie. They drew everyone’s eyes upon them. On the morning of Easter Day, Paul, praying before the relics of Saint Stephen, found himself perfectly cured. At once cries were heard from all sides in the church: Thanks be to God, blessed be the Lord. The young man threw himself at the feet of Saint Augustine, to whom he was presented. The Saint raised him and embraced him. When he had gone up into the pulpit to preach, he pointed him out to the people, saying: “We are accustomed to read the accounts of the miracles which God has worked through the prayers of the blessed martyr Stephen. But today the presence of this young man takes the place of a book for us; we need no other writing than his face, which you all know, etc.” He adds that without the prayers of Saint Stephen he would not have had the strength to bear the fatigue of the previous day (Holy Saturday), on which he had spent the greater part of the day and night without taking food, which still did not prevent him from preaching on Easter Day. On Easter Tuesday he had Paul and Palladie placed on the steps of the pulpit so that the people could see them. The one no longer had any mark of his illness, while the other trembled in all her limbs. Having then had them withdraw, he preached on the respect children owe their parents and on the moderation with which parents should treat their children. His sermon was interrupted by the acclamations of the people, who kept repeating the words: “Thanks be to God.” It was that Palladie had just been cured while praying before the relics of Saint Stephen. The sermon that was interrupted by this miracle has come down to us, as have all those Saint Augustine preached on this occasion. About a year later the holy doctor inserted the account of the cure of Paul and Palladie, with that of several other miracles, in his last book of *The City of God*.

Jean le Clerc attacks the judgment and truthfulness of Saint Augustine with regard to the miracles he reports as having been worked through the intercession of Saint Stephen. It is very strange that such a discovery should have been reserved for this new master in the art of criticism. But will Christians suffer the most learned and holy doctors of the Church to be represented as cheats and impostors? and will they consent to the rest of the faithful being ranked in the class of imbeciles? The miracles in question are attested not only by Saint Augustine but also by Possidius, by Evode and by several authors. It must also be observed that there were then in Africa a great number of men commendable for their learning and penetration, who no

doubt examined the facts and admitted them only after recognising their truth. But suppose that Catholics were simple enough to let themselves be imposed upon by their bishops, could their enemies, who spied on their actions with such malignity, be deceived in the same way? The miracles in question took place at a time when there were many Manichees, Donatists and Arians in Africa. Yet is the slightest trace of protest found on the part of these heretics and of the pagans?

Nor is that all: one would have to say that the Fathers of that century all agreed to deceive the faithful grossly. But whom will one persuade of the reality of such a conspiracy? All the following ages have admired in these celebrated doctors, and above all in Saint Augustine, a happy combination of gravity, wisdom, holiness, judgment and learning. The holy bishop of Hippo distinguished himself principally by his zeal in combating falsehood in all kinds of matters. Let one read the works he has left on that vice. He proves against the Priscillianists that it can never be permitted to tell the least deliberate lie, even were it a question of saving a man's life, of preventing evil, or even of procuring baptism for a child who otherwise cannot receive it, because there is no circumstance in which what is essentially evil can become lawful. It is seen that lying is above all criminal in matters of religion; and if it could ever become lawful, one could no longer count on anyone's sincerity.

Le Clerc and his partisans say that the Fathers had recourse to fraud to facilitate the spread of their favourite doctrine concerning the invocation of the Saints and the veneration of relics. But this invocation and this veneration had long been established, and had often worked miracles in the other parts of the Christian world. See, for the West, the works of Saint Paulinus, Saint Prudentius, Saint Sulpicius Severus, Saint Gaudentius, etc.; and for the East, those of Saint Chrysostom, Saint Basil, the two Saint Gregories, Theodoret, Saint Ephrem, etc. Le Clerc himself recognises it in the lives of several of these Fathers.

In truth, Saint Augustine observes with other Fathers that the gift of miracles had diminished little by little, and that they had in general ceased in the Church because the Gospel was sufficiently established. But he explains himself on this gift in the same way as the Apostles, and he adds that God still sometimes works miracles for the glory of His name and to awaken the fervour of the faithful by making them think of Him. That is why, in his book *The City of God*, he confounds the pagans by the miracles that were being worked in his time, above all by those of the relics of Saint Stephen. Speaking of the latter, he mentions five persons raised to life. He gives their names with those of their families and notes all the circumstances. Two recovered life through garments which had been made to touch the relics of Saint Stephen. Something similar is read in the Acts of the Apostles, where we see that certain things which had touched the body of Saint Paul were the instruments of various prodigies. All that remains for these very fastidious critics is to attack the story of the dead man raised to life by touching the bones of Eliseus, and the cure of the sick who had devoutly applied to themselves the aprons and handkerchiefs taken from the body of Saint Paul. God can no doubt make use of sensible instruments to manifest His power and His mercy, as Jesus Christ often did during His mortal life.

At Longpont, near Paris, there is to be seen in a shrine of gilded wood a crystal tube fitted with silver fastenings, containing a notable bone of the holy Deacon, first martyr, obtained through the influence of Cardinal de Richelieu, whose secretary was grand prior in commendam of Longpont.

The history of the veneration and relics of Saint Stephen at Besançon would require a special history; we can say only a few words about it. Saint Helena, mother of Constantine, on a journey to Besançon, where Saint Stephen already had a chapel raised by the bishop Saint Lin at the foot of Mount Coelius, conversed with Hilan, then bishop of that see, and conjured him to pray Saint Stephen to intercede with God for her son, who was fighting for the empire against Maxentius. She promised in return to procure relics of this Saint for the church of Besançon. In fact, later, when she went to Jerusalem, she asked for relics of Saint Stephen from Macau, bishop of the holy city. He handed her, together with the Saint's dalmatic, a stone sealed with his seal. These relics were sent and received at Besançon about the year 327. The tomb of Saint Stephen was, as

we have said, discovered in 415. From then on several churches obtained some bones of the holy deacon. The emperor Theodosius, in 446, made a gift of the bone of the arm of Saint Stephen to Célidoine, archbishop of Besançon; it was received with the greatest solemnity. When they wished to detach some particles of this holy relic to satisfy the pious desires of the ten bishops present at the ceremony, blood flowed in abundance from the dry bone, and the prelates gathered it respectfully to carry it away to their dioceses. Miracles multiplied and, as they did, increased the piety of the faithful and the concourse of pilgrims.

Besançon became as it were the centre of the veneration of Saint Stephen in the West, and the day on which the miracle we have just spoken of took place (3 August) became the one on which the finding of the relics of Saint Stephen was celebrated throughout the West.

These relics of Saint Stephen, the most authentic that could be seen, were destroyed in 1793. But in 1832 Cardinal de Rohan, archbishop of Besançon, brought back from Rome, where the greater part of the body of Saint Stephen rests, a bone of the arm of this holy martyr, which reawakened the devotion of the people of Besançon to their holy protector. In 1848 the relic was richly enshrined in a reliquary of silver-gilt, which His Eminence Mgr Cardinal Mathieu offered to the illustrious chapter of his metropolitan church. The same year Mgr Mathieu obtained that the church of the citadel, built in the time of Louis XIV when Vauban, in order to fortify the town, was obliged to pull down the old church of Saint-Étienne, be restored to worship. The order is dated 20 December and signed Lamoncière. Every year the entrance to the citadel is opened to the public for the feast of 26 December.

Lastly, by a brief dated at Rome, 9 April 1853, our Holy Father Pope Pius IX granted a plenary indulgence to all who, having received the sacraments of Penance and the Eucharist, visit the church of the citadel on 26 December and pray there according to the intentions of the sovereign Pontiff. The church of Besançon celebrates the memory of Saint Stephen on 13 and 20 July, on 3 and 23 August, and on 26 December.

The history of Saint Stephen (his martyrdom, the finding of his relics, his various miracles) is depicted on an interesting diptych in the Vatican, though of a rather late period. What is above all curious in this monument is the vision of the priest Lucien, in which the bodies of Saint Stephen, Gamaliel, Nicodemus and Abibas are symbolised by four vases set near the bed where he lies.

The history of this miraculous discovery and of this translation was written by the priest Lucien himself. Avit, a Spanish priest and intimate friend of Saint Jerome, who was then living at Jerusalem, translated it into Latin; and the Benedictines published it in their appendix to the seventh volume of the works of Saint Augustine. What it contains is attested by Chrysippus, one of the principal priests of the Church of Jerusalem, whose virtue the author of the life of Saint Euthymius singularly praises; by Idatius and Marcellinus in their chronicles; by Basil, bishop of Seleucia; by Saint Augustine, Bede, etc. The account of the same facts is found in most historians and in the sermons of the principal Fathers of that century. — See, for further details: *Vie des Saints de Franche-Comté*, one of the best works of hagiology produced in our time.

## Saint Dalmace or Dalmat, Archimandrite of Constantinople, and Saint Fauste, his Son, Monk

*440. — Pope: Saint Sixtus III. — Emperor of the East: Theodosius the Younger.*

> *Inimici jaculis invulnerabilis est, qui solitudinem dilirjit.*
>
> *He who loves solitude is invulnerable to the darts of the enemy of salvation.*
>
> *Saint Nilus.*

Saint Dalmace, whom the Greeks in their Menology call Dalmat, was of a distinguished family in the Eastern empire. In his youth he followed the profession of arms and served under the great Theodosius as an officer in the second company of the palace guards. The contagion of the world, in this wholly secular employment, did not spoil his heart. He kept himself in the virtue that had been instilled in him from childhood and lived in his state in a very edifying manner. He was married from the time of the emperor Valens, and it appeared later that piety reigned also in his family, which was numerous. Saint Isaac having come from the East to Constantinople, he made his acquaintance; and on one occasion he stayed seven days in his monastery to profit at leisure by his instructions. After this sort of retreat the Saint made known to him that God wanted him at his side; in which Dalmace, who was already inclined to it by his piety, made no other delay than what he needed to prepare his wife for it and to set his domestic affairs in order. As his house was a house of virtues, he had no difficulty in obtaining from his wife the sacrifice God wished of him, and he found the same submission in his children.

He went therefore to Saint Isaac, bringing with him one of his sons named Fauste, who wished to imitate him in his retirement. He soon became the principal disciple of his spiritual father, by the ardour he showed for penance, by his charity toward the poor, by his love of retirement and by the progress he made in perfection. His fasts were rigorous and frequent, and it is asserted that he spent a whole Lent without taking anything. His life, reported by the Bollandists, adds that he then remained until the Ascension in a kind of ecstasy, during which he was transported in spirit into the church of the Holy Maccabees while the patriarch Atticus was celebrating Mass there; and that, in declaring this to his holy abbot Isaac, he assured him that he had seen there three religious of his monastery who had attended it, one of whom was near the sanctuary, another in the ambo and the third at the great door; which Isaac found to be true when he inquired of these religious on their return.

That Saint having gone to receive in heaven the reward of his labours and his zeal, and having left Dalmace as his successor in the government of the monastery, the latter applied himself with incredible attention to making the religious virtues flourish there. One can judge of it by the enclosure he constantly kept; for he did not leave his cloister during the space of forty-eight years. During that time the city of Constantinople was shaken by earthquakes; and as processions were being held to appease the anger of God, the emperor pressed the Saint to come to them; but he begged him to be pleased to let him pray in his cell. The prince, who held him in great veneration, did not press him further. The way in which God punished a wicked man before his eyes increased still further the high esteem in which he was held at court. Two litigants had brought their case before the emperor; and the plaintiff, who was acting very unjustly, had by his chicanery and artful words given so favourable a turn to his cause that the other saw himself on the point of losing. In this extremity he threw himself at the emperor’s feet and said to him: “Prince, have pity on me; send us both to the abbot Dalmace, that he may decide the matter: you could not give us a more equitable judge, and I hope that God will make the truth known through him.” The emperor answered that he was willing, and they went to the Saint. “Explain to me, then,” he said to them, “the matter that brings you.” Then the unjust plaintiff, wishing to assert his pretended right, found his tongue tied, and he fell dead at the feet of Dalmace. The Saint sent a report of it to the emperor in these terms: “God Himself has judged this case in favour of the one who was wronged.” This filled the prince and all the great men of his court with admiration.

But the virtue and zeal of Saint Dalmace never shone more brightly than in the service he rendered to the Church against Nestorius, who had come from Antioch to occupy the chair of Constantinople after Atticus. God made known to him the sentiments this heresiarch had in his soul before he manifested them. When Nestorius wished to visit him in his cell, he said to him firmly: “You may go away; for I shall not receive you until you have renounced your errors.” Nestorius saw himself forced to withdraw; and the Saint said to his religious: “Take care of yourselves, my brethren; there has come into this city an evil beast, which will wound many people by its

The scandal soon broke out. Nestorius at last brought his impious dogmas to light, and in 431 the council of Ephesus was assembled, at which more than two hundred bishops were present and over which Saint Cyril of Alexandria presided as legate of Pope Celestine. This holy assembly condemned Nestorius and deposed him from his dignity. But it is impossible to express what this heresiarch and his partisans did by their intrigues to prevent its execution. John, patriarch of Antioch, a friend of Nestorius, who had been taken from his clergy, arrived at the council four days after the sentence had been given. He was accompanied by the bishops of the East, that is, of Syria, of whom it was suspected that several held sentiments close to those of Nestorius. They complained that there had been too much haste in this judgment, and their passion carried them so far as to assemble a false synod in which they dared to depose Saint Cyril, and Mennon, bishop of Ephesus.

Count Candidien, whom Theodosius the Younger, then emperor, had sent to the council to maintain peace there, took the side of John of Antioch and his adherents, and by the false reports he made to the prince, who esteemed Nestorius, believing him a Catholic, he led him to annul what had been done against him. But three new legates, who arrived at that time on the part of the Pope, confirmed the sentence of the council by their subscriptions. Meanwhile the friends of the Orientals continued to act for themselves and for the cause of Nestorius. The court found itself divided, and Theodosius, who acted on the reports made to him, confounded the innocent with the guilty. He sent Count John to Ephesus to arrest at the same time Saint Cyril, Mennon and Nestorius. The first two were put into the hands of Candidien, and the prelates of the council were not permitted to leave the town. They were scorched by the burning heats of summer, and several died of it. Calumnies were published against them; they were loaded with insults and curses; and while the partisans of Nestorius had the freedom to send to the court whatever they wished, the Fathers of the council did not have the freedom to write, or else everything that came from them was intercepted by sea and by land. At last, to get their letters through, they were obliged to make use of a faithful man disguised as a beggar, who hid them in a thick cane that served him as a staff.

The affairs of religion were in this sad state at Ephesus, and the Fathers of the council made them known to Saint Dalmace, as also to the clergy and the abbots of Constantinople. Saint Dalmace, we say, answered them, assuring them of the efforts he was going to make to remedy it. For this he took a striking measure, which succeeded for him, and it is said that he was moved to it by a voice.

Theodosius was not rendering the council the justice he owed it, because he was deceived by the false accounts given him of it by the friends of Nestorius, while the true ones did not reach him. Then Saint Dalmace, who for forty-eight years had kept himself shut up in his monastery, and whom the emperor went to visit in his cell when he wished to see him, came out of it for the glory of God, accompanied by a part of his religious, who were joined by several others with their abbots; and all together, followed by a crowd of people, went in procession to the emperor’s palace, holding lighted candles in their hands and singing psalms. The emperor, hearing the singing, asked what it was: he was told that it was the abbot Dalmace coming to the palace with his religious. He was astonished at it and went out to meet him. His religious stopped outside the palace, and Dalmace entered it alone with the prince. He then presented to him the letters of the council, at which he was extremely surprised and even troubled, seeing that what they contained was quite different from what had been reported to him. He told him to have them read before everyone, so that each might be informed of the truth, and gave him to understand that he granted the council full liberty to send him deputies, and that he would use his authority to uphold what had been done there. Saint Dalmace, on leaving the audience, told all those who were waiting outside the palace for its result to go to the monastery of Saint Mocius, martyr; and there, having mounted the tribune, he read before everyone the letter of the council containing the true account of what had taken place in the judgment given against Nestorius, and declared all that the emperor had said to him on that subject for the support of the orthodox faith. He ended his report by assuring the people, as much out of prudence as out of humility, that if things had turned out so well, it must not be attributed to his persuasions or his prayers, but to the piety of the prince, who

made profession of following the faith of his ancestors; and he recommended them to pray for him. Then the people, who had already pronounced anathema against Nestorius, anathematised him anew. Saint Dalmace, Samson, Maximien and others of the clergy of Constantinople hastened to inform the council of all that had taken place, and begged it to give their church a pastor in place of Nestorius. Saint Dalmace styles himself in this letter priest, archimandrite and father of the monasteries, and humbly commends himself to the prayers of the council. This title is also given him in the answer which the bishops of that assembly sent him, which is very glorious to the memory of this Saint. “We have given thanks to God,” they say to him, “who raised you up to uphold the orthodox faith and to make known to the most pious emperors Theodosius and Valentinian, as also to the holy archimandrites, to all the beloved clergy and to the people, what pains and labours we have endured to preserve it; for you are the only one who has helped us; and so we lift up our hands to heaven with all our heart, and we pray the heavenly Father for the preservation of our most pious emperors and for Your Holiness.

“We exhort you to unite yourself ever more closely with us and to act in our name in all that concerns the faith; but you have no need for us to recommend it to you; for we are not unaware that God had made known to you the poison Nestorius had in his soul before he arrived at Constantinople.”

The Greeks give the Saint in their office the glorious title of Advocate of the Council of Ephesus, in memory of what we have just related. They say that the council made his monastery the head of all those of Constantinople. Pope Saint Celestine gives it the same prerogative in writing to the council, and confirms that the Saint had known by a heavenly light that, when Nestorius came to Constantinople, his soul was infected with error. Saint Dalmace was already very old at that time; it is believed that he was about eighty. Maximien, a religious and afterwards a priest of the clergy of Constantinople, was put in the place of Nestorius on 25 October in the year 431; but he held that see only two years, five months and nineteen days; for he died on 12 April in the year 434, and Saint Proclus succeeded him. It was under the episcopate of the latter that Saint Dalmace, after having governed his disciples and all the monasteries of the imperial city in holiness, went to gather in heaven the fruits of his holy works, about 440. His body was first carried solemnly to the great church, preceded by Bishop Proclus, all his clergy and the people, each carrying lighted candles and singing hymns and spiritual canticles. It was then carried back to his monastery, where it was buried. The history of his life asserts that from time to time a liquid flowed from his tomb, which served to heal the sick who had themselves anointed with it in faith.

Extracted from the *Vies des Pères des déserts d’Orient*, by the Rev. Father Michel-Ange Marin.

## Saint Euphrone, Bishop of Autun

*490. — Pope: Saint Felix III. — King of France: Clovis I.*

> *No one will come to the kingdom of heaven unless he walks in the path of right and justice.*
>
> *Saint Cyprian.*

Saint Euphrone appears to us in history as one of the most imposing authorities, one of the most brilliant lights of the Church of Gaul, one of the finest ornaments of the episcopate in the fifth century. From his youth the study of the divine Scriptures and of the holy Fathers was his most serious occupation and his dearest delight: he could not tear himself away from it. Formed early by the reading and assiduous meditation of those books which, nourishing at once the mind and the heart, are an inexhaustible source of virtues and of light, he was equally distinguished by the holiness of his life, by his learning, and by his zeal for the house of God and the beauty of worship, for the honour and virtue of the clergy, and for the regularity of discipline. Above all, an admirable prudence and a consummate wisdom were remarked in him: so he was consulted as one of the orators of that age.

While still a simple priest, and still young, he showed himself worthy of the episcopate to which Providence destined him, not only by the breadth of his ecclesiastical learning and the eminence of all the priestly virtues, but also by one of those works which at once reveal a man's worth. Saint Symphorien rested in a simple little chapel, the only monument erected until then to so great and so holy a renown. Euphrone, whose ideas were lofty and whose heart was as large as it was pious, believed that this was not enough for the Christian hero, the most brilliant glory of his native place and even of the Church of Gaul. Every time he went to pray in that dear and venerated, but too humble sanctuary, he said to himself: Do not the honour of the religion for which this young and valiant athlete fought, the honour also of the city that gave him birth, the good of souls and the edification of the numerous pilgrims all demand that we render to our glorious fellow-citizen and martyr a cult more worthy of him, and above all more worthy of the God who is pleased to glorify him? Let us honour him on earth in proportion, if it is possible, to the honours he receives in heaven, by adorning with holy magnificence the tomb in which rests the sacred body of this spotless victim immolated to the Lord. Symphorien enjoys all-powerful credit with the divine rewarder whose friend he is: let us raise under his name a temple to Him for whom he fought; let us display there the majesty of worship; let us establish near these relics a house of prayer where religious will unceasingly implore his brotherly protection and bring down upon us the graces of which Jesus Christ has made him the special dispenser to his fellow-citizens. Is not honouring the saints and martyrs also sowing on earth seeds of holiness, provoking to virtue by the compelling influence of example, awakening faith, inspiring Christian courage with generous impulses, and rekindling in the hearts of the faithful the fire of divine charity? Finally, is not the glory of the saints on earth the glory of the Church, the glory of God Himself?

Such was the object of his thoughts, or rather his constant preoccupation and his most ardent wish. For the rest, his decision was soon taken. Rich, but truly master and not slave of his riches, he knew how to use them nobly and holily; a priest, he regarded himself only as the administrator of his fortune, persuaded that Providence had given it to him so that it might be in his hands an instrument of good works. Full of these lofty ideas and penetrated with these sentiments, so beautiful and so Christian, he listened only to the inspiration of his priestly zeal; and soon, thanks to his pious munificence, there rose in honour of Saint Symphorien and under his name a superb basilica, in which was laid with great pomp the body of the glorious martyr, with those of Saint Fauste, his venerable father, and of Saint Augusta, his heroic mother, both worthy to share here below the honours of the religious cult rendered to their son, as they share his reward in heaven. Thus the precious remains of those who were our forefathers according to the faith, and the most radiant jewel in the crown of Christian Autun, received a brilliant and solemn testimony of the veneration they deserved. The faithful, seeing surrounded with holy magnificence and with all the splendours and pomps of the sacred liturgy a tomb which they venerated, which they loved as a family tomb, as a title of glory and protection, as a source of heavenly favours, blessed the worthy priest Euphrone and thanked God for being pleased always to give His Church examples of lofty virtue. — The architecture of this ancient basilica of Saint-Symphorien must have had a style and character analogous to those of the Roman monuments which then adorned the city, that is, elegance in grandeur. We should like to be able to describe it; but history contents itself with praising in general terms the majestic height of the holy building, which struck the eye from afar. The entrance was preceded by a superb narthex or portico. It was there that the tomb of Saint Symphorien was first placed; there that the numerous pilgrims coming from all sides to venerate the relics of the celebrated martyr, and the sick asking for their cure, took shelter.

Euphrone did not content himself with building this great church; he completed his work by establishing a numerous community of regular clerics to serve the basilica. This holy house became as it were a centre of light for the whole country and a sort of diocesan seminary in which the clergy were formed. Autun had an abbey properly so called. This great religious establishment, one of the oldest in Gaul, must therefore have its place in the history of the monastic Order, as in the history of the cult and posthumous glory of Saint Symphorien. Thus Euphrone had the double merit of raising over the tomb of our illustrious Saint a

magnificent temple to the God of martyrs and at the same time of maintaining there the holy psalmody; of favouring and developing there the regular discipline, ecclesiastical vocations and the clerical life; and of making evangelical perfection flourish there, in the shade of the vast and beautiful cloister he had just had built to gather and shelter the chosen souls who, finding the world too low for them and feeling ill at ease in it, aspire to climb higher and to live in a purer atmosphere. This remarkable monument of the holy priest's zeal and piety was like the confluence where the two great springs of monastic life at that time came to mingle: the rule of Saint Basil, arriving from Cappadocia, and that of Saint Anthony from Egypt. These two rules preceded all the others in these parts and formed the primitive code of the great monastery of Saint-Symphorien, where the cenobitic life and the solitary life were seen to unite and blend in a harmonious unity: activity in recollection for some; prayer and meditation in the secrecy of a cell for others; the practice of the evangelical counsels for all. This great work, so fruitful in the present and destined to be still more so in the future, is at last accomplished. It has brought more than ever into prominence the holy priest who had already drawn upon himself general esteem and veneration by his learning, his wisdom, his priestly virtues and the good use he made of his riches. So everyone designated him in advance for the episcopate; and when, many years afterwards, the see of Autun became vacant by the death of Léonce (about the year 460), he was proclaimed with one voice the successor of that holy prelate. His election only ratified a choice long settled by public opinion. He passed therefore from the government of the monastery of Saint-Symphorien, of which he was no doubt the first abbot, to the government of a great diocese. No one was so equal as he to so eminent a position. From then on his merit, placed on a loftier stage and finding a wider sphere in which to develop, shone with a still brighter lustre, radiated farther and could exercise a vast influence, which did not even stop at the limits of the church of Autun. Like Rhétice, one of his most illustrious predecessors, the new bishop became one of the lights and one of the finest ornaments of the Church of Gaul. Consulted from all sides, loved and appreciated everywhere, enjoying immense consideration, often in contact with the most illustrious persons of his time and with all the great prelates who were then the glory of the episcopate, he was involved in several important affairs and showed on every occasion that ecclesiastical learning, that wisdom, that zeal for divine worship and for holy discipline which he possessed in so remarkable a degree.

After having been the counsellor of Talasius of Angers regarding worship and discipline, and of Sidonius of Clermont in the choice of Saint Simplice as bishop of Bourges; after having been, with Saint Patient, the soul of a meeting of bishops which gave the people of Chalon a worthy pastor in the person of Saint Jean, Euphrone was further the light of the council of Arles (473), where twenty-nine bishops condemned the errors of the Predestinarians, who had thrown the churches of Provence into confusion. The august assembly had the consolation of seeing the priest Lucide, the promoter of this heresy, retract in these terms: "In conformity with the decree which the venerable council has just issued, I condemn with it this proposition: The action of divine grace is independent of the human will or of its cooperation." The Catholic dogma was set out in a letter drawn up by Fauste of Riez. Euphrone's signature is one of those to be read at the end of this fine monument of the faith of the episcopate of Gaul. He had gone to protest in the name of his Church against the false interpretations given by some rash men to the doctrine of Saint Augustine on grace. Thus this great bishop is found wherever there is question of a grave interest of discipline or of faith. Not content with having shown, as we have seen above, so much zeal and magnificence in honouring the relics and memory of Saint Symphorien, he also contributed by a pious liberality to the adornment of the tomb of Saint Martin at Tours: an admirable thought, thus to bear witness so publicly that the church of Autun loved to remember that this great Saint had honoured those parts with his presence, marked his passage by prodigies, evangelised the peoples and contributed powerfully to destroying the remains of idolatry.

Saint Euphrone died about the year 490, full of days, but above all of merits and of glory before God as before men; that is to say, he went to receive in heaven the reward of his virtues and his long labours. He was buried in the basilica, near the tomb of Saint Symphorien. He himself had chosen his last abode there; it was there that he wished to await in peace the day of the glorious resurrection, in the company and under the

protection of the young Saint, the object of his cult and his love. He rested in this basilica until 1803, when he was transferred to the cathedral of Autun.

Several churches were placed under the patronage of Saint Euphrone or even bore his name, one among others situated near Semur-en-Auxois, which was in the gift of the Chapter of the cathedral of Autun.

Extracted from *Saint Symphorien et son culte*, by the abbé Dinet.

## The Blessed Bennon, Canon of Strasbourg, Bishop of Metz, Solitary in Switzerland

*940. — Pope: Stephen VIII. — King of France: Louis IV.*

> *Saluti contraria est prosperitas mundi, sed adversilat eiproxima est.*
>
> *The prosperity of the world is contrary to salvation, but adversity is favourable to it.*
>
> *Hugo, cardinal.*

Bennon was a native of Swabia and, so it is claimed, a kinsman of Raoul, king of Burgundy. He had been named a canon of the cathedral; but, disgusted with the world, he renounced his benefice and left Strasbourg about the year 906 to seek a refuge in some solitude and serve God there. He arrived in Switzerland, a few leagues from Zurich, in a frightful wilderness where Saint Meinrad had laid, forty-three years before, the foundations of a monastery which had been abandoned since his death.

This solitude was then covered by a forest and did not produce even enough to provide for the upkeep of the pious hermit; but what is not a man capable of who wishes to live for God, and what obstacles could stop a soul detached from the world and sighing after the goods of eternity? Bennon tore from the ground a few herbs on which he fed, and when, later, disciples had come to join him to share his austerities, they cleared these wilds together and thus provided for their existence. Dead to the world and to himself, and inwardly penetrated with the baseness of his nothingness and the greatness of the divine goodness, he rose toward God with continual fervour; he regarded as a moment the five or six hours of prayer he made every morning, and when he came out of this exercise something extraordinary was noticed in his face. His faith was so lively that one would have said he penetrated the reality of the mysteries it teaches us; he would rather have seen himself stripped of everything in this world, and suffered even the cruellest death, than lose the precious treasure of the faith. This faith is no doubt the first gift God can give us; it is a supernatural light which He deigns to communicate to us to enlighten us and lead us to our last end: like that pillar of fire of which the divine Scriptures speak, which led the Israelites in the desert, faith dispels the darkness that hides from us the sight of the road we must take to reach eternal happiness; it is the root of the spiritual life, the basis of all true virtue and the principle of every meritorious action before God. “O faith,” Saint Ambrose said of old, “you are richer than all treasures, more estimable than all goods, more effective and more sovereign than all remedies.” But it is with this gift of God as with all the others: many persuade themselves that they possess it who have perhaps only its appearances.

Our faith must bear fruits of life, so as to merit one day eternal life. Such was the faith of Bennon in his humble solitude. His disciples imitated the fine examples he gave them and advanced with great strides in the way of perfection. The lord of the district gave them a piece of uncultivated land; they made the most advantageous use of it, rebuilt the ruined chapel and constructed some cells: such is the origin of the celebrated abbey of Notre-Dame-des-Ermites.

Bennon devoted part of his fortune to procuring the most necessary things for his community, and he was helped in his praiseworthy designs by Adalbéron, bishop of Basle, his kinsman, who gave him his estate of Sierentz in Upper Alsace, which the abbey of Einsiedlen kept until the end of the 14th century, when it gave it back to Burkard Münch of Landscron. Thus a numerous community formed around the holy man, which

followed no other rule than the exemplary life of Bennon, until later the rule of Saint Benedict was introduced there. The abbey of Seckingen gave the island of Uffnau, in the lake of Zurich, to Einsiedlen as a fief.

Bennon had left the world intending never to return to it; he had found in his wilderness ample compensation for all the sacrifices he had made, when the emperor Henry the Fowler came to tear him from it to raise him to the episcopal see of Metz. This prince, who had heard of Bennon's holiness and of the great qualities everyone admired in him, had seized Lorraine. Without regard for the right of election which the clergy and people of Metz enjoyed, he named Bennon to govern the Church of that city. The servant of God yielded only with difficulty to the emperor's proposal; the thought of procuring the glory of God in that eminent office could alone make him consent to it, and he left his monastery in 925. His disciples were inconsolable at this loss; but Bennon calmed their grief by giving them to understand that he would see them again one day.

The clergy and people of Metz had seen with singular discontent the infringement committed by their emperor against the rules established by the canons of the Church for the election of pastors, and some historians claim to find in it the origin of the disagreements that broke out almost at once. As for Bennon, he applied himself with the zeal of an apostle to healing the wounds of his Church; but an ungrateful and unteachable people is not easy to lead; the prejudices it nourished against him could not be overcome by the sight of the holy pontiff's virtues. Bennon opposed to the harshness shown him nothing but the gentleness and holiness of his life; night and day he sent up to the Lord sighs and burning prayers and asked Him for patience, to triumph over the rebellious hearts of his diocesans. In spite of the aversion his flock showed him, the virtuous prelate rose up forcefully against the vices that prevailed in his Church; this did not prevent some villains whom his zeal had angered from seizing him in 927 and putting out his eyes, afterwards mutilating him in a shameful manner. Bennon bore this act of cruelty with the courage of a martyr; although he knew his enemies, he would never denounce them to the emperor's justice in order to take vengeance on them; on the contrary, he asked pardon for them and interceded on their behalf. The council of Duisburg launched a sentence of excommunication against the authors of this outrage and had them punished according to the laws in use at that time. The blessed prelate, no longer regarding himself as fit to govern his diocese, and although the sound part of his flock tried to make amends for the crime of a few evildoers, renounced his bishopric and took the road back to his solitude. His former disciples received him with a kind of veneration and saw in him a martyr of his zeal; they hastened to lavish on him every possible consolation, so as to make him forget his misfortune. Bennon regarded this trial from heaven as a favour the Lord was doing him, since, in taking from him his bodily sight, they were procuring him the means of advancing still further on the road of virtue. His life was more than ever consecrated to acts of piety and works of mortification: for more than ten years he never ceased to give his religious the example of entire submission to the will of God. He could say, in the same spirit as the great Apostle of old: "Who shall ever separate me from the love of Jesus Christ? Crowns, riches, pleasures, I have trampled your charms underfoot; and you, tribulations, temptations of every kind, afflictions of body and mind, you cannot shake my constancy; and you, death, who seem so fearsome, I despise your blows; they do not frighten me, because I hope in One stronger than you, in Him who destroyed your empire and took your prey from you." Never did Bennon complain of the sad state to which he was reduced. His continual occupations were prayer and meditation; the religious often gathered around him to consult him on their advancement in perfection. The pious prelate was afflicted toward the end of his days with various infirmities which added still more to his sufferings; but in the midst of the sharpest pains he was often heard to utter these remarkable words: "Lord, increase my sufferings, but grant me patience." At last, after he had been for long years the model of every virtue, the Lord called him to a happier life on 3 August 940. Bennon had prepared himself for death as the saints prepare for it: the last days of his existence were nothing but a continual conversation with God. He gave up his soul amid his disciples, in the arms of his friend Eberhard, and was buried near the oratory of the holy

Virgin.

Extracted from the *Saints d'Alsace*, by the abbé Hunckler.

## The Blessed Geoffroy II de Loudon, Bishop of Le Mans and Confessor

*1255. — Pope: Alexander IV. — King of France: Saint Louis.*

> *Sic est volwtas Dei ut benefacientes obmuiescere faciatis irnprudentium hominum ignorantiam.*
>
> *It is the will of God that by your good deeds you should silence ignorant and foolish men.*
>
> *1 Petr., ii, 15.*

Twenty-six days after the death of Geoffroy de Laval, the chapter of Le Mans chose Geoffroy de Loudon to occupy the chair of Saint Julien, on 16 September 1234. The family of our Blessed was originally from Maine and took its name from a seigneurial estate in the parish of Parigné-l'Évêque (Sarthe), arrondissement and canton of Le Mans. Powerful in Maine from the year 1180, a branch of this family made its home at Trèves, a small town of Anjou set on the Loire, remarkable for its enchanting site and its fine crenellated tower, the remnant of an old castle. Our prelate's father, also named Geoffroy, held the barony of Trèves; and it was in that place, in the bosom of a pious family, that he was born who was destined to govern the Church of Le Mans. His mother was called Béatrix, his elder brother Foulques, and his younger brother was the knight Emery. He had a sister named Marguerite, who married the baron of Montsoreau, a powerful man in Anjou. A sister of his father, Hersende de Loudon, was married to Guillaume Morin, lord of Vaux and of Le Tronchet, in Maine. These names and alliances prove the rank this family held among the baronage of Maine and Anjou. It is not entirely extinct in that country. Our prelate's cradle was surrounded by the happiest influences. From his childhood care was taken to strengthen his intelligence by study. At fourteen, having already acquired an extensive knowledge of profane antiquity, he renounced the fictions of the poets and the works of the pagans in order to study only the holy Scriptures and the monuments of Christian tradition, from which he drew more useful and more abundant fruit. With profound learning Geoffroy united the virtues fitted to make him pleasing to God and to men: angelic purity, continual vigilance over all his senses, rigorous austerity toward himself, deep humility and entire probity—such were the characteristics that distinguished him. His youth, wholly given to learning and works of piety, soon shone out; and Bishop Maurice hastened to attach him to the church of Le Mans by conferring on him the first dignity after that of dean, that of cantor, and a prebend. From then on he began to enjoy considerable revenues, which he used only for the relief of the poor and the splendour of worship. Besides his benefices, he held the barony of Trèves, which he administered with a wisdom remarked by the historians.

Elected to govern the Church of Le Mans, Geoffroy de Loudon appeared humbler still than before, and all his virtues began to shine with a new lustre. The year of his election and the following one were marked by a terrible famine in the diocese of Le Mans. To relieve the misery of the needy, the clergy made heroic efforts and sold part of the ornaments of the sanctuary. The chapter distributed to the poor the price of a magnificent silver baldachin which the archdeacon Payen had bequeathed to the tomb of Saint Julien. As these sums still did not suffice for the needs, several canons proposed selling part of the ornaments of the head of Saint Julien; and their opinion was about to prevail; but the bishop gave a hundred and fifty livres tournois from his patrimony, and the canons sixty livres tournois from the fabric of the church; and so the precious reliquary was preserved for the city.

Geoffroy de Loudon applied himself with all his power to the maintenance or restoration of discipline, not only in his diocese but in the whole kingdom. Amid these unceasing occupations he still found time to give himself to works of charity. He was never found idle; he cherished contemplation as the food of the soul, and he was drawn by a powerful attraction to the study of the holy books. It was no doubt this assiduous reading that had made him one of the most eloquent preachers of his time. With this activity and zeal Geoffroy made

a great number of disciplinary regulations for the administration of the diocese; he confirmed the division of its territory into archdeaconries and obtained a bull from Gregory IX approving it. Several churches consecrated by Geoffroy de Loudon are mentioned, among others those of Ségrie and Vivoin. In 1247 the church of the priory of Sainte-Catherine at Laval was consecrated by Michel de Villoiseau, bishop of Angers, in the presence and with the consent of the bishop of Le Mans, who himself dedicated the altar of the crypt. In the month of June 1236, Marguerite, a noble lady of the family of Beaumont-le-Vicomte, widow of a prince of the house of Stuart, earl of Fife in Scotland, laid the foundations of a monastery of Carthusians in the parish of Saint-Denis-d'Orques. The place had been given to the pious widow the previous year by Raoul III de Beaumont, her uncle, for this foundation, and it was called the Parc-d'Orques; whence the charterhouse was named Notre-Dame du Parc-d'Orques. At Raoul's request the king Saint Louis authorised the foundation in 1236, and in the month of February of the following year Gregory IX issued (4 February 1237) a bull for the same purpose. From the first moments Geoffroy de Loudon had encouraged this establishment; so he learned with keen sorrow that the Carthusians were thinking of abandoning it, discouraged by the barrenness of the place and the insufficiency of their first revenues. He used all his means to keep these religious, and carried his sacrifices for them so far that he has always been regarded as the principal founder. He had a church built at his own expense more spacious than the first and in a more convenient situation; he raised cloisters, cells for the religious, various workshops and a great enclosure wall. He had water conduits made and, to give more healthiness to the country and more fertility to the land, he had several ponds dug, which have just been drained. To meet such considerable expenses without cutting anything from his accustomed good works, he found himself obliged to sell part of his patrimony. Besides this, he secured twenty livres of rent on the living of Marolles, tithes on the parishes of Meslay and Montabon, and several other spiritual and temporal benefits. Among other proofs of this prelate's solicitude for the monks, we shall note the care with which he guaranteed their privileges against the encroachments of the secular clergy. Several lords of the neighbourhood protested against the establishment of the new monastery on the usual pretext of their rights being injured; they disturbed the religious with the hunts they led near their cloister and harassed them in various ways: Geoffroy obtained a bull from Innocent IV to protect the persons and property of the disciples of Saint Bruno against all violence and usurpation. Hervé de Chaources was one of the lords whose noisy packs most often brought disturbance into the solitude of the Carthusians; on the representations of Geoffroy de Loudon he renounced his claims. Raoul de Thorigné-en-Charnie followed this example. Sparing no sacrifice to establish this pious community firmly, our prelate bought with his own money the adjacent lands which had furnished the pretext for these vexations. Having been called in 1232 by the monks of Évron to dedicate the church they had just built, on the very day of the solemnity he declared to the religious assembled in chapter that the Carthusians of the Parc were going to be forced to abandon their house for lack of sufficient revenues to subsist. The monks of Évron hastened to come to their help; they gave them in perpetuity the priory of Saint-Denis-d'Orques, with middle and low justice, reserving only the rights of suzerainty and patronage and a rent of eighteen livres. Through these unceasing efforts our pious bishop was able to dedicate the church of the Carthusians on the feast of Saint Denys in the year 1244, in the presence of a crowd of clerics, nobles and common people. He consecrated it in honour of the Saviour, Our Lady and Saint John the Baptist, and he blessed the cemetery in the month of September of the following year.

Toward the end of the year 1239 the bishop of Le Mans made the journey to Rome. He assisted the sovereign Pontiff at the solemn session in which the latter excommunicated the emperor Frederick II, on 28 March. In 1245 Geoffroy went to the council of Lyons, to which Innocent IV had summoned him. He attended all the sessions, among others the third, in which the whole council deposed the emperor Frederick II and declared his subjects released from their oath of fealty. He stopped some time at the abbey of Tournus, where he assisted the abbot Bérard in his last moments. A fresco in that church still represents him presiding at the funeral, accompanied by another bishop.

The monks of Évron were applying all their efforts to the completion of the splendid church they were raising to the glory of the Mother of God. This sacred building, one of the finest in the diocese of Le Mans after the cathedral, bears vividly imprinted the traces of the faith that inspired its builders. The perfect unity of the plan, the complete harmony of the details and the boldness of the execution have given the choir of the church of Évron a grandeur and beauty that many cathedral churches would envy. The dedication of this new sanctuary was carried out in the year 1252 by Geoffroy de Loudon, amid a great concourse and with the gathering of all the priors dependent on the abbey.

After thirty-seven years of continual labour, the choir of the cathedral church of Le Mans was at last finished (1254). Seeing this sublime work even today, it is easy to understand the enthusiasm that transported our forefathers, which the historians have depicted in such artless colours. The choir of Saint-Julien du Mans is the purest, most harmonious and most delightful product of the system of architecture that has the pointed arch for its generator. The whole diocese longed to see the inauguration of this magnificent temple, and Geoffroy de Loudon fixed it for the Monday after Low Sunday, a day already marked in the annals of the Church of Le Mans by two similar solemnities, under Hildebert in 1120 and under Guillaume de Passavant. As the building was still cluttered with debris and unused materials, at the bishop's call all the inhabitants of the city hastened to make it ready for the feast. The neighbouring bishops were invited to assemble for the solemnity. The multitude of people who had come not only from the whole diocese but even from the whole kingdom to witness the translation of the relics of Saint Julien, which were to be laid in the new part of the church, led the clergy to perform this ceremony during the night to prevent tumult. All the bishops were present; but Geoffroy reserved to himself the happiness of carrying the sacred bones himself from the place where they had previously rested to the altar where they were to remain exposed to the veneration of the faithful. During the fifteen days that the relics were exposed, the piety of the canons did not tire of keeping watch over them day and night; the inhabitants of the town asked the favour of sharing these vigils; the viscount of Beaumont, the lord of Montfort-le-Rotrou, the barons and the rest of the knighthood of the diocese vied for the honour of keeping guard every night. The abbeys and convents of the town and suburbs solemnly sang the vigils in turn, beginning at nightfall; then the canons celebrated their offices; so that the praises of God scarcely ceased for a moment to resound in the holy place. Geoffroy de Loudon did not set foot outside the town during all this time; every day he went to the church to attend the offices, make his prayers there and bring his offerings.

Geoffroy de Loudon took joy in the care of adorning the church of Saint-Julien; he had several stained-glass windows made at his expense, in which his arms are seen, and he bequeathed vestments of great price and precious books. He founded five anniversaries: for his mother, his sister and his two brothers, Foulques and the knight Eméry, and finally for himself. In order to give greater splendour to worship, he granted the chapter the church of Saint-Vincent des Prés. He secured to this body rights over the church of Ancinnes and united to it that of Sargé, which was vacant. Finally he also united to the chapter the church of Charné, which his predecessor had already wished to give to the canons; and these dispositions were respected after him. Geoffroy de Loudon also bequeathed to the cathedral a great quantity of vestments precious in material and workmanship. Among them many of silk are noted, several enriched with precious stones or oriental pearls. He gave five complete sets of pontificals, five mitres, a crosier, two silver basins weighing eight marks, several hangings in tapestry and silk with the arms of the king of France, and other objects of the same kind. To adorn the shrine of Saint Julien he gave seventeen gold rings set with stones of very great price; mention is even made of a sapphire the size of an ox's eye. Lastly he left to the cathedral several books remarkable for the beauty and richness of their ornaments and vignettes: an antiphonary, three graduals, a troper, an epistolary, a gospel-book, a missal and two ordinaries.

Extending his solicitude to all the interests entrusted to him, Geoffroy de Loudon put the affairs of the bishopric in the most regular order. He spent great sums in repairing, enlarging and rebuilding the castles of

Touvoye, Yvré-l'Évêque and others. He bought at Paris, with his own money, a vast and magnificent mansion on the hill of Sainte-Geneviève, and left it to the bishopric of Le Mans. At his death the various episcopal residences were found furnished with all suitable furniture, even approaching sumptuousness.

Of all Geoffroy de Loudon's benefits to his Church, perhaps the most signal was the establishment of the confraternity of Saint Julien and the pardons and indulgences he obtained from the Holy See. To stir up the piety of the faithful and bring them to contribute to the building and decoration of the cathedral church, Geoffroy formed an association of prayers and good works, which lasted until 1791 under the name of the Confraternity of Saint Julien. It was very numerous and was divided into three sections, the ecclesiastics, the laymen and the women, each comprising several subdivisions. They attended in their order the general processions and the particular solemnities of the confraternity. There was a fine, for the benefit of the fund, for anyone who happened wilfully to infringe certain points of the statutes. The indulgences with which the sovereign Pontiffs enriched it were very abundant. The first of whom a sure title is extant is Innocent IV, who in 1254 granted a hundred days of pardon and indulgence to those who should visit the church of Saint-Julien and make some alms there. In 1460 Pius II, in 1483 Sixtus IV, and above all Julius II, in the time of Cardinal Philippe de Luxembourg, granted more considerable favours to this association. At the same time as Geoffroy de Loudon was pursuing the establishment of this work, he had to sustain painful struggles with Count Charles I. The gentleness which was the salient trait of our prelate's character could not bend this lord, who raised several difficulties for him; the gravest of all concerned the oath of fealty which they wished to exact from the bishop. Geoffroy resisted courageously and showed himself inflexible. He left for Rome after the month of June 1255, in the hope of finding with the successor of Saint Peter the light and support he needed. He went to Anagni, where the Roman court was, and received a very favourable welcome from Alexander IV and the cardinals; but he could not conclude the affair that had brought him to the apostolic chair; for he was struck by so dangerous an illness that he succumbed in a short time, and was buried on the seventh day after his arrival, at Anagni, on 3 August in the year 1253. He had governed the diocese of Le Mans twenty-one years, ten months and some days.

## CULTE ET RELIQUES.

A magnificent funeral was held for him in the church of the Friars Minor at Anagni, where his remains stayed for a fairly long time. Later they were brought to France and buried in the church of the charterhouse of the Parc de Saint-Denys, as he had ordered. This sanctuary at once became the theatre of our holy bishop's miraculous power: the people went there in crowds to obtain the cure of their illnesses; and it has been observed that persons attacked by fever above all received relief there. When they could not go to the Charterhouse, they sent an undergarment which the religious made to touch either the tomb or a chalice which the Blessed had used and had given them; their prayers were almost always granted when they used this garment. The examples of these prodigies have been innumerable; one may even say that they have not ceased in our own time, since the inquiries made by Mgr J.-B. Bouvier have established recent facts. The monument of the blessed bishop was set in the wall on the left side of the choir. It was remade in the 15th century, as is shown by the tombstone which today serves as the retable of an altar in the church of Saint-Denis d'Orques. Four figures of angels, each with a book in hand, occupied the four corners of the monument. Two other angels above supported the escutcheon, which was repeated in several places. The tombstone, the arched monument under which it lay, the tympanum and the whole ensemble were adorned with paintings. On both sides tablets had been set containing prayers for the use of pilgrims. As early as the 16th century, Dom Pierre Cousturier, to whom learning and virtue assured a distinguished rank in his Order, affirmed that while he was governing the Charterhouse of the Parc as prior the concourse of pilgrims was so great that several times the religious debated whether they should not carry the holy relics out of their church to ensure the calm of their solitude.

The cult of our Blessed ceased in 1790 with the destruction of the religious Orders: some of his relics are still venerated in our day at Saint-Denis-du-Parc and at Loudun (Vienne).

Extracted from the *Histoire de l'Église du Mans*, by Dom Piolin. — Cf. *Acta Sanctorum, ad diem* iii *Augusti*.

## Saint Marane and Saint Cyre, Virgins, Recluses at Beroea in Syria

### (about 445).

Marane and Cyre were both born at Beroea in Syria; they belonged to noble parents and had been very well brought up. The world offered an attractive future to their eyes: but they despised its charms and pleasures to devote themselves entirely to the love of Jesus Christ. They bound themselves in an intimate friendship which ended only with death. Resolved to save themselves from the dangers of the world, and united with each other in the same thought and the same desire, they withdrew to a solitary place a little outside the town where they were born. They each took their maidservants with them, who would not leave their holy mistresses nor live apart from them. The two holy maidens, with the help of their companions, closed with stones and sand the approaches to the place where they wished to live far from all distraction, and they remained there, without house or shelter of any kind, exposed to the rigours of the sun, the rains and the winters, and to all the changes of weather and season. They had made in their enclosure wall a kind of window, through which they received their food and things of absolute necessity, and through which Marane spoke to the women who came to consult them and to be edified by their holy conversation. The two austere recluses were clad in a long veil or mantle, which covered not only their whole body but their face, feet and hands. They had loaded themselves with irons that crushed them: a collar, a girdle, bracelets and fetters. Cyre, who was the weaker, was so overwhelmed by them that she could scarcely straighten her poor body, bowed down under the burden. They had been leading this austere life for forty-two years when the pious Theodoret, bishop of Cyrrhus, came to visit them in his ascetic journeys; he begged them to put off their burden of iron for a moment during the conversation he had with them: which they did out of deference; but at his departure they at once took up the load again, sweet to the love that burned in them for their heavenly Spouse.

A charming gaiety and a wholly divine gladness animated these poor maidens, thus enclosed, exposed to all the injuries of the weather, living on a little poor and scanty food and a little clear water. Three times they passed a whole Lent without eating anything, in imitation of the Saviour, who nourished them with His burning charity. They left their refuge only once: it was to go on pilgrimage to the Holy Land; they made the road from Beroea to Jerusalem on foot without taking any food; they returned in the same way after satisfying their devotion, and shut themselves up within the enclosure of their wall, never to leave it again. They died holily on 3 August, about the year 445.

Extracted from *La Vie d'une Sainte pour chaque jour de l'année*, by the curé of Vite!.

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[1] See, in the life of Saint Paul on 29 June, some details on Saint Gamaliel. — Nicodemus was of the sect of the Pharisees and was reputed a doctor in Israel. He believed in Jesus Christ (*Joan.*, iii). From time to time he went to visit the Saviour, openly took His defence against the Pharisees (*Id.*, vii, 50), embalmed His body with rich perfumes and took charge of His funeral (*Id.*, xix, 39). Having been driven from the synagogue for having believed in Jesus Christ, he withdrew to Gamaliel's house in the country, where he died, as Saint Augustine assures us (*Hom.* cxx, *in Joan.*). — Abibas or Abibon was the younger of the sons of Gamaliel: he was baptised at the same time as his father, at the age of twenty. — Godescard and Baillet.

[2] At Agen, of which Saint Stephen is the principal patron, this feast is a double of the first class with an octave.

[3] Some details on Saint Lydia may be seen in the life of Saint Paul (29 June).

## 4 August

# Martyrologies

## MARTYROLOGE ROMAIN.

At Bologna in Romagna, Saint Dominic, confessor, founder of the Order of Friars Preachers, a most illustrious person for his holiness and his doctrine, who kept his virginity unstained until his death and merited by his great virtues to raise three dead persons to life. He stifled the heresies of his time by the power of his preaching, trained many persons in the religious virtues and the exercises of Christian piety, and at last fell peacefully asleep in Our Lord on the 6th of this month; but his feast is kept on this day by order of Pope Paul IV. 1221. — At Thessalonica, today Salonika, a city of Macedonia, Saint Aristarchus, disciple and inseparable companion of the apostle Saint Paul, who speaks of him in these terms in his Epistle to the Colossians: “Aristarchus, my fellow prisoner and companion in chains, greets you.” This Apostle having ordained him bishop of the Thessalonians, he sustained great combats and suffered cruel torments under the empire of Nero, after which, crowned by the hand of Jesus Christ, he found true peace. 1st century. — At Rome, on the Latin Way, Saint Tertullin, priest and martyr, who, after being cruelly bruised with blows of sticks, burned in the sides, struck on the mouth with stones, stretched on the rack and torn with thongs of ox-sinew, was condemned under the emperor Valerian to have his head cut off, and so finished the course of his martyrdom. 257. — At Constantinople, Saint Eleuthère, martyr, of senatorial rank, who was beheaded for Jesus Christ during the persecution of Maximian. 4th century. — In Persia, the holy martyrs Ia and her companions, who were put to death by various torments, with nine thousand Christians whom King Sapor held in captivity. 346. — At Cologne, Saint Protais, martyr. — At Tours, Saint Euphrone, bishop. 573. — At Rome, Saint Perpetua, who, having been baptised by Saint Peter, brought to the faith of Jesus Christ Nazaire her son and Africain her husband, and buried the bodies of many holy Martyrs. At last, laden with the merits of her good works, she passed from this world to a happier life. — At Verona, Saint Agabe or Agasse, bishop and confessor.

## MARTYROLOGE DE FRANCE, REVU ET AUGMENTÉ.

In the diocese of Lyons, commemoration of the translation of the body of Saint Just, bishop of that see and confessor, of whom we shall speak more fully on 2 September, which is the day of his feast. About 390. — In the country of Autun, Saint Sigrade, widow, mother of Saint Léger, honoured on this same day in the country of Soissons, whose life we shall give on 8 August. About 680. — In the North of France, Saint Abel, archbishop of Reims, abbot of the monastery of Lobbes, whose life we shall give on the following day. He has already been cited in the martyrology of France for 5 July. 751. — At Besançon, the holy martyrs Epiphane and Isidore, patrons of the metropolitan church of that city. Absolutely no circumstance of their life or death is known, but their cult is very ancient. Their notable relics, sent by Theodosius the Younger, were received with the arm of Saint Stephen about 446. Archbishop Célidoine had them enclosed in the altar of the chapel built under the choir of Saint-Jean; they were taken out of it in 1319 and laid provisionally in a fitting place while the shrine being prepared for them was awaited. The following year (1320) Archbishop Vital carried out their solemn translation, and they were enclosed in a silver shrine offered by the liberality of Jeanne, queen of France, daughter of Othon, count of Burgundy. It was inspected in 1640, in 1674 and in 1723. These relics disappeared during the Revolution of 1793[1]. — In the diocese of Le Mans, under the episcopate of Saint Principe (497–511), the holy martyrs Pérégrin, Machorat and Viventien, slain for having defended the virginity of Saint Flaminia, their sister, a young Spanish girl of great beauty whom the Franks had taken prisoner after the battle of Vouglé against Alaric, king of the Visigoths. Pérégrin had his throat cut; after Machorat had been gravely wounded, his life was spared. Viventien was killed in the depths of a very thick wood where he was working, and his body was thrown into a neighbouring spring, where it remained two months without corruption; after which it was honourably buried in a piece of ground not far from the spring, and an oratory was built over his tomb; this oratory was soon replaced by a more spacious church. In the 9th century his relics were transferred to the monastery of Saint-Laumer at Blois. The spring of

Saint-Viventien no longer exists: it was in the parish now called Saint-Vincent des Prés, formerly Saint-Viventien, a parish whose church is still under the patronage of this holy Martyr. The chapel dedicated under his invocation, which had never ceased to be frequented until the Revolution, has been turned into a barn. The feast of these Saints was removed from the Breviary of Le Mans in the edition of 1823[2]. 5th century. — At Tulle, Saint Baumade, also called Baumard, Baumez and Bommer, abbot in Maine. During the incursions of the Normans his relics were carried to Tulle, where he has been honoured as patron. About 540. — At Auxerre, Saint Morin, also called Marin and Maurin, bishop of that see and confessor, whose cult is very doubtful. 9th century.

## MARTYROLOGES DES ORDRES RELIGIEUX.

Martyrology of the Canons Regular. — At Bologna, a fortified city of Italy, in Romagna, Saint Dominic, confessor, first a Canon Regular at Osma (*Uxama*), a town of Spain in the intendancy of Soria (Old Castile), then Founder of the Order of Friars Preachers, an illustrious person, etc. 1221.

Martyrology of the Camaldolese. — At Spalatro, a city and port of the Austrian States (Dalmatia), Saint Reinier, archbishop of that see and martyr, a monk of our monastery of Santa Croce of Fonte Avellana, first bishop of Cagli, then transferred to the metropolitan church of Spalatro; he was crushed under stones by the Slavs for having defended the property of his church[3]. 1180.

Martyrology of the Friars Preachers. — At Bologna, Saint Dominic, confessor, founder of the Order of Friars Preachers, an illustrious person, etc. 1221.

Martyrology of the three Orders of Saint Francis. — At Bologna, the deposition of Saint Dominic, confessor, founder of the Order of Friars Preachers, most illustrious for his holiness and his doctrine, whom divine Providence associated by a bond of perpetual kinship with our Father Saint Francis for the glory of the Catholic Church. He died on 6 August and was inscribed in the calendar of the Saints by the sovereign pontiff Gregory IX. 1221.

## ADDITIONS FAITES D'APRÈS LES BOLLANDISTES ET AUTRES HAGIOGRAPHES.

In the diocese of Naples, Saint Dominic de Gusman, confessor and founder of the Order of Friars Preachers, named in the Roman martyrology for this day, and patron of the whole kingdom. 1221. — In the same diocese, the Blessed Réginald of Saint-Gilles, confessor, of the Order of Friars Preachers, whose acts we have related in the life of Saint Dominic, on this day. 13th century. — In Ireland, Saint Lugil, also called Luan, Lua, Lugaidth and Molua, abbot. He was brought up at Benchor under Saint Comgall. Saint Bernard says that he founded a hundred monasteries in Ireland. The most celebrated of all was the one called Cluain-Fearta-Molua (in Irish *Cluain* means cave, and *Fearta* miracles), which was in the county of Leinster, on the borders of those of Ossory and Quéen. The Saint ordered his religious to keep silence and to live in perpetual recollection. His rule was long followed in

Ireland. 622. — At Pesaro (*Pisaurum*), a fortified town of Italy, chief town of the former Roman delegation of Urbino and Pesaro, the Blessed François or Cicco of Pesaro, confessor, of the Third Order of Saint Francis. The canons of the cathedral of Pesaro have solicited from the sacred Congregation of Rites the confirmation of the cult long given to their illustrious fellow citizen. The decree was issued at Rome on 31 March 1859[4]. 14th century. — At Rome, the holy martyrs Crescentien, Juste, and Sachinte or Jachinte, cited by Saint Jerome without further detail. — At Nicomedia, today Isnikmid, a town of Bithynia on the Propontis, the holy martyrs Serge and Barthélemy, cited by the same. — At Tarsus, today Tarsous, a city of Asia Minor, capital of Cilicia, Saint Eleuthère, martyr, cited in the Roman martyrology for this day. 4th century. — In Persia, Saint Eudocie, martyr. A Roman by birth, she was brought into Persia by the soldiers of Sapor II, posthumous son of Hormisdas II (310–380), after the war the king of Persia waged against Julian

and Jovian, Roman emperors. The acts of Saint Eudocie so closely resemble those of Saint Ia, named in the Roman martyrology for this day, that many hagiographers and martyrologies have confused them; the Bollandists, however, think that they must be distinguished. 4th century.

## Saint Dominic de Gusman, Confessor, Founder of the Order of Friars Preachers

*1170–1221. — Popes: Alexander III; Honorius III. — Sovereigns of Castile: Sancho III and Ferdinand II; Ferdinand III.*

> *Quis putas puer iste erit?*
>
> *Luke i, 66.*
>
> *Dominicus et Franciscus, ceu gemina Ecclesist sidéra. Dominici lahia visa sunt ad instar alvearis et faoi mellis.*
>
> *Dominic and Francis of Assisi, these are the two most brilliant stars of the Church. The so pure lips of Dominic have distilled a precious honey for her.*
>
> *Lobbetius, de S. Dominico.*

Here is an admirable man whom God caused to be born after the middle of the 12th century to be, by himself and by his religious, the light of the world, the pillar of the Church, the support of the Christian religion, the reformer of morals, the scourge of heretics, the ruin of idolatry and of all the sects of the infidels, and the wall of bronze which the apostolic Holy See has always set against all its enemies. We are all the more obliged to give his life exactly, because there are few persons among the faithful who do not have a close connection with him, either through having embraced one of the three Orders of which he is the father and head, or through belonging to the confraternity of the holy Rosary, which recognises him as its author.

He appeared on earth in the time of the pontificate of Alexander III and of the empire of Frederick I, surnamed Barbarossa, in the year 1170, at which time Saint Thomas, archbishop of Canterbury, was slain in England for upholding the rights and immunities of the Church; as if God, in calling to Himself that powerful defender of His Spouse, had wished to recompense her a hundredfold for so great a loss by giving her this holy patriarch, who was to form whole armies of preachers and martyrs for her. The place of his birth was Calahorra, a town of Old Castile. His father was Don Félix de Gusman, of the illustrious family of the Gusmans, which drew its origin from the dukes of Brittany and which in the course of the centuries has become allied through its daughters to the kings of Spain and Portugal. The Spanish authors say that his mother was called Jeanne d'Aza and that she was of the family of the knights of Aza, whose fine deeds have made them notable in the history of their country. But Father Jean de Sainte-Marie, following the Blessed Alain de la Roche, tells us that she was called Jeanne de Bretagne and that she was the daughter of a count of Brittany with whom Félix de Gusman wished to ally himself as being descended, through his ancestors, from the same stock. It may be, nevertheless, that she had acquired by her dowry the lordship of Aza, which is not far from Gusman and Calahorra, and that she had taken from it the surname of Aza. She was a lady of singular virtue, and on the magnificent tomb built for her in the convent of the Friars Preachers of Pennafiel, to which her body was transferred in the year 1318, she is called Saint Jeanne, wife of Don Félix de Gusman and mother of Saint Dominic.

This holy child was not the only fruit of the chaste marriage of these illustrious persons: they had two more sons, older than he. The first was Don Antoine de Gusman, who became a priest and, having distributed all his goods to the poor, withdrew into a hospital to serve Jesus Christ there in His suffering members; he attained an eminent holiness. It is even said that he worked several miracles after his death, which keep him still alive in men's memory and are striking marks of the glory he possesses in heaven. The second was Mannes de Gusman, who, after the establishment of the Order of Friars Preachers, wished to be received into it and spent his life there, with much praise, in the exercises of a holy preacher and a perfect religious. As for

our Saint, who was only the third, God made known before his birth that he would be an extraordinary man from whom all Christendom would draw signal services. His mother, while still carrying him in her womb, wished to make a novena in the church of Saint Dominic of Silos for her happy delivery. On the seventh day of her devotion that blessed abbot appeared to her in his religious habit, but in a wholly heavenly splendour, and assured her that she bore in her womb a child who by his holiness and his doctrine would be the light of the world and the consolation of the whole Church. Another time it seemed to her that she had in her womb a little dog holding a torch in its mouth, and that after it was born it set fire to the whole earth. This was a symbol signifying that her son would cry out and, so to speak, bark continually against vice; that he would enlighten all kingdoms by the purity of his light, and that he would kindle the fire of charity in an infinity of hearts.

He was called Dominic in baptism, in honour of that glorious Confessor who had made such happy predictions to his mother. The baptismal font in which he was regenerated still exists, and Philip III, king of Spain, in the year 1601, had it carried from Calahorra to Valladolid to have the same sacrament conferred there on his son, the infante of Spain, whom he had named Philippe-Dominique-Victor and who succeeded him, and on his daughter Anne of Austria, afterwards wife of Louis XIII and mother of Louis XIV, called the Great. There were further presages, after the birth of this admirable child, of what he was one day to be; for his godmother, a lady of rank and very virtuous, had a mysterious dream in which she saw on his forehead a star so brilliant that it surpassed in light all the stars in the sky and spread its rays over the whole earth; and while he was still in the cradle a swarm of bees was seen fluttering around his face, seeming to wish to make a hive of his mouth, as the pagans relate of Pindar, of Plato and of Hiero, king of Sicily, and as ecclesiastical History tells us far more surely of the great doctor Saint Ambrose, whose eloquence was also sweeter and more pleasing than honey. It is said further that one day, when his mother had taken him to Mass at the monastery of Saint Dominic of Silos, the priest celebrating the sacrifice, instead of saying *Dominus vobiscum*, turned toward the child and repeated three times: *Ecce Reformator Ecclesix*; “behold him who will reform the morals of the faithful.” He did this without thinking of it and by a supernatural impulse, which changed the words he meant to say into this oracle of heaven.

The event soon verified such marvellous presages. Dominic had almost nothing of childhood but bodily smallness and helplessness. His mind opened in a short time, and so happily that one saw in him even then the presence of mind and maturity of an old man. He was always modest, reserved, humble, devout, temperate and obedient. He was not yet out of the care of a nurse when he began to practise mortifications which the most fervent persons would find it hard to undertake at an advanced age; for he rose at night unknown to anyone to make his prayer, and afterwards lay down only on the floor, without straw mattress or blanket. When he was of an age to learn letters, his parents gave him to one of his uncles, who was archpriest of the church of Gumiel d’Yzan and who took care to instruct him, and have him instructed, very thoroughly. The holy child’s exercises, outside the time of his study, were the same as those of his master; for he went assiduously to the divine offices, where he sang with admirable fervour and devotion; he also gave himself to mental prayer, in which he received very special lights and consolations. We read even in the Blessed Alain that from that time the holy Virgin visited him and taught him the excellent devotion of the Rosary, which he afterwards spread through the whole world and which has been a source of spiritual and temporal graces and blessings for all the faithful. Other authors, however, place this apparition later, and some put it back to the time when our Saint was fighting for the faith against the Albigensians; but it may be that Our Lady appeared to him several times to instruct him in this devotion and that, having shown him only a few points of it in his childhood, she afterwards revealed its secrets and mysteries to him more clearly, as we shall explain exactly on 1 October, when we shall give an entire article on the institution of the holy Rosary.

At the age of fourteen his parents sent him to the University of Palencia. There he made rapid progress in rhetoric, philosophy and theology; he also acquired a perfect knowledge of Scripture and the Fathers. He

spent about six years in these studies, but without relaxing anything of his exercises of piety. He had his hours marked out each day for prayer; he failed in them much less than in taking the sleep and meals necessary to sustain his body; and Saint Antoninus assures us that he never approached God, who is an abyss of mercy and goodness, without being at once rapt out of himself and receiving some extraordinary grace. He fasted almost always, never drank wine, slept very little, and had no other bed than the floor of his room. He also kept a continual solitude, knowing almost no other road in Palencia than that to the church and that to the public schools. He avoided bad company and visits; in a word, everything that can harm the virtue of chastity; and as his tenderness for the holy Virgin grew more and more in his heart, he was wonderfully exact in reciting several Rosaries every day in her honour, and put such recollection into it that this vocal prayer was well worth the meditations and mental prayers of many contemplative souls.

He had even then so much compassion for afflicted persons that, if he could not relieve them, he wept bitterly over their misery. During a furious famine which was depopulating almost all of Europe in the year 1191, he was not content to give all the money he had, but also sold all his furniture and even all his books, that is, what he had that was most precious, to assist the poor; his example led the richest people of Palencia to open their hearts, their granaries, their coffers and their hands to an infinity of unfortunates whom poverty was putting in danger of dying of hunger. He did the same thing again afterwards on another occasion. This charity drew to him all sorts of needy people asking him for help: a poor woman begged him, with tears in her eyes, to give her some alms to ransom her brother from the hands of the Moors, who had made him a slave. Dominic had then given everything, and nothing remained to him with which he could help her in this extremity; but charity is at once ingenious and heroic; he said to this woman: “I have neither gold nor silver; do not grieve, however; I know how to work. Offer me to the Moors in exchange for your brother; I wish to be a slave in his place.” She, astonished at such a proposal, did not dare accept it; but Dominic had nonetheless the merit of charity before God.

Dominic had no less compassion for the spiritual ills of his neighbour. From his youth he practised very harsh penances and devoted himself to the rigours of divine justice for the conversion of sinners. His body being unable to bear the weight of so many austerities, he fell dangerously ill, and he would have been in evident peril of death if Saint James the Greater, who appeared to him in that extremity, had not restored to him a health which he employed with an entirely new courage for the salvation of souls. He did not content himself with working for it in secret by his mortifications and prayers; but as God had given him a powerful eloquence, he used it to bring minds back to piety and Christian perfection. Among those he converted at that time is noted a young prince who had studied with him; persuaded by Dominic’s exhortations of the vanity of the world and of the happiness found in the service of God, he renounced all the pleasures and honours his birth promised him to enter the Order of Cîteaux, where he was afterwards elected abbot, and from there was raised to the eminent dignity of cardinal. It is said that this was Conrad Eginon, made cardinal and bishop of Porto. People were already eager to hear him. He was consulted from all sides on the thorniest affairs, so great was the confidence in his learning and his probity. Those who had to choose a state of life asked his advice on that choice, on which earthly future and temporal destiny often depend. Those who groaned under the weight of their vices addressed themselves to him as to an excellent physician and begged him to show them the remedies. Finally, those who had difficulties in theology, in cases of conscience or in understanding the sacred writings had recourse to his lights and deferred to his decisions as if he had been the oracle of the University of Palencia, where he gave public lessons on holy Scripture.

The bishop of Osma, Martin de Bazan, having converted the Canons of his cathedral into Canons Regular, resolved to attach the young Dominic to it, since he belonged to that diocese. He entrusted this affair to Don Diego de Azévédo, prior of the reformed chapter. Our Saint received this proposal as an order from heaven; he went to Osma, to his prelate, where he took the religious habit at the age of twenty-five.

He regarded as nothing all that he had done until then; and, fixing his eyes, like Saint Paul, on what remained for him to do, he undertook with new courage to fight against himself and to acquire the Christian and religious virtues. He prolonged his vigils and prayers, increased his fasts and his other bodily mortifications, and from then on prescribed for himself the rule of taking the discipline three times each night with iron chains. He renewed in his person the austere and penitential life of the ancient Fathers of Egypt and the Thebaid, whose examples and maxims he meditated in the conferences of the abbot

Cassian. Yet his austerities did not prevent him from working for the conversion of sinners and the great work of the salvation of souls. The fruits of his preaching were very abundant. He strengthened the Catholics, confounded the infidels and even converted many heretical Moors. At last he acquired such a reputation as an apostolic man that vacant Churches wanted him for their bishop, and in fact a bishopric suffragan to Compostela was offered him. But he answered even then what he often answered afterwards: “God had not sent him to be a bishop, but to preach”; *non me misit Dominus episcopare, sed prædicare*. For the rest, he worked all these marvels principally by preaching the holy Rosary, whose mysteries he explained and which he counselled everyone to recite with attention and fervour.

When he had returned from this great mission, his prelate ordained him priest and made him subprior of his new Congregation. This was in reality the first office, since the bishop was prior. But as this good pastor recognised that Dominic was called by God to evangelical labours, he did not wish to shut up such a light in a cloister. He sent him first to Palencia, where he had studied, to teach theology there. It was then a considerable University, with many students both from the country and from abroad; but it has since been transferred to Salamanca. Dominic won admiration there by the depth of his doctrine and the penetration of his mind. His discourses of piety had no less success. It is said that it was at this time that, by the power of the Rosary which he preached, a girl named Alexandre, who recited it assiduously and who was cruelly murdered without the means of confessing, rose again five months later to receive that sacrament from him. The bishop of Osma then allowed him to make a second mission. He went along the coasts of Galicia with another religious of his Congregation named Brother Bernard, stirring up everyone to devotion to Our Lady, so as to merit the grace and mercy of her Son. One day when he was preaching on the seashore, Turkish pirates seized him and took him prisoner. But scarcely was he on their ship when a furious storm broke out: the corsairs are afraid; they call on the true God, abjure Mahometanism, and Saint Dominic at once calms the angry sea. The ship came to land at a port of Brittany, where, after their baptism, he established the Confraternity of the Rosary for them; he then carried it to Vannes, where he went to visit the duke of Brittany, who was his near kinsman. The fruit he bore in that country by his preaching was so great that he could not suffice to hear the general confessions. An infinity of persons wished to receive Communion from his hand, and the bishopric of Dol being vacant, great efforts were made to get him to accept it. He refused it generously, saying as before “that he had not been sent to be a bishop, but to preach.” The duke wished at least to keep him in his States, and even forbade all his subjects to let him leave; but the holy Virgin carried him away from there and brought him safely to the town of Osma, to his bishop, to continue there his exercises as an apostolic preacher.

It was then that this great man preached more openly in Castile and Aragon the devotion which that Queen of the angels had taught him, and established its Confraternity on all sides. Almost incredible prodigies and quite surprising conversions are related which he worked by this means: thus were converted Alphonso, eighth or ninth king of Castile, who, through assiduity in saying his Rosary holily, entirely changed his life and conduct, became a very good prince, won a signal victory over the Miramolin, who had seized his States, defeated more than two hundred thousand of his men in a single battle, and returned to the peaceful possession of his kingdom; another Alphonso, king of León and Galicia, who escaped the eternal damnation his crimes had merited by promising to say his Rosary devoutly every day; and many others like them, which the reader will find in the Annals and full Histories of the Order of Saint Dominic.

Meanwhile this same king of Castile of whom we have just spoken, father of Blanche, afterwards queen of France and mother of Saint Louis, named Don Diego de Azévédo, who had become bishop of Osma in 1201, as ambassador to France, to negotiate there the marriage of Prince Ferdinand, his son, with the princess of Lusignan, daughter of Hugues le Brun, count of La Marche in Limousin[1]. The bishop wished Dominic to accompany him. They left Castile together therefore and, taking their road through the kingdom of Aragon and the towns of Perpignan and Narbonne, they arrived in Languedoc and the neighbourhood of Toulouse, where they saw with sorrow the strange ravages the Albigensian heretics were causing there. It even happened, by an admirable disposition of divine Providence, that they lodged with a man infected with this heresy; but Saint Dominic, having entered into discussion with him, set before him with such zeal and force the falsity of his dogmas and the impiety of his practices that that very night he drew him out of his blindness and brought him back into the bosom of the Church; so that, as Vincent of Beauvais remarks, he could address to him these words of Ecclesiasticus: *Hospitio mihi factus es frater*; "by the hospitality you have given me, you have become my brother." These were the first-fruits of the inestimable fruits which this holy Patriarch was soon to produce in that province by the entire reduction of these same Albigensians. Our illustrious ambassadors' journey was successful. They found the count of La Marche in his castle of Gace; they made him the king of Castile's proposal and obtained from him what that king desired for the alliance of Ferdinand his son with the princess his daughter. After such good words they returned to Spain to inform Alphonso of it, who, wishing to conclude the matter, sent them back with a great suite and a magnificent train to bring the future bride of Ferdinand. They came back to France therefore for this purpose; but they were much surprised, when they arrived in the country of La Marche, to learn of the death of this young princess and to find her covered with a funeral pall instead of the precious garments that were being prepared for her for the ceremony of her wedding. They recognised in this more than ever the vanity of human greatness, and, having sent back to Spain the train they had brought, they resolved to go together to Rome to obtain from the Pope permission to go and preach the truths of the Gospel to the Cumans, a northern people still idolatrous, or else to stay in Languedoc to combat there, with the other missionaries, the abominable errors of the Albigensians. It is said that before leaving France they made a journey to Paris to visit the pious Blanche, daughter of their king, married to Louis VIII, who was then still only heir presumptive to the crown, and that Saint Dominic counselled this princess to recite the Rosary assiduously, so as to make herself worthy to give France a wise, devout and generous prince, such as her son Saint Louis was, the greatest monarch who ever wore the crown of the fleurs-de-lis.

When our holy travellers had arrived in Rome, the pious bishop earnestly begged Pope Innocent III to relieve him of his bishopric, so that he might be freer to work for the reduction of infidels and heretics. But the Pope, who knew his merits, took care not to deprive the Church of so worthy a pastor; he only allowed him to remain two years in Languedoc to exercise his zeal there against the Albigensians, with the three legates he had already sent there, who were Don Arnauld, sixteenth abbot of Cîteaux; Don Pierre de Castelnau, a religious of Froidefond; and Don Rodolphe, also a religious of that abbey. With this permission he took the road back to France, still accompanied by Saint Dominic, and before engaging in this glorious mission he visited the abbey of Cîteaux, whose holiness was the good odour of Jesus Christ for the whole world. He stayed there three days and even took the habit of that holy Order out of devotion, imitating in this Saint Thomas of Canterbury and many other prelates who had clothed themselves in that precious livery so as to have a share in the merits of so holy a house. Some authors write that Saint Dominic did the same: which we find likely, since he was too zealous not to imitate his prelate in a practice of piety which was in no way repugnant to his state. These holy persons went from there to Montpellier, where the legates of the Holy See had assembled. They had already laboured much for the reduction of the heretics; but the little progress they had made led them to look for more effective means than those they had used until then. Dominic had recourse to prayer for this; and God made known to him that the true means of overcoming the heretics was to adopt an apostolic form of life, making their journeys on foot, without train, without money, without

servants, without provisions, and in perfect abandonment to the care of divine Providence, so as to preach by example rather than by words, and by this conduct to confound the hypocrisy of some of these heretics who, calling themselves the perfect, made profession of great poverty and extreme abstinence. The Saint, having received this light, communicated it to his bishop, and this prelate proposed it in the Synod in the presence of the legates. At first they found difficulty in it, fearing that the Catholics would be scared off at seeing their prelates and their missionaries in a state so stripped of all temporal comforts. But the bishop and Dominic encouraged them and offered to begin this kind of life themselves. They therefore sent back to Spain all the train and furniture they had and set about preaching, as apostles, the Christian truths against the impostures of the heretics. The other missionaries followed their example and absolutely insisted that the bishop be head of the mission; God blessed their labours so marvellously that they made more conquests in a day than they had previously made in several months. They preached at Garaman, a town near Toulouse. The people were so touched by their discourses that, recognising the truth, they drove from their walls the two principal heretics of the country, called Baldwin and Thierry. The abbot of Cîteaux was not then with them, having been obliged to make a journey to his abbey to preside there over his general Chapter. The Blessed Pierre de Castelnau was also forced to take some rest because of the ill-treatment he had received from the enemies of the Church. Thus the mission now consisted only of the holy bishop, Rodolphe and Dominic. The heretics opposed to them books full of impostures, blasphemies and invectives against God and against the Saints, which they repeated again in several public discussions. Dominic answered them by word of mouth and in writing, but with such force and clarity that these seducers saw themselves unable to reply. They asked for his writing in order to examine it privately, promising to yield if they found it sufficiently supported. The Saint gave it to them, well knowing that truth would always be invincible. They read it together, examined it with all the malice the spirit of heresy suggested to them, and strove to find answers to it; but the arguments that supported it seemed to them so strong and so convincing that they did not think they could destroy them. In this perplexity one of the company said that it should be thrown into the fire, and that if it did not burn, it was a sign that the contrary doctrine was the better and the more tenable. All agreed to this opinion, and at once they flung Dominic’s writing into the midst of the flames: it remained there some time without burning; but God, wishing to increase the miracle, the flames cast it out of their bosom without having done it any damage. This miracle did not soften these hardened men: they took up this marvellous book again and threw it a second time into the spot where the blaze seemed most ardent; but in vain: it came out with the same integrity as before. They took it up a third time and plunged it again into the fire; but this was only to their greater confusion. For, as if it had been of a heavenly substance, it was neither consumed, nor even scorched or heated by that element. All this, however, was useless to convert them, and their only resolution was to keep secret these prodigies of which they alone were witnesses. Yet there was a soldier of the company who recognised his error; and, wishing to be reconciled with the Church, came to inform the holy missionaries of what had happened. This is how Pierre des Vaux-de-Cernay relates it in his History of the Albigensians, where he says that this happened at Montréal.

Meanwhile our holy missionaries still continued their apostolic journeys and won signal victories over their adversaries on all sides. Being one day at Fangeaux, between Toulouse and Carcassonne, Saint Dominic disputed publicly against one of these sectaries and pressed him so hard that he saw himself unable to answer. Those of his party, who no doubt did not know what had happened at Montréal, said that their doctrine consisted not in words but in deeds, that the papers of the two disputants should be thrown into the fire, and that he whose writings did not burn would be held to be the preacher of the truth. Saint Dominic, inspired by God and full of confidence in His goodness, accepted this offer in the name of all the Catholics. A numerous assembly of both parties gathered, judges were appointed, a great fire was lit; the heretic’s writings were thrown into it and in a moment they were consumed, without a page or a line of them remaining. Dominic’s writings were also thrown in, not only once but three different times; but each time the flames gave them back safe and sound without having dared to touch them. The place of so celebrated a

dispute and so signal a miracle was afterwards turned into a convent of Friars Preachers, and a beam was preserved there onto which Saint Dominic's book flew three times as it came out of the flames, with the shape of it that was miraculously imprinted on it in three different places.

So signal a victory raising the courage of this great man, he undertook to rescue a number of young girls whom their parents, who had not the means to feed them because of the great dearth in the country and the ruin of their farms and castles, had placed in the hands of the richest heretics, to the great danger of their faith and of their eternal salvation. The Saint, says Saint Antoninus, wished to be sold himself, so that the price of his sale might serve to preserve them from so great a misfortune; but God was content with the inclinations of so heroic a charity and gave him the means, through the alms of Don Bernard, archbishop of Narbonne, of Foulques, bishop of Toulouse, and of some other Catholic lords, to found for them the great and celebrated monastery of Prouille, near Fangeaux, where he gathered a number of these girls, prescribing for them very wise constitutions for living in enclosure, retirement and regularity. This priory is the first of his Order, and has been the source of many others illustrious for regular observance and holiness. This foundation is placed in the year 1207.

In that same year our apostolic band was increased by the return of Don Arnauld, abbot of Cîteaux, legate of the Holy See, who brought with him twelve abbots of his Order, firmly resolved to combat heresy by leading the evangelical life which the others were already practising. The bishop of Osma, whom they all recognised as their head, distributed them among various districts of Languedoc and of the county of Toulouse, so as to combat heresy in several places at once and to help on all sides the souls who were wavering in the faith or who, having left the bosom of the Church, wished to return to it. Meanwhile the two years granted by the Pope to the holy prelate for combating the heretics having run out, he thought himself obliged to make a journey to his diocese, intending nevertheless to return soon to the charge with the permission of the Holy See. Passing through Pamiers, where he was received like a true apostle by the bishops of Toulouse and Conserans and by a great number of abbots and clerics, he won a most signal victory over the Waldensians and the Albigensians, who were very powerful there; for the Catholics and the heretics having agreed on a public disputation, for which a judge who favoured the heresy was named, this generous Confessor spoke with such force and eloquence for the truth of the Catholic religion that he struck the heretics dumb, disarmed them entirely, and even converted the judge, who had resolved to favour his adversaries. He left France with this great triumph and in a short time reached his church of Osma; but while he was preparing for a new war in defence of the Church, and was even collecting alms to make a stable and perpetual establishment of missionaries in the places infected with the poison of heresy and for the support of the monastery of Prouille, God told him that it was enough and invited him to enjoy the rest he had merited by so many labours and conquests. He died in the same year (1207) and was buried in his cathedral, to the left of the high altar. His whole diocese, as well as the company of missionaries, bitterly wept his death; but God consoled them marvellously by declaring his holiness through great miracles.

A short time after the death of this great Prelate, the abbot of Cîteaux found himself forced to take the road back to his abbey to see to the affairs of his Order. The blessed Pierre de Castelnau was massacred by the heretics. Don Rodolphe had also withdrawn a little before to the abbey of Franquevaux and had died there, worn out by the fatigues of the mission. These misfortunes discouraged the twelve abbots who had newly arrived and made them think that they would gain nothing over the Albigensians and that they would render more service to God by taking up again the care of their monasteries; so they went back, and the whole weight of the mission fell on Dominic. This marvellous man did not lose courage: strengthened on one side by a wholly extraordinary grace which Saint Lutgard had merited for him by a fast of seven years, and on the other by seven or eight good workers who placed themselves under his direction and perfectly took on his spirit, he began all over again to combat the heretics and to pursue them in all the places where they had entrenched themselves. The desire of martyrdom made him go freely everywhere, running barefoot, without

money and without provisions, from town to town and from village to village; he carried the light of the Gospel on all sides. But as the enemies of the Church were supported by the counts of Toulouse and Foix, by the archbishop of Aix and by Rabbestin, who had been deposed from the bishopric of Toulouse for his crimes, he believed it necessary to oppose temporal arms to these sectaries, who ruined morals no less than piety and disturbed the State as much as the Church.

The legate Arnaud having returned, a council was held on this matter, and the bishops of Toulouse and Conserans, men most zealous for the Catholic faith, undertook to go to Rome to make the proposal to His Holiness. They set before him the deplorable state of the provinces of France from the Garonne to beyond the Pyrenees, the need to remedy it, to prevent the evil from spreading everywhere, and to employ for this the secular arm, without which it seemed impossible to restore order in the provinces. They informed him at the same time of the zeal of Saint Dominic, of his penitential and apostolic life, of his great miracles and of the marvellous fruits of his preaching. The Pope, touched by their discourses, named Cardinal Milon or Galon as his legate in France to work effectively at this affair, recommending to him in particular to make use of the counsels of the abbot Arnauld, with whom our Saint was of one mind and one heart. He also wrote to the king of France, Philip Augustus, to exhort him to the holy war against these enemies of God, of the Church and of all human society.

The former legate and the new one gave our Saint three missions: the first, to continue his sermons and his private and public disputations, according to the express command he had received of it from His Holiness; the second, to preach the crusade so as to assemble the Catholic lords and peoples against the heretics; the third, to seek out the latter, to judge them, to absolve them, to condemn them and to punish them. Dominic acquitted himself worthily of these missions, and to attack the enemy in his stronghold he entered the town of Albi, where he preached controversy with incredible courage and resolution. He also published the crusade elsewhere; and it is said that he went as far as Paris, where he saw Queen Blanche for the second time.

Yet he had great and extreme pain at seeing that the fruits did not correspond to his zeal and his labour, and what gave him more sorrow was that, few heretics being converted, the army of the Catholics which was about to come would massacre a great number of them, and that thus they would be lost for all eternity. In the bitterness with which his heart was filled, he addressed himself to the holy Virgin and earnestly begged her, with tears in his eyes, to help him and to inspire him with the means of bringing back these hardened men. One day when he was in the greatest fervour of his prayer, in the chapel of Notre-Dame de Prouille[2], that Mother of mercy appeared to him and told him “that, as the angelic Salutation had been the beginning of the redemption of the world, so this Salutation must also be the beginning of the conversion of the heretics; that thus, by preaching the Rosary, which contains a hundred and fifty Ave Marias, he would see a marvellous success of his labours and the most obstinate of these sectaries converted by thousands.” Dominic obeyed this voice and, instead of dwelling as before on disputations and controversies, he applied himself principally to announcing the Rosary, to explaining its fifteen mysteries and to declaring the greatness and the merits of the holy Virgin; he succeeded so admirably that in a few years he drew more than a hundred thousand persons out of hell by making them abandon their errors. Thus it is only at this time, and not before, that most authors have placed the establishment of this celebrated devotion; but it is more true that our Saint had already published it in his evangelical journeys in Aragon, in Galicia and in Brittany, as has been recognised from reliable records of those times.

If Saint Dominic worked so many marvels at the beginning of his preaching against the Albigensians, he made himself still more admirable when the army of the crusaders had arrived and the generous Simon, count of Montfort, who was made its leader, had undertaken to fight the rebels and ruin them everywhere. This great captain was the Joshua who marched at the head of the troops of the living God, and Saint Dominic was the Moses who, by his tears, his prayers and his austerities, obtained for him from heaven most glorious victories. He sometimes left his evangelical journeys, which had no other end than the strengthening of the

Catholics and the conversion of the heretics, and went to the army to instruct the soldiers, to have them make good confessions, to form them in the devotion of the Rosary and then to spur them on to fight courageously for the cause of religion; and it is not to be believed how many prodigies he worked by these cares. Often the count of Montfort saw himself abandoned by the crusaders, who bound themselves to fight only for a time, and he had not enough soldiers left to set one against twenty, or thirty, or fifty of the enemy party; but the Saint encouraged him so powerfully, together with Alix, the same count's wife, who also had a wholly martial heart, that the soldiers seemed to grow stronger through this abandonment, because they put their trust in the help of the Almighty. It was by the assistance of this great Saint and by the power of the Rosary that a hundred Catholics put three thousand Albigensians to flight; that five hundred overran ten thousand of these fanatics; that most of the towns of Languedoc and of the county of Toulouse were carried with few men; and above all that a hundred thousand men, led by the king of Aragon and by Raymond, count of Toulouse, who had come to besiege Count Simon in Muret, were cut to pieces by two or three thousand Catholics, of whom only nine perished in the battle, while more than thirty thousand heretics lost their lives there, with the king of Aragon and a number of nobles. On this occasion Saint Dominic was at the head of the faithful, holding in his hand a cross whose wood was pierced by many arrows, without a single one striking the crucifix. Toulouse was then obliged to surrender to the count of Montfort and to receive the Catholic instructions of Saint Dominic, and the other rebel towns at last followed its example.

During these various exploits our Saint received still other favours and worked other very considerable prodigies. One day when, to prepare himself for his ordinary combats against error and falsehood, he had begun to pray before the door of a church which was shut, he found himself miraculously inside with a lay brother of the Order of Cîteaux whom he had taken as a companion, without its appearing that the door had been opened, or his knowing how he had been carried in. Another time, his bag and his books having fallen into the river, they were fished out several days afterwards without being wet. Often on his journeys, when rain was falling on all sides, it did not fall on him, and he arrived as dry as if the weather had been perfectly clear. As he carried no money, he asked for passage on ferries and boats out of charity. One day a rustic and uncivil boatman absolutely insisted on having money: the Saint raised his eyes to heaven, and at that very instant a coin came out of the ground which served to satisfy him. At Castres, in the convent of Saint-Vincent, the crucifix spoke to him and encouraged him to pursue his designs and to bear courageously the crosses which were inseparable from his apostolic labours. In the same place, while making his thanksgiving after Mass, his fervour was so wonderful that it raised him a cubit above the pavement, of which the prior, who was Brother Mathieu, and the other canons were witnesses. He miraculously saved from the water forty English pilgrims who were on their way to Saint James and who fell into the Garonne while crossing it in a boat too weak to carry so many people. In a word, he did so many other supernatural works for the confirmation of our faith that only a more than diabolical obstinacy could resist the evidence of his doctrine and the clarity of the light he carried on all sides.

His wholly evangelical life and his humility set off all these great deeds. We have already said that he had refused a bishopric in Galicia and another in the duchy of Brittany; he refused three more in the places of his glorious conquests, namely that of Béziers, that of Conserans and that of Comminges, notwithstanding the urgings and pressing solicitations made to him to accept them. He took on only for a time the office of vicar general of Carcassonne, until Guy, abbot of Les Vaux-de-Cernay, who was its bishop, returned from the crusade to take possession of his see; and he accepted out of obedience the office of inquisitor of the faith against the heretics, which Pope Innocent III created for the first time in order to give it to him; this office not having previously been separate from the prelacy and from the sublime dignities of legate and bishop, to whom by right it belongs to make inquiry against the heretics within their jurisdiction. But it is time to speak of the establishment of his Order, the great work for which Providence had destined him from all eternity. He conceived the design of it as early as the year 1207, seeing himself often without a sufficient number of workers to preach the Gospel and to repress the audacity and malice of the heretics. He also reflected that

those who worked with him, being bound to it neither by their state nor by any engagement of their profession, were every day on the point of abandoning the enterprise and leaving the work of God unfinished, especially because of the difficulties met with in it, the fatigues that had to be surmounted, the dangers that had to be overcome, and the death to which one was continually exposed. This therefore made him resolve to institute a religious Order which should have as its end the preaching of the Gospel, the instruction of the peoples, the conversion of heretics, the defence of the faith and the propagation of Christianity. God revealed even at that time to the blessed Marie d'Oignies, whose life we have written on 27 June, that He wished to give this help to His Church, as is related in her history composed by Cardinal Jacques de Vitry. Another holy religious had a similar revelation in a rapture that lasted three days. Dominic, having this thought, communicated it to his bishop, who was still alive, and to other prelates of signal piety and very great learning; they all confirmed him in so lofty an enterprise, and several even promised to assist him with their credit, their authority and their goods. With this in view he gradually gathered sixteen companions, whom he formed for evangelical labours; and in the year 1216, seeing that the evils were multiplying more and more; that the heretics, though conquered by arms, did not for that reason return to the bosom of the Church from which the spirit of falsehood had separated them; that the morals of the

Catholics were extremely corrupt, and that in many places ecclesiastical discipline was almost entirely abolished, he went to Rome to find Pope Innocent III, to propose to him the design which God had been inspiring in him for so many years.

The bishop of Toulouse, who had come to the general council of the Lateran, was the first to speak to the Pope of a design so useful to the Church; some other bishops spoke to him of it likewise and greatly praised this new founder to him; the Saint also had an audience for the purpose. But as the council had just ordained that efforts should be made rather to reform the Orders already established than to receive new ones, the Pope remained firm in refusing the proposal made to him, until he saw, in a mysterious dream, the Church of the Lateran in ruins supported on the shoulders of Saint Dominic; he had him come back and, approving his Institute by word of mouth, sent him back to Toulouse to confer with his companions on the Rules and Statutes to which they wished to bind themselves, promising to approve them when he had drawn them up, and exhorting him nevertheless to keep to some ancient Rule, to which he could add Constitutions proper to his design. Dominic therefore returned to Toulouse and, having assembled his companions in the monastery of Prouille, set before them what the Pope had ordered him. They invoked for this the assistance of the Holy Spirit and, after mature deliberation, felt themselves inspired to take the Rule of Saint Augustine, with some Statutes of the Order of Prémontré, to which they added Regulations proper to the apostolic life which they wished to profess. They then began to build in Toulouse the convent of Saint-Romain, which has since been replaced by another more magnificent. While they were working at it, Dominic took the road to Rome again to obtain the confirmation that had been promised him. On the way he learned of the death of Pope Innocent III, which occurred at Perugia on 15 July 1216. This death, and several other important affairs which occupied Pope Honorius III, his successor, at the beginning, somewhat delayed the carrying out of what our Saint was asking. He did not, however, lose courage; but, growing more ardent the greater the difficulties that arose, he continually besought the divine goodness, by his prayers, by his tears, by his fasts, by his bloody disciplines and by all the other ways capable of moving it, to accomplish at last the project it had inspired in him.

Being one day at prayer in the church of Saint Peter at the Vatican, he was rapt in ecstasy; he saw Our Lord in His glory, raised on a throne from which, holding three lances in His hand, He seemed about to pierce all men and strike the whole earth with His thunder. He saw at the same time the holy Virgin throw herself at His feet, begging Him to stay His anger and to pardon those whom He had been pleased to redeem with His precious blood. And as this angry judge told her that the crimes of men had reached such excess that He could not refrain from punishing them with extreme rigour, she presented to Him two of her servants, one of

whom was Dominic himself and the other the patriarch Saint Francis, assuring Him that by the preaching of these faithful ministers of the Gospel, and by their good examples and those of their children, so happy a change would be brought about in the morals of men that His justice would have reason to be satisfied: which made the lances fall from His hands and appeased Him entirely.

The joy this vision gave our Saint is beyond belief; he recognised anew by it that his enterprise came from heaven; that it would have a very happy success; that his children would be the reformers of the world, and that, joined with those of Saint Francis, they would bring about a marvellous renewal in Christendom. He also noted the features of the face of him whom God had given him as a companion, and the form of his habit. Some time afterwards, having met him in Rome, he recognised him without difficulty, embraced him with great signs of gladness, and formed with him a close friendship which he always kept until death. This same vision was soon followed by the authentic approval and confirmation he was pursuing. The Pope spoke of it to the sacred college and, with its advice and consent, had the bull for it dispatched on 22 December 1216, giving this new Order, by a particular movement of the Holy Spirit, the name of *Fratrvm Prsedicatorum*, that is, in the language of that time, of *Frères Prêcheurs*, which ought not to be changed, although the word *prêcheur* for *prédicateur* (preacher) is no longer in use. Then the holy patriarch, wishing to thank the divine goodness for so many graces, withdrew again into the church of the Holy Apostles, where those glorious princes appeared to him and, the one presenting him with a staff and the other with a book, said to him: “Go and preach, for you are chosen by God for this ministry.” He saw at the same time in spirit his children going two by two through the whole universe and preaching the word of God with much zeal and with a truly apostolic ardour. From that time, in memory of this favour, he ordinarily carried, in the towns as in the country, a staff in his hand and the book of the Epistles of Saint Paul, whose assiduous reading he urgently recommended to all his disciples. Before leaving Rome he made his vows in the hands of the Pope, who appointed him master general of his nascent Congregation and gave him power to receive religious to profession, to take new houses on all sides, to set superiors over them and generally to do all that he judged necessary for the good government of his whole Order.

On his return to Toulouse he had the consolation of seeing the convent of Saint-Romain finished through the liberality of Bishop Foulques and of Simon, count of Montfort, who had an incredible affection for him. He shared with his children the happy news of the establishment of their

Congregation and prepared them for profession by all the exercises that could help to make them spiritual men, true religious and excellent preachers of the word of God. As he knew that learning was an essential thing for this congregation, whose end was to explain, defend and teach the truths of the faith, he did not even hesitate to take them himself to the public schools of Toulouse to hear there the lectures in theology and the explanation of the holy Scriptures. God wishing to make known to the professor the merit of these new hearers, one morning when he was only very lightly asleep it seemed to him that he saw seven most brilliant stars enter his classroom, one of which, however, surpassed the others in beauty and splendour. At first he was uneasy about the meaning of this dream, but he recognised its true sense when he saw Saint Dominic bring his religious to his lectures; by the spirit of God he discovered that these were the seven stars He had shown him in his dream, which were indeed soon to light up the whole earth with the marvellous brightness of their light.

When Saint Dominic saw his disciples so well disposed, he received them to profession and, without further delay, distributed them in various countries and kingdoms to carry the torch of true doctrine everywhere. The bishops of Narbonne and Toulouse and Count Simon, who were much grieved to see Languedoc and Guyenne deprived of so great a help, opposed it at first and tried to dissuade the Saint from dismembering so soon a body that had only just been born; but he, who had the order of heaven and knew the fruits each of his children would bear in the places to which he was sending them, held firm against their opinion and carried out his own with a constancy worthy of a faithful servant. He therefore sent to France Father Matthieu of

Paris, with Fathers Bertrand, of Guarrigue, a small village of the province of Narbonne; Michel de Fabra, a Spaniard; Jean de Navarre, of Biscay; and Laurent, an Englishman; besides Mannes de Gusman, Saint Dominic's brother, who had already entered his Order, and Odéric of Normandy, a lay brother. For Spain, he sent there Father Suero Gomez, a Portuguese nobleman, with three Spaniards: Michel, of Uzera; Pierre, of Madrid; and Dominique, of Segovia; he kept the others at Toulouse and Prouille to train new religious there, to govern the house of the nuns, and to continue the exercises of preaching and of the pursuit of the heretics.

The blessed Patriarch, after converting and enrolling in the confraternity of the holy Rosary almost the whole town of Carcassonne, above all through the miraculous deliverance of a possessed man who had been seized by fifteen thousand demons for having blasphemed against the fifteen mysteries of the Rosary and who had often insulted the holy preacher who proclaimed its marvels; and after spurring on the count of Montfort to fight generously against the count of Toulouse, head of the Albigensians, who had retaken that important place, himself left Languedoc to go and establish his Order in various towns of Christendom. He went first to Paris, where he saw Queen Blanche, already the mother of her son Saint Louis, whom God had granted her by the power of the Rosary: for she had recited it with much assiduity, following the Saint's instructions. The progress of his children in that town made him judge that his presence was not necessary there. He therefore went on to Metz; several good workers having presented themselves to him, he founded there a convent of his Order, of which he made the blessed Étienne, his companion, the first prior. Among those whom he clothed with his habit he took six of the most resolute, whom he brought with him to Italy. On this journey, taken by brigands and led to a castle where the captain, with fourteen officers and five hundred soldiers, led a diabolical life, living only by plunder and defiling themselves with all the filth of which a brutish man is capable, he happily converted them all. His design was, when he had arrived at Venice, to cross over into Cumania, a country enclosed by Tartary, Russia and Scythia, at the head of the Black Sea, which had not yet received the light of the Gospel; and for this he had had a vicar general of his Order elected, who was Father Matthieu of Paris; but God made known to him once more that He was content with his good will for this mission and that he would render Him more service by strengthening the Order of His preachers, so that there might always be some ready to go to every part of the world, than by going himself to carry the Gospel to those distant countries. The impossibility he found at Venice of making this journey was a confirmation of this heavenly inspiration. So he resolved to go to Rome, so that his Institute, being established there, might spread from there more easily into the other towns and all the other kingdoms of the earth. He nevertheless left some of his own at Venice to build a convent there and sent others to Spalato for the same purpose; and, passing through Padua, he promised the inhabitants to send them some too when he was in Rome. As soon as our Saint was in that capital city of Christendom, he went and threw himself at the feet of Pope Honorius III to give him an account of the happy success of the Congregation which he had had the goodness to confirm. The Pope heard him with much joy and, so that he might do in Rome what he had done in France, gave him the church of Saint Sixtus and its dependencies to serve him as a convent. Then he began to open his mouth in that great city and to unfold there the inestimable treasures of the wisdom and grace with which his soul was enriched; and his preaching was so effective that within the same year he saw his new convent peopled with a hundred religious who, according to the spirit of his Institute, burned with zeal for the salvation of souls and were ready to go to the ends of the habitable world to work for the conversion of the infidels. The chief of them were Tancrède, Othon, Grégoire, Henri and Albert, who were as it were the foundations and the living stones of the spiritual edifice of the Order of Friars Preachers in Italy.

The miracles which God worked by the hands of Saint Dominic also gave him credit and won him a wholly particular veneration. The authors of his life note especially three dead persons whom he raised to life. The first was the son of a holy Roman widow named Guatonia, or Tuta de Buvaleschi; this lady, going to the Saint's sermon, which no one missed, left this little child sick in his cradle. On her return she wished to give him some care, but she found him dead and without any remaining breath or respiration. In the grief with which she was filled she took him in her arms and, entering the convent of Saint Sixtus, where because of the

building work there was as yet no enclosure, she carried him to the feet of the Saint, who was at the door of his Chapter; she spoke to him more with her eyes than with her mouth, but she spoke enough to make him understand that she was asking for the resurrection of her son. The Saint withdrew a little, prostrated himself on the ground and made a short prayer, after which, making the sign of the cross over the dead child, he gave him back his life and returned him alive and well to his mother. This prodigy, in spite of Dominic's prohibitions to her and to his religious to speak of it, at once came to the ears of the Pope. He wished to have it published from the pulpit for the honour of the new Order and the confirmation of the faith; but the Saint so prevailed with His Holiness that he changed his resolution and revoked the order he had given for this publication. Yet the whole city of Rome, being informed of all that had happened, conceived such respect for the Saint that each thought himself happy to be able to touch him, and several even cut off the edges of his habit to make relics of them: so that sometimes it no longer came down further than his knees. Those who accompanied him tried to prevent this excess; but this great man, seeing that the more they prevented it the more eagerly people sought to tear or cut off something belonging to him, said to them gently: "Let this people satisfy its devotion."

The second dead man whom he raised was a workman who, working at his monastery of Saint Sixtus, was crushed under a section of wall that fell on him. The religious, extremely distressed at this accident, begged their holy Father to have pity on this unfortunate man. He had his body drawn out from under the rubble and, having made his prayer for him, restored his broken limbs and put him back in the same state as before. This new prodigy increased still further the affection of the Romans towards him. Yet this did not prevent his community, which lived only on alms, from often lacking the food necessary for life; but divine Providence always provided for it in a miraculous manner. Twice angels in human form entered the refectory and gave each of the religious a loaf of incomparable taste and whiteness. Twice the Saint's blessing was so effective that the first time it caused wine to be found in a cask where there had been none before, and the second time it so multiplied a single piece of bread that there was enough to feed his whole community, and much still remained after the meal. The third dead person who received life through the prayers of this great wonder-worker was the young lord Napoléon, nephew of Cardinal Étienne de Fosseneuve. This young man, riding about Rome on horseback, fell so heavily on the pavement that he broke his head, shattered his whole body and died suddenly. The cardinal, his uncle, was then with Saint Dominic and two other cardinals, Ugolino, bishop of Ostia, and Nicolas, bishop of Frascati, who were working together on the affair the Pope had entrusted to them, of reuniting in a single monastery all the nuns scattered about Rome. The news of this death, which many circumstances made dismal and deplorable, deeply affected this good uncle. He fainted and had to be laid on a bed. Saint Dominic, who shared in the pain of all the afflicted, also felt much sorrow at it. His children seized this occasion to beg him to raise the dead man. He did not refuse; having vested to say Mass, he went up to the altar in the presence of three cardinals and of Yves of Cracow, in Poland, of Saint Hyacinth and the blessed Ceslas, the prelate's nephews, and of a great number of religious. The devotion with which he celebrated was admirable: tears flowed abundantly from his eyes, his breast heaved an infinity of sighs, and when he was at the elevation of the holy Mysteries he entered into an ecstasy and a marvellous rapture, during which his body was raised a cubit from the ground. After Mass he went to the place where the dead man was, followed by all this illustrious company. He prayed three times for him, and each time touched with his hand his broken limbs, which he had first put back in their natural position. After this ceremony he entered into a new transport, which again raised his body above the ground, and in this state he cried out in a loud voice: "Napoléon, my son, in the name of Our Lord I say to you, arise." At this word the dead man obeyed more promptly than if he had been alive. His bones knit together again, his limbs were rejoined, his wounds closed, and he rose up full of life and health, about six hours after his death. One cannot conceive the astonishment and admiration of the onlookers, nor the dispositions which so evident and authentic an act produced in the hearts of all the inhabitants of Rome to receive with submission the counsels Saint Dominic gave them in his sermons.

After this we must no longer be surprised if, in the short time he stayed in Rome on this occasion (eighteen months), he undertook and carried out things which seemed to require several years. We have already spoken of a mission he had from the Pope, to gather all the nuns of the city into a single monastery. This design was extremely useful, because God is better served and regular observance better kept in one large monastery than in several small ones; it nevertheless met with many difficulties: for these nuns were accustomed, some to live with their relatives, others to lodge in small separate communities, and all to keep no enclosure but to go out with entire freedom; and their families did not wish to be deprived of the company and conversation of these pious women. But the Saint surmounted these obstacles so skilfully and so won over all minds that he at last united all these nuns, and even those of Santa Maria across the Tiber, in a single house, that of Saint Sixtus, which his religious gave up to them in order to move to that of Santa Sabina, which the Pope gave them with all its dependencies. He imposed perpetual enclosure on them, according to His Holiness's intentions, and, having had them take his Institute, formed them admirably in all the Christian and religious virtues: so that in this convent one saw, through the holiness of these excellent subjects, an image of the angelic life and of the fair order that reigns in each choir of the blessed spirits. Several more miracles are related which the Saint worked to confirm them in their first resolution; but we should be too long if we dwelt on all the actions of this incomparable man.

He did no less striking ones in his new monastery of Santa Sabina. It was there that, by preaching the Rosary, he converted a usurer who had grown rich and amassed great treasures by unjust trading; and a courtesan called Catherine la Belle, who, from a public sinner, became an illustrious penitent and an excellent servant of God. It was there that he won for Jesus Christ and for religion Saint Hyacinth and Saint Ceslas, Poles and nephews of the bishop of Cracow, who soon afterwards carried the Order into Germany and Poland, where Saint Hyacinth above all made himself admirable by an infinity of prodigies, as we shall tell in his life. It was there that he received the blessed Réginald de Saint-Gilles, canon of the church of Saint-Aignan at Orléans, after obtaining health for him from the holy Virgin by a signal miracle. This learned and pious cleric had come to Rome with his bishop, intending to visit the stations and the places consecrated by the blood of the Apostles and Martyrs; but, hearing of the exemplary life and the miracles of Saint Dominic, he came to see him and asked him for the habit of his Order. The Saint promised it to him with all the more joy because, knowing that he was most virtuous and joined great learning to piety, having even taught canon law for five years at Paris, he would make a great minister of the word of God; but scarcely had he given him a day for entering his monastery when a violent illness that seized him not only delayed the accomplishment of his design but also put him in great danger of losing his life. Saint Dominic, not wishing to lose so rare a subject, prayed earnestly for his recovery. One day therefore, when the fever was tormenting him most cruelly, the holy Virgin appeared to him and, touching with her hand all the members which the priest is accustomed to anoint in giving Extreme Unction, not only restored him to perfect health but also conferred on him extraordinary graces opposed to the vices of which those members are usually the instruments, above all an angelic chastity and a perfect mortification of the tongue and of all the senses. She showed him at the same time the habit he was to wear, which was not a canon's habit, such as Saint Dominic and his children had worn until then, but a habit and a scapular of white serge, with a black cape and hood over them. And so the Saint, after this revelation, changed the habit of his Order with the Pope's permission and gave it the one whose form his good Mistress had shown to this great servant of God. He clothed him with it among the first, and he was afterwards a man mighty in works and in words, who rendered great services to religion. He died in the odour of sanctity at Paris in the year 1220 and was buried at Notre-Dame des Champs, which was then the burial place of the Friars Preachers.

Some time later Saint Dominic had a vision full of consolation, in which Our Lord showed him all his children hidden under the mantle of His most holy Mother. The care he took for their advancement did not prevent him from applying himself to many other things which he believed could contribute to the increase of God's glory. In this spirit he counselled the Pope to create an officer in his palace to explain holy Scripture

and the truths of our faith to the infinity of persons who thronged to the court and often lost much time waiting for their affairs to be dispatched. His Holiness charged him with this office, and he discharged it worthily for all the rest of the time he was in Rome. This officer is the one called the master of the sacred palace, who has since become one of the most considerable in Rome; it is always religious of Saint Dominic who bear this title, and they scarcely ever leave it except to become cardinals or masters general of the whole Order. In the same spirit the same holy Patriarch, seeing the Church's need of soldiers to defend her against the insults and cruelties of heretics and infidels, established, with the Pope's permission, the Order of the Soldiers of the militia of Jesus Christ. The need to be brief does not allow us to give here the obligations and the statutes of this Order. We shall note only that it was with it that the Third Order of Saint Dominic, of both sexes, began, which has become so celebrated since his death and which we may call a happy nursery of Saints, men and women, since it has given and gives every day so great a number of them to the Church.

After this foundation, news arrived in Rome of the glorious death of Simon, count of Montfort, who was killed on 28 June of the year 1218, in the ninth month of the siege he had laid before Toulouse. This event made the Saint resolve to return to Languedoc, to console and strengthen the religious he had left there and his daughters of the monastery of Prouille, and to extend there his new Order of the militia of Jesus Christ, which was especially needed in that country. He left Rome about the feast of All Saints and, passing through Florence and Bologna, where he worked a number of miracles and received several considerable favours from heaven, he reached the county of Toulouse in a short time. His presence rejoiced his children immensely and made them conceive new resolutions to work at the perfection of their state; but he soon weaned them of it to pass into Spain, where his Order was making very great progress. Preaching one day at Segovia, in Old Castile, he assured his hearers that the sky, which had given no rain for a long time, so that a great famine was feared, would soon give it in abundance: which happened at the end of his sermon, although at the beginning the whole air was perfectly clear and there was no sign of any change in the weather. This favour was attributed to his prayers, and he was given a convent for the religious of his Order. He also founded one at Madrid for nuns, and in other places he made very remarkable conversions.

When he had given in Spain all the orders necessary for the preservation of what he had established, he crossed back into France and came to Paris, where he found thirty religious who already had some buildings in the University quarter, with an old chapel dedicated in honour of Saint James, although their burial place, as we have said, was still at Notre-Dame des Champs. It is because of this chapel, which gave its name to the whole rue Saint-Jacques, that they were called Jacobins. The Saint thanked God for these happy beginnings and, to give them further growth, began to preach the word of God and to publish anew the devotion of the holy Rosary. One day, having been asked to preach in the cathedral church, he prepared himself for it by an hour's prayer. The holy Virgin appeared to him and marked out for him as the subject of his sermon the first mystery of the Rosary, which comprises the Annunciation of the Angel, her consent to the word of that heavenly Spirit, and the Incarnation of the divine Word in her womb. The fruit of his exhortation was so great that most of the Parisians were then seen to enrol in that august confraternity; the most powerful contributed abundantly by their alms to the building of a monastery. It is true that four libertines, like those who still wish today to pass for fine wits and free thinkers, mocked his sermon; but their mockery did not long go unpunished, for the very next day, fighting two against two, they killed one another and died miserably, thus verifying what the Saint had said in the pulpit, that some of his hearers, if they were not converted, would not see the end of the following day.

The Servant of God's stay in Paris was only a month, and yet he did great things for the spread of his Order, for from there he extended it not only into several other towns of the kingdom but also into Scotland, at the request of King Alexander, who, having come to renew the ancient alliances of his crown with that of France, asked him for some of his religious for the instruction and sanctification of his subjects. From Paris the Saint took the road back to Italy. He went first to Bologna, where he received unspeakable consolation

from the great fruits that the blessed Réginald had borne there in only the eight months he had stayed there. Then he returned to Rome, where he was received with universal acclaim for the great prodigies he had worked there on his previous journey. Nevertheless he stayed there only a very short time, for, having strengthened his religious of Santa Sabina and his daughters of Saint Sixtus, to whom he disclosed various snares laid for them by the devil, he came back as soon as possible to Bologna, where his presence had been needed since the obedience he had given the blessed Réginald to go to Paris.

It was in that town, at the feast of Pentecost in the year 1220, that he held his first general chapter. We leave it to the particular historians of his Order to relate in detail the ordinances he had made there, so full of wisdom and holiness that one cannot doubt that the Holy Spirit was their author. We shall note only that the glorious patriarch, seeing the principal members of the Congregation assembled, threw himself humbly at their feet and, protesting that he was a lax religious, a man without fervour and of bad example, begged them most urgently to depose him from his office or to accept the free and voluntary renunciation and resignation of it which he was making. This act of humility delighted the whole company; but there was no one who would listen to a proposal from which the whole Congregation could only suffer very great harm. Not having been able to obtain this discharge, which he regarded as a signal favour, he exhorted his children to continue serving God and their neighbour in holy fervour, and insisted particularly on the establishment of perfect poverty, without revenues or possessions or any landed property in any of their monasteries. He made them a most moving discourse on the subject and showed them effectively that there is nothing safer or more advantageous than to rely entirely on the help of divine Providence; the whole chapter joined in his view. Since that time this great poverty has been moderated for good reasons and with the permission of the Holy See. But in the 16th century the Reverend Father Antoine Lequien du Saint-Sacrement, a religious of this Order, of eminent holiness, who possessed in an excellent degree the double spirit of his Father Saint Dominic, re-established it in some convents of Provence.

Saint Dominic, after this chapter, made his residence at Bologna and left it thereafter only for a few journeys of short duration. On the first he went to Florence, Siena, Viterbo, Modena, Milan, Como, Bergamo, Cremona and Brescia, either to establish new convents there or to visit those his children had already established; and everywhere he made conversions and worked miracles which caused him to be regarded as a wholly heavenly man and as the great wonder-worker of his age. At Viterbo he greeted the Pope, who gave him new marks of affection and goodwill for himself and for his family. At Cremona he saw for the last time the seraphic Father Saint Francis, and it is beyond belief how these two seraphim of the earth set each other ablaze with the fire of divine love and with the desire to go soon to enjoy the sovereign good. On a second journey he went through the chief towns beyond the Po and stopped principally at Parma, Piacenza, Reggio and Faenza, where people were eager to establish convents of his Order. At Siena the bishop absolutely insisted that he lodge in his palace; but as the servant of God could not refrain from keeping strict observance everywhere, he still rose every night with his companion to go to the church for Matins; and God, by an effect of His providence and goodness, sent him two Angels who led him with lighted torches, opened the doors of the bishop’s house for him, took him right into the church and then brought him back to his room in the same way as he had left it; which was seen first by the bishop’s servants and then by the bishop himself, who chose to stay awake to test it. Passing back through Florence, he completed there the conversion of a notorious public sinner named Benoîte, whom he had already twice delivered over to bodily possession by the devil to make her feel the pitiable state of her soul; and after freeing her from it, he made of her so illustrious a penitent that she merited extraordinary visits and caresses from heaven and the grace of dying in the ardours of a pure love of God.

On his return to Bologna he held his second general chapter, in which he divided his whole Order into eight provinces, which already comprised fifty-six convents, without counting those that were only planned. He also had eight provincials elected to govern them, and sent his children into various regions of the world,

even into the most northern countries, such as Denmark, Sweden, Norway and as far as beneath the Arctic pole. Hungary, Greece, Palestine and the whole East also had their share in this great blessing; so that one could not wonder enough how, in only five years, this mystical vine had spread so far that it was able to cover, so to speak, the whole earth. The Saint could not, of course, send into all these places old men accomplished in learning and in the practice of the religious virtues, and he was often obliged to send there men professed for a week, and even novices; which led several of them to beg him urgently to consider their small capacity for the great functions of preaching the Gospel and spreading his Order with which he wished to charge them; but, what is altogether surprising, in sending them he miraculously made them capable of these ministries. “Go,” he said to them, “bear fruit on all sides, exhort everyone to penance; rebuke sinners boldly and charitably; God will bless your labour, and you will lack nothing.” So they went headlong; and their obedience was followed by so many blessings that all at once they appeared not only as perfectly virtuous men and religious of exemplary holiness, but also as great theologians and apostolic preachers; their preaching being accompanied by miracles, they made prodigious changes in all the places where they proclaimed the word of God, drawing infidels to the faith, sinners to penance and good people to the exercises of a perfect life.

And so Saint Dominic, who could not accompany them in body, was everywhere with them in spirit; he practised great austerities and continual prayers to merit for them the grace of his Order and the assistance of the divine Spirit. Finally, on a third journey, in the year 1221, he founded more new monasteries; and by the deliverance of the possessed, by the working of miracles and by the force of his preaching, he gave a new lustre to the devotion of the Rosary, which was the most usual subject of his discourses, as it was the most powerful instrument of all his marvels. This tour, however, was not long, because, inwardly warned that the time of his reward was approaching, he returned promptly to Bologna to prepare himself for death, which was to put him in possession of an immortal life and of a happiness incapable of change.

The reader will have been able to notice in this history heroic acts of all the virtues; indeed there is no action of our Saint in which several of them do not appear with much lustre. It is nevertheless fitting to reflect on them for a moment for the greater edification of the faithful. In the first place, what can be said of the faith of this admirable patriarch, who fought all his life to defend it, to uphold it, to plant it in the hearts of heretics and to strengthen it in the hearts of the faithful; who preached it with such light and such zeal in the greatest cities of Europe; who wished to carry it himself into the most distant regions, to the furthest extremities of Scythia and Tartary; who did through his children what God did not permit him to do in person; and who, in short, exposed himself a million times to death and to the cruellest torments for the truths of our holy religion? The great miracles he worked, whether when he was asked or when his charity inspired him to help persons in affliction, show further that he had that Gospel faith which is capable of tearing mountains from their place and casting them into the sea. He never hesitated in anything, and he was so persuaded not only of God’s power but also of the indubitable truth of the promises He has made to His servants that he would have undertaken the most difficult and, so to speak, the most impossible things if he had judged that they would contribute to His glory. His confidence in divine Providence was no less than his faith. No other proof of it is needed than his constancy in making all his journeys without money, without provisions and without any visible resource on the human side; than the obligation laid on his children to do the same in those great missions where, according to the rules of human prudence, the things most necessary for life were bound to fail them; and than the poverty he established in all his monasteries, not allowing them to have any revenue or possession. But must he not have possessed this virtue in a truly heroic degree when he had his religious sit down at table without bread, without wine and without any other food, never doubting that God would provide them with what they needed once they were seated, as indeed never failed to happen?

His love for Our Lord Jesus Christ was without measure: he loved Him as his Master, he loved Him as his Saviour, he loved Him as his King, his Sovereign, his All and his God. He could not bear to see Him

offended; he spared nothing to win hearts for Him and to procure Him glory. All his joy was to be with Him and to enjoy His presence and His conversation. That is why, when on the road, he asked his companions to go on ahead and leave him alone, so that nothing might prevent him from speaking to Him heart to heart. That is why he loved solitude and was almost inseparable from prayer, to the point of spending whole nights in it; and when he came back from his journeys, all weary, all wet and sometimes with his feet all torn, he nevertheless went before anything else before the Blessed Sacrament, where he remained several hours in prayer. It is even said that he had no other room than the church, and that if the weakness of his body obliged him to take a moment's rest, he did so at the corner of the altar step, after asking Our Lord's permission. His skill in occupying himself with Him during those precious nights was admirable: now he adored Him with his face to the ground, now he stretched out his hands in the form of a cross, sometimes he raised them to heaven to draw down help from it; at other times he made a great number of bows and genuflections; at times, in fine, he wept so bitterly and uttered such loud cries that he could be heard from the dormitory; which stirred his brethren to pray and weep as he did. When he said Mass his eyes were never dry, and usually at the Canon or at the Lord's Prayer his face could be seen all bathed in tears. The Passion of this divine Master was so deeply imprinted in his inmost being that he never lost the remembrance of it. He meditated on it unceasingly and drew from it at every moment motives for loving Him with all his strength. A holy penitent learned in a revelation that Our Lord, in reward for this holy assiduity in contemplating His wounds, imprinted their marks on his feet, his hands and his side, with the pains of His crowning with thorns, though in a secret and hidden manner, without anything of it appearing outwardly. This miracle happened, it is said, at Segovia in Spain, in a vaulted cave which he had chosen to serve him as a monastery.

Nothing would need to be added to what we have said of his respect and tenderness towards the holy Virgin, if this devotion had not been so marvellous that one can never say enough about it. He had drunk it in, so to speak, with his mother's milk, having drawn it from the good upbringing his mother had given him and from the holy instructions he had received from his uncle. It always grew with him and always accompanied him until death. He could never have his fill of blessing this august Mistress and of reciting Rosaries in her honour. He never preached without proclaiming her greatness and the admirable effects of her mercy. His keenest joy would have been to die for her glory and for her singular titles of Virgin and Mother of God. During his life he won for her more than four or five million servants, having received no fewer persons into the confraternity of the Rosary, in which one professes to be her humble subjects. Nor can one conceive the graces and favours he received from her goodness. How many times did she appear to him to give him tokens of her love? How many times did she assist him in pressing needs and in thorny affairs of which no good outcome was dared to be hoped? How many times did she preserve him from the snares and wicked artifices of his enemies? How many times did she miraculously heal the wounds others had dealt him, or that he had dealt himself by the pitiless rigour of his austerity? What graces did she not grant him, both for himself and for his Order and for the persons he commended to her? Her familiarity and her goodwill towards him were even so great that she did not hesitate, now to call him her Spouse, now to offer him her sacred breasts to make him suck the milk of paradise, now to allow him to rest his head on her bosom, as the beloved Disciple laid his on the adorable breast of the Saviour; now to cover him and all his religious with her royal mantle, as a sure pledge of her protection. Zeal for the salvation of souls was a fire which continually burned and consumed the heart of Dominic. It was for their conversion that he exposed himself to so many labours and sufferings from his youth to the end of his life; that he shed so many tears and sent up so many sobs to heaven, and that he so often drew blood from his body, so that, punishing himself for their sins, he might turn away from their heads the effects of the divine indignation. It was to prevent their eternal loss that he several times offered himself to be sold to the infidels and to remain their slave, and that he desired to be torn with whips, to be cut in pieces and to suffer every other kind of torment. He never approached a town or a village without melting wholly into tears, looking with a spirit of compassion and sorrow on the miseries and sins of those who lived there. *Totus in lacrymas solvebatur*, says the blessed Humbert. The Order of Friars

Preachers, which he founded to continue throughout the whole earth and until the end of the ages what he could do himself only in a small number of places and years, is a further powerful witness to the unequalled charity with which he burned. Indeed, one cannot count the thousands of infidels, heretics and bad Catholics he converted through his children, nor the multitude of souls from every part of the world who have entered heaven by their means.

His humility matched the greatness of his charity. We have already given proofs of it when we noted with what constancy he refused the bishoprics and other ecclesiastical dignities offered to him, and how insistently he asked to be relieved of his office of general at an age when it seemed he could still exercise it for more than twenty years; but it appeared with still more lustre in all his ways of acting and of dealing with his brethren and with seculars, for he always made himself the least of all; he did not hesitate to go begging from door to door himself for the support of his religious; he stooped to the lowest offices of the monasteries, and he avoided honour with more care than the ambitious show eagerness in procuring it. Not only did he consider himself the greatest sinner in the world, but he had this thought so strongly imprinted in his soul that he feared his presence would draw down God's curse on the places he entered. That is why, when he approached them, he knelt down and, with tears in his eyes, said: "I pray You, Lord, and I conjure You by Your most lovable goodness, not to regard my sins here, nor to pour out Your anger on this place because I shall have entered it, nor to exterminate this people in whose midst I shall live, for the greatness of my iniquities." He did not speak thus out of ceremony, but from a real sense of his unworthiness and an actual contempt he had for himself; which is doubtless the highest point to which humility can be carried, since, moreover, not only had he always kept the whiteness of virginity, which he avowed a moment before his death, but he had also never lost the grace of his baptism, and mortal sin had never entered his soul.

Penance and austerity being the faithful guardians of humility and purity, one cannot say how dear they were to our Saint. All his life he was his own executioner; and had he been in the hands of Barbarians, they would not have treated his body with as much rigour and inhumanity as he treated it himself. He began from childhood to fast, to keep vigil, to sleep only on boards, to tear his skin with bloody scourgings. His ordinary practice, when older, was to fast every day, often to content himself with bread and water, to sleep scarcely at all, and when necessity obliged him to take a moment's rest, to do so on the first bench he found, without taking off his clothes or even lying down; and every night to take the discipline three times with a heavy iron chain which each time made great wounds on him. Besides this, he always had around his loins an iron belt which kept open the wounds he had made, and on his back a hair shirt or cilice whose bristles, entering his wounds and mingling with his blood, caused him continual pain. What is more surprising is that neither the fatigues of his journeys, nor the exercise of preaching, which requires a strong voice, a robust body and perfect health, nor advancing age, ever made him lessen anything of this pitiless severity towards himself; in spite of the pains he felt at every moment, which would have brought any other man to cries and tears, he was always, as his Acts say, *Vultu hilari et jucundo*, "of a cheerful, joyful countenance, full of a lovable serenity." Far from using public conveyances on his journeys, he made them barefoot, with this circumstance, however, that he took off his shoes only after leaving the towns and put them on again before entering them, to avoid the praise of men. This rigour was the reason why his feet were often all bloody, either from going through brambles and thorns or from walking on sharp stones; then this admirable man made more conversions and was more terrible to the demons, the heretics, the sinners and the enemies of his Order. In short, the historians agree that his life was so penitential that without a continual miracle and an extraordinary assistance from the holy Virgin he could not have borne it; but that lovable Mother, who regarded him as her Agent, her Apostle, her Son and her Spouse, sustained him in his weaknesses and healed him when the wounds he had made could have caused him some dangerous and mortal illness.

Another discourse would be needed to speak worthily of the monastic virtues of this apostolic man; we mean of his poverty, his chastity, his deference and his submission of mind even towards his inferiors, the

exactness of his silence and his zeal for regular observance, of which he could not bear the least articles to be transgressed. A new eulogy would also be needed to represent according to their merit all the gratuitous graces with which he was endowed, since there is not a single one of all those marked out by the apostle Saint Paul which he did not possess in a very eminent degree. Above all he had in an excellent degree the spirit of prophecy, the grace of healing, that of working prodigies, and the gift of the discernment of spirits. He saw clearly all the devil's undertakings against his religious; and one day, having forced him to declare what he gained against them in the choir, the dormitory and the refectory, he compelled him at the same time to admit that he lost in the chapter all he had gained in the other places, because it was a place where, through the admonitions of their superiors and through penances received with humility, all the faults of the day were wiped out. He drove him without difficulty, and as with a sovereign and absolute command, out of the bodies he possessed; he made him come out shamefully from two of his religious who had been seized by this enemy, the one for having eaten meat contrary to the constitutions, and the other for having drunk in the town without permission and without making the sign of the cross over his glass.

He was so great a friend of God that he never asked Him for anything without obtaining it. Having one day simply declared this to Don Alacrion, prior of L'Hôtel-Marie, of the Order of Cîteaux, that holy religious, surprised at so great a grace, said to him: "Since that is so, my reverend Father, why do you not ask God for the vocation to your Order of Doctor Conrad, that learned professor of the University of Bologna, whom your children so passionately desire to have among you?" — "What you propose," answered Dominic, "is very difficult; yet if you will spend this night in prayer with me, I hope that we shall obtain it from the goodness of the Almighty." — "Willingly," said Alacrion, "although my prayers are not capable of adding any strength to yours." They therefore spent the night together in prayer, and the very next morning, which was that of the feast of the Assumption of Our Lady, Conrad, touched by a sudden grace and a vocation he did not expect, came and threw himself at the feet of our Saint while they were saying at Prime *Jam lucis orto sidere*, and earnestly asked him for the habit of his Institute. Dominic already knew that he would come; he received him with open arms as an extraordinary present from heaven and clothed him in his livery, or rather in that of Our Lady. He merited for him at the same time the spirit of his Congregation, so that he worked excellently for its establishment and was an excellent missionary and preacher of the Gospel. For the rest, we must not be astonished if God refused nothing to Dominic, since Dominic refused nothing to God; he obeyed not only all His commandments and counsels, but also all His inspirations; he watched continually over himself, lest a word, a look, a movement, a desire or a thought displeasing to Him should escape him; he made himself so irreproachable in all things that nothing was ever seen in him that was not perfectly exemplary.

It is time to come to the end of this holy life, which we should never finish if we wished to relate all that could redound to the praise of our Saint. An angel was sent from heaven to tell him that the time of his reward had come. He received this news with a joy and gratitude that cannot be expressed, and went as soon as he could to Bologna, so as to settle the affairs of his Order before giving up the care of it. The fatigues of the journey not having prevented him from attending Matins, he was seized with a severe headache, a continual fever and a cruel flux of blood, which he endured with invincible patience and with a joy that filled all his children with astonishment and consolation. At first he allowed them to put him on a straw mattress to satisfy them; but finding himself too softly placed, he would have no other bed than the ground: it was not reasonable, he said, that a great sinner should die on a bed, when our Master and Saviour died on a cross. He made his general confession with as many tears as if he had committed all the sins of the world; he received the sacraments of the Eucharist and of Extreme Unction with incredible devotion and fervour, and, having assembled first twelve of the chief religious of the monastery and then the whole Community, he made them exhortations so full of force and unction that Father Ventura, prior of Bologna, testified in his depositions that he had never heard any so moving. Above all he exhorted them to humility, to charity among themselves, to voluntary poverty, to zeal for the salvation of souls and to the spread of the Order, so as to be

able to make more holy conquests in the world. He then gave them his blessing, assuring them, to console them, that he would be no less useful to them in heaven by his prayers than he had been on earth by his guidance and instructions. But it is said that he fulminated his curse against those who should corrupt or alter the constitutions of his Order and introduce novelties against the purity of the observance.

After speaking to his children he turned to Our Lord and the Holy Virgin, to whom he commended his family and all those who in the course of the years should embrace his Institute. He received a favourable answer from their goodness; and the Holy Virgin promised him to place his own under the shelter of her royal mantle, which is the fullness of her mercy. A short time afterwards the lovable Jesus and His august Mother, accompanied by an army of heavenly spirits, came again to visit him to receive his blessed soul. He then told those present to begin the prayer of the Church, *Subvenite sancti Dei, occurrite Angeli Domini*, and in the midst of this prayer Dominic, raising his hands and eyes to heaven and all aflame with an ardent charity, gave up his most pure spirit to be crowned with eternal glory. It was on Friday 6 August of the year 1221, which was the 50th year of his age. There were at the same time several revelations of his glory. His sacred body was buried, as he had ordered, in his church at Bologna. Cardinal Ugolino, legate of the Holy See, who was afterwards Pope under the name of Gregory IX, performed the ceremonies of burial, accompanied by the patriarch of Aquileia, several other bishops and prelates, and an infinity of lay people of every condition, who hastened there to honour the dwelling of so holy a soul and the venerable relics of a man so favoured by heaven.

He is seen in his images seated with his religious at a bare table, with the angels who come to serve him. One day he was told that there was nothing left to eat. He nevertheless had the bell rung; the religious gathered in the refectory, and when they were seated at their tables, angels appeared. Each of them carried a wallet on his shoulder, and from this wallet he drew a loaf which he placed before each religious.

Ordinarily a lily and the book of the Rule are put in Saint Dominic’s hand; he also bears on his forehead a shining star, either because the noble lady who held him at baptism did in fact see a beautiful star on his forehead, or because, according to Sister Cécile, a light shone between his eyebrows and inspired men with respect and love.

Tradition portrays Saint Dominic as Joyful and Gentle. He was of middle height, Sister Cécile tells us; his face was handsome and slightly ruddy. He was always cheerful and pleasant; no one spoke to him without becoming better. His hands were long and fine, his voice clear, noble and harmonious; he never became bald, and he always kept his religious crown of hair entire, sprinkled with a few white hairs. He was a man of prayer; that is the most striking feature of his life; he never wanted either cell or bed; he slept on the altar steps or on the flagstones. He took part in the office with fervour and joy, and he insisted that all the ceremonies be well performed. One of his favourite devotions was to keep his eyes fixed on a crucifix. He never spoke in public without first kneeling before an image of Mary. He worked many miracles, but his angelic character had perhaps a greater power than his miracles. Saint Catherine of Siena, in one of her visions, saw the face of Saint Dominic resembling that of Jesus Christ Himself, a visible image of the inward and spiritual transformation that had been wrought in his soul.

The Order of Saint Dominic spread after his death with extraordinary rapidity, and that very year it extended as far as Palestine. The third provincial general, the celebrated doctor of law Raimond de Pennafort, gave the Order its definitive organisation in 1238, and since then the rare modifications made in it have been required by the needs of the times. Absolute poverty was for two centuries the invariable principle of the Order. After the council of Basle, Pope Martin V authorised the possession of landed property by a bull.

At the most flourishing period the Order counted forty-five provinces and twelve congregations (particular sections of the Order), each placed under a vicar general. In Naples alone the Order at one time had eighteen convents of men and ten convents of women. It was in Spain and its possessions that the Order became most

numerous and most influential. Spanish authors have spoken of a convent in Ethiopia which contained nine thousand monks and three thousand brothers. The congregations were reforms introduced by zealous superiors into the houses of their provinces.

The first reform was introduced in Germany by the blessed Conrad of Prussia, provincial general, about 1389, because during the plague of 1349 discipline had singularly declined. The blessed Barthélemy de Saint-Dominique did the same in Italy. Others followed this example. One of the principal reforms was that of the Blessed Sacrament, established in France by Father Antoine Quien in 1636, at Marseilles. One may regard as affiliations or offshoots of the Order, less known and less numerous and often short-lived, the institutions of the knights of the Militia of Christ, of the Holy Rosary, of the Cross of Christ, and of Our Lady of Victory.

The great privileges which Gregory IX had granted the Order excited jealousy and opposition against it. By these extraordinary privileges the Pope gave the Dominicans, as well as the Franciscans, an authority and an influence of which the founder had not thought. They could preach and hear confessions wherever they saw fit, without being obliged to ask authorisation from parish priests or bishops; the latter were to treat the Dominicans as apostolic men. Honorius II created for the Order the important office of master of the sacred palace, so that a member of the Order might preach to the people of the Pope's household. Leo X entrusted to it the censorship of all books and all engravings appearing in Rome, and the master of the sacred palace has kept these functions to our own day and continues to be a Dominican.

A still greater obligation imposed by the Pope on the Dominicans was to seek out dangerous errors, to bring them into the light of day and to provoke their repression. It was Gregory IX who first charged the Dominicans of Toulouse with this difficult pursuit, because the Albigensian heresy was continuing to stir there in the darkness. The tribunal of the Inquisition obtained an immense preponderance in Spain, and it always had a Dominican at its head.

The Order rendered the greatest services through the heroic devotion of its members, who carried the Gospel into central Asia. A multitude of Dominicans, obeying the orders of the Popes, went to face privation, martyrdom and death in those inhospitable regions. It was also the Dominicans who had to win the populations of America to Christian truth at the time of its discovery, and if they did not succeed as might have been hoped, it was not for want of zeal and prudence on their part, but as a result of the insatiable avarice and the frightful inhumanity of the first conquerors, whom the Dominicans opposed with courage, but without success.

Besides the most profound of Christian thinkers, Saint Thomas Aquinas, the Order of Saint Dominic has produced many great men, such as Albert the Great, an author even more prolific than Saint Thomas; Vincent of Beauvais, whose universal learning astonishes the most learned; Saint Antoninus, archbishop of Florence; Saint Vincent Ferrer, Noël Alexandre and so many others.

Up to the beginning of the last century the Order had given the Church four Popes, sixty cardinals, a hundred and fifty archbishops and more than eight hundred bishops. It counts a great number of martyrs and many canonised and beatified confessors. The Order of Saint Dominic no doubt suffered the effects of the general decline of religious institutions in the last century, but today we see it taking on a new life and vigour. France has given its most generous blood to the Order of Friars Preachers. The restoration of this Order in all the purity of its primitive discipline goes hand in hand with the progress of the Catholic Church. Father Lacordaire reopened France to Saint Dominic; "it was important," he says, "that a little of this generous blood should flow under the old habit of Saint Dominic." Since his time French subjects have abounded in the religious houses of the Order; several of them are at this moment shedding a bright lustre on it, and the work of its reform is being accomplished under the direction of a French Master General. Only five years after it had reappeared in France, the Third Order, re-established by the Reverend Father Lacordaire, already

counted two thousand brothers, and their number has since increased considerably.

But France does not reappear alone at the holy Patriarch's banquet; everywhere the white scapular of Saint Dominic is to be seen: Italy, Belgium, America and England look with admiration on the new birth of this imperishable family, which follows the fortune of the Church and, like her, never dies.

### CULTE ET RELIQUES.

His body remained hidden for twelve years in the bosom of the earth; but at last it made itself known, both by a sweet odour exhaled from his tomb and by the miracles worked there; it was also noticed that the tomb sometimes visibly swelled and then sank down again. Pope Gregory IX allowed the body to be raised from the ground and translated to a more honourable place in the church at Bologna. This was done on 24 May in the year 1233, as is related in the Roman martyrology. Finally, the following year, on 12 July, the same Pontiff, who had had the honour of laying him in the ground, being informed of a considerable number of miracles which had been worked and were being worked every day, in all parts of Europe, through his intercession, issued the decree of his canonisation, setting his feast on 5 August, the eve of his death, so as to leave the 6th to the solemnity of the Transfiguration; and since then Pope Paul IV has moved it forward one more day and put it on the 4th, so that the 5th might be free for Our Lady of the Snows. In 1235 his precious relics were taken from the tomb in which they had been laid and kept in a coffin of larch wood. In 1383 his head was detached from the body and placed apart in a silver reliquary. This translation or elevation of his head is marked in some martyrologies on 15 February. In 1473 the sumptuous monument which adorns the church of the Dominicans of Bologna was raised to him.

To complete this biography we have made use of the Life of Saint Dominic by A.-C. Chirat, priest of the Third Order of Saint Dominic, and of the *Dictionnaire encyclopédique de la théologie catholique* by Goschler. — Cf. 1° among the hagiographers: Surius, Blessed Jordan, Brother Constantine, Father Humbert, Theodoric de Podio, Barthélemi, Nicolas Trevet, Father Touron, Father Jacques Echard, the R. P. Lacordaire, etc.; — 2° among the historians: Fleury, *Hist. ecclés.*; Leande Albertus, *de Viris illustribus*; Flaminius, *de Vita fratrum Ordin. prædic.*; Honorius III and Gregory IX, Bulls, Approvals of the Constitutions of the Order; Herman and Hélyot, *Hist. des Ordres relig.*; M. de Montalembert, *Étude sur le* XIII$^{e}$ *siècle*; — 3° among the panegyrists: St. Thomas Aquinas, *Sermo in festo S. Dominici*; Guillaume de Paris, Laselve, Biroat, Duneau, Lejeune, Senault, Du Jarry, Richard l'Avocat, Houdry, Bretteville, Texier, Nouet, Croiset, Anselme, Vivien Laboissière, Latour.

## Saint Euphrone[3] or Eufroy, Archbishop of Tours and Confessor (573)

Euphrone, sprung from a senatorial family and nephew of Saint Gregory, bishop of Langres (541), embraced the clerical state from his youth and gave the example of all the virtues and all good works. He succeeded Gonthaire in the government of the Church of Tours. His humility, his gentleness and his affability made him welcome to everyone.

He attended the third council of Paris and himself convoked the second council of Tours (566), at which Saint Prétextat of Rouen and Saint Germain of Paris came to sit, with many other bishops of those three provinces. A fire having devoured the greater part of the town of Tours and all its churches, Euphrone consoled his unhappy flock with the heart of a good Pastor, and his charity was their chief refuge. Two basilicas were rebuilt at his expense. He roofed the church of Saint-Martin with sheets of tin, in which he was helped by the munificence of King Clotaire I (497–561). He used his credit with King Caribert (561–567) to defend the town of Tours against the exactions of the tax collectors and to have the immunities of that town confirmed by royal authority. He blessed the oratory raised in honour of Saint Maure and Saint Britte, and was chosen with other bishops by the king of Austrasia, Sigebert I (561–575), to carry solemnly a piece of the true Cross to the monastery of Sainte-Radegonde at Poitiers.

After shining by the gift of miracles and by that of prophecy, he gave up his soul to God at the age of seventy, after seventeen years of episcopate. His successor was the illustrious Saint Gregory of Tours (539–593), whom the Church honours on 17 November.

His body was buried with honour in the church of Saint-Martin.

*Propre de Tours.*

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[1] *Vie des Saints de Franche-Comté*, vol. iv.

[2] Dom Piolin, *Histoire de l'Église du Mans*, vol. i; *Acta Sanctorum, ad diem* iv *aug.*; Pesche, *Dictionnaire de la Sarthe*, vol. v; Guillois, *Évangile en action*, vol. ii.

[3] The Blessed Reinier, born at Ravenna, had made profession at the monastery of Fonte Avellana. He was taken from it to occupy the see of Cagli, a suffragan bishopric of Urbino, in the Roman States. The difficulties he experienced in preserving the property of his Church, and the lawsuits he found himself obliged to sustain for that reason, had decided him to go and offer his resignation to Pope Alexander IV, when deputies from Spalatro in Dalmatia came to Rome to ask for him as archbishop. The Pope willingly granted him to them. He governed his church with much prudence, reformed his clergy and instructed his people with zeal; but the troubles which had obliged him to leave Cagli followed him to his new see; he found the properties of this church usurped as well; and as Dalmatia then depended on the Greek empire, he went to the emperor Manuel Comnenus to obtain his protection in recovering this property. The emperor received him favourably and authorised him to claim all the properties for which his church held titles. Back at Spalatro, Reinier went through the country to assure himself of the usurpations of which he complained. Arriving near Mount Massaron, which was inhabited by Slavonians, he was pursued by the multitude, who accused him of coming to strip them of their possessions, and who stoned him on 4 August 1180. His diocesans came to take away his body and buried it in the church of Saint-Benoît outside the walls of Spalatro. He is honoured as a martyr on the day of his death in Dalmatia and in the Order of the Camaldolese.

[4] Cf. *Analecta juris pontificii*, 35th number (November and December 1859).

[5] Others understand by this a province of Sweden; others, of Germany.

[6] A local tradition attests that it was at the sanctuary of Notre-Dame de Drecho, near Albi, that the vision of the blessed Virgin Mary took place.

[7] Alias: Eufroine, Eufraise.

# 5 August

## Martyrologies

### MARTYROLOGE ROMAIN.

At Rome, on the Esquiline hill[1], the dedication of the basilica of Our Lady of the Snows. 366. — In the same place, the execution of twenty-three blessed Martyrs who, during the persecution of Diocletian, were beheaded on the old Via Salaria and buried on the slope of the hill of the Cucumber. 304. — At Augsburg (Augusta Vindelicorum), a town of Bavaria, the birthday in heaven of Saint Afra, martyr, who, from the pagan she had been, was converted to Jesus Christ by the instructions of Saint Narcissus, bishop; having been baptised with all her household[2], she was burned for the faith of Jesus Christ. 304. — At Ascoli Piceno, in the March of Ancona, Saint Emygdius, bishop and martyr, who, ordained bishop by Saint Marcellus, pope, and sent to that place to preach the Gospel there, confessed Jesus Christ and received the crown of martyrdom under the emperor Diocletian. 303 or 304. — At Antioch, Saint Eusignius, a soldier, who at the age of a hundred and ten, reminding Julian the Apostate of the faith of the great Constantine, under whom he had fought, and reproaching him for having denied the piety of his fathers, was beheaded by order of that emperor. 362. — Further, in the same place, the holy martyrs Cantide, Cantidien and Sobel, Egyptians. — At Châlons-sur-Marne, Saint Memmie, a Roman citizen, who was consecrated bishop of that town by the apostle Saint Peter and brought the people entrusted to him to the knowledge of the truths of the Gospel. 126. — At Autun, Saint Cassien, bishop. 330. — At Teano (Teanum Sidicinum), a town of Italy in the Terra di Lavoro, Saint Paris, bishop. About 346. — In England, Saint Oswald, king and martyr, whose Acts the Venerable Bede, priest, has described[3]. 642. — The same day, Saint Nonna, mother of Saint Gregory of Nazianzus[4]. About 374.

## MARTYROLOGE DE FRANCE, REVU ET AUGMENTÉ.

In the diocese of Cambrai, Saint Jean XIX, confessor, bishop of Cambrai and Arras. 879. — In the diocese of Viviers, Saint Venance, bishop of that see and confessor. 544. — At Lobbes, in the Low Countries, Saint Abel, archbishop of Reims, apostle of the Belgian provinces of Liège and Hainaut. 751. — At Blois, memorial of Saint Viatre (Viator) of Tremble-Vif, first a monk of Micy or Saint-Mesmin, near Orléans, then a solitary in the heaths of the Sologne (Secolaunia), in the diocese of Blois. Middle of the 6th century. — In the diocese of Cambrai, Saint Thierry, confessor, bishop of Cambrai and Arras. 862. — At Saintes, Saint Frédulfe (Fredulphus), also called Fridulfe, Froult and Frion, confessor. The legend (Breviary of Saintes, of 1542) relates that one day a man named Constantin, needing the tool with which the salt-workers repair their salt-marshes and gather the salt, stole, to fashion it for that use, the gutter channel from the roof of the church of Saint-Froult (near Soubise, on the shores of the Ocean, not far from the mouth of the Charente). Armed with this instrument, he goes to his work; but all at once he is struck with blindness, and he is seen wandering, as in a labyrinth, through the thousand channels and the beds of his salt-marsh. The punishment was salutary: from then on this man never failed to come every year to the church of Saint-Froult to implore his pardon, until at last he obtained his cure[5]. 7th or 9th century. — In the diocese of Tarbes, translation of Saint Savin, confessor, mentioned in the martyrologies of 9 and 11 October. There was in the valley of the Lavedan (Hautes-Pyrénées, arrondissement of Argelès, near Lourdes) a Benedictine abbey (*S. Savinus prope Baregium*) dedicated under his invocation. Destroyed by the Saracens, this monastery was afterwards restored and endowed by Charlemagne. 8th century. — In the old small town of Châtres (Castris), today Arpajon, in the diocese of Versailles, and at Corbeil, in the same diocese, Saint Yon, priest and martyr, disciple of Saint Denis the Areopagite and apostle of the valley of the Orge (a small river of France, in Seine-et-Oise). After governing for several years the church he had founded in that country, he was arrested by the idolaters and beheaded by order of the prefect Julien. His relics are kept in the church of Saint-Clément at Arpajon and in that of Notre-Dame at Corbeil. He is named on 22 September in the Roman martyrology. 3rd century. — In the diocese of Autun, memorial of Saint Memmie, first bishop of Châlons-sur-Marne, mentioned in the Roman martyrology for this day. 126. — In the diocese of Saint-Flour, dedication of Notre-Dame des Neiges, and anniversary of the deliverance, through the help of Mary, of the town of Aurillac (Cantal), besieged by the heretics. — In the diocese of Paris, feast of Saint Yon, and memorial of Saint Memmie, mentioned above. — At Orléans, the blessed Roger le Fort, seventy-fifth bishop of that see and confessor. 1367. — In the diocese of Bourges, Saint Viatre of Tremble-Vif, mentioned above. — At Mechlin (Belgium), in the convent of the Carmelites, anniversary of the apparition of the most holy Virgin in the midst of all the brethren assembled. 1288. — At Petite-Forêt-de-Raismes (Nord, arrondissement of Valenciennes, canton of Saint-Amand-les-Eaux), in the diocese of Cambrai, Notre-Dame de Bonne-Espérance, a pilgrimage which owes its origin to the Jesuit college of Valenciennes, whose pupils placed a statue of Mary in the wood of Raismes. This sanctuary was destroyed in ’93; in recent times the parish priest has had a chapel raised there under the same title of Notre-Dame de Bonne-Espérance. 1625. — At Châlons-sur-Marne, Saint Pome, virgin, sister of Saint Memmie, first bishop of that see, named in the Roman martyrology for today. As the feast of this Virgin is kept more particularly on 8 August, we shall give her life on that day.

## MARTYROLOGES DES ORDRES RELIGIEUX.

Martyrology of the Basilians. — Saint Nonna, mother of Saint Gregory of Nazianzus, of the Order of Saint Basil. About 374.

Martyrology of the Premonstratensians. — At Rome, on the Esquiline hill, dedication of the basilica of Santa Maria ad Nives. 366. — The same day, the apparition of the blessed Virgin Mary, who showed Saint Norbert the white habit of the Institute of Prémontré in the chapel of Saint John the Baptist. 12th century.

## ADDITIONS FAITES D'APRÈS LES BOLLANDISTES ET AUTRES HAGIOGRAPHES.

At Rome, dedication by Pope Pius IV of the church of Our Lady of the Angels. This church, which once formed part of the thermae or baths of Diocletian, was made a cardinal's title, enriched with several indulgences, and given by the same Pope to the Carthusians, whom he took from their monastery of Rome called Holy Cross in Jerusalem, where today, in their place, are religious of the Order of Cîteaux. 1561. — At Augsburg, a town of Bavaria, Saint Afer and his companions, martyrs. According to tradition, Saint Afer was the uncle of Saint Afra of Augsburg, mentioned in the Roman martyrology for this day. Like her, he was converted by the Spanish bishop Saint Narcissus, as were many pagans, his companions. His feast has scarcely been kept except since the 12th century. 304. — At Galatz (Axiopolis), a town of Moldavia on the Danube, the holy martyrs Hirénée, Eracle and Datie, mentioned by Saint Jerome. — The holy martyrs Florian and Filistin, mentioned by Saint Jerome without further details. — In the ancient town of Septempeda, on whose ruins San Severino (Septempeda nova) stands today, in the March of Ancona, Saint Margaret, widow, surnamed *the Unshod*, because she carried austerity so far as never to use shoes. The Bollandists relate that her husband treated her inhumanly because, as she wore no shoes out of a spirit of mortification, she was taken for a beggar and a vagabond; but that our Saint obtained by her prayers that her husband should see her shod, although in reality she was not. They also relate the following fact: Margaret went very often to a place near Septempeda to confess her faults to a Father of the Order of Saint Dominic; her husband took it ill that his wife was absent so frequently and thereby neglected the care of her household. Now, to leave free course to the pious servant of Jesus Christ, an angel, taking the form and the manner of Margaret, himself attended to the cares of the household in her house, and thus removed every pretext for the husband's ill humour. Our Saint died at the age of seventy. After her death it was seen that she continually wore a nail driven into each of her heels, and under her clothes a hair shirt of the roughest kind. Her body is still kept today at San Severino. The Roman martyrology names her on 27 August. 1595.

## Saint Memmie[6], Confessor, First Bishop and Apostle of Châlons-sur-Marne

*126. — Pope: Saint Sixtus I. — Roman Emperor: Hadrian.*

*Christum sequi voluit; contemnenda docuit hæc corrupta.*

*He wished to follow Christ, and taught men to despise the corrupt things of the world. Prose of Saint Memmie.*

This most worthy prelate was a Roman, of the illustrious family of the Memmii, which, at the time of that city's sovereignty, gave it a great number of senators, consuls, generals and learned orators. He came into the world under the empire of Tiberius and was brought up by his parents in the worship of the false gods, the only religion they recognised. But Saint Peter having come to Rome in the reign of Claudius to proclaim there the Gospel of Jesus Christ, he was one of the first to open his eyes to the truth and to detest the superstition of idolatry, so as to enter the bosom of the Christian Church. Baptism was conferred on him by that Apostle, who had an extraordinary joy at seeing a man of this rank, allied to the first persons of the empire, submit to the yoke of the divine Majesty and make public profession of being the disciple of the crucified Man-God.

Faith having struck deep roots in his heart, and the love of God inflaming him more and more, the same Apostle judged him worthy to be the minister of the heavenly doctrine and to go and carry the Gospel to the Gentiles; so he ordained him priest and bishop and sent him into Gaul with Donatien, deacon, and Domitien, subdeacon. Memmie's humility persuaded him that he was not capable of so great a ministry, and that he ought rather to remain in Saint Peter's following, to profit by his instructions and example, than himself undertake the conversion of the infidels, of whose number he had been two or three years before; but charity and obedience prevailed in his mind over these sentiments of humility; and so, full of zeal and ardour for the conquest of souls, he set out joyfully from Rome with the two holy companions whom the Apostle had given

him. Yet, as he had to be tried, so that his virtue might become more solid and his fidelity appear with greater lustre, scarcely was he twenty miles from the city when Domitien, his subdeacon, was seized with a violent fever which carried him out of this world. This accident somewhat troubled the new missionary, and he thought that, being still so near Rome, he ought to retrace his steps to inform Saint Peter of it, so that he might give him another companion or put off the mission to another time, as he should judge most fitting.

Saint Peter consoled him in his grief and encouraged him to persevere; and as he held in his hands the keys of health and sickness, of life and death, as well as the power to bind and loose sinners, he took a few threads from the fringe of his cloak and, giving them to him, said: “Go, place this on the body of the dead man; God will restore him to life, and he will become, with you, an excellent labourer of the Gospel.” Memmie did not doubt the truth of this promise; he took this piece of fringe and set out at once with his deacon Donatien, who had come back with him. As soon as he had arrived at the place where he had left the dead man, he applied to him the relic of the holy Apostle, and at that very instant the dead man rose again and, having no remaining trace of illness, was able to continue his journey.

This great miracle inspired our holy Bishop with new courage and dispelled all the fears which the sight of his weakness and his small experience had previously given him. He crossed all the rest of Italy with Cisalpine Gaul and, having passed the mountains, came by way of Burgundy into Champagne and to the neighbourhood of Châlons. His journey was accompanied everywhere by new prodigies: on all sides he healed the blind, the dumb, the crippled and the sick afflicted with fevers; in short, no bodily infirmity could resist the power which his master Saint Peter, after Jesus Christ, had communicated to him. When he found himself near Châlons he learned by inspiration from heaven that this was the end of his journeys and that he was called to the conversion of this people. He therefore entered the town and began to preach there with apostolic vigour against the superstition of paganism, which, in adoring several gods, entirely destroyed the essence and the property of the Divinity, which can only be one. His deacon and his subdeacon laboured on their side to gain some ground over these idolaters; but, the time of their conversion not having yet come, all the efforts of these holy preachers were useless. They even saw themselves forced to leave Châlons through the mutiny of the people, who, unable to bear that anyone should speak against the divinities they were accustomed to adore, drove them out shamefully, with the threat of putting them to death in a most cruel manner if they were found again within the walls.

Saint Memmie then knew that the change of these blind men must be the fruit of his prayers and his tears, and that he had to merit a good success for his preaching by afflicting himself for those he wished to convert. And so, having found a league from the town a forest called Bruxerre[1], which its silence and solitude made suitable for the exercises of the inward man, he withdrew there with his companions; and having made himself a small rustic dwelling there with branches of trees, he began in it the life which the anchorites have since led in the deserts. There he deplored at every moment the misery and hardness of the pagans who refused the light which God’s goodness was sending them; there he pressed that infinite Mercy urgently that it might please it at last to touch their hearts and make them enter the ways of eternal salvation; and to obtain what he asked more promptly, he accompanied his prayers with vigils, fasts and many other macerations which his zeal and love of his neighbour inspired in him.

God at last granted his desires. Several persons informed of the gift he had of restoring health to the sick had recourse to him and implored his help. He received them with kindness and delivered them from the ailments with which they were afflicted. The cure of these first ones drew others to his desert to receive the same grace, and he granted it to them too; and by this means he became in a short time the refuge of all the unfortunate of the country. It happened at this same time that a young nobleman named Lampas, son of the governor of the province for the Romans, having urged his horse onto the bridge over the Marne called the bridge of Nau, was thrown into the river and, as no help could reach him, perished there miserably. So dreadful an accident threw his father into despair, and no other means was found of consoling him than to

call to him our holy Bishop, whose reputation was already spreading everywhere. The servant of God saw well that grace wished to use this occasion to begin to make his word fruitful in that town; so, without needing much pressing, he came as quickly as possible to find the governor. The consternation in which the latter was made him incapable of listening to long discourses: nor was our Saint one of those comforters whom Job calls *verbosos*, "great talkers." He said only a word to him, but a word that gave back life to his heart before giving back life to his son's body: "Do not grieve," he said to him; "the almighty Lord who sent me, and who alone is the God of heaven and earth, will raise your son to life and give him back into your hands in full health." This promise was quite new for pagans who had never heard speak of resurrection and who, according to the principles of the philosophy of the Gentiles, believed it entirely impossible. Yet they saw with their own eyes the fulfilment of what the holy Prelate had promised them: he had the body of the dead youth brought before him and, by the power of the sign of the cross, restored him to the state he was in before his fall. It is in memory of this prodigy that every year at Châlons, on the day after Pentecost, a solemn procession is made in which the shrine of Saint Memmie is carried onto the bridge of Nau; formerly it was incensed there. Today this no longer takes place. But when the shrine has arrived at that spot, the bishop or the dignitary who presides intones the *Te Deum*, the chanting of which continues on the way to the cathedral. So striking a miracle changed not only the mind of the governor but also that of all the inhabitants who heard of it. They repented of having driven from their walls so admirable a man, whom death obeyed as its sovereign. They came themselves to beg him to come back and share with them the heavenly doctrine he had come to bring them. Saint Memmie had a marvellous joy at this conversion; and, accompanied always by his subdeacon, he took the road back to the town, whose gates were opened to him in triumph. On his entry he gave sight to three blind men who came and presented themselves before him; he also healed three lepers and cast the devil out of the body of a possessed man. To preserve the memory of these two miracles, a great cross was raised on the very spot where they were worked, which gave its name to the gate of that quarter. Since that time it has been called the Porte Sainte-Croix. The same name has been given to the street.

The inhabitants, admiring the merits of the servant of God more and more, overwhelmed him with respect and affection; the governor begged him most urgently to take lodging in his palace; but he told them "that the only thing he expected of them, and which could give him any satisfaction, was that they should acknowledge the truth he was proclaiming to them, overthrow their idols, demolish their profane temples where they had committed so many abominations, and receive into their hearts the faith of Jesus Christ." They listened to this proposal quite willingly, and the Saint, who wished to leave to the Saviour's grace the time to dispose their minds entirely to so surprising a change, went back in the evening to the solitude from which he had come. His absence only increased their desire to possess him; the inhabitants, unable to bear that their town should be deprived of the divine preacher who held in his hands the remedy for all their bodily and spiritual ills, came in crowds the very next day to his desert to beg him to come back. They protested to him that they would entirely renounce the worship of their false divinities, and even offered him one of their temples to be purified and changed into a Christian church. The Saint, seeing their devotion, entered Châlons for the third time and, having purified that place of abomination by the ceremonies of the Church, dedicated it under the name of Saint-Pierre du Mont, although Saint Peter was still alive, as Saint Savinien afterwards did at Sens and Saint Clement at Metz. It was then that he began to instruct these idolaters in earnest on all the points of our religion; he did so with such success that the governor, with his wife and his son, and most of the inhabitants received Baptism from his hands and from those of his subdeacon.

From that time his life was nothing but a continual series of miracles following one upon another. He delivered another possessed man, healed a lame man by the laying on of his hands, and restored the use of his limbs to a paralytic, saying to him these words of Saint Peter: "Silver and gold I have none; but what I have I give you. In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, arise and walk." He applied himself at the same time to refining the morals of these new Christians, to ridding them little by little of the bad customs they had kept

from paganism, to giving them a taste for the solid maxims of the Gospel, and to making them perfect disciples of Jesus Christ through contempt of temporal things and desire for eternal goods.

Memmie and his two companions can no longer suffice for their sublime ministry. The harvest grows ever more abundant. He must think of giving himself worthy fellow-workers.

The holy Pontiff, with profound wisdom, does not ask Peter for new labourers. He believes that to ensure the perpetuity of the faith in Châlons, to strengthen it there for ever and to implant it in the very heart of the inhabitants, he must seek his fellow-workers among them. He chooses young men of the town itself in whom he discerns happy dispositions, who are bound by a thousand ties to the mass of the people: by their birth, their parents, their kinsfolk, their friends, their customs, their language. By this they are infinitely better fitted to exercise a powerful influence; and if persecution should remove them for a time from their native land, they would soon return to it by the force of nature. Memmie forms them into a college of clerics, which he establishes in the solitude of Buxerre. There, far from the world and under the eyes of God alone, he instructs them with greater care in the doctrine of salvation, exercises them in the practice of the Christian virtues, of which there is no example in all antiquity, and forms them for the functions of the sacred ministry. When he judges them sufficiently prepared, he lays his hands on them and ordains some subdeacons, others deacons, and others priests.

To assign to each the portion of the flock he must feed by word and example, he institutes in Châlons seven titles or parishes, independently of the two temples he had already dedicated to the true God: four in the city, and the other three in the suburb or great island and in the townships, where he appointed seven priests and as many deacons, after the pattern of Rome.

The first of these titles, which is beside Saint-Pierre au Mont, was named the mother church, baptismal church or baptistery, in honour of Saint John the Baptist, forerunner of Jesus Christ.

Anciently, baptism was given only in this church. It was the bishop himself who performed this function on the vigils of Easter and Pentecost. In the course of the year, when there was urgent need to baptise, the priest of each parish went to this same church and conferred baptism there on those in his charge.

The second title was dedicated in honour of the blessed Mary in Vaux, where there was an underground chapel in which the statue of the Virgin who was to give birth was worshipped.

The third title was that of Sainte-Croix, which is said to have been that old church which, having fallen into ruins, was restored and has since borne the name of Saint-Éloi. Nevertheless the street still keeps the name of Sainte-Croix, both on account of this church and on account of the fine cross which the people of Châlons had erected at the entrance of that street, on the same spot where Saint Memmie gave sight to three blind men.

The fourth title was consecrated in honour of Saint James. This is the whole quarter now called the parish of Saint-Loup. These are the four titles which were in the city, or town.

The fifth title was established in the great island, or suburb of the market castle, which was called in Latin *suburbium, seu macelli castrum*. It was dedicated in honour of Saint Andrew. It would later bear the name of another saint. Yet Saint Andrew would always remain its original patron. Its extent began at the bridge of Mau and ended at that of Nau. This suburb was formerly inhabited for the most part by merchants. The sixth title that Memmie instituted was in the township of Nau and had as its parish church Sainte-Madeleine. This was the whole quarter that was called the parish of the Trinity. It comprised within its bounds all the streets and houses from the bridge of Nau to that of the Marne. There stood several very ancient monuments: the temple of the sibyls, the college of the druids and the échevinage, or praetorium, where they administered justice. It is there that the finest monument of Châlons would later be built.

Lastly, the seventh title was fixed at a church built in the township of Marne, which bore the name of the Holy Innocents and afterwards that of Saint-Sulpice.

These seven churches or parishes were served by seven priests and as many deacons. The dean of these priests was attached to the church of Saint-Jean, as the first parish; he was called archpriest. He was head and superior of the six others. Likewise the dean of the deacons was at the head of the deacons and was called archdeacon. The service of the priests extended to spiritual matters; that of the deacons to the temporal needs of the old, the orphans, the poor and the sick or infirm.

This archpriest and this archdeacon had authority only within the town and in the suburbs of Châlons.

As for Memmie, he reserved to himself the basilica of Saint-Pierre aux Monts. There he gathered all the Christians, who came there to render to the true God a free and pure worship and to hear the word of life which flowed from his mouth like a river of honey. This is the cradle of the Christian religion in Châlons and the original seat of the bishopric. The faith having spread more and more, the church of Saint-Pierre in course of time became too small to hold all the people. Hence the origin of the cathedral.

When Memmie had thus organised the spiritual administration of Châlons and had unburdened himself of the load that weighed on him onto a native clergy, young and full of ardour, he did not think of enjoying some rest. He found new and more abundant food for his zeal. He turned his eyes to the neighbouring countryside, which formed the civitas of Châlons and was still covered with the shadows of death.

To bring them the light of faith more quickly, he divided them likewise into parishes and established an archpriest and an archdeacon in the chief places of the various districts.

The chief place was always designated by the Latin word *pagus*, and it was always a considerable fief, often a county. *Pagus* and *comitatus* are sometimes synonyms in our ancient records; each chief place or *pagus* had its governor or count, according to the capitularies of Charles the Bald in 853.

Memmie divided his diocese into four chief places, whose names are these: *Perthisius pagus*, Perthes; *S tadiensis pagus*, Astenay, which later took the name of Sainte-Ménehould; *Vertudisus pagus*, Vertus; and *Camisiciacus pagus*, Cheminon.

The rural archpriest, or centurion, was at the head of a hundred priests, or ten tens of priests; the rural archdeacon had under him the same number of deacons.

The dean, under the orders of the archpriest, oversaw ten priests in his district. He usually resided in a township, *vicus*. The title of archpriest successively gave way to that of archdeacon, which alone subsisted until the annihilation of all civil and religious administration in 1793.

Memmie is not content with thus dividing his diocese into four archpresbyterates; he hastens to go himself to preach the Gospel there. Being a Roman, Memmie had nothing more urgent than to visit the Roman soldiers, his fellow-countrymen, who were stationed at Vitry, and to deploy all his zeal to draw them out of the darkness of paganism. Touched by his discourses, his virtues and his miracles, the legionaries renounced their idols, purified their temple and consecrated it to the true God. The inhabitants of Vitry were so filled with gratitude for the inestimable gift of the faith he had brought them, with admiration for his virtues and with confidence in his power with God, that they placed their church under his invocation.

The Perthois then had as its capital Perthes, a very considerable city, which gave its name to the province and was as it were the presidial court to which all the cases of the country were brought. Perthes had as its governor a lord named Athila. Memmie goes to that town and proclaims the Gospel there with such fruit that the lord gives him his own palace as an outright gift, so that he may establish clerics there to celebrate the holy mysteries, and assigns them several lands for their support.

Memmie, to give the converted pagans the means of fulfilling the duties imposed by the divine religion they have embraced, consecrates in the very palace that Athila had given him a church which he dedicates under the invocation of Mary, Queen of the Angels, to whom he has a singular devotion. He brings from his college of Buxerre clerics whom he ordains priests, charges them with keeping this new people in the faith, gives them for their needs the lands the lord of Perthes had granted him, and sets at their head Léger (Leodegarius), his disciple most distinguished for the holiness of his life, for his zeal for religion and even for his miracles. Léger was the first rural archpriest.

The tireless Pontiff worked with as much zeal and fruit for the conversion of the three other archpresbyterates, of Joinville, of Astenay (later called Sainte-Ménehould), and of Vertus. His renown prepared the way everywhere; he had only to present himself to gather an abundant harvest.

Memmie came safely through the very stormy period of the reign of Nero, in which three members of his family had the glory of sealing their faith with their blood. As the governor of Châlons and the inhabitants, as well as the surrounding peoples, were Christians, no one was found to carry out the tyrant’s bloody orders.

During this terrible storm Memmie, without moderating his zeal, nevertheless took the precautions prudence can inspire. If Memmie succeeded in escaping the persecution, he could not avoid a great misfortune, which he felt extremely and which served to make his virtue shine forth the more.

Lampas, governor of Châlons, to whom he was bound by such sweet ties, breathed his last in his arms and went to receive the reward of his good works. It was not given him to raise him to life a second time. All the people wept for so excellent a governor. Memmie paid him the funeral honours due to his rank, and above all to his merits. He had set apart a particular place for burying the Christians. But he did not wish Lampas to be buried in the common cemetery; he raised a magnificent tomb for him on a hillside. There is still near Châlons a district called the mont Lampas, and there is a place there called the Mausoleum. Medals and ancient remains were found there in 1837. Memmie, after thirty years of episcopate, wished to fulfil a great duty. He went to Rome in the year 96 to give an account of the administration of his diocese to the visible head of the Church, who was Saint Clement, third successor of Saint Peter, to steep himself afresh at the centre of Catholic unity, to warm himself again at the hearth of apostolic zeal, and even to lay down the burden that weighed too heavily on his shoulders, weakened by age. But the holy Pontiff of the eternal city is satisfied with his immense labours and sends him back to Châlons to continue them with new ardour. He even gives him a wider mission; he charges him to go and evangelise the neighbouring nations, which are still sitting in the shadow of death.

It is this second mission that some authors have taken for the first.

Memmie returns to Châlons inflamed with a more ardent zeal for the salvation of souls and invested with greater powers. He is no longer content to proclaim the Gospel in the province which had first been committed to his care; he pushes his apostolic journeys further.

He preaches the faith to the peoples near the forest of the Ardennes and on the banks of the Meuse. Near Sedan there is a place where his name has remained, called Saint-Menge. Far from seeking the sweetness of rest, he runs unceasingly to meet new fatigues. Dangers and obstacles seem to multiply beneath his steps; but his zeal is kindled more and more. How he would wish to carry the torch of faith to the ends of the universe and to sacrifice himself a thousand times for the salvation of his brethren! He travels through the diocese of Langres and everywhere obtains abundant fruits of salvation. This tireless apostle advances, in 120, as far as the country of Liège, proclaims the good news in the town, which he converts, and where he consecrates to God a temple under the name and protection of the first martyr, Saint Stephen.

When he had strengthened this town in the faith, he left there some of his disciples to continue the work he had so happily begun, and came back to Châlons.

Some authors claim that he went to preach the Gospel as far as Spain, where his name is held in veneration.

There was no virtue that did not shine admirably in Saint Memmie. He had a constant and unshakeable faith, a confidence in God that no adversity could weaken, a perfect and most pure charity which made him look in all things to the interests of the glory of Jesus Christ. He loved prayer and solitude, and when he had spent whole days preaching to the idolaters, instructing the new faithful, administering the sacraments of Baptism and Confirmation and celebrating the holy Mysteries publicly, he withdrew to it eagerly, so as to draw from prayer and communion with God supernatural strength to continue his functions holily without detriment to his own spiritual advancement. In these exercises of piety he reached an extreme old age, since it is asserted that he was thirty-two when he received episcopal consecration and that he was bishop for no less than eighty years. Seeing therefore that the end of his life was near and that his weakness no longer allowed him to discharge his functions, he laid down his bishopric and the burden of his church on Donatien, his former deacon, whom he designated as his successor. The treasure he bequeathed him was not considerable: it consisted only of a wooden crozier and a few other ornaments of the same value; but he left him in compensation admirable examples of virtue, which served to perfect the holiness he already possessed in an excellent degree. At last he gave up his soul to God in the manner one could expect of so great a servant of Jesus Christ. It was in the year 126, under the pontificate of Sixtus I and the empire of Hadrian.

His sacred body was buried in his oratory of Buxerre, which he had never abandoned during his whole life; and as many miracles were worked at his tomb, the Christians of Châlons, who were his children in Jesus Christ, had a very fine church built there under the name of the Apostle Saint Peter, to whom they were indebted for their own apostle. Later, the miracles having continued and the pilgrimage of Saint Memmie having become very celebrated, this church changed its name and took that of the same Saint Memmie, or Menge.

## CULTE ET RELIQUES.

In the year 633 there was at Châlons and in its neighbourhood so great a drought that all the waters had dried up and the earth was reduced to extreme barrenness. Recourse was had to God through the intercession of Saint Memmie, and on the 5th of the month of May, at daybreak, at about four o'clock, the ground where the church is built and the holy body is buried opened of itself in the form of a well forty feet deep. This prodigy caused no small astonishment to all the people; but the water which spouted up immediately afterwards over this opening and soaked the ground all around gave a new subject of wonder and a desire to know the cause of this marvel. They therefore dug beside the miraculous well and found that this spring came from the coffin of our holy bishop, which was full of very clear water and enclosed his sacred bones, no longer covered with skin and flesh, but so well joined together and in so fair an arrangement that it was evident they had not been preserved in this state without a particular protection of divine Providence. Then all those present, after crying "Miracle!" for some time, offered prayers to God in thanksgiving for the favour they had just received from His mercy.

Many miracles have been worked at this admirable sepulchre: for the possessed have been delivered there, the blind given sight, the sick healed, and all kinds of unfortunate people relieved. Saint Gregory of Tours relates, in the book of the Glory of the Confessors, that he was a witness of the power of Saint Memmie in the person of one of his servants who, travelling in his train, was stopped at Châlons by a violent fever accompanied by vomiting and other distressing symptoms. His master came to pray for him at the sepulchre of this blessed bishop, and that very night the sick man found himself perfectly cured, so that he rose in the morning in perfect health. The college of clerics founded by Saint Memmie became a religious community around which dwellings came to cluster. We think that this is the origin of the abbey and village of Saint-Memmie. The abbey was destroyed in 855 by the Normans, together with its church. Both were rebuilt, but the church was smaller. It is probably the one still to be seen today beside the tomb of Saint Memmie. In

863 Charles the Bald gave orders to open the sepulchre and raise the body of Saint Memmie from the ground. In 1065, the old patrimony of the abbey having been given to the chapter of Saint-Étienne, the Canons wished to possess the Saint's body. The bishop having given orders for the translation to take place in 1066, the few monks still remaining in the poor abbey and the inhabitants of the township of Saint-Memmie vigorously opposed his undertaking. But soldiers came to invade, pillage and lay waste the monastery, carried off the Saint's body by force of arms and took it at once to the cathedral. In 1077 Pope Gregory VII had the body returned to the abbey. On 8 June 1318 the body was raised from the ground and placed in a rich shrine of pure silver, with that of Saint Pome, his sister. The shrine was then set in a spacious niche above the high altar. In 1450 and in 1543 the religious were obliged to put the shrines in safety because of the wars and the thefts that follow them. They deposited them in a house called the petit Saint-Memmie, which belonged to them. It was situated at Châlons, at one of the corners formed by the rue Sainte-Marguerite and the rue Basse-Saint-Jean. In 1624 took place the most celebrated translation of the relics of Saint Memmie and of his two companions. It was accompanied by a great number of miracles. From then on the cult of Saint Memmie became more and more celebrated, and his relics were asked for on all sides for the consecration of churches. In 1793 the shrine of Saint Memmie was seized, but the relics were preserved from all profanation: they were buried in the cemetery and taken out of the ground in 1795 under the eyes of the ecclesiastical authority. They were then enclosed in a shrine of gilded wood which still exists today. In 1814, at the time of the invasion, the relics were carried to the convent of the nuns of the Congregation, where they remained until 8 May 1817, when they were given back to the parish of Saint-Memmie.

To compose this biography we have made use of the *Discours sur saint Memmie* by the R. P. Charles Rapine, of the *Beautés de l'histoire de la Champagne* by the abbé Boitel, and of local notes supplied by M. l'abbé Bégin, canon of Châlons.

## Saint Cassien, Bishop of Autun

*355. — Pope: Saint Liberius. — Roman Emperor: Julian the Apostate.*

> *Cum te Deum meum quxro, vitam beatam guxro, guxram te, ut vivat anima mea.*
>
> *When I seek You, my God, I seek a happy life; I will seek You, then, so that my soul may live.*
>
> *Saint Augustine.*

Cassien is one of the purest renowns of his age; one of those men great in heaven and on earth who have filled the Church with the fame of their holiness, their extraordinary virtues and the report of their miracles, and whose cult, famous from the remotest antiquity, has always been spread far and wide, always dear to the faithful, and attested by all the ecclesiastical writers, by all the martyrologies and by the liturgies of several dioceses.

The school of Alexandria, having become Christian, was labouring to communicate the treasure of the faith to the other schools of the empire and even of the whole world. Saint Pantaenus had been seen making his way towards India to convert the Brahmins. The traditions of our Churches have kept a vague but incontestable memory of the missionaries who set out from Egypt to come into Gaul to combat the errors of the Druids and the heresies which the mingling of their philosophy with some truths borrowed from Christianity had brought forth. The most illustrious of all these missionaries is Cassien. The original Acts of this Saint's episcopate have probably perished; but it is known that his memory always remained surrounded with great lustre. The immense veneration of which he was the object, the throng of pilgrims at his tomb and the marvels worked through his intercession tell us that the ancients regarded him as one of the most illustrious apostles of Gaul. His reputation was so great, his cult so celebrated and so widespread, that his life was written in prose and in verse. He must have left very great memories.

Cassien, who came into our regions as a missionary bishop, was born at Alexandria in Egypt of noble and wealthy parents. His education, entrusted to the holy bishop Zonis, whom others call Zenon or Théon, was eminently Christian. And so from his tenderest years he gave himself entirely to God, whom he loved with all his heart, says the historian of his life. Faith and piety, sown early in his young soul and cultivated by skilful hands, struck such deep roots there that neither the pull of example, nor the thousand seductions of a pagan life, nor the fury of the great and last persecution could shake them. He spent long vigils in prayer, invoking the martyrs, asking through their intercession the grace to practise their virtues, the strength to imitate their courage and the happiness of sharing their lot. Soon two dominant virtues showed themselves in him in a high degree, charity towards his neighbour and zeal for the glory of God, which, for that matter, are fused in great apostolic souls into an admirable unity. Not believing that he was permitted to be rich for himself alone, he spread benefits around him, freed his slaves and, taking Saint Hilarin as his associate, created a kind of hospice where poor travellers were welcomed with touching kindness. With his own hands he washed their feet, according to the precept and example of the Saviour, served them at table and cared for them in their illnesses. Besides the relief he lavished on the suffering or needy members of Jesus Christ, the worship of God and the salvation of souls also occupied him. He had a church built, says the legend, in the town of Orthe, endowed it richly and placed a numerous clergy there to serve it. When the building was finished, he consecrated it to God under the title of Saint Lawrence. It was the illustrious martyr himself who had asked this of him in a mysterious vision. Already Cassien deserved that heaven should enter into communication with him.

Meanwhile his reputation never ceased to grow: people spoke of his holiness and of his admirable works not only in the place where he lived but throughout the whole province: *In tota Ægypti provincia*. His name was on every lip, and admiration of his virtues in every heart. People delighted in extolling his tender and compassionate charity and the noble and holy use he made of his riches. All eyes were drawn by so new a spectacle; for paganism had not accustomed the world to such examples. In short, such was soon the esteem, love and veneration of the people for Cassien that the town of Orthe wished to have him as its bishop. The admirable Christian, whose profound humility surpassed even his eminent merit, frightened by the weight of the episcopate, refused with a holy obstinacy. But the faithful arrived in crowds. Men, women, children, old people, all cried out at once as they rushed towards him: “Cassien bishop! Cassien bishop!” Nothing less than this kind of violence done him by a whole town was needed to overcome his long resistance. Having become bishop, that is to say pastor, teacher and father, he used all the rest of his fortune to help the poor, aspiring to no other treasure than the one he was laying up in heaven for eternity. But while feeding with material bread the flock entrusted to his care, he assiduously distributed to it the spiritual bread of Gospel doctrine; and thanks to his active solicitude, discipline, purity of morals and piety flourished in his Church. For his lessons were listened to, because his examples spoke louder still; and his labours became marvellously fruitful, because his fervent prayers in the silence of the night drew down the heavenly dew upon them. Besides, everything in him combined to win hearts: a gentle word, a calm and affable manner, a countenance of majestic serenity and perfect beauty, reflecting a soul more beautiful still, beautiful as an angel, says the author of his life. He never grieved anyone; on the contrary, everywhere his presence brought contentment, peace and joy.

Meanwhile the most terrible of the persecutions had just struck its last blows, and the holy bishop Zonis had been among the victims sacrificed for the name of Jesus Christ. Cassien gathered up with pious love and affectionate respect the body of his former master, the father of his soul; and these venerated remains, which had received a second baptism, the baptism of blood, a double consecration, that of holiness and that of martyrdom, he buried in the church where seventeen priests and a deacon already rested, who had also died, but in an earlier persecution, for their faith and for their God. From then on he commemorated him every day and carried his name to the altar of the divine sacrifice. These Christians, so fervent and so strong in faith, were at the same time full of tenderness: they did not forget their friends or their benefactors. For the piety

which opens souls to the love of God opens them also to the love of neighbour, to all fine and generous sentiments, to all memories, to all legitimate affections; and it even purifies them, supernaturalises them and sanctifies them. It is the sweet and faithful guardian of gratitude and friendship; it keeps in all the freshness of their first days these two daughters of the heart, which too often fade and perish very quickly when religion does not come to their help to preserve them by blessing them and supernaturalising them.

Cassien had aspired to the glory of giving his blood too for the Gospel; and one might say, if it were permitted to compare two such different ambitions, that the palms of the victors would not let him sleep[1]. Above all since the glorious death of the holy pontiff who had carried off half of his soul, all his desires and all his prayers had turned still more keenly towards martyrdom. Until then he had been able to nourish this heroic hope; but he had to renounce it. Peace had just been restored to the Church, and the emperor was a Christian. At any price, however, he wished to suffer for the faith and to offer the divine Master greater sacrifices than those of continual prayer, a pure heart, the daily works of Christian piety and charity, the efforts of the most persevering zeal and the most active devotion to the salvation of the little people entrusted to his care. The ordinary labours of an episcopate that was laborious but tranquil, the care of a few souls entrusted to his solicitude, did not seem to him painful enough, meritorious enough, worthy enough of the divine Shepherd who had spent His life running after so many stray sheep and had shed for them His sweat and His blood. Cassien's great soul aspired higher, embraced a vaster horizon, felt as it were the need of a more generous and more sublime devotion. He needed the fatigues and dangers of an extraordinary mission, peoples to be conquered on distant shores, in unknown lands: he needed the apostolate.

For a long time he examined and reflected in the secret of his heart; for a long time he questioned the divine will in prayer. At last, in his intimate communications with heaven, he heard that voice of God, at once gentle and strong, which the Saints know how to understand and which enlightens them, draws them and subdues them; he saw, beyond all possible doubt, that Providence wished to make of him a missionary bishop, an Apostle. Thus his desire was going to become a reality, a duty. "I shall go, then," he said to himself, "I shall go in search of infidel nations, and I shall find, if not perhaps the bloody and instantaneous martyrdom which God has refused me and of which I was not worthy, at least the martyrdom of every day, by which I shall pour out at every moment some drops of my life with my sweat. Let us go: God wills it." As soon, indeed, as he was fully persuaded that this holy thought came from heaven, he clung to it with all the strength of his soul and thought only of carrying it out. But first he prayed again to know the place where divine Providence, to which he offered himself as a docile though wretched instrument, would deign to employ the efforts of his zeal. At last one day it was revealed to him that Gaul was to be the scene of his apostolic labours.

From then on nothing prevented him from making known and executing the great design he had long nourished in secret. Having therefore gathered several of his colleagues in the episcopate and all his clergy, he spoke: "Heaven," he said, "has inspired in me the resolution to leave my country, my family and my Church, to go across the seas into the vast lands inhabited by the Gauls and the Sicambri, to proclaim the word of the Gospel." At these words, struck with astonishment, understanding nothing of a decision which seemed to them strange and without motive, and fearing above all to lose so holy a bishop, they all interrupted him sharply: "What!" they cried, "does your Church not call for your care, and does it not need you? Does your zeal find nothing more to do here? And what has your country done to you, that it no longer has any charm for you, any right to your love, any share in the works of your devotion? Have you no devoted neighbours left, no affectionate friends, that you abandon these places which saw you born and which nourished you?" Cassien answered in a deeply felt tone, with a voice moved but firm, with a grave but gentle and modest air: "Our Lord has said that whoever for love of Him leaves his house, his family and his fields shall receive a hundredfold even here below and shall have eternal life besides; that whoever does not know how to renounce everything cannot be His disciple." No one dared reply. All, yielding to these high motives

of faith and subdued by the irresistible ascendancy of a great heart, laid down their arms and could only admire so much virtue and say: “God’s will be done! Go, since heaven commands it.” Thus the same words of the Gospel which, in the same places, had sent Saint Antony flying to the desert, sent us Saint Cassien.

The new apostle, having no more to contend with, then and there addresses a moving farewell to his venerable brethren, takes with him two priests, Domitien and Didyme, two deacons, Orian and Néonas, with seven clerics in minor orders, all like himself in the prime of life, all animated with that supernatural zeal and courage that make the missionary, and prepares to depart. A heavenly joy, the joy of a great sacrifice accomplished, shone on his brow. But at the last moment his heart had to sustain a very hard assault. For one could not believe, says the biographer, what the mourning of the clergy and the whole town was at the moment of parting. Nothing was seen but tears, nothing heard but groans, lamentations and sobs. All said, weeping: “Tender and good father, why do you leave your children orphans thus? Who will have for us henceforth the assiduous and vigilant care you lavished on us? Who will pray for us? Who will instruct us? Who will direct us in the way of salvation, when we no longer have you, you our guide and our light? Good shepherd, what! you abandon this flock which you have long fed and which so loved to live under your keeping and to walk under your guidance! And you leave it to go into a distant land which we have never seen and of which we have scarcely heard! Ah! what will become of you? You are lost to us for ever.” The man of God was certainly not insensible to the heart-rending complaints of this good people; but if his heart was deeply touched, his courage was not weakened nor his resolution shaken. Soaring, raised and sustained by faith, in a higher region where nothing earthly could reach him, and knowing how to set, when necessary, the love of God far above love of country and family, above all human affections, even the most legitimate, the holiest and the dearest, he answered the tender complaints of the weeping crowd with sublime complaints: “What are you doing?” he said. “Why do you trouble my heart with your tears?” He wished to go on, but his emotion betrayed him and stopped the words on his lips. He could only give a fatherly blessing to this spiritual family, so beloved, so loving and so desolate. Then, having recovered himself a little, he added: “Fear nothing for us, for God who sends us will Himself be of the journey and will accompany us everywhere.” And he embraced his clergy, bathing them in his tears. Yet a supernatural joy shone in his moist eyes: the sweetest and at the same time the noblest and most sublime sentiments of earth and of heaven at once softened and exalted his heart of bishop, pastor and father, his great soul of an apostle. We read in the Acts of the Apostles that Saint Paul, after giving his last recommendations and his last farewells to the chief representatives of the Church of Ephesus, at the moment of embarking for new regions to which his zeal called him, knelt down to pray with the faithful, his spiritual children. And then all shed abundant tears, falling on his neck and embracing him. They were grieved above all at a word they had just heard. The Apostle had said to them: “You will see me no more.” And they accompanied him very sadly to the ship.

After letting fall from his lips the last words we have just heard and mingling his tears with the tears of his people, the Saint made his way with his travelling companions to the vessel ready to leave port. When he was alone with the worthy fellow-workers who were to share with him the fatigues and dangers, the sacrifices, the devotion and the merits of a distant apostolate, he said to them, to strengthen them at the moment of the final farewell to their native land, when nature suffers and groans and the heart beats harder and seems to want to attempt a last assault on the supernatural side of the soul: “The sovereign and almighty master, our help and our protector, will always be with us. Courage then, my brothers, my beloved children! Let us go! Into God’s keeping!” Then, as the ship began to move away from the shore of his homeland, he added, raising his eyes to heaven with an inspired air: “Lord, open Yourself before us the way in which we are going to walk, direct our steps in the paths of peace, keep us under the shelter of Your wings and lead us for the glory of Your great and holy name, which deserves to be known, praised and glorified throughout the whole earth and to the ends of the world.” The priests and the young clerics all answered: “Amen!” Then Cassien, raising his hands, blessed them, saying: “Lord Jesus, preserve Your servants who put all their trust in You!” And already the land was fleeing far from them. It was the eve of the calends of April (31 March), probably

about the year 320. — So we still see in our own day a bishop, with a few priests likewise, a few clerics and a few catechists, intrepid missionaries whom the ever-fruitful womb of the Church brings forth and whom her inexhaustible charity nourishes, go on board a ship to seek, even in the depths of another hemisphere under new skies, inhospitable coasts or a few islets cast amid the immense solitudes of the Ocean, and plant there the cross, the cross that makes of the savage a man, a Christian, a son of God, an heir of the heavenly kingdom.

The voyage of Cassien and his companions lasted six months, because they made it as apostles, sowing the word of God everywhere along their way, destroying idols, administering baptism, opening the gate of heaven to a numerous people in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, visiting the tombs of the martyrs in every town and carrying away precious relics for their consolation and the salvation of souls. At last, after travelling along part of the African shores, escaping with divine protection from the hands of the infidels and coming safe and sound out of all the dangers of land and sea, they landed happily at Marseilles. On touching the longed-for shore towards which, says the pious legend, Jesus Christ had directed the course of their ship, they fell on their knees to give thanks to the divine Master.

But the apostolic band did not think that this town was to be the goal of its long pilgrimage. It aspired to the centre of Gaul, where it thought Christianity was less known; and, always under the guidance of the angel of the Lord, it turned its steps towards Autun, drawn no doubt by the reputation of that famous city, the centre of the old druidism and still covered at that time with pagan temples. Cassien judged that it was there, rather than in any other town of the land of the Celts, that he should deploy his zeal: that at the outset of his apostolic labours he should go and draw, on this soil bathed in the blood and consecrated by the relics of Saint Symphorien, inspirations of piety, faith and courage, kindle his evangelical ardour and seek heavenly support for the success of his mission. And so, scarcely had he arrived when he was seen making his way to the martyr's tomb. "He went," says the historian B. Goujon, "to the very place where Saint Symphorien had suffered death and passion, and entered the oratory which the Christians had already built there, to make his prayer."

It is there that, humbly prostrate, he never ceased offering and commending his work to the illustrious Saint, the protector and glory of the Church of the Aedui; there that the days passed for him like hours; there, near those sacred remains, that he seemed to have fixed his dwelling, asking God from morning to evening and during long vigils, through the merits of the young victim sacrificed on that very soil, to bless the town which had given him to earth and to heaven, and to open the eyes of the poor blind people it still contained in great numbers. Who will tell us the rapture of his ecstasies during his fervent prayers in the little sanctuary and on the tomb of Saint Symphorien, the fervour of his prayers, the keenness of his desires, the ardour of his longings? But how can we sound the mysteries of heaven in the depths of an apostle's soul? Thus did the pious and devoted missionary sanctify the first days after his arrival at Autun, persuaded that he could do nothing unless he first won to his interests the sovereign Master of hearts and the Saints, our protectors with Him. Meanwhile Rhétice, having learned that a holy man, a bishop, had just arrived from the East, went at once to find him in the oratory of Saint-Symphorien. And when Cassien, at this first meeting and before beginning his evangelical labours, offered him his services and his co-operation, the illustrious pontiff, already informed of and struck by all that he had been told of the stranger, received him with profound respect, with great honours and pious joy, to the singing of hymns and sacred canticles, not forgetting to give him the kiss of the Saints, the fraternal embrace, as to a dear and venerable colleague who seemed to come to him from heaven to second him in the exercise of the pastoral ministry. The two men of God understood and appreciated each other at once. Together they gave thanks to heaven which had united them; together they laboured for the conversion of the city. Rhétice, happy to have found such a collaborator, cherished him as a friend, as a brother, as a support sent by Providence for his old age. Learning every day to esteem him more, he now had only one desire, that of being able to keep him, both for his own consolation and above all for the

good of his dear Church of Autun. A friend, a saint, is so great a treasure! But after working with the illustrious prelate for several years and greatly advancing the work of God, Cassien, whose devouring zeal always demanded new food, said to him one day: “Most holy brother, I have formed the plan of carrying the Gospel into Britain: here Jesus Christ is now known, while there, there is a people that does not yet know Him.” Thus Cassien wished to go in search of the Gallic race everywhere and to pursue druidism to the limits of the world then known. He had left Egypt with this idea, worthy of an apostle; and probably he desired to cross into Britain only because he saw that the old cult was almost forgotten and discredited at Autun, or at least on the point of being so; whereas in the distant island of the Britons he thought to find it still vigorous among ignorant and half-barbarous populations, and to study it and fight it as a zealous missionary, ceaselessly tormented by thirst for the glory of God and the salvation of souls. Rhétice, saddened at being unable to keep by him until death one who was another self, an incomparable coadjutor, a support for his episcopal old age, and to bequeath him as his successor to the Church of Autun, said to him in a tone of the deepest sorrow: “My brother, I doubtless have only a very small number of years left to spend on earth, and God, who sent you here, wills that you stay with me. The hour has not yet come, then, when He is to open to you the way you desire to enter: wait a little longer.” Cassien saw a manifestation of the divine will in the venerable prelate’s desire and words. Besides, it would have cost him so much to grieve his heart! So he stayed. The two Saints lived and worked together for three more years: it was death alone that separated them. Rhétice’s soul went up to heaven; and Cassien buried his body with episcopal pomp and fraternal piety in the cemetery facing the town. There every day, in memory of him, he offered the heavenly victim and laid a prayer on his tomb: *Sacrificium pro eo immolabat per singulos dies*.

A whole year was given to mourning and regret, after which all the clergy and all the people, rich and poor, called Cassien with one voice to the dignity of first pastor of the holy and apostolic Church of Autun. This unanimity was a tribute paid at once to Cassien, whose merit it proclaimed so solemnly, and to Rhétice, whose memory it honoured by raising up the coadjutor of his choice. And who else would have been more worthy to succeed the great bishop whose loss they mourned than the one who had long shared his labours during his life, and afterwards upheld and continued his work, and had merited so high a confidence and occupied so large a place in so great and holy a heart? Cassien would gladly have declined the honour, or rather the heavy burden of the episcopate, which was henceforth to weigh on him. He dreaded the immense responsibility for so many souls for whom he would answer before God; but at the same time, did not such universal and spontaneous wishes, laying a necessity on him and doing him a kind of violence, furnish him with a striking and indubitable proof of the intentions of Providence? He had therefore to submit and to give up his great plan of going to evangelise Britain. His humility was consoled by the thought that He who had called him would know well how to sustain him. Raised to the see of Autun, Cassien showed himself an eminent bishop and a good pastor, while remaining the tireless apostle and missionary come from the banks of the Nile to win souls for Jesus Christ. Having lent the old age of Rhétice the help of his active zeal for the conversion of the infidels, he seemed to redouble his efforts when he found himself alone at the head of the flock; and the great work, the object of his constant concern, made new progress. Affable to all, doing good to idolaters as to Christians, he was loved by all, because all saw that they were loved by him. This reciprocity of affection, this drawing together of hearts in mutual love, served as a preparation for the Gospel. As formerly at Orthe, his gentleness, his fatherly kindness, his frank, open, cordial and welcoming ways and his immense charity won him souls, and Jesus Christ received a great number of them from his hands. And so the divine Shepherd wished to honour His worthy minister in the eyes of the peoples with the greatest glory there is on earth: He rewarded and at the same time sanctioned Cassien’s zeal, and increased the power of his action on the infidels, by an eminently privileged gift, the gift of miracles. How many times, through the ministry of the holy Bishop, did the sovereign Master of nature give sight to the blind and hearing to the deaf, and strength and health to the infirm and the sick of every kind? And the pagans, struck by this brilliant and perpetual intervention of heaven, ran in crowds to the foot of the cross. After working with ceaseless

activity during a laborious episcopate of twenty years from his elevation to the see of Autun, watching with pious solicitude over the flock which the sovereign Shepherd had entrusted to him and bringing a multitude of new sheep into the divine fold, Cassien was called to eternal rest (about the year 355). His soul flew to the bosom of God whom he had loved so much; and his body, the perishable instrument of immortal works, the venerated remains of a Saint, laid in the cemetery of the Via strata, awaited the general resurrection and heavenly glorification near that of Saint Rhétice, his illustrious predecessor, not far also from the little oratory guarding the relics of Saint Symphorien, where he used to spend such long hours in prayer that he seemed to have fixed his dwelling there.

### CULTE ET RELIQUES.

The memory of the great bishop remained in benediction throughout the province. Besides the feast of 5 August, which recalled his entry into heaven, the memory of his ordination was also celebrated on 9 February. Several churches, among others that of Atic-sous-Moûtier, two leagues from Semur-en-Auxois, and those of Savigny, Veilly and Ecutigny, were placed under the title of this illustrious Saint. The memory of his charity, his kindness, his zeal fruitful in conversions, and the miracles he had worked during his lifetime was handed down by tradition from one generation to another; and the prodigies which continued to mark his tomb came unceasingly, in the course of the ages, to revive the devotion and confidence of the peoples. It is his tomb, surrounded by a truly extraordinary veneration, which, with that of Saint Symphorien, gave most renown to that little corner of earth, well worthy in truth to be called the dwelling of the saints, *loca sanctorum*, the holy places of Autun, and which for centuries drew so many pious and even so many celebrated visitors there. The throng of pilgrims coming from all parts to implore the intercession of the holy bishop was immense, since as early as the time of Gregory of Tours the stone covering his precious relics was almost entirely worn away. Each person detached a few fragments from it and went away happy to carry off with him this dust which worked prodigies. Even in modern times confidence in Saint Cassien had not ceased, and his powerful intercession still worked miracles. The abbot of Saint-Quentin in Vermandois, moved by the marvels continually worked at the Saint's tomb, asked for and obtained from Madon, bishop of Autun, in 820, the body of Saint Cassien, to carry it to his church. He placed it first in various spots which did not seem fitting enough for so precious a treasure. That is why Charles the Bald had a magnificent reliquary prepared for it in the crypt of the basilica of Saint-Quentin and took care to have it placed there with honour. Although the body of Saint Cassien no longer rested at Autun, King Robert raised a very fine chapel in the place where he had been buried. The tomb of Saint Cassien is still to be seen today in the church of Saint-Quentin; but it is empty. What remains of his relics is enclosed in a too modest reliquary which is exposed on feast days on a small credence table beside the high altar.

We have taken this biography from a work of M. l'abbé Dinet entitled *Saint Sympho … culte, avec tous les souvenirs historiques qui s'y rattachent* [text missing in the print]. — Cf. *Légendaire d'Autun*, by M. [text missing in the print]

## Dedication of Our Lady of the Snows, Today Saint Mary Major, at Rome

*366. — Pope: Saint Damasus. — Emperor of the West: Valentinian I.*

> *Beata virgo Maria nive candidior.*
>
> *The purest snow is only an imperfect emblem of the virginal purity of the most holy Virgin.*
>
> *Sophron. episc., de Assumpt. B. M. V.*

Under the pontificate of Liberius there was at Rome a patrician named John, married to a lady of high birth like himself. They had no children, and this privation was very painful to them; but as they were pious, they bore it with perfect submission to the will of God. When age left them no further hope, they resolved by common accord to make the holy Virgin the universal heir of all their goods. They made a vow to that effect;

and, to learn to what use that Queen of heaven and earth destined her inheritance, they applied themselves more than before to fasting, prayer and the relief of the poor and the sick. The holy Virgin heard their desires favourably: and on the night of the fifth day of August she appeared to them both separately in a dream and told them that it was her Son's will and her own that they should use their goods to have a church built on a spot of the Esquiline hill which they would find covered with snow in the morning. On waking they told each other their revelations and, seeing that they agreed perfectly, went at once to find the Pope to inform him of what God had made known to them. The Pope, who had had a dream exactly like theirs, did not doubt that it was a stroke from heaven. And so he had the clergy and people assembled and advanced in procession towards the Esquiline hill, to verify there the truth of this signal marvel. The patrician and his wife followed the priests, and when they had all arrived on the hill, they saw a space all covered with snow, of the size required to build a church on it. This building was raised with great magnificence by these pious persons.

This church was at first called the Basilica of Liberius, or Liberian Basilica, because it had been begun under his pontificate; then Saint Mary *ad Præsepe*, or Our Lady of the Crib, because the crib which had served as the cradle of the Saviour of the world was brought there from Bethlehem. But later (about 435), Pope Sixtus III, successor of Saint Celestine I, having had it rebuilt and adorned with very fine works of painting and sculpture, it was called the Basilica of Sixtus. Lastly, as many other churches of Our Lady were built in Rome, to distinguish the one we are speaking of from all the others, which it surpasses in size and beauty, it was given the name of Saint Mary Major, which is the one it most commonly bears today. It was to this celebrated basilica that Pope Saint Gregory, before being crowned sovereign Pontiff, had the general procession of all the bodies of Rome go, to obtain from God the cessation of the plague which was depopulating the whole of that great city. It was again to the same church that Pope Leo IV had another procession led to obtain deliverance from a serpent which was causing great ravages in the country. An exempt[1] having been charged by the exarch Olympius to attack Pope Saint Martin I in this sanctuary and to run him through the body with his sword, he lost his sight as soon as he made ready to carry out this sacrilege, the holy Virgin being unable to suffer so horrible a crime to be committed in a place consecrated to her. Our Lord has worked several other miracles there, and continues every day to work new ones there through the intercession of that great Queen who is its titular and patroness. From this we must infer that she did much more honour to the patrician John and his wife in making them the founders of so illustrious a temple than if she had given them several children; since by this means she has made their memory immortal and has made their goods profit for the help and consolation of all the faithful until the end of the world. It should also be noted that this church is the most magnificent in Rome after the incomparable basilica of Saint Peter and that of the Lateran. It has one of the four doors which are solemnly opened in the holy year and closed when the great jubilee is over; it is also one of the five patriarchal churches and one of the seven principal churches of Rome. The Penitentiaries of the Order of Saint Dominic hear confessions there, as the Jesuits do at Saint Peter's, the

Benedictines at Saint Paul's and the Cordeliers at Saint John Lateran. Two sumptuous chapels are to be seen there: one built by Sixtus V, where the cradle of Our Lord is kept, which is exposed only on Christmas Day; the other built by Paul V, called the Pauline Chapel, where the lifelike picture of the holy Virgin painted by the evangelist Saint Luke is kept. It is said that this last cost more than seven hundred thousand Roman crowns, that is, more than two million five hundred thousand francs. The whole body of the church is also very rich. The vault is a gilded ceiling of marvellous workmanship, and the pavement is of white and black marble mingled with a quantity of mosaic figures. A very great solemnity is held there on this day, and all day long, in memory of the ancient miracle of the snows of which we have spoken, flowers of white jasmine are made to fall there by artifice, filling it with a very pleasant fragrance.

The other churches of Rome dedicated to Our Lady are so numerous that we do not claim to give all their names here. We shall say only that almost all the secular and regular communities have placed themselves, as

if in rivalry, under the protection of that august Princess: the secular Chapters have Saint Mary of the Tiber, Santa Maria della Rotonda and Santa Maria in via Lata; the Carthusians, the church of Our Lady of the Angels; the Dominicans, Our Lady of the Minerva; the Cordeliers, Our Lady of Ara Cœli; the Penitents, Our Lady of the Miracles; the Augustinians, Our Lady del Popolo; the Canons Regular of Saint Augustine, Our Lady of Peace; the Carmelites, Our Lady Transpontina; the Olivetans, Our Lady the New; and the Feuillants, Our Lady of the Way. In all these churches the praises of this Virgin of virgins are continually celebrated, and great throngs of people are often seen there to pay her profound homage and to implore her protection and help.

For the rest, although the miracle of the snows, and then the dedication of the temple built on the very spot where they had fallen, are the real subject of today's solemnity, we must not doubt, nevertheless, that the Church's intention is also to honour the virginal purity of our incomparable Queen, figured and represented by those snows. This purity is so great and so admirable that there is none among all creatures, and beneath that of God, that can be compared with it. Indeed, although holy Scripture, speaking of the Angels and of the heavens, assures us that they are exposed to the infinite light of God's gaze, the heavenly Bridegroom makes known to us that it is not so with Mary, and that there is no stain, no defect and no imperfection in her: *Et macula non est in te.* Saint Bernard says that the innocence and purity of the Angels cannot approach hers. Saint Thomas, in opusculum viii, asserts the same thing, and on chapter i of the Sentences he adds that God could produce a creature so pure that no other creature could ever rise higher, and that Our Lady was such.

Her purity consists, first, in this, that her body was exempt from every kind of defilement and corruption, through the most excellent and perfect virginity that ever was or can be conceived after that of Jesus Christ, her only Son; secondly, in this, that her soul was exempt from every stain of sin, having never contracted or committed or been able to commit any, not by nature like Our Lord, but by the abundance of her grace, in which she was confirmed, and by the singular protection of God; thirdly, in this, that her heart was perfectly detached from every creature and inseparably attached to God alone, in which consists the sublime purity of the spirit, since it is the admixture of created things that defiles and corrupts us, and on the contrary union with our first principle and last end that purifies and sanctifies us.

On this subject one may see: the *Triple Couronne* of Poiré; the *Grandeurs de la Vierge* of Gibieuf; and the *Excellences de Notre- Dame* of Priesac.

## Saint Venance, Bishop of Viviers

*544. — Pope: Vigilius. — King of France: Theudebert I.*

> *Nothing was finer or more edifying than the spectacle Saint Venance offered to every eye. In this illustrious Pontiff were admired the zeal of the Apostles, the learning of the doctors and the munificence of princes. Life of Saint Venance.*

Venance was the son of Sigismund, who reigned over the Burgundians, first jointly with his father and then alone after the latter's death. The fact of his birth rests on very numerous and very weighty testimonies. History does not say expressly when he was born. We believe, however, that he was born about the year 494. When he came into the world his father and mother were still plunged in the darkness of Arianism; but he had the happiness of receiving from the lips of the great bishop of Vienne the truths of the orthodox faith and the maxims of Christian piety. From the lessons of so skilful and pious a master he drew an ardent love of God and a profound contempt for the fragile goods of this life. He soon gave a striking proof of it. He was touched by these words of the Gospel: "He who loves father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me." He generously renounced all the honours and all the riches that awaited him in the world; he left his father's house and went to hide himself in the depths of a cloister.

According to a very ancient document, the martyrology of Viviers, he embraced the religious life in a Benedictine monastery situated at

Viviers, on the top of a hill whose foot was washed by the Rhône. In the pious refuge he had chosen, "Venance consecrated himself entirely to the Lord; he applied himself to His service with that humility and fervour which are the true mark of the saints. But divine Providence, which destined him to occupy one of the first places in the Church, did not wish his virtues to remain hidden and buried in oblivion. It took particular care to spread their good odour far and wide." The report of Venance's holiness, says a bishop of Viviers, filled the kingdom of the Burgundians on both sides of the Rhône[1]. At that time Saint Avitus was still governing the ancient and holy church of Vienne. That great pontiff, whose ardent zeal equalled his vast learning, attached himself strongly to everything that could serve and glorify religion. He saw with joy the happy dispositions, the remarkable talents and the high virtues of Venance. The fervent religious had been eagerly admitted into the sacred ranks of the clergy. Saint Avitus gave him all his affection and all his confidence. He was not slow to charge him with an important and delicate mission. In his admirable devotion to all the interests of the universal Church, he looked anxiously towards the East, where schism had broken out, where the Eutychians were raising their heads, where the bad faith of the Greeks inspired only too legitimate fears. To learn the religious situation of those distant lands and make it known to the bishops of Gaul, Saint Avitus wrote to the Roman Pontiff, Hormisdas, who had sat in the chair of Saint Peter since the year 514. He sent his letter by Venance, who had been raised to the diaconate, and gave him the priest Alexis as his travelling companion. The close relations that Saint Avitus had with Venance's family, and the views he doubtless had for the young prince, may explain to us why he chose the pious deacon and wished him to go to Rome. Although history is silent, it is easy to understand what a magnificent welcome Venance must have received in the eternal city. His rare merit made him worthy of the greatest honours, independently of what was owed to a Burgundian prince. Not long before, Rome had seen within its walls his royal father, who had just embraced the Catholic faith. That religious prince had gone to venerate Saint Peter and Saint Paul and to receive the blessings and counsels of Saint Symmachus, the immediate predecessor of Pope Hormisdas. He had been loaded with the greatest honours by the Roman Pontiff. He had prostrated himself with lively faith before the tomb of the holy Apostles and had edified the whole city by the spectacle of his high virtues. The memory of his journey, still quite alive in men's minds, disposed them marvellously in favour of his son. But the pious Venance was much less sensible of the marks of esteem and goodwill lavished on him than of the happiness of seeing at such close quarters the august head of the Church and of visiting places so holy and so celebrated. In spite of the ineffable consolations he tasted at Rome, he soon had to tear himself away from that beloved city and take the road back to Gaul. As early as 15 February 517, Hormisdas handed to him and to the priest Alexis the letter destined for the bishop of Vienne.

Eminent dignities and glorious labours awaited Venance on his return to his homeland. Shortly after his arrival he must have been raised to the priesthood and to the sublime functions of the episcopate. Here is what we know on this last point. A diocese dependent on the metropolis of Arles, but neighbouring that of Vienne, was without a bishop: it was that of Alba or Viviers. Nine known bishops had governed it up to the period we have reached. They were Saint Janvier, Saint Septimius, Saint Maspicien, Saint Mélanius, Saint Avole. They had their seat at Alba Augusta, a considerable town built at the place now called Aps. It was the capital of the Helvii, which later took the name of Vivarais. This city having been ruined from top to bottom by the Vandals, the holy bishop Auxonius was forced to establish his see at Viviers, which was only a small township on the banks of the Rhône, not far from Alba. Auxonius and several of his successors continued to style themselves bishops of Alba, out of respect and attachment for their original see. We shall see Venance sign so at the council of Epaone. After Saint Auxonius the Church of Viviers was governed by Eulalius, Saint Lucien and Saint Valère. On the death of the last, the people and clergy, wishing to give him a successor, unanimously chose Venance, whose rare qualities were proclaimed everywhere by his renown, and won him every heart. Having first obtained the consent of King Sigismund, his father, who had succeeded Gundobad,

deputies went to our Saint, who, having returned from Rome only a short time before, was probably with the bishop of Vienne or with his family. But Venance, believing himself unworthy of this honour and incapable of fulfilling so high a ministry, opposed a thousand resistances to them. He profoundly despised glory and riches, he keenly dreaded the weight of the pastoral staff and sighed only for retirement. A simple, obscure life, filled with prayer and the study of divine learning, free from the agitations of the world: such was his only ambition. But heaven did not think as the humble religious did.

In those times the Church of Gaul was in the most critical position. The conquerors who had driven out the Roman eagles professed various errors. To maintain the Catholic faith, to bring the heretics back to unity, to instruct and baptise the pagans, to repair the immense ruins the Barbarians had scattered everywhere: such was the noble and difficult mission of the episcopate. Men were needed as learned as they were virtuous, as prudent as they were devoted. God, who always gave the Church of Gaul striking marks of His protection, did not forget her in these difficult times. He raised up for her a host of pontiffs whom learning, holiness and courage have immortalised and made dear to religion and to the country. What men indeed were the Avituses of Vienne, the Viventioles of Lyons, the Remigiuses of Reims, the Caesariuses of Arles, the Apollinaires of Valence! With many others besides, whom we could name, they rose at that time like beneficent stars and made princes and peoples feel their salutary and powerful influence. Heaven willed that Venance should have a most glorious place in that holy and brilliant pleiad.

Our Saint's hesitations had to give way before the desire to serve the Church, before the fear of resisting the divine will and of grieving the soul of the great bishop of Vienne, his father and friend. He therefore ascended, as if in spite of himself and solely to fulfil a sacred duty, the see of Alba or Viviers, which so many holy and courageous pontiffs had already made illustrious by the lustre of their virtues. Such was the idea people had of his merit that his great youth was not regarded as an obstacle to the episcopate. He had scarcely reached, we believe, the age of twenty-two or twenty-three. But in those days what was considered above all was the qualities of the candidates and the eminent services they could render to the Church of Jesus Christ.

Soon the new bishop was called to take part in one of the most celebrated councils of Gaul. Several times the holy Pope Hormisdas, whose zeal let nothing escape, had urged the Burgundian bishops to assemble in council. They were able to answer the wish of the Roman Pontiff from the beginning of the reign of King Sigismund. Finding no obstacle on the part of that religious prince, Saint Avitus and Saint Viventiole convoked all the bishops of the kingdom to Epaone for 6 September 517. According to the most common opinion, Epaone is the place today called Saint-Romain-d'Albon, canton of Saint-Vallier, diocese of Valence. Situated in the centre of Sigismund's kingdom, in a pleasant site not far from the Rhône, at roughly equal distance from the extremities of Burgundy and dependent on the Church of Vienne, Epaone, as Saint Avitus said, was perfectly suited for holding a council. Here are some fragments of the very remarkable letter which that celebrated metropolitan addressed to our Saint and to all the other bishops of Burgundy: "It is long since our sad occupations have made us interrupt a practice which our fathers instituted with great wisdom: the frequent holding of councils and ecclesiastical assemblies. … The Church of Vienne therefore begs you, through my mouth, to restore so salutary a practice, too long abandoned. Our ministry obliges us to confirm the old rules and to add new ones to them if it is necessary." Saint Avitus invites all his colleagues to come to the council very punctually and to prepare carefully the matters to be treated there.

Venance answered eagerly the call that had just been made to his zeal. He went to the council, which opened at the place and time appointed and lasted ten days. He found there twenty-three bishops who lived under the sceptre of Sigismund, his father, and the deputy of one prelate who was absent. Venance displayed in this council all his learning and all his zeal for the reform of public morals and the restoration of ecclesiastical discipline, necessarily impaired by the invasion of the Barbarians and the presence of the heretics. He took part in drawing up forty canons, a glorious monument of his pastoral solicitude and that of the Fathers of that assembly. These canons concern clerics, church property, the sacred liturgy, monasteries of men and women,

and so on. The rules laid down by the Fathers of that assembly seemed so wise to a great bishop of Valence that he exclaimed: “May I love them and make others love them as much as they deserve!”

Viviers had only to congratulate itself on the happy choice that had been made. Scarcely had Venance in his hand the pastoral staff so dreaded by his humility when he displayed all the marvellous qualities that make those great bishops whom heaven and earth alike admire. Animated by the liveliest faith and fired by the most ardent zeal, he strove to spread the knowledge and love of God around him. By his frequent and eloquent preaching he strengthened the just in the way of virtue and brought back to it the unfortunate who had abandoned it. Following the example of his father Sigismund, that courageous and powerful adversary of error, he laboured ardently for the extinction of Arianism, which had caused such ravages in the Catholic Church and was still desolating a portion of the Church of Viviers. He knew how important ecclesiastical discipline is, both for the holiness of clerics and for the salvation of the simple faithful. And so he neglected nothing to restore it and make it flourish, in conformity with the decrees of the council of Epaone at which he had been present. He applied himself equally to having the canons of the other councils observed which were held before or during his glorious episcopate. Nothing was finer or more edifying than the spectacle he offered to every eye. In this illustrious Pontiff were admired the zeal of the Apostles, the learning of the doctors and the munificence of princes. The marvellous influence he exercised over minds, which came perhaps less from his august character and royal birth than from the lustre of his holiness and his personal qualities, allowed him to do the most admirable things. He was consumed with an ardent zeal for the glory of God’s house. He made the most generous efforts to render the religious buildings worthy of the great God to whom they are consecrated and whom He fills with His majesty. He understood the importance of those fine and spacious churches where Christian populations kneel at the foot of the altars, throng before the sacred pulpit and around the holy tribunals of penance, and partake of the sacraments, which are for them an inexhaustible source of light, strength and consolation. Placed, so to speak, at the dawn of that Middle Age so famous for the marvels it brought forth, he entered gloriously into that memorable era in which our bishops raised the superb Romanesque and Gothic basilicas which the 19th century so rightly admires.

The cathedral of Viviers was in the most deplorable state; it was threatened with complete ruin. This sad spectacle rent our Saint’s heart and made abundant tears flow from his eyes. He resolved to raise up again, enlarge and adorn with rare magnificence this temple dedicated to the deacon Saint Vincent, one of the most illustrious martyrs of the Church of Spain. Not having the resources needed to bring his vast project to completion, he took the road to the capital of Burgundy and made his way to the palace where the king his father lived. He set before Sigismund what he proposed to do for the glory of God, the magnificence of Catholic worship and the edification of the faithful; he told him at the same time that he needed him to come to his help. The prince answered his son’s wish and generously granted him all he asked. Happy at having seen his religious family again and obtained what he desired, Venance hastened back to his episcopal town and set to work. The work, pushed forward ardently, was finished in a short time. Soon the pious Pontiff had the consolation of celebrating the august mysteries in a new basilica, larger, more beautiful and more richly adorned than the first. Through his care another church was built outside the walls of the town. It was dedicated to Saint Julian, a nobleman of Vienne who sanctified himself in the career of arms and shed his blood for Jesus Christ near Brioude (Haute-Loire). Less spacious than the cathedral, it perhaps surpassed it in an infinity of rich and marvellous works. The columns that supported the roof of the building, the pavement, the facing of the interior walls: all was polished and precious marble.

Venance was full of respect and faith with regard to baptism; he wished it to be administered fittingly and the people to have a high idea of the sacrament which regenerates them and begets them to the Catholic faith. That is why he had magnificent baptismal fonts built in the church of Saint-Julien. The pavement was of marble, as were the columns that supported a crowning adorned with fine and rich mouldings. The water, taken from a place named Caléfécétus, was brought to the baptistery by an underground channel. It flowed in

lead pipes and rose through marble columns. A bronze stag, placed in the centre of the building, received it and spouted it into the baptismal basin. To explain what at first sight is strange in what we have just seen, we must remember that in the 6th century baptism was usually given by immersion. A great quantity of water was needed to fill the basins destined for this sacred use.

Our Saint did not confine to what we have said the zeal with which he was fired. He wished a church to rise in honour of the Mother of God. By its size and magnificence it was worthy of the most august of Virgins, for whom Venance professed a filial piety which he strove to make the flock entrusted to him share. It seems that this was the first sanctuary built at Viviers in honour of the Virgin Mary. This church was also dedicated to the holy martyr Saturninus, who, sent into Gaul by Pope Saint Clement towards the end of the 1st century, converted a great number of idolaters and died generously for the faith. Besides the sanctuaries we have spoken of, a few others rose in various places of the diocese. The generous bishop also endowed richly the parish churches of Notre-Dame-de-Lussas and Saint-Martin-de-Bessiac, which was later called Lavilledieu. Such was his zeal for the restoration and building of churches. He showed no less in adorning and having those of his episcopal town kept in the most fitting manner. Eager to contribute powerfully to the glory of God and the edification of the people, he created chapters of clerics to devote themselves to psalmody and to sing the praises of the Lord in the churches of Viviers. He drew up for them with his own hand a common rule and the duties they had to fulfil towards God, towards themselves and towards others. To make this admirable and holy institution lasting and perpetual, he assigned the funds necessary for the maintenance of the clerics. Venance also provided for the temporal and spiritual needs of his people with a truly admirable liberality and zeal. Everywhere ruins had been made under the feet of the Barbarians. Viviers in particular had suffered much from the Goths, the Alans and the Vandals, who had successively trodden its territory. He did not fall short of his position, and was able to make people forget the misfortunes of the recent invasions. The ramparts of the episcopal town were falling into ruins; he spent considerable sums in repairing them. He enlarged the circuit of the capital of the Vivarais. He had magnificent towers built at intervals, intended both to fortify the town and to embellish it. He had spacious and comfortable houses built, as well as superb civic buildings. He considerably increased the sources of public revenue, and through his care and his benefactions Viviers was transformed into a true city. He endowed the religious communities generously. He made learning and discipline flourish among his clerics, whose father, model and idol he was. The labours which this great Pontiff undertook to that end, his examples and his encouragement, did not remain without fruit. His clerics were religiously eager to gather all his learned teachings, his eloquent homilies and even his least discourses. Thanks to this precious deposit of sound traditions, faithfully kept and handed on from one generation to another, there was formed within the church of Viviers a school of learning and eloquence, of morals and discipline, in which for a long time the authority of the examples and doctrine of the blessed Father Venance was invoked as an oracle.

Something would have been lacking to our Saint’s glory if God had not reserved for him the most terrible trials. As early as the year 517 or 518, the conduct of his father Sigismund towards the bishops of the council of Lyons, and above all towards Saint Apollinaire, had caused him profound sorrow. The year 520 took from him his friend Apollinaire, with whom he loved to treat of the great interests of the Church which both loved with so noble a passion. A short time afterwards he saw the tomb close also over Saint Avitus. Before this loss, which must have been so painful to his heart, he had had to mourn the death of a beloved mother, the pious queen of the Burgundians, taken about the year 519 from the love of her royal husband and of her children. Afflictions of another kind were reserved for Venance and were to show him in a very striking manner the instability of human greatness. A dreadful storm broke over his family and shattered beyond recovery the throne of the Burgundian princes. The pious Venance, who loved his family tenderly, must have felt keenly the tragic events and the bloody catastrophes that befell them. But these terrible blows were softened by the most Christian death of Sigismund and by the prodigies that accompanied it. Venance also had the consolation of learning that three years after his father’s death his body was carried to Agaune, where

that generous prince had restored and enlarged a celebrated monastery and endowed it for nine hundred religious. Numerous and striking miracles glorified the tomb of this holy king, proved that God had accepted his humiliations and his penitential life, and caused him to be placed on the altars. His feast is marked on the first of May in the Roman martyrology.

In the year following the fall of the Burgundian monarchy, that is to say in 535, divine Providence prepared a great consolation for our holy Bishop. It was given him to take part in the work of a council held at Clermont in Auvergne in the second year of the reign of Theudebert I. After the council Venance came back to his diocese and resumed the course of his apostolic labours. God granted him several more years, during which he appeared more than ever detached from life. He had no other thought than that of eternity, no other desire than to go and rejoin the blessed prince who had given him life and whom he knew to be in possession of heavenly bliss.

In spite of so many violent shocks, capable of shaking and weakening the most robust constitution, he gave himself up with new ardour to all the austerities of penance. The thoughts of death and judgement, which he had never lost sight of, then occupied him exclusively. Every day he summoned himself before that dread tribunal where he was soon to appear to give an account of his works. This thought, so distressing for a sinner, ought, it seems, to have had nothing but consolation for a Saint. But, far from it, all his virtue was not capable of reassuring him about actions of which a God was to be the judge, and at every moment he feared to hear the sentence of his condemnation pronounced. To forestall the fatal consequences of a judgement from which there is no appeal, after giving immense alms to the poor all his life, he distributed to them before dying the little that remained to him. Thus the holy Prelate carried all the virtues to the highest degree of perfection. Far from burying the talent entrusted to him, he made it bear fruit a hundredfold, and by his fidelity in corresponding to grace he merited to be admitted to a share in the glory of the blessed. Full of merits and worthy of all praise, he gave up his holy soul to his Creator on the 5th of the month of August 544. His body was laid in a marble sarcophagus and carried to the sanctuary of Notre-Dame du Rhône, which he had built himself.

An old painting, which was in the former church of the Capuchins on the banks of the Rhône, represents Saint Venance healing children who are presented to him, and persons of every age who stretch out suppliant hands towards him. — In the chapel of Saint-Venance is to be seen the statue of the Blessed, crozier in hand and mitre on his head.

## CULTE ET RELIQUES.

Numerous prodigies obtained by invoking the holy Bishop soon made his tomb glorious and drew to it in crowds the homage of the piety and veneration of the peoples. Later his relics were carried to the monastery of the nuns of Soyons, before the arrival of the Saracens, who in 737 destroyed the church of Notre-Dame du Rhône from top to bottom. The body of Saint Venance was for the monastery of Soyons the occasion of numerous graces with which the nuns were loaded. This place became further celebrated through an infinity of prodigies which the Lord worked every day to manifest the glory of His servant. The monastery having been given to the flames and destroyed by the Protestants, the nuns were forced to flee and take refuge at Valence (1621), where they built a new monastery in 1627. The body of Saint Venance was not sheltered from the devastating impiety of the heretics; yet a fairly considerable part of these precious remains escaped the hands of those sacrilegious men. On coming to settle at Valence, the Benedictines of Soyons brought there the holy relics which they had had the happiness to save from destruction. They then laid them with respect in the church they had built for their new monastery. The neighbouring peoples came in crowds to honour these precious relics, drawn also by the numerous prodigies worked in favour of those who implored the Saint’s protection. These relics were kept by the Benedictines until the Revolution. Forced to disperse for ever, they left them in the hands of some pious persons. When the churches were reopened, the relics of Saint

Venance were placed in the cathedral of Valence and then carried to the church of the hospital on 14 August 1803, where they are still venerated today.

Extracted from the *Histoire du Vivarais* by the abbé Rouchier, from the *Vie de saint Venance* by the abbé Champion, and from the *Acta Sanctorum*.

## Saint Abel, Archbishop of Reims, Abbot of the Monastery of Lobbes, in the Low Countries

*8th century.*

> *Blessed are they that suffer persecution for justice' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.*
>
> *Matt. v, 10.*

As the law of nature had its Abel, to whom Our Lord gave the name of Just, so the law of grace has also had its own, in whom justice and holiness were so eminent that they served for the sanctification of several peoples. There are authors who dispute his illustrious title of archbishop of Reims and will have it that he was only its bishop, or chorepiscopus; but it is clear enough from the letters of Pope Zachary to Boniface and of Pope Adrian to Tilpin that he was truly its archbishop. The Pallium which the first sends him at the request of the same Saint Boniface, apostle of Germany, and which the second asserts was sent to him by his predecessor, is a manifest proof of it. And so Flodoard, who wrote the *History of the Church of Reims* in the middle of the 10th century, convinced by this reason, places him in the rank of its archbishops: as do also Baronius, under the year 734, Colvenerius in his Notes on Flodoard, and Messieurs de Sainte-Marthe in their Catalogue of the Archbishops of Reims. If others have not spoken of him, it is because, on the testimony of the same Pope Adrian, the persecution stirred up against Saint Rigobert, his predecessor, not having entirely died down, he was driven from his see almost as soon as he had taken possession of it, without being allowed to exercise the functions of his office there.

Abel was an Irishman or a Scot by nation and spent his first years in one of those two islands which are now part of the kingdom of England. When he was of an age to travel, following the example of those three illustrious brothers, Saint Fursey, Saint Foillan and Saint Ultan, his fellow-countrymen, he came into France to serve God there with greater perfection. It is even said that he was one of the twelve priests who followed the great Saint Egbert, afterwards archbishop of York, when, by divine revelation, he left the monastery in Ireland of which he was abbot, to come into Gaul and preach the Gospel there to some remnants of idolatrous nations which had not yet acknowledged the true God. He presented himself therefore, with this holy company of apostolic missionaries, to Pepin of Héristal, who was then governing the kingdom as mayor of the palace. The latter, admiring their zeal, sent them into Frisia, which he had just conquered from Duke Radbod and which had not yet received the light of the Gospel. Our Saint preached Jesus Christ there with marvellous force and eloquence, and, without fearing death, which he had every day to expect from that barbarous and hardened people, he applied himself for some years to bringing it under the pleasant yoke of Christianity. Saint Boniface, legate of the Pope, knowing the merit of Saint Abel, who had filled all the Low Countries with the reputation of his holiness and zeal, and seeing that the Church of Reims, since the death of Saint Rigobert, had no lawful pastor, being only occupied by Milon, who had unjustly intruded himself into it during the lifetime of that holy archbishop, named this excellent missionary as its head and pastor (743) and at the same time procured the Pallium for him, as well as for Grimon, archbishop of Rouen, and Hunebert, archbishop of Sens. We see in the council of Soissons, held in 745 before Easter, that it was ordained there that the causes of the bishops and clerics of his province should be brought before him and that he should watch over the good conduct of all the monasteries, both of men and of women. Yet this worthy prelate, to whom Our Lord had given all the talents of nature and of grace necessary to repair the ruins of the house of God, could not long enjoy his church in peace; but, as Cain persecuted his brother Abel

and at last took his life, so the partisans of Milon, and those who could not bear that the goods of the bishopric which they had tyrannically usurped should be taken out of their hands, persecuted our Abel, and they would perhaps have put him to death if, to prevent so great a scandal, he had not given way to force and envy. This we learn from the letter of Pope Adrian to Tilpin already cited, where he says of our Saint: *Ibi permanere permissus non fuit; sed magis, contra Deum ejectus est.* "He was not allowed to remain in his archbishopric; but he was driven from it against the commandment of the law of God." He withdrew therefore to the abbey of Lobbes, of which he had perhaps already been a religious, and there applied himself with such fervour to all the exercises of the interior and monastic life that it would have been difficult to find in the monastery a religious more austere and more assiduous in prayer than he. This did not, however, prevent him from still performing some functions of his dignity; he continued his work of preaching, carrying the light of truth throughout the country of Liège and Hainaut, and he did it with such success that he is regarded as one of its principal evangelists.

At last, after wearing himself out with penances and labours, he happily reached the end of his life, the beginning of his glorious eternity, on 5 August, about the middle of the 8th century, that is to say between 750 and 780. His body was buried in the church of Saint-Ursmar, where his tomb was to be seen raised above the ground in the chapel of Saint-Jacques, with an archiepiscopal cross above it, adorned at its foot with several fleurs-de-lis which mark the dignity of his see. Several miracles have been worked there, and especially many possessed persons have found their deliverance there. A notable bone of his arm was carried in the year 1615 to the convent of the Minims of Andrelek, near Brussels; this relic had been obtained by Charles of Lorraine, duke of Aumale, founder of that religious house. In 1409 his relics were carried to Buich in Hainaut, with the bodies of the other saints of Lobbes, to remove them from the ravages of war. Since that time his feast was celebrated in that town, as well as at the monastery of Lobbes, on the 5th of the month of August.

The Roman martyrology does not speak of Saint Abel; but Molanus added him to the martyrology of Usuard, and Ferrarius places him among the Saints omitted from the Roman martyrology.

*Acta Sanctorum*. — Cf. *Vies des Saints des diocèses de Cambrai et d'Arras*, by the abbé Destombes.

## Saint Thierry, Confessor, Bishop of Cambrai and Arras

*862. — Pope: Nicholas I. — King of France: Charles II, the Bald.*

> *Pretiosissimum quid est anima Deo, pro qua proprio Filio non pepercit.*
>
> *A soul is the most precious thing there is for God, since for it He did not spare His Son. Hugo card.*

At the time when grave quarrels and distressing divisions between Louis the Pious and his children were troubling the Church and the kingdom of France, the sees of Cambrai and Arras were occupied by the venerable and holy bishop Thierry. Nothing is known of the years before his election or of the circumstances that determined it. Some authors seem to suggest that Louis the Pious was not altogether a stranger to it. This choice would do great honour to that unfortunate monarch, who would thus have deserved well of the Churches of Cambrai and Arras.

However that may be, it is certain that from the first days of his episcopate Thierry was surrounded with the consideration and respect of all. He was held to have intimate and mysterious dealings with God; it was even said that he was favoured with the gift of prophecy.

The few events to be found in his life are almost all connected with the general history of the Church of France at that period, and it is hardly possible to relate them in a simple notice with the details they require. Here, in a few words, is what in these facts may interest and edify the reader.

When some bishops of France, led astray above all by the perfidious machinations of Ebbo, archbishop of Reims, failed in the respect and obedience they owed to Louis the Pious, Thierry, although he had received episcopal anointing from the hands of Ebbo, did not let himself be carried along and always remained faithful to his lawful prince. Later, at the council of Thionville, he signed with his other colleagues the sentence of deposition pronounced against the archbishop of Reims, which the latter then acknowledged he had justly deserved. Among the particular judges whom Ebbo had chosen on this occasion figures Saint Thierry of Cambrai and Arras. This preference does too much honour to the worthy prelate not to be mentioned (835).

Saint Thierry was also present at the council held in Paris in 845, in which wise measures were taken to remedy the numerous evils afflicting Church and State. A few years later (849) he went to the royal house of Quierzy-sur-Oise, where an assembly of bishops had been convoked to condemn the errors of Gottschalk and to oppose the disorders which that turbulent and violent monk was causing everywhere. In another council, held at Soissons on 22 April of the year 853, Bishop Thierry presented a writing in which all the details of the deposition of Ebbo, at which he had been present, were recorded. “What I have seen and heard,” he said aloud in the midst of the assembly, “I bear witness to and set down in writing.” The celebrated Lupus of Ferrières, who was also present at this council, then took the writing from the prelate’s hands and read this account of Ebbo’s deposition and of his restoration, “so contrary to the canonical rules,” said Saint Thierry, “that Pope Sergius had paid no regard to it and had granted Ebbo only lay communion.” The wisdom of the venerable bishop of Cambrai and Arras then contributed much to the restoration of peace.

In spite of manifold occupations and continual anxieties which beset him on all sides, Saint Thierry still found time to satisfy his own piety and that of his flock by paying to the relics of the Saints the homage and respect due to them. He had the consolation of raising from the ground the body of Saint Liévin in the village of

Houthein, in the territory of Alost, and of publicly acknowledging there the miracles and cures which were often worked at the tomb of that holy martyred missionary.

At the news of the ravages the Northmen were already causing on the coasts of the Morini and in the neighbouring lands, the religious of Saint-Vaast at Arras thought of putting the body of their venerable patron in safety. They begged Saint Thierry to raise that precious body himself. The prelate kindly agreed to their request and performed this touching ceremony, not without feeling in his heart a deep sadness at the sight of the evils that were beginning to afflict France. After enclosing these sacred remains in a coffin, amid an immense crowd of weeping onlookers, Saint Thierry, accompanied by the religious, himself carried it as far as Beauvais.

But it was not only the pirates who stirred up disorders and afflicted the hearts of the bishops. There were also at that time a great number of disorderly and greedy lords who gave themselves up to every kind of oppression and plunder. One man of the district in particular never ceased to lay waste the lands dependent on the Church of Arras and to commit continual violence there. Saint Thierry first used all the means his spirit of gentleness and patience suggested. He addressed wise warnings to this man, fitted to touch him, and at the same time invited him to come to him. But the man stubbornly refused, in spite of all the pleas that could be made; then, when he learned that excommunication had been pronounced against him, he poured out against the holy Pontiff all the insults his blind fury inspired. Driven, so to speak, by a frenzy of greed and hatred, he gave himself up from that moment to new and more criminal acts of violence. But God permitted that a short time afterwards he should perish in a tragic manner, in circumstances in which everyone recognised an effect of divine justice.

Amid all these pains and cares of the episcopal ministry, Saint Thierry found the sweetest consolations in prayer. “Often,” continues Balderic in his chronicle of Cambrai and Arras, “he prolonged his prayer far into the night. He was even sometimes rapt in ecstasy.” The worthy bishop also found in the friendship of his

metropolitan, the celebrated Hincmar of Reims, a relief in the pains of his laborious episcopate. The writings of the learned archbishop of Reims prove that he took a lively interest in Saint Thierry, felt a profound respect for his virtue and had a sincere friendship for him. The venerable bishop of Cambrai and Arras was already well advanced in age when he had to go to a place in his diocese which the authors do not name. It was, to all appearances, to perform some functions of his ministry there.

As he arrived at some distance from the place, he told those who were with him that an accident was threatening him. They at once insisted on preventing him from going further, but Saint Thierry answered them calmly: “We must not seek to withdraw ourselves from the will of God, who strikes us to heal us and wounds us to bring us the remedy afterwards.” Scarcely had he finished these words when a beggar presented himself before him and greeted him respectfully. The mule on which the holy old man was riding was frightened by the man’s gestures, and in the movement it made it threw him into the arms of his attendants, who had rushed forward to prevent his fall. All hastened to carry the holy bishop to a nearby place to have his thigh, which was broken, set and to give him the other help his condition required.

This accident probably hastened the death of Saint Thierry, who gave up his soul to his Creator on 5 August 862 or 863, after an episcopate of about thirty-two years. His body was laid in the cemetery of the monastery of Saint-Aubert and remained there until the time of Bishop Fulbert. At that period it was carried to the town of Magdeburg in Saxony, to satisfy the emperor Otto the Great, who had asked for relics for the churches of that town, which he had just founded.

Taken from the *Vie des Saints des diocèses de Cambrai et d’Arras* by the abbé Destombes.

## Saint Jean XIX, Bishop of Cambrai and Arras

*879. — Pope: John VIII. — King of France: Louis II, the Stammerer.*

> *Quid, o homo, in omnibus es prudens, et circa teipsum es insipiens?*
>
> *O man, why be prudent in everything and foolish in what concerns yourself?*
>
> *St. Bernard, Serm. de Miseria humana.*

For nearly three years the Churches of Cambrai and Arras had been without a pastor, through the intrigues of the emperor Lothair, who claimed to place unworthy men there, when at last God put an end to this calamity. It was in that very prince’s palace that He went to seek the man after His own heart who was to govern these two dioceses and edify them by his virtues. This was the priest Jean, attached to the court as cantor of the chapel. In that office, then an important one, he had been able to keep a holy independence and the most inviolable fidelity. And so he was received at Cambrai and Arras with marks of joy and respect. Hincmar, archbishop of Reims, assisted by Bertulphe of Trier and Odon of Beauvais, gave him episcopal consecration (866). The new Pontiff discharged all the duties of his ministry with zeal and repaired by his prudence the evils caused by Lothair’s obstinacy and the long vacancy of the see. Grieved by the scandalous disorders of the young emperor, with whom he had lived for several years, he groaned bitterly over them before the Lord and asked for that soul, led astray by the passions, the grace of a sincere conversion.

During his episcopate this venerable bishop attended several councils, in which he was noted for his spirit of conciliation and charity. He is found at Soissons in 866, at Troyes in 867, at Verberie in 869, at Douzy in 871, at Chalon-sur-Saône in 875 and finally at Ponthion in 876. As zealous for the defence of the rights of his Church as for the sanctification of souls, Saint Jean energetically opposed the undertakings of some violent men who were taking advantage of the public troubles to seize church property, and in particular that of the abbey of Lobbes. He likewise took care of the relics which the sacrilegious greed of the Northmen made it necessary to shut up in the strongholds of the kingdom.

Flodoard, in his History of the Church of Reims, and other ancient authors note the intimate relations that existed between Archbishop Hincmar and the venerable Jean, who was one of his suffragans. They were united by a close friendship and had an equal ardour in working for the sanctification of the peoples and the glory of the Church. We see, in a letter reported by Balderic in his chronicle of Cambrai and Arras, that Hincmar thanks Bishop Jean for the services he has rendered him, and asks him to send him a sermon of Saint Augustine and Bede's commentary on the Proverbs.

After an episcopate of thirteen years, filled with tribulations and merits, this worthy bishop gave up his soul to his Creator on 5 August 879, leaving to his people a reputation for holiness which miracles have confirmed. It is related, among other extraordinary facts, that a man afflicted from childhood with a contraction of the sinews, who had been brought on a cart to the Saint's tomb, found there the cure of his infirmity. The body of Saint Jean was first laid in the church of Sainte-Croix at Cambrai; but later Gérard I, of Florines, translated it to the church of Notre-Dame, which had been repaired and enlarged.

Taken from the *Vies des Saints des diocèses de Cambrai et d'Arras* by the abbé Destombes.

## Saint Emygde, Martyr, Bishop of Ascoli Piceno, in the March of Ancona (303 or 304)

Saint Emygde was born at Trier of an illustrious family. At the age of twenty-three, in spite of his parents' opposition, he embraced the religion of Jesus Christ and professed it with unshakeable energy to the end of his life. Despising all the pleasures of the earth, he applied himself entirely to the service of God. He burned with an ardent charity and, to win souls for Jesus Christ, he went to Rome. An inhabitant of the island in the Tiber offered him hospitality, and he rewarded him by curing his daughter, who for five years had been suffering from a mortal illness. It was in giving her Baptism that he worked this prodigy. Shortly afterwards, having restored sight in the presence of the people to a blind man whom this miracle converted, he was arrested and taken to the temple of Aesculapius. There he declared himself a servant of Jesus Christ, healed a great number of sick people in His name, destroyed the altars and threw the broken statue of the god into the Tiber. Three thousand infidels were converted; the prefect, being informed, flew into a great rage and uttered threats against Emygde. The latter, warned by an angel, escaped and went to find Pope Marcellinus, who ordained him bishop and sent him to Ascoli Piceno (March of Ancona). On the way the Saint worked a great number of prodigies and obtained numerous conversions. When he entered Ascoli, the idols uttered lamentable groans and pointed to the stranger who had just arrived as the cause of their grief. The people, angered, set out to look for him and brought him before the prefect of the town, who used every means to make him adore Jupiter. He even offered to give him his daughter in marriage. Saint Emygde refused, converted this daughter and, having made water come out of a rock, baptised her with fifteen hundred other persons. The prefect had the bishop beheaded, and his body was seen to rise, take up its head and walk to an oratory, a distance of three hundred paces. Later the relics of Saint Emygde were translated into a larger church, and they are still today the object of a particular cult for the inhabitants of Ascoli and for many strangers who come to venerate them.

*Acta Sanctorum.*

## Saint Viatre of Tremble-Vif, Monk of Saint-Mesmin near Orléans, then Solitary in the Diocese of Blois (Middle of the 6th Century)

The Sologne (Secolaunia) is a small region of old France, in the Orléanais, today in the department of Loir-et-Cher, between the Loire and the Berry. This country is covered with marshes (some 1,200 of them are counted, occupying 17,000 hectares), heaths, heather and uncultivated land; fevers are frequent there and the population sparse.

At the time when Saint Mesmin was governing the monastery of Micy (today Saint-Mesmin), near Orléans, several religious of that house withdrew into the heaths of the Sologne to serve God there with greater freedom of spirit. Among them was Viatre, a native of the Berry. Having arrived in the solitude, he marked the site of his cell and the place where he wished to die by planting an aspen, from which the church and the township of the place afterwards took the picturesque name of Tremble-Vif (*Tremulus vivus*, or *Tremuli viens*); the tradition of the country adds that this miraculous tree renewed itself from age to age in one of the pillars of the church. The cult of the blessed patron has been kept up in the same way, and that district invokes him with pious confidence. The power of curing fevers, so common amid the unhealthy marshes of the Sologne, is attributed to him in particular.

The church was built, or at least rebuilt, thanks to the generosity of a married couple, natives of the Berry, no less fervent than rich. The husband had been paralysed for ten years and the wife blind for fifteen; both owed their complete cure to the intercession of Saint Viatre and generously showed him their gratitude: so says the simple legend. The relics of this venerated patron, after undergoing several vicissitudes, were recognised anew in 1817 and enclosed in a splendid silver shrine given by M. Deloynes d'Auteroche, then the principal landowner of the parish of Tremble-Vif. The feast of Saint Viatre is marked on 5 August. For some years the parish has been authorised to give up its name and take that of the holy Patron whom it still honours.

*Saints de Blois*, by Dupié, librarian.

## The Blessed Roger le Fort, Seventy-fifth Bishop of Orléans and Confessor (1367)

The blessed Roger was born at the castle of Ternes, in La Marche; Guillaume de La Chapelle, archbishop of Toulouse and cardinal, was his uncle. He had taught at the University of Orléans, and at the time of his promotion he belonged to the Church of Bourges as its dean. The manner in which he was elected deserves to be told.

On the day when the clergy and people were to proceed to the election, the blessed Roger happened to be in the church, and he was in a position to notice the scandalous eagerness with which the canons were bustling about, without being held back by fear of the duties and difficulties inherent in the episcopate. It is related that, in a jesting tone, he said to one of them who was going into the Chapter: "And I too should like my lords the electors to remember me in the present business." The canon immediately carried the remark to the assembly; the improvised candidate at once won all the votes. Then the president, who had long known Roger's merit and worth, rose and said to the electors: "My brothers, heaven and earth are witnesses that you have chosen and asked for Messire Roger as bishop. As for me, in accordance with your opinion, I declare, in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, that he whom your wishes designate must indeed be the Pontiff of this city, for he is a man of angelic countenance, of eminent holiness and wisdom. Be convinced that this is how the Holy Spirit Himself judges, whom you could not resist without making yourselves guilty." After this address Roger was unanimously elected bishop of Orléans. Now, while the canons were giving their votes, the servant of God, alarmed at the turn things were taking, began to protest and to say that he in no way aspired to such an honour, that the words that had fallen from his lips were not serious, and that they were strangely mistaken if they thought him fit for the episcopal functions. Nevertheless the voice of the people came to ratify the choice of the Chapter, and the man elected had to bow before the will from on high. The registers of the Vatican attest that Roger was presented to the Apostolic Chamber on 13 May 1321. John XXII confirmed his election. His consecration took place on 13 June of the same year, as did the release of the regalia.

In 1324 the blessed Roger spent several days at the abbey of Saint-Mesmin. The same year he raised the feast of the Conception of the holy Virgin to the annual rite, and the following year, by virtue of an apostolic

commission, together with the archbishop of Vienne, he made the visitation of the monastery of Longpont.

Roger le Fort was translated to Limoges and afterwards to the patriarchal see of Bourges. He died in 1367, aged ninety, on 5 August, according to the martyrology of Orléans.

Extracted from the *Évêques d'Orléans* by V. Pelletier.

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[1] On the Esquiline hill, see note 1 to the Roman martyrology of 1 August.

[2] She is represented tied to a tree in the midst of a burning pyre. — When the Roman martyrology says that Saint Afra was "baptised with all her household," it alludes to the baptism and martyrdom of Hilaria, her mother, and of Digne, Eunomie or Eumenie, and Eutropie or Euprépie, her servants. The executioners, seeing that they refused to sacrifice to the gods, filled the sepulchre of Saint Afra with vine-shoots and dry thorns, shut it upon them, set fire to it and withdrew. — The tomb of Saint Afra was formerly to be seen near Augsburg: a church stood over this tomb. Several translations of her relics took place, in 956, in 1004, etc. — Baillet and P. Cahier.

[3] Oswald is celebrated for the victory he won over Cadwalla, king of the Britons, who had thrown himself on the country of the Northumbrians, and for the wooden cross he planted on the battlefield, before which he made his soldiers pray to ask God for the success of their arms. This cross afterwards became very celebrated. Bede says that in his time small pieces were cut from it and steeped in water, and that the sick who drank this water, or on whom it was thrown by way of sprinkling, recovered their health. Oswald perished in a battle that Penda, king of Mercia, fought against him. His head was sent to Lindisfarne. In 1104 this head was enclosed in the shrine containing the body of Saint Cuthbert and translated to Durham. The right arm of the Saint was formerly kept at Bamburgh. The rest of his body was given to the monastery of Bardney, in the county of Lincoln; in 910 these relics were translated to Gloucester, where one sees the monument raised to the glory of Saint Oswald in the church of Saint Peter; in 1221 a part of these precious remains was carried to the abbey of Berg-Saint-Winoc (Nord), where they were burned by the Calvinists. — Alban Butler.

[4] Some details about Saint Nonna and about Saint Gregory, her husband, may be read in the life of her son Saint Gregory of Nazianzus, doctor of the Church and archbishop of Constantinople, which we gave on 9 May, vol. v, p. 409.

[5] The question whether there were two Frédulfes, one a confessor who was not a bishop and the other bishop of Saintes, is much debated. Until the learned hagiographers and judicious critics of the diocese of La Rochelle and Saintes have fully cleared up the question, we follow the opinion of M. l'abbé Grasilier, of Saintes, and we say: It is perhaps wrongly that the holy person with whom we are concerned has been confused with the bishop of Saintes Frédulfe or Fréculfe, who attended the councils of Soissons in 862 and that of Pistes in 864; on the other hand, there seems to be no better ground for admitting two Saints of the same name, one a bishop, the other a simple confessor.

[6] Alias: Menge, Memje, Memmius, Meinge, Mémy.

[7] Later it was called de la Boissière, and later still du Bauchet.

[8] It is well known that Themistocles said that the laurels of Miltiades did not allow him to sleep.

[9] Exempts were formerly officers of certain cavalry corps who commanded in the absence of the captain and lieutenants.

[10] De Suze, *Sanctorale Vivariense*.

# 6 August

## Martyrologies

### MARTYROLOGE ROMAIN.

On Mount Tabor[1], the Transfiguration of Our Lord Jesus Christ. 32. — At Rome, on the Appian Way, in the cemetery of Callistus, the birthday in heaven of Saint Xystus or Sixtus, second of the name, pope and martyr, who was beheaded during the persecution of Valerian and thus received the crown of immortality. 259. — Further, Saint Felicissimus and Saint Agapitus, deacons of Saint Sixtus, and Saints Januarius, Magnus, Vincent and Stephen, his subdeacons, who were beheaded with him and buried in the cemetery of Praetextatus. Saint Quartus also suffered death with them, according to Saint Cyprian. 259. — At Burgos in Spain, in the monastery of San Pedro de Cardeña, of the Order of Saint Benedict, two hundred religious who were massacred with Saint Stephen, their abbot, by the Saracens for the confession of Jesus Christ; Christians buried them in the cloister. — At Alcalá in Spain, the holy martyrs Justus and Pastor[2], brothers, who, while still very young and at school, threw their books on the ground and ran of their own accord to martyrdom. They were arrested by order of the governor Dacian, who had them beaten with clubs; and as they were encouraging one another to constancy, they were led out of the town and slaughtered by the

executioner. 304. — At Rome, Saint Hormisdas, pope and confessor. 523. — At Amida, a town of Mesopotamia (today Diarbek), Saint James, a hermit celebrated for his miracles[3]. About 502.

## MARTYROLOGE DE FRANCE, REVU ET AUGMENTÉ.

In the diocese of Trier, Saint Schetzelon or Scocelin, confessor, solitary. About 1135. — In the south of France, Saint Stapin, confessor, who is believed to have been bishop of Carcassonne. — In Burgundy, and at Savona in the former Sardinian States (general intendancy of Genoa), the blessed Octavien de Quingey, bishop of Savona and confessor. He was born about 1060 at Quingey, chief town of a canton of the department of Doubs, in the diocese of Besançon; he had as his father the celebrated count William II, surnamed Tête-Hardie, and as his brother Guy of Burgundy, who was afterwards Pope under the name of Callistus II. Octavien was entrusted from his earliest years to the Benedictines of Cluny, where he took the religious habit. He then studied theology at the University of Bologna. In 1087, on his father's death, he consecrated himself to God in the monastery of San Pietro in Ciel d'Oro (*in Cælo aureo*) at Pavia, where he was ordained priest. When he had spent thirty years there in the study of the sacred sciences and the practice of Christian piety, the Church of Savona, widowed of its pastor, turned its eyes to him and chose him as bishop (1123). However vast his diocese, his vigilance and solicitude were able to provide for everything, and the reform of morals was the principal aim of his efforts. He occupied the see of Savona until about the age of seventy, died full of virtues and good works, and was buried in his cathedral church. Forty years after his death his body was discovered and found free from corruption and exhaling a sweet odour. Recognitions or translations of his relics took place in 1202, 1215, 1553, 1586, 1589 and 1605. By a decree dated 6 August 1783, confirmed by the sovereign pontiff Pius VI, the sacred

Congregation of Rites approved and confirmed the cult paid from time immemorial to the blessed Octavien and granted a proper office and Mass in his honour for the whole diocese of Savona. 1128. — In the diocese of Limoges, Saint Exoce, bishop of that see, which he held for fifteen years. He has remained celebrated for the unalterable purity of his morals, the liveliness of his faith, always active and accompanied by good works, and his patience proof against everything. The celebrated Venantius Fortunatus, bishop of Poitiers, made a fine eulogy of him in the epitaph he composed for him. 6th century. — At Paris, in the church of the Feuillants of the rue Saint-Honoré (Bernardine religious of the rule of Cîteaux, whose Order was instituted in 1577 by Jean de la Barrière at the abbey of Feuillant, near Toulouse), dedication of Notre-Dame de Protection, so named by Queen Anne of Austria in gratitude for the favours she had received from that Queen of heaven. 1651. — At Saint-Affrique (Aveyron), in the diocese of Rodez, anniversary of the procession in honour of Notre-Dame de Miséricorde. When cholera broke out at Saint-Affrique on 15 July 1854, the people ran to throw themselves at the feet of Our Lady, of whom that little town has long possessed a miraculous statue. As the scourge did not yield to these prayers, on Sunday 6 August a general procession was made in which clerics in choir dress carried the statue of the Virgin on a litter surmounted by a gracefully decorated canopy. From that moment the scourge decreased rapidly and ended by disappearing.

## MARTYROLOGES DES ORDRES RELIGIEUX.

Martyrology of the Order of Saint Benedict. — At Burgos in Spain, in the monastery of San Pedro de Cardeña, two hundred religious who were massacred with Stephen, their abbot, for the Catholic faith, and buried in the cloister by the Christians.

Martyrology of the Franciscans. — On Mount Tabor, the Transfiguration of Our Lord Jesus Christ. The sovereign pontiff Callistus III granted to those who attend the Mass and office of this feast the same indulgences as are dispensed on the day of the feast of the body of Our Lord. 32.

## ADDITIONS FAITES D'APRÈS LES BOLLANDISTES ET AUTRES HAGIOGRAPHES.

In Bavaria, the blessed Bertha of Biburg, virgin. She was born in Germany and had as her father Count Henry of Hilpolsteim and as her mother the princess Bertha of Istria. Having lost her parents, she inherited the estate of Biburg and there founded, on the advice of Saint Otto, bishop of Bamberg, a monastery with a church of the Order of Saint Benedict, and a hospice to receive and lodge the poor there, feed them and care for them in their illnesses. Saint Eberhard, Bertha's brother, was the first abbot of this monastery, whose church was consecrated by Saint Otto. Happy at the accomplishment of this fine and great work, Bertha withdrew into a pious solitude within her noble dwelling and led there a wholly angelic life until it pleased Our Lord to call her to Himself. 1151. — In Sicily, Saint Chrême or Chrêmes, abbot and confessor. He may have been thirty years old when he buried himself in a solitude in the part of the island where the town of Villafranca was later built: there rises sheer an enormous rock, accessible from one side only; it was to the highest peak of this rock that Saint Chrême withdrew, to give himself up there, far from all distraction, to a contemplative and mortified life. Roger I, great count of Sicily (1101), having witnessed two striking miracles which our Saint worked before him, vowed him from then on a great friendship and held him in deep esteem. Having climbed Saint Chrême's steep rock, and delighted with the magnificent view one enjoyed from it, which stretched over Mount Etna and as far as the sea, he had a monastery built there, of which our Saint was the first abbot. The rule of Saint Basil was followed there. Saint Chrême was buried under the steps of the church of his convent, and on the very spot where he was buried a spring gushed out which still flows today and whose water has the power of curing fevers. 1116. — At the village of Schleburchrath or Slebusrode, near Cologne, the blessed Gézelin, also called Gitzelin and Gezzelin, swineherd and confessor, whom a great number of hagiographers have wrongly confused with Saint Schetzelon or Scocelin, solitary, whose life we give on this day. Molanus relates that he was invoked with success when people wished to be preserved from malignant pustule and from measles. Chastelain adds that Henry, baron of Renschenberg, had an oratory raised in his honour which was long celebrated under the name of the Chapel of Saint-Gézelin (*Gisle- Kapellchen*): there was under the altar a spring whose miraculous water, like that of Lourdes in our day, cured numbers of sick people of their infirmities and drew a great concourse of pilgrims. Date uncertain.

## The Transfiguration of Our Lord on Mount Tabor, in Syria

*32. — Roman Emperor: Tiberius.*

> *In Transfiguratione, quid aliud quam resurrectionis gloria nuntiatur?*
>
> *What can I see in the Transfiguration, if not a symbol of the glory of the future resurrection?*
>
> *St. Gregory the Great.*

After the celebrated confession that Saint Peter made of His divine sonship and of His dignity as Christ and Messiah, a confession approved by the other Apostles, Our Lord, wishing to prepare them all for the bloody execution of His Passion, began to reveal to them that He must go to Jerusalem, that He must suffer many things there at the hands of the Elders, the Scribes and the Chief Priests, and that He must be put to death there, to rise again on the third day. He then set before them a capital point of His Gospel: "That whoever wished to come after Him into the possession of His glory must renounce himself, carry his cross and follow Him, because he who claimed to save his soul, that is, to exempt it from crosses and mortifications, would infallibly lose it, whereas he who lost it for love of Him, by willingly suffering every kind of pain, and death itself, for the glory of His name, would save it in truth." But as it was hardly easy to engage them in a life full of mortifications and sufferings without giving them some pledge of the reward they were to expect for it in heaven, He assured them at the same time that there were some among them who would not die before they had seen the Son of Man coming in His kingdom, that is, before He had shown them something of that incomparable glory with which He was to be eternally clothed at the right hand of His heavenly Father, and in which they were to have a share, as being His friends, His brethren, His co-heirs and His members.

It was not necessary, for the fulfilment of this promise, that He should appear to them in the brightness of His majesty before His

Resurrection, since He had told them only that it would happen before their death. But as He wished to strengthen them against the temptations they were to have at the time of His Passion, and also to make them see that, if He was delivered to His enemies and treated with all the indignity that rage and envy can suggest to barbarous and bloodthirsty men, this was not through weakness and powerlessness, but through the abundance of His love, which would suspend the use of His power in order to let Himself be sacrificed for our salvation, He carried out soon afterwards what He had promised them, by working the great miracle of the Transfiguration, which is today the subject of the Church's veneration. Indeed, the holy Evangelists tell us that scarcely six days had passed since this signal promise when Our Lord, taking with Him Saint Peter, Saint James and Saint John, led them up a high mountain apart, and was transfigured in their presence. His face became resplendent as the sun, and His garments became white as snow. Moses and Elijah appeared in the same place and spoke with Him of the death He was to suffer at Jerusalem. This happened while He was at prayer. The Apostles saw nothing of it at the beginning, because they were drowsy and a deep sleep had seized them; but on waking they perceived that marvellous brightness of His face and that incomparable beauty of His garments, with the two Prophets who were speaking to Him. So delightful a sight filled them with wonder and joy: they contemplated it for some time in silence; but Peter, seeing that the Prophets were withdrawing, said to the Saviour: "Master, it is good for us to be here; if it please you, we will make three tents here, one for you, one for Moses, and the third for Elijah." He was so enraptured and beside himself that, according to Saint Luke, he did not know what he was saying. He had not yet finished these words when a bright cloud formed and covered him with Saint James and Saint John. All three were afraid on entering this cloud; but at the same time a voice came out of it which said to them: "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased alone; hear Him." This voice, which was that of the eternal Father, increased their fear; they fell on their faces, full of dread and terror: and they would never have dared to rise if Our Lord had not come to them and touched them, saying: "Arise, and fear not." Then they opened their eyes and saw no one any more but Jesus alone, who had already resumed His ordinary countenance. They came down from the mountain with Him, and as they came down, this great Master of humility said to them: "Tell no one what you have just seen until the Son of Man be risen."

Saint Thomas explains this whole mystery very learnedly. The first reason he gives for it is the one we have spoken of. "Our Lord," he says, "had foretold to His disciples the insults and the pains He was to endure in the course of His Passion, and had urged them to walk in His steps and to carry their cross every day after Him. This was the road He had taught them for coming to a share in His glory; for, as Saint Paul said later: 'If we suffer with Him, we shall reign with Him, and if we have a share in the pains and bitterness of His death, we shall have a share in the fullness of His happiness.' Now, in order that a person may apply himself courageously to the pursuit of the means, he must have knowledge of the end; so that the greatness of the good he hopes for and of the reward he expects may sweeten the pains met with in the use of these means, which is especially necessary when they are extremely difficult and run counter to the inclinations of nature." It was only through many tribulations that the Apostles and all Christians were to enter the kingdom of God, just as Our Lord entered into the enjoyment of His own kingdom only by His cross and by His death: it was therefore fitting that they should see, even in this world, some image and representation of that kingdom; so that, as the Venerable Bede says on Saint Matthew, the contemplation of that glory which will never end might make them endure with more constancy, during the moments of their pilgrimage, the adversities they were of necessity to endure in it. It was therefore for this that Our Lord, as a Master full of wisdom and goodness, was transfigured in their presence, showing them by His own glory a sample of that which was prepared for them in heaven. Saint Leo, pope, and Saint John Damascene, in the discourses they composed on our mystery, give the same reason: the first says excellently that "by the Transfiguration of Our Lord the hope of the Church was founded; because the whole body must recognize in the glory of its head that which

is destined for itself, and from there proceed with courage to suffer like Him the reproaches and adversities of this life."

Next, according to the same doctors, Jesus Christ wished by this mystery to confirm the Apostles in faith in His divinity, which they had just recognized and confessed; to forestall the scandal they might feel on seeing Him die in so tragic and so ignominious a manner on the cross; to show the truth of what He said, that no one was able to take His life from Him against His will, but that He would give it of His own free will and without anyone forcing Him to give it; and finally, that glory belonged to Him as His own, and that if He was not clothed with it, this was only through a loving condescension to our needs, and in order to be in a position to instruct us by His word, to edify us by His example and to redeem us by His death.

Let us add that Our Lord also wished to be transfigured so that the new law might not be given with less brightness and splendour than the old law, and that it might at the same time be authorized by the eternal Father, who orders us to hear His Son, and by Moses and Elijah, the first of whom received the old law amid lightnings, and the second upheld its observance with a fiery zeal, and both of whom came to pay their homage to the one Lawgiver of the human race. But we must note three differences between the splendour that appeared at the time of the promulgation of the old law and that which appears at the Transfiguration, where the new law is promulgated, differences which raise the latter supremely above the former. The brightness that appeared when the old law was given was foreign to Moses and did not come from his own resources, whereas the glory that appears at the Transfiguration is an overflow of that with which the Saviour's soul was always penetrated. At the time of the promulgation of the old law, the light was accompanied by a great noise from the thunderbolts and thunders that rumbled over Mount Sinai. But there is nothing so calm and so tranquil as the splendour of the Transfiguration: there is no thunder, no smoke on the mountain of Tabor, and if the Apostles are terrified, it is not by any violent noise that they hear, but by the greatness of the majesty that presents itself to their eyes. Not only could the Jews not go up the mountain where the Tables of the law were given; they could not even look at the face of Moses in the brightness it had received from his converse with God, to show that they were still in the time of shadows and figures. But the Apostles go up the mountain and contemplate openly the admirable splendours of their Master's glory, although it was far more dazzling than that of Moses, to signify that the Christians, whom they represented, would be in the time of truth and light.

After these excellent reasons for the Transfiguration, we must consider, with the same Angelic Doctor, its nature, its properties and its circumstances. We read first, in the text of the Gospel, that the Son of God took with Him three of His Apostles, Peter, James and John. He took them and led them with Him, because, if Our Lord had not taken our nature and raised up our weakness, and if He did not strengthen us by His example and by His grace, none of us could go up into heaven. He did not take all His disciples: first, because many are called but few are chosen, and above all there are few persons in this life who reach the sublime states of contemplation and of familiar communication with God; secondly, because, according to the wise disposition He wished to establish in His Church, the highest mysteries were to be made known to the generality of the faithful only through the organ and ministry of a small number of ecclesiastical superiors, so that in this mystical body there might be a perfect order through the influence of superiors on their inferiors and the subordination of inferiors to their superiors. He did not take more than three disciples, because, in actions which make a stir and may draw admiration and praise upon us, we must be extremely reserved about doing them before men, and reveal them only so far as charity and necessity oblige us. Nevertheless He did not take fewer than three: whether, as Saint Damascene says, to honour the mystery of the Trinity; or to show that the descendants of the three sons of Noah, that is, all the nations of the earth, were called to eternal happiness; or finally because it is written that all things shall be judged on the testimony of two or three witnesses. He took Peter, James and John in preference to the other Apostles: Peter, for the solidity of his faith and the fervour of his love; James, for the promptness of his preaching and the primacy of his martyrdom; John, for the candour

of his virginity and the innocence of his life, which made him worthy to be the beloved disciple and the keeper of his Master's secrets.

Our Lord, having taken these three Apostles without telling them anything of His design, led them up a high mountain apart. The Gospel does not say which mountain this was; but it is held by tradition that it was Mount Tabor. This is also the opinion of Saint Cyril, of Eusebius, of Saint Jerome, of the Venerable Bede, of Saint John Damascene and of all the interpreters, who say that it was in the mystery of the Transfiguration that these words of the Royal Prophet were fulfilled: *Thabor et Hermon in nomine tuo exultabunt*; "Mount Tabor and Mount Hermon shall leap for joy in your name." — "Hermon," says Saint Damascene, "rejoiced at the baptism of the Son of God, because the voice of the eternal Father resounded there. But Tabor rejoiced at His Transfiguration, because the Saviour appeared there in the brightness of His glory and His majesty, and received there a new testimony from the sacred mouth of His Father." This mountain is near the town of Nazareth, in Galilee, in the great plain that Holy Writ calls Esdraelon, and it is said to be one of the highest mountains of Palestine. It was there that the captain Barak and Deborah the prophetess won over Sisera, general of the army of Jabin, king of Canaan, that signal victory which is spoken of in the book of Judges, chapter iv. It was there that Our Lord delivered that admirable sermon which we call the Sermon on the Mount, and which contains all the principles of the sublime morality of Christianity. It was there that, after His resurrection, He showed Himself to nearly five hundred of His disciples, as He had promised several times, both before His Passion and after He had risen.

It was fitting that He should be transfigured and be declared the sovereign Lawgiver of the new law on a high mountain: 1° so that, being separated from the tumult of men, He might not be interrupted in this action, and that only the Disciples He had chosen might have a share in the vision of His beauty and His glory; 2° so that the new law might yield in nothing to the old law, which had been given to Moses on the mountain of Sinai, and that the three Apostles might better know its height and excellence; 3° to teach us that, in order to pray in a holy manner, to make ourselves worthy of the visits of heaven, to change our life and morals and to be transformed into other men, we must seek retreat and solitude, detach ourselves from dealings with the world, rise above the inclinations of the flesh and of corrupt nature, and pass from the region of the senses to that of the spirit and of grace. Let us add that, as the Transfiguration was the image of the eternal happiness prepared for us in heaven, it had to take place apart, to show us that then we shall be entirely separated from everything that can defile and molest us, and that we shall no longer have cause to fear either hunger, or thirst, or pain, or misery, or sin, or anything contrary to our innocence and our felicity.

It was therefore on a high mountain, and on the mountain of Tabor, which from then on became the figure of heaven, that Our Lord willed to be transfigured. It would be a very gross error to imagine that He really lost His body to take another, either spiritual or composed of various parts of the air. It is not even true either that He left the disposition and state of a mortal body to take the qualities of an immortal body, or that He changed the very form and the lineaments of His face; but His Transfiguration consists only in this, that He clothed Himself with one of the endowments or qualities of glorious bodies, brightness, making His face shine like the sun by a transfusion and overflow of the glory with which His soul was filled. To understand this truth well, we must remember that Our Lord being God, and His soul enjoying from the moment of its formation the splendours of the beatific vision, His sacred body, as a natural consequence, ought from then on to have been glorious and to possess the four qualities which it now enjoys in heaven: *impassibility*, *subtlety*, *agility* and *brightness*. However, as He could not, with these qualities, perform the functions of Mediator and Saviour, He deprived Himself of them voluntarily until the moment of the Resurrection, taking only a body that was passible, earthly, subject to the distances of places and opaque like other bodies, and suspending, by a miracle and by a disposition of providence which the holy Fathers call economy and dispensation, those glorious qualities which were to flow from the soul onto the body. But as, on other occasions, He had taken for a moment something of the first three: of *impassibility*, in passing through the

midst of the Jews who were throwing stones at Him, without being seen or wounded; of *subtlety*, in coming forth from His mother's womb without breaking the seal of her virginity; of *agility*, in walking on the waves of the sea without sinking; so, in the

Transfiguration, He willed to take for a time the fourth of these qualities, by an admirable glory which He communicated to His body and which made it shine more than all the stars of heaven.

Thus the glory with which He clothed Himself did not come from without, but from the brightness of His soul, just as that which He possesses at present, and which He has possessed since His Resurrection, comes only from the fullness of the happiness with which His soul is filled and blissfully penetrated. And from this we must conclude two things with the Angel of the Schools: the first, that the brightness which appeared on Our Lord's face in His Transfiguration was the same in essence as the brightness of glory, but that it was different as to manner. It was the same in essence, because it arose from the same principle, namely, from His divinity united to His body and from the consummate happiness of His holy soul; but it was different as to manner, because the brightness of glory is a stable and permanent quality, attached to the glorious body as to its proper subject; whereas the Transfiguration was only a passing quality, and one which was not even proportioned to the state in which the Saviour's body was, since, as we have said, it did not cease to be mortal. The second thing is that the Transfiguration was at the same time a miracle and a cessation of miracle. It was a cessation of miracle, since it was only by miracle that Our Lord suspended the glory of His soul and prevented it from flowing onto His body: which He ceased in part to do when He allowed this precious outflow. It was nevertheless a miracle, just as it was in Him a miracle either to pass through the crowd without being seen, or to come forth from His mother's womb without making a breach, or to walk on the waves of the sea without sinking; because it was not natural to Our Lord's body, in the state in which it was, to have these prerogatives, and because, the glorious qualities being naturally inseparable, one cannot except by miracle possess one of them without enjoying all the others at the same time.

For the rest, although the Evangelists speak only of the splendour that appeared on the Saviour's face, it is nevertheless very probable that His whole body, and especially His feet and hands, which were visible to the eyes of those present, were clothed with a like brightness. This is the opinion of Saint Jerome in the 61st letter, to Pammachius; of Saint Ephrem, in a discourse on the Transfiguration; and of Cardinal Cajetan, in his Commentary on Saint Thomas. It is more difficult to say whether this admirable brightness was only on the outer surface of the Saviour's body, or whether it was solid, that is, whether it penetrated the whole thickness of His limbs, as is commonly believed of the brightness of glorious bodies. Some Doctors consider that it was solid, because Saint John Chrysostom and other holy Fathers, explaining our mystery, say that Our Lord had in it the same brightness that He will have on the day of the last judgment: now, on that great day and throughout all eternity, He will have His body wholly filled and penetrated with light; it is therefore very likely that it was the same in His Transfiguration. However, the opinion of Saint Thomas is that this marvellous brightness was only on the outer surface, because the sacred text teaches us nothing else about it, and because this was enough for the end Our Lord intended in this mystery, that is, to manifest His glory in it and to give a sample of that which He has prepared for His elect. If the holy Fathers say that it was the same as that which He will have at the last judgment, this must be understood as the same in substance, and not the same in extent, as we have already explained.

Not only was the adorable body of the Son of God clothed with a heavenly light, but, further, His garments became white as snow, the whitest thing that falls under our senses. Saint Mark and Saint Luke add that they too received an extraordinary brightness, which no doubt came from this luminous body sending its rays through their fabric, as was noted by the author of the book *Of the Wonders of Holy Scripture*, attributed to Saint Augustine: *Caro illuminata*, he says, *per vestimenta radiabat*. It was a symbol of the innocence and incomparable beauty of the Church, figured by the Saviour's garments, and a sign that she would be clothed with glory, but that she would receive it only from His liberality, and by a participation in and outflow of His

own.

At the same time Moses and Elijah appeared on the mountain, to do Him homage for all that they had had of rare and excellent while they were in the miseries of this life, and to adore Him under the august titles of Messiah, Shepherd, Head, King, Prince of peace and perfect Redeemer of the human race. The Gloss on Saint Luke says that these were not the real persons of Moses and Elijah, but angels clothed with an appearance that represented them. This opinion, however, is not tenable; and the sacred Text names Moses and Elijah too expressly for us to doubt that it was they themselves in person. The greater difficulty is to know whether Moses, who was dead, and whose soul rested in limbo, rose again and appeared in his own body, or whether he appeared only in a borrowed body formed by the hands of the Angels. The Angelic Doctor holds the latter opinion, and he proves it by this, that God does not work miracles without necessity. Now there was no necessity, for the accomplishment of the mystery of the Transfiguration, that Moses should appear in his own body; this would have required a very great miracle, and would even have obliged him to die a second time; it is therefore credible that he appeared only in a borrowed body. However, several theologians give him on Tabor the same body he had when he was on earth: they say that this is more in keeping with the words of Scripture, because it does not say that the soul of this Prophet appeared; rather, it says expressly that Moses, as well as Elijah, who was living, appeared. However that may be, Our Lord wished to show by this apparition that His power extended over the living and the dead; that His Gospel was the end and fulfilment of the law and the Prophets; and that He Himself was the way which these great men had sought, the truth which they had announced and the life for which they had hoped.

His converse with them was admirable, and our minds are too weak to form a just idea of it. However, the Gospel tells us nothing else of it except that they spoke of the manner in which He was to die at Jerusalem. These Prophets knew it already, since they had foretold it when they lived on earth; but they no doubt received on this occasion a clearer and more distinct knowledge of it: either before appearing, so that they might approach the Saviour with a more tender and more grateful love; or from the very mouth of this divine Master, who had the goodness to reveal to them what He was to endure, so that Moses might impart it to the holy Fathers in limbo, and Elijah might make it his continual meditation with Enoch, in the place of their sojourn, until the end of the ages. But who could express their thoughts, their feelings and their words when they saw, on the one hand, the ineffable beauty and infinite merits of the God-Man, and, on the other, the reproaches with which He was to be sated, the blows and the wounds He was to receive, and the cruel and ignominious death to which He was to be condemned! There is no doubt no affection that so moving an object would not stir up in their hearts, and they thereby gained a higher idea of the divine goodness and perfections than from all their prophetic lights and all the revelations they had received from heaven. For the rest, Our Lord wished to speak of His sufferings at the very time of His triumph, to show us that He esteemed them infinitely, that He had an extreme desire for them, and that He preferred them to all the glory of His body; and also to teach us that, in the sweetest visits of heaven, we must keep an inclination for the cross, and never forget, in our greatest elevations, what can serve to humble us.

During this marvellous converse the Apostles, who had fallen asleep because it was late and the length of the road had greatly tired them, woke up, and they saw their Master in the brightness of this extraordinary glory, with the blessed Prophets, who also shared in His splendour. So it happens to the just at the end of their life: they fall asleep in death; but at the same moment they awake, and their soul enters into the eternal contemplation of the greatness and the beauties of Jesus Christ. What am I saying? into contemplation? they even enter into the enjoyment of His glory and into the blessed participation in His happiness, and they are told: “Rest after so many crosses and labours, and taste at leisure the joy of your sovereign Lord.” Saint Peter, enraptured by so beautiful and so delightful a sight, and fearing that it might end too soon, cried out: “Lord, it is good for us to be here; be pleased that we set up three tents here, one for you, another for Moses, and a third for Elijah.” It was the abundance of his joy, the depth of his respect and the fervour of his love

that made him speak in this way; for he esteemed his Master infinitely and loved Him above all things: conceiving no glory as great as that with which he saw Him clothed, he wished it to last for ever. Besides, he dreaded the moment when his Master, according to His prediction, would be seized by the Jews and delivered to the Gentiles to be put to death, and he saw no better means of making Him avoid this death than to keep Him on Tabor with Moses and Elijah, separated from dealings with men.

But why do Saint Mark and Saint Luke say that he did not know what he was saying? And why does he say it himself through the pen of Saint Mark, who was his interpreter and no doubt wrote it only by his order? Is it not because he spoke of making three tabernacles, whereas there must be only one, which is the true Church, which is preserved and made glorious only by maintaining itself in unity? Is it not because he seems to put the servants on a level with the Master, in wishing to give Moses and Elijah tents of their own as well as Jesus Christ, whereas Moses and Elijah, that is, the Law and the Prophets, walked only under the shadow of Jesus Christ? Is it not because he wants Jesus, Moses and Elijah to remain in a place which is in no way proper to them; since Moses must return to limbo to announce to the holy Fathers what he has seen and to receive soon afterwards the wages of his eternal glory; Elijah must return to the earthly paradise, to be at the end of the ages the witness of the truth of Christianity against the impostures of Antichrist; and the Saviour must be crucified on the mountain of Calvary, to enter by His sufferings into the enjoyment of His kingdom? Is it not because he places all felicity in the sight of the Saviour's body, whereas eternal life can consist only in the permanent sight of His divinity? All these reasons are excellent; but the principal one is that, according to Saint Peter's plan, Jesus Christ would not have died, and, not dying, He would not have redeemed the world; He would have left us all in death. Besides, this Apostle thought only of the present life and did not raise his thought to the happiness of the future life, which is nevertheless the one that must occupy all our desires; besides which he thought only of himself and of the two companions who were with him, without troubling himself either about the other nine Apostles, or the great number of the Disciples, or the sacred Virgin, or the whole human race. He therefore did not know what he was saying, and his joy or his love so intoxicated him that he gave no thought to his own words.

While he was forming this wish, a shining cloud surrounded the whole of this illustrious company, from the midst of which was heard the voice of the eternal Father, saying: "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased alone: hear Him." As the old law had been given in a cloud, it was reasonable that Jesus Christ too should be declared the sovereign Lawgiver of the new law in a cloud. But never had God said of Moses, nor even of any Angel, as Saint Paul remarks, what He says today of Jesus Christ: "This is my beloved Son." They are all servants of God, but Jesus Christ is the Son, not by grace, by adoption, by privilege, by mission, or by some excellent quality that raises Him above other men; but He is so by nature, as He whom the Father begets from all eternity, and who is of the same essence and the same substance as He. It is this Son whom He loves uniquely and in whom He places His good pleasure, because He finds in Him a goodness proportioned to His love, which is an infinite goodness and the very goodness by which He is good. Thus it is with justice that He sets Him before His Apostles, and through them before all men, as their sovereign Master and as the One whom they must hear. And He will have cause to condemn all those who have preferred to follow the maxims of the world, the corrupt inclinations of their flesh and the suggestions of the devil, rather than the sacred rules of the morality brought by this divine Lawgiver.

A rich Commentary on these same words will be found in the Sermons of Saint Leo, pope. It suffices to note here further that this submission, which the eternal Father asks of us for the instructions and commandments of His Son, is as it were the end of the whole mystery of the Transfiguration. For there are three things which lead us to receive with respect and observe with love the ordinances of a lawgiver: the first is his own merit; the second is the justice and holiness of his law; the third is the greatness of the rewards he promises to those who keep it faithfully. Now the whole mystery of the Transfiguration tends only to convince us of these three things with regard to the new law. The word of the eternal Father shows us the infinite merit of Jesus Christ,

who brings it to us, and who is neither an Angel nor a mere man, but the Creator of Angels and men; the homage of Moses and Elijah bears witness to the holiness of this law, since they acknowledge in it that the old law was only its rough sketch, and that the prophecies were only predictions and promises of it. Finally, the glory that appears on the Saviour's face is a pledge of that which is prepared for the faithful observers of the same law; and it is easy, in contemplating this glory, to judge of the greatness of the felicity of the blessed: for if the mere sight of it was so delightful that the Apostles who were favoured with it believed themselves already in heaven, what will it be to possess it? And what will it be, above this glory, to enjoy the glory of the soul, which is incomparably higher, purer and more perfect than all bodily glory? And what will it be, finally, together with this glory, to have the fulfilment of all one's desires, the fullness of all goods and the consummation of all happiness? Thus everything that appears in our mystery presses us and sweetly engages us to receive Jesus Christ as our Master and to make ourselves the faithful observers of His ordinances.

The Apostles, on hearing the voice of the eternal Father, fell to the ground, because human weakness is in no way capable of hearing things so lofty unless it is upheld by the strength and power of God. But Our Lord came to them and, touching them, brought them back to themselves; because it is by His saving approaches and by the impressions and touches of His grace that we rise from our falls and are raised to the contemplation of the Godhead. Then they saw no one but Jesus, because, after imperfect prayer, in which one rises to the knowledge of God through creatures, one enters into a sublime prayer in which one sees no longer anything but God alone. It is not known how long this great mystery lasted. Perhaps it began in the evening and ended only the next morning. On the descent from the mountain, Our Lord very expressly charged His Apostles to say nothing of what they had seen until after His Resurrection: this was so as to give no cause of envy and jealousy to the other Disciples, and to teach these three that great secrecy must be kept about the extraordinary graces received in prayer. Saint Luke adds that they fulfilled this command and spoke to no one of the mystery of the Transfiguration until Our Lord had risen. Saint Peter mentions it in his second Epistle, chapter i, and testifies that the thought of this mystery powerfully encouraged him to bear with constancy all the adversities of this life.

We have in this same mystery the confirmation of several other articles of our faith. The mystery of the most holy Trinity is represented to us in it, because all three divine persons take part in it: the Father, by bearing witness to the excellence and authority of His Son; the Son, by showing the glory that was naturally due to Him; and the Holy Spirit, by covering, under the form of a cloud, Jesus Christ, the two Prophets and the three Apostles. The mystery of the Incarnation also appears in it with brilliance, since the voice of God, saying of Jesus that He is His beloved Son, shows that the only Son of God was made man, and that the man is the true Son of God. The mystery of the Passion and that of the death of Our Lord are expressed in it, since the Saviour's converse with the two Prophets turns on the excess of the sufferings He was to endure on Calvary. Finally, we see in it an image of the Resurrection and of the eternal happiness of the head and members of Jesus Christ and of His Disciples, because the glory that appears on His face is as it were the foretaste and the display of that which He already possesses, and which we shall one day possess in eternity. This is why the Church today addresses this prayer to God: "Great God, who in the glorious transfiguration of your only Son confirmed the mysteries of the faith by the testimony of the holy Fathers, and who admirably signified the perfect adoption of children by the voice you formed in the midst of a shining cloud, grant us the grace of becoming at last the co-heirs of this King of glory and of being partakers of His splendours."

As we have already noted, it is regarded as certain that it was on Mount Tabor that Our Lord was transfigured. The apostle Saint Peter calls it the holy Mountain. The summit is a plateau half a league in circumference, sloping gently towards the west, all covered with holm oaks, ivy, fragrant groves, ancient ruins and memories. This celebrated mountain is known under the Hebrew name of Tabor, under those of *Itabyrion* and *Atabyrion* which the Greeks gave it, and of Jebel Nur (mountain of light) and Jebel Tor (the

mountain) which the Arabs give it today. Saint Helena came to Tabor, built a church there and left considerable sums for those who might wish to dwell there. Saint Paula came there in the fourth century. In the sixth, Saint Antoninus already found three churches there. Adamnan tells us that in the seventh century there was a large convent. In the eighth, Saint Willibald also speaks of a convent and of a church consecrated to Moses and Elijah. Benedictines of Cluny, who had founded a second convent, were all slaughtered by the Saracens in 1113. John Phocas, who visited Tabor at the end of the same century, found there two convents which had been re-established, one Greek and the other Latin: there was a multitude of religious. The monk Boniface says that a large convent had been built there by the kings of Hungary. Towards the year 1209 Malek-Adel had the church and convents razed, and on their ruins he raised a citadel which was later destroyed by the Saracens themselves. In 1262 Baibars brought death and devastation to the holy mountain, and the pious solitaries abandoned for ever the ruins of the three tabernacles of Mount Tabor, which today are no more than the haunt of wild beasts. Louis IX went up this holy mountain several times. Today the plateau of Mount Tabor is all covered with ruins; one finds there great stretches of wall which belonged to the last fortified castle built by the Saracens. One also sees vaults and cisterns; the whole had been very solidly built: there are still recognizable remains of the churches and convents. Only rare pilgrims are seen there now. Three altars have been built under little vaults; it is there that, on the day of the Transfiguration, the Catholics of Nazareth come on pilgrimage, and that the Franciscan Fathers celebrate the office. In the sanctuaries of Palestine one has at all times the privilege of saying the Mass that relates to the place where one is.

As for the solemnities of the feast of the Transfiguration, the authors who treat of the divine offices say that it was established in the year 1456 by Pope Callistus III, and that this Pope composed its office and granted for it the same indulgences as for the feast of the body of Our Lord. They add that this was in memory of the great victory which the Christians won the same year over the Turks before Belgrade, forcing them to raise the siege, and where Mahomet II, the terror of the East, was wounded. It is certain, however, that this feast is much older, as Baronius proves in his Notes, by the testimony of several Latin martyrologies and several Greek menologies, and above all of the martyrology of Wandelbert, who lived about the year 850. The ninety-fourth sermon of Saint Leo, which is on the mystery of this feast, proves that it was kept at Rome in the middle of the 5th century. One may see in the *Bibliothèque des Prédicateurs* of the learned Father Combefis, of the Order of Saint Dominic, the ecclesiastical authors who composed sermons or homilies on this subject.

Although we must always have our heavenly fatherland before our eyes and never lose the remembrance of it, we must nevertheless think of it more particularly on this day, since the Church sets before us in it so precious a pledge and so beautiful an image of the immortal glory we shall possess there. For the rest, we shall think of it with profit if this reflection makes us renounce the pleasures and vanities of the world and embrace the humble and mortified life of Jesus Christ. For we must be persuaded that, although Our Lord went up the material Tabor before going up Calvary, there is nevertheless no other road to reach the mystical Tabor, which is eternal felicity, than to pass through the crosses and mortifications figured by Calvary. The road is short, and Our Lord has greatly sweetened it by passing along it first; let us not refuse to enter upon it: if we suffer a little in this life, we shall rejoice infinitely in the next; and if we have a share in the bitterness of our Master’s chalice, we shall have a share in the fullness of His happiness.

A sculpture on the doors of the church of Saint Paul Outside the Walls, at Rome, offers a fine representation of the mystery of the Transfiguration of Our Lord.

To complete Father Giry, we have made use of *Les Saints Lieux*, by Mgr Mislin.

## Saint Xystus or Sixtus II, Pope and Martyr

*259. — Roman Emperors: Valerian and Gallienus.*

*Nihil Deo tam gratum, tam amabile est, quam mitis anima atque mansueta.*

*God finds nothing more pleasing, nothing more lovable, than a gentle and merciful soul.*

*St. John Chrysostom, Homily III on Penance.*

The infant Church saw two holy Pontiffs appear under the name of Sixtus, both of whom honoured her by their martyrdom. The first was a Roman and the son of a shepherd; he held the apostolic see under the emperor Hadrian, and generously suffered death under Antoninus, to go to enjoy Jesus Christ, on 6 April in the year 127[1]. The second, whose memory the Church celebrates today, was an Athenian. In his youth he applied himself greatly to the study of philosophy, which was held in great account in his country; but having recognized how much the doctrine of Jesus Christ was preferable to all the wisdom of the Greeks, he left this occupation to study nothing more but Jesus Christ crucified. Having come to Rome, he made himself very celebrated there by his prudence, his holiness and his profound knowledge of everything that belongs to ecclesiastical discipline.

The apostolic chair had remained vacant for a month after the martyrdom of Pope Saint Stephen I (253–257). The Church of Rome, widowed of her pastor, learned each day of the massacre of one of her children. Thus the acolyte Tarsicius was arrested by the pagans at a moment when he was carrying the holy Eucharist on him. The soldiers who seized him wished to know what he was carrying. The heroic minister of Jesus Christ refused to reveal the holy species, and let himself be beaten to death by the mob with stones and sticks[2]. In a solemn assembly in the catacombs, the clergy and faithful of Rome, braving the fury of the persecution, had the courage to give a successor to the martyred Pontiff. Saint Stephen I had entrusted the government of the Church to Sixtus, his archdeacon, while he himself, imprisoned for the faith, was undergoing the first blows of the eighth persecution. The votes of the assembly fell on the courageous archdeacon (257). As soon as Saint Dionysius, patriarch of Alexandria, learned of his election, he wrote to him to ask whether persons who had received baptism at the hands of heretics, and who asked to be received into the bosom of the Catholic Church, ought to be rebaptized. We do not have his reply; but if he had time to give one, it was doubtless entirely in keeping with the one that Saint Stephen, his predecessor, had made to the same question put by bishops of Africa: namely, that nothing must be innovated, but that one must hold to tradition. Dionysius had the consolation of seeing all those whom a passing error had drawn away return to unity. Sixtus conferred orders in the month of December, according to the custom of the Popes, and laid hands in them on four priests, seven deacons and two bishops. Some put among their number Saint Sixtus, first archbishop of Reims; but Flodoard, who wrote the *History of the Church of Reims*, says that he was sent into the Gauls long before by the apostle Saint Peter.

Our Saint suffered incredible pains for the defence and propagation of the Christian religion. The emperor Valerian having declared to the senate that he wished search to be made above all for the bishops, the priests and the ministers of the Church, and that they be made to suffer every sort of torment even to death, Sixtus was arrested as head of the Christians, brought before the judges and accused of having held secret assemblies against the prince’s prohibition. Sixtus confessed that he spared nothing to establish the worship of the true God and to destroy the superstition of idolatry, and declared that he would die willingly for so just and so holy a cause. He was led to the temple of Mars, to be pressed to sacrifice to this false divinity; but he absolutely refused to commit this impiety. And so, after a short imprisonment, and while the Pontiff was celebrating the holy mysteries in the cemetery of Callistus, soldiers seized him and led him out of the city, where the executioners cut off his head (6 August 259).

Saint Sixtus had sat about two years, from the consulate of Maximus and Glabrio (257) to that of Aemilianus and Bassus (259). He went before into heaven that pleiad of glorious martyrs whom the edicts of Valerian were multiplying in every part of the world, and of whom the history of earth has not been able to keep all the names. As he walked to execution, Lawrence, archdeacon of the Roman Church, followed him weeping and said to him: “Where are you going, my father, without your son? Where are you going, holy Pontiff,

without your deacon?" Sixtus answered him: "It is not I who abandon you, O my son; but a greater combat is reserved for you: you will follow me in three days[3]." So it happened. But if Saint Sixtus was not from that moment accompanied by Saint Lawrence, he did not lack other companions in his sufferings. For Saint Felicissimus and Saint Agapitus, deacons, Saint Januarius, Saint Magnus and Saint Stephen, subdeacons, and Saint Quartus were beheaded with him, as the Roman martyrology assures, although the poet Saint Prudentius says in particular of Saint Sixtus that he was fastened to a cross.

Among the praises that antiquity has given to Sixtus II, one remarks above all that of a gentle and peaceful pontiff. It was to this meekness that the consoling mission was reserved of ending the quarrel of the Rebaptizers, of which we have spoken, and which had filled the pontificate of his predecessor with bitterness.

His body was buried in the cemetery of Callistus, on the Appian Way, where he had been executed, and those of his Companions in the cemetery of Praetextatus, as the book of the Sovereign Pontiffs, attributed to Saint Damasus, remarks. All the martyrologies, following Saint Cyprian, Saint Augustine, Saint Maximus, Saint Peter Chrysologus and many others, speak with respect of this blessed Pontiff.

Saint Sixtus is represented: 1° with a sword at his side, to recall that he was beheaded; 2° fastened to a cross, some authors maintaining that he endured this kind of torment; 3° conferring the diaconate on Saint Lawrence; 4° led to prison and handing over to Saint Lawrence the money of the alms, to distribute it to widows and orphans; 5° walking to execution, accompanied by the same Saint Lawrence, to whom he foretells that he will undergo martyrdom after three days.

## CULTE ET RELIQUES.

Among the Dominican sanctuaries of Rome one remarks the church of San Sisto Vecchio (Saint Sixtus the Old). It was built towards the end of the 3rd century, on the site and with the remains of a temple of the Muses, by a Roman matron named Trigida, in honour of our holy Pontiff. His precious remains, taken from the cemetery of Callistus on the Appian Way, were laid there. From the 4th to the 13th century this church had much to suffer, and in the year 1200 Innocent was obliged to rebuild it entirely when he resolved to gather together at San Sisto all the nuns scattered about Rome. In 1488, under the pontificate of Sixtus IV, Cardinal Pietro Ferrici restored it at his own expense, and another cardinal, Filippo Buoncompagni, at about the same time, charged Baccio Pintelli, the celebrated architect of the Sistine Chapel and of the Ponte Sisto, to make for it the little façade that we still see today. Under the pontificate of Paul V (1605–1621), the Most Reverend Father Serafino Sicco, master general of the Order of Saint Dominic, had some paintings executed there. Finally Benedict XIII (1724–1730) put the last touch to its embellishment; and if this dear church is still fresh and well preserved today, in spite of its neglect and the dampness of its surroundings, it owes this to the zeal and intelligent care of the Reverend Father Mulooly, former prior of San Clemente.

Let us add, for the record, that this church of San Sisto, the first dwelling of Saint Dominic and consequently the true cradle of his Order, many times heard the powerful voice of the founder of the Dominicans ring out. It was there that he very often proclaimed the divine word to the crowd that pressed on his steps everywhere and tore off scraps of his garments to make relics of them.

We have completed Father Giry's account with the *Histoire générale de l'Église* by the abbé Darras, vol. viii, and the *Année dominicaine*, vol. v.

# Saint Hormisdas, Pope and Confessor

*523. — King of France: Childebert I.*

> *Show yourself severe towards the proud, kindly towards the humble, merciful towards repentant sinners, inflexible towards hardened sinners.*

*Peter of Blois.*

Saint Hormisdas, who was elected to succeed Saint Symmachus, was born at Frusinona (Frosinone), in Campania. His father was named Justus. Before entering holy orders he had been engaged in the married state and had had a son named Silverius, who later became Pope. As deacon of the Roman Church he distinguished himself by so many proofs of virtue and ability that the Roman clergy and people chose him with one voice. The new Pontiff showed himself worthy of his holy predecessors. At the moment when he ascended the apostolic chair, Constantinople saw a revolution unfold which nearly had the most fatal consequences for the emperor Anastasius. To calm the rebellious people, this prince was obliged to appear before them in the attitude of a suppliant and to promise solemnly to recall the banished bishops, to embrace the orthodox communion and to protect the true Church. To give a semblance of execution to the promises that fear had just wrung from him, Anastasius wrote to Pope Hormisdas a letter in which he begged him to send legates to a council that was to meet at Heraclea to treat of the reunion of the two Churches and the ending of the Eastern schism (515). Hormisdas seized with joy the opportunity of extinguishing a schism that had so long been desolating the Church. He sent to Constantinople as legates Ennodius, the former deacon and later successor of Saint Epiphanius in the see of Pavia; Fortunatus, bishop of Catania; the priest Venantius, the deacon Vitalis and the notary Hilarus. But Anastasius had no intention whatever of pursuing a serious negotiation with the Holy See; he wanted to gain time in order to deceive everyone. The legates were sent back with a letter addressed to the Pope, in which he anathematized in formal terms the doctrine of Eutyches and expressed his astonishment that the Pope could have suspected him of heterodox sentiments concerning the council of Chalcedon. While he was thus lying to his conscience, he was having the Catholic bishops of Nicopolis, Lychnidus, Naissus and Pautalia deported, and making Dorotheus, metropolitan of Thessalonica, apostatize. The bishops of Illyricum and Epirus then met in council and sent Saint Hormisdas the minutes of their sessions and the decrees they had promulgated.

The holy Pope welcomed with happiness these testimonies of fidelity and devotion to the cause of God, and congratulated them on them. As the apostate metropolitan Dorotheus was levying enormous taxes on the Churches of Illyricum and inventing new forms of oppression every day, the bishops again had recourse to the Pope, who decided to send a second embassy to Constantinople to obtain from the emperor the cessation of such violence. Anastasius drove the legates from his presence in an offensive manner and had them put aboard one of his ships with an escort under orders not to let them communicate with any of the cities of the empire (517). Nevertheless the envoys of the Holy See managed to hand over to some orthodox monks the nineteen copies of the pontifical protests, which were thus spread and posted up in all the cities of Asia. The Eutychian bishops, accomplices in the heresy of Anastasius and fearing that emperor’s vengeance, tore down these notices and sent them to the court. Anastasius set no more bounds to his fury against Pope Hormisdas. He wrote him a letter full of insults, in which he said among other things: “Learn that we give laws to all and receive them from no one.” But the hand of God struck this impious prince: during a storm the lightning fell on him and struck him dead. His successor, Justin, called the Elder, took the reins of government. He was orthodox. His first care was to send the senator Gratus to Pope Hormisdas with letters in which he asked the Pontiff to help him restore the peace of the Churches in the East. Hormisdas, on the advice of King Theodoric, sent off to Constantinople as legate the bishop of Capua, Germanus, accompanied by the priests John and Blandus, the deacons Felix and Dioscorus and the apostolic notary Peter. He gave them precise instructions on the faith, and handed them a detailed *libellus* on the form to be followed for receiving the abjuration of the schismatics and reconciling the penitents.

On arriving at Constantinople they were received by the population with transports of joy. A multitude of orthodox monks and illustrious personages came out to meet them. The emperor Justin and the consul Vitalian went to receive them at the *Castellum Rotundum* and escorted them to the capital to the singing of sacred hymns. The senator Gratus accompanied them. John, bishop of Constantinople, and all the Catholic clergy of the city attended this solemn entry and shared in the general joy. But the accomplices of Acacius

and the abettors of Eutychianism, shut up in the great basilica of Saint Sophia, drew up a protest and addressed it to the emperor; the work of reconciliation was nonetheless accomplished. Pope Hormisdas went to Ravenna to confer about it with King Theodoric. After this interview the Pope addressed a solemn letter (*Auctoritatem*) to the emperor Justin, by the terms of which, after renewing the earlier condemnations of Peter Mongus, Acacius and all the Eutychian heretics, the Pontiff restored the Churches of the East to the communion of the apostolic See.

The schism had lasted thirty-five years since the condemnation of Acacius. When John, patriarch of Constantinople, signed the act of reunion in the presence of the assembly of the faithful, tears flowed from every eye, and an immense acclamation in honour of the Pope and the Emperor rang out under the vaults of the basilica; the whole Catholic world answered it, and Eutychianism received a mortal blow from it.

Hormisdas, having discovered Manichaeans at Rome, had them brought to trial and condemned to exile. Their books were publicly burned in the square of the Constantinian basilica (Saint John Lateran). Under this Pontiff the episcopate of Africa, which had been abolished for seventy-four years by the Arians, began to be reconstituted. At the same time a crown of gold sent by Clovis, king of the Franks, to the tomb of blessed Peter the apostle was received at Rome. A great number of vessels of gold or silver and precious objects were likewise sent from Constantinople by the emperor Justin, among others a manuscript of the holy Gospels bound in two tablets of gold weighing fifteen pounds and enriched with precious stones. King Theodoric for his part offered to blessed Peter the apostle two silver chandeliers weighing seventy pounds. It was under Pope Hormisdas that the Order of the Benedictines was instituted by Saint Benedict, about the year 520. Hormisdas was a model of modesty, patience and charity; he watched with untiring attention over all the Churches, commended to the clergy the virtues proper to their state and sent them instructions on the psalmody. By a decretal letter addressed to all the bishops of Spain he forbade the ordaining of priests *per saltum*, that is, without observing the intervals prescribed by the canons. Public penitents could not receive orders. The probity and learning of those to be ordained were to be inquired into at length. Finally, provincial synods were to be held at least once every year, “because,” said the Pope, “it is a most effective means of preserving discipline.” Saint Hormisdas used five hundred and seventy-one pounds of silver, the fruit of the charity of the faithful, to adorn the churches of Rome. He built a basilica in the territory of Alba, on the estate called *Fontis*. Our Church of the Gauls owes to him the erection of the see of Reims into a vicariate of the apostolic See. In several ordinations held at Rome in the month of December he created fifty-five bishops, twenty-one priests and ten deacons, and he governed the Church nine years and ten days. He died on 6 August 523. He had the happiness of seeing the Burgundians renounce Arianism, the Ethiopians paganism, and the Homerites abjure the Jewish superstition. He was buried in the basilica of Saint Peter. After him the vacancy of the episcopal see was seven days.

## ÉCRITS DE SAINT HORMISDAS.

He wrote a great number of letters which he sent throughout the whole Christian world. They show much prudence, statesmanship and firmness; but one sees in them also that he knew how to bend when the cause of the Church required it: and if they bear the marks of the barbarism of his century as to style and language, the thoughts are no less noble or solid for that. His letters and decrees are found in the collections of the Councils and in the Latin Patrology, vol. lxiii, after Mansi, who gives them in vol. viii of his edition of the Councils. There one also reads a notice by Anastasius; letters to the number of eighty-one, among which are a great number of letters of the emperors Anastasius and Justin, and the account of several Councils held against the Eutychians. Then come the decrees after Gratian; they are followed by an appendix containing three apocryphal letters. Seventy-nine new letters of this Pope have recently been published in the appendix to the Bullarium of Turin.

To compose this biography we have made use of the *Histoire de l'Église* by the abbé Darras; the *Liber Pontificalis*; the *Histoire des souverains Pontifes romains* by Artaud de Montor; the *Histoire des Papes* by Chantrel; and the *Histoire des auteurs sacrés et ecclésiastiques* by Dom Ceillier.

## Saint Schetzelon or Scocelin[1], Confessor, Solitary in the Diocese of Trier

*1139. — Pope: Innocent II. — Emperor of Germany: Conrad III.*

> *Omnibus modis est utilis a mundo secessus.*
>
> *Withdrawal from the world is useful, from whatever angle one considers it.*
>
> *St. Diadochus, On Spiritual Perfection, c. xviii.*

The life of this excellent solitary is so extraordinary that we should never have set it before the generality of the faithful to read, if it were not approved by Saint Bernard, all of whose sentiments the Church respects, and related by authors worthy of belief. The historian Achard, a disciple of the same Saint Bernard, who was sent by his blessed Father to this marvellous anchorite to pay him his respects, to present him on his behalf with a habit of his Order and to beg him not to forget him in his prayers, tells us nothing of his parents, nor of the place of his birth, nor of his manner of life in his childhood and youth, nor of the occasion of his retreat into the desert; but what he does tell us will suffice to show us to what degree of detachment from the things of the earth grace can bring so faithful a soul, and how watchful the Saints are over themselves to avoid the smallest seekings of nature and self-love.

Schetzelon, according to the account of this author, lived in the solitudes of Lower Germany at the time when Saint Bernard was enlightening all Europe by his learned writings and his eminent holiness. He was a wholly heavenly man and a living angel on earth, who had no other occupation than to contemplate the truths of the other life, to converse familiarly with the blessed, and to sacrifice himself by penance for the needs of the Church which still fights amid the miseries of this exile. He treated his body with such rigour and so astonishing an austerity that one could say of him not only what Our Lord said of Saint John the Baptist, that he neither ate nor drank, but also what Saint Bernard adds to this praise, namely that he was not clothed. He was like those divine men of whom Saint Paul speaks in his Epistle to the Hebrews, of whom he declares that the world was not worthy, who went wandering and homeless through the mountains and the solitudes and hid in the holes and caves of the earth, where they lived only on the foods on which animals are accustomed to feed. Indeed, this holy hermit had no cell or fixed dwelling; but he went from one desert to another, having no roof but the sky and no food but that of the wild beasts that people the forests, that is, wild herbs and roots; if he sometimes ate acorns or the fruits that grow on beech trees, he counted this as the greatest of delicacies.

He lived in this way for ten years, suffering hunger, thirst, cold, heat, the stings of gnats and the wounds made in him by the thorns and the sharp stones on which he was obliged to walk, with an invincible courage and patience, and without seeking any relief in the company and society of other men. At the end of this time, and during the last four years of his life, when the cold was extreme, when snow or ice covered the whole earth and it was impossible to pull roots out of it, being no longer able to prolong his fast so long, he would approach the most remote farmsteads of the countryside, where the poor people took care to put out for him, outside or in the yard, a little straw or a sack to lie on, with a piece of barley bread or bran bread for his sustenance. He arrived there only after nightfall and left before daybreak, so as to see no one and be seen by no one. He knew by a divine and prophetic light the cottages to which he should go, and these were always those of the poorest and of good people. Those to whom God gave the grace of receiving so illustrious a guest bore him such respect that they did not dare to approach him or speak with him without his permission, which they rarely obtained; and then some old rags were thrown to him to cover himself; for although sensuality was so dead in him, as in Saint Mary of Egypt, that his nakedness no longer caused him any

shame, he took care nevertheless not to expose himself in that state to the eyes of the persons whom he allowed to speak to him. In those times of ice and snow he also sometimes accepted a little bag, which he hung round his neck and in which he put the remains of the piece of bread that had been given him; he carried them off to the desert so as to be able to stay there longer without coming back. That was all the property this divine man possessed on earth: rich in his poverty, and supremely rich, since he had nothing and was content to have nothing. The reputation of so extraordinary a man soon spread through all France and reached the ears of Saint Bernard; Bernard also learned by revelation that the solitary's conduct and manner of life were from God, and that the Holy Spirit had inspired them in him in order to give the world the model of the greatest poverty and the most perfect destitution of which it had ever seen the spectacle. He therefore wished to have a holy union of friendship with him; and as he had sent one of his disciples, named Achard, into the diocese of Trier to found there the abbey of the Cloister of the Virgin, in a place called Himmerod, he instructed him to go and find this heavenly man and, as a token of the bond his Order wished to have with him, to present him with a complete habit of a religious of Cîteaux to put on. Achard was delighted with this mission; he at once inquired where he might find the holy solitary, and, having learned the place where he was to come one night, he went there before daybreak with some other religious of his monastery who were burning with the desire to speak with this visible Angel. But his vigilance was in vain; for Saint Schetzelon, having learned by revelation that religious were to come to speak to him, left the yard where he had withdrawn before midnight and fled so far into the desert that there was hardly any hope of finding him there. The uncertainty whether he would return to the same farmstead, or when he would return there, upset all Achard's plans; so all he could do was to beg the master of the house to tell the servant of God, when he returned, that he begged him, for the love of God and out of regard for the venerable abbot of Clairvaux who had sent him, to allow him to see him once only and to enjoy his conversation for a moment. The host did not fail to do so, and Saint Schetzelon, who knew by the spirit of prophecy the incomparable merits of Saint Bernard, at last yielded to his disciple's wish. When Achard and his companions saw the blessed solitary, who had covered himself as usual with a rag to speak to them, they were filled with marvellous astonishment. The abbot presented to him the respects of his blessed Father and assured him that, although he had never seen him, he was nevertheless bound to him by the bonds of a perfect charity; as proof he offered him on his behalf some eulogies, blessed things which the faithful sent one another as tokens of the communion that existed between them. Schetzelon received this present in a very obliging and most courteous manner. Then the abbot begged him to accept also, on his master's behalf, the habit of Cîteaux which he was sending him. The solitary took it with great respect, kissed it and put it on, saying: "Blessed be God, who inspired your father, a truly apostolic man, to remember me, who am only a most wretched sinner." Then he took it off, adding that he had put it on out of obedience and respect towards so great a man, who had deigned to send it to him; but that he could not keep it any longer, because it was not necessary to him and because, besides, this Saint had not commanded him to keep it.

Achard and his religious, seeing the gentleness and affability of Schetzelon, however wild his outward appearance, took the liberty of asking him whether he was no longer tormented by the temptations of the devil and the goads of the flesh. To which the man of God, after a little smile (for he was cheerful by nature and very agreeable in conversation), answered them in these terms: "It is a long time, my dearest brethren, since by the grace of God I have found myself almost entirely freed from the revolt of the passions. But since the life of man is a continual temptation, who will boast of having a pure heart? And does not the apostle Saint John say that if we flatter ourselves that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us? Only an extraordinary protection of the almighty hand of God can make us avoid all the snares of our enemies, by which we are perpetually surrounded. I will tell you, then, the strongest temptation I have had for some years, from which you will be able to judge by what attacks and what combats I am sometimes tried. One day when the cold was sharper and the frost harder than usual, I was lying quite naked on the ground, with my limbs stiff and numb; the Creator of the universe, who, according to the Prophet, makes the

snow fall like wool, gave me instead of a garment a very great carpet of snow, a cubit thick; my whole body was covered with it, but at the place of my mouth, which still had a little warmth, a small opening was formed. It happened, then, that a leveret, running here and there over the countryside to find a resting-place, chanced upon this opening, and, being drawn by the little warmth it felt there, stopped short and settled gently on my face. This incident made me give a little smile; I lost my usual gravity and let myself go to some vain joy. It even came into my mind to put my hand on this animal and take it, which was very easy for me, not to keep it, but to stroke it and amuse myself, without fearing to spend in this vain diversion the time that ought to be consecrated to the praises of God and to penance. However, after resisting the violence of this temptation for a long time, I at last overcame it and dispelled it by the grace of God. So that, remaining motionless in my place, I let this animal rest on me without touching it, until it went away of its own accord. That is the greatest temptation I remember having had for a long time, and I have been glad to tell it to you to satisfy your request, in gratitude for your dear visit, although perhaps I have related it a little more freely than I should, for which I am very sorry. My soul is sometimes troubled by similar vanities which pass through its mind like importunate flies; I do not, however, give them consent; but you see what the weakness of man is."

After Saint Schetzelon had refreshed the abbot Achard and his religious with these conversations full of innocence and piety, he begged them most earnestly to commend him to the prayers of their father Saint Bernard, assuring them that he was a great servant of God. Then, to satisfy their desire, he gave them his blessing, and without delaying further he fled swiftly into the desert, like a hind that has escaped from the hunters' nets and a bird that has freed itself from the fowler's snare. So the same abbot Achard relates it in a conference he gave on this subject to his novices.

There would be many other marvels to tell of this admirable solitary if, by a lofty wisdom which is the true prudence of the Saints, he had not kept them hidden, with no other witness than God, the Angels and the Blessed. At last, having learned by a divine revelation that the hour of his death was approaching, he came to the nearest church, where he received the holy Viaticum; after which, without anyone noticing it, he fell peacefully asleep in Jesus Christ on 6 August, the day consecrated to the solemnity of the Transfiguration of Our Lord, about the year 1139.

His holy body was buried in the church where he had received the last Sacraments. His tomb at once became renowned for great miracles and supernatural cures. As this place was not judged strong enough to guard so great a treasure for long, it was carried for safekeeping to the castle of Luxembourg, where it rests in the church of Notre-Dame. Our pious solitary may be represented: 1° almost naked, walking in the desert and praying; 2° receiving on Saint Bernard's behalf, as we have said, a garment which he puts on for a moment out of gratitude, but which he gives back to the holy abbot's envoys, saying that Bernard has not ordered him to keep it; 3° drawn out of the snow in which he had remained buried. Molanus, in his Additions to the martyrology of Usuard, and Arnold Wion, in his Monastic Martyrology, place him in the duchy of Mons, in Hainaut; but they wrote Mons for Luxembourg, as the Rev. Father Chrysostom Henriquez remarks in his Martyrology of the Order of Cîteaux. — Besides these authors, the life of Saint Scocelin is found in the book of the *Reliques sacrées du désert*, and the Rev. Father de Saint-Jure relates part of it in his work entitled *L'Homme spirituel*.

## Saint Stapin of Dourgne, Confessor, Presumed Bishop of Carcassonne

*7th or 8th Century.*

Gérard de Vic, in his History of the bishops and memorable events of the Church of Carcassonne (1666), adds a supplement devoted to the bishops of that same see whose lives bear no precise date, assuring us that this supplement is taken from an ancient list of those same bishops, drawn up in 1552 from a still older martyrology which the Church of Carcassonne was using in this biographer's lifetime. "In this list," says the text, "appears Saint Stapin, a native of Dourgne, in the diocese of Lavaur, honoured for a very long time as a

saint in his native country, as well as at Ventenac, in the diocese of Carcassonne, and in that very town, in the cemetery of Saint-Vinant. We still see there today a chapel which draws a great concourse of persons eager to attend the holy offices there and to venerate the relics of this pontiff on 6 August, the day on which his memory is celebrated. This Saint is also honoured under the title of bishop of Carcassonne in some regions of Germany." It was very probably in this martyrology that Mgr de Bezont, bishop of Carcassonne, found the name of Saint Stapin, since he included this holy bishop among his predecessors in the ritual he issued in 1764.

Joseph Sementius, a religious of Milan, says in his Biography of Saint Stapin, reproduced by the Bollandists, that Saint Stapin has an altar at Milan in the church of Santa Maria Segreta of the Reverend Somascan Fathers, and that his feast is celebrated there every year with solemn pomp, as also in several other places in Italy; that by a brief given at Rome in 1671 Pope Alexander VII grants numerous indulgences to a Confraternity of men and women under the patronage of Saint Stapin, established at Lyon in the church of the Augustinian Fathers, in the faubourg de la Croix-Rouge; finally, that Mgr de Tulle, bishop of Lavaur, signed with his own hand on 7 June of the year 1663 an authentic testimony in favour of the cult of Saint Stapin in the parish of Dourgne, and that a similar testimony was also given on 2 June of the same year by Mgr d'Anglure de Bourlemont, bishop of Castres.

Sementius relates several other facts which he assures us he gathered himself from the records of the Church of Carcassonne and from an ancient tradition spread through the neighbouring regions. He speaks of Saint Stapin's solitary life on a mountain not far from Dourgne, of his renown in the surrounding country, and of the crowds of people who came to him. He relates that he was raised from his retreat to the episcopal chair of Carcassonne; that this election was greeted with unanimous applause; that he accepted this sacred charge in obedience to a divine revelation, and that he adorned it by his virtues. Moreover, a constant tradition confirms to us that Saint Stapin, after leading a penitent and solitary life in a little valley of the mountain of Dourgne, was raised to the episcopal see of the town of Carcassonne.

Mgr de Royères, bishop of Castres, and M. Fons, parish priest of Saint-Germain, exiled in Portugal during the Revolution of 1793, found in the abbey of Arlobassa an image representing Saint Stapin, bishop, honoured on 6 August, powerful for obtaining the cure of ailments of the legs, *patronus in podagra*. This reminder of their homeland deeply moved the two exiles. They brought back this image, which is preciously kept at Dourgne.

As for the period in which he lived and must have occupied the see of Carcassonne, reputable authors believe it was in the interval between 683 and 788.

The custom of the early times was to beatify in a synod of all the bishops of the province, presided over by the primate. It was in this manner, Gérard de Vic tells us, that eleven bishops of Carcassonne were in all likelihood beatified, whom the highest antiquity places among the Saints. Among them one notes Saint Stapin, of whom the author speaks at greater length than of the others.

Since 1532 Saint Stapin has been honoured with a particular cult, as secondary patron, at Dourgne, a market town at the foot of the Montagne Noire, chief town of a canton in the department of Tarn, and at Ventenac, a parish of the canton of

Alzonne, department of Aude. In both these parishes his feast is celebrated on 6 August. At Dourgne as at Ventenac this feast, which is kept with great solemnity, draws every year a great number of pilgrims who come to beg in their prayers the protection of Saint Stapin and to ask for the cure of various bodily infirmities. There is at Dourgne a church dedicated to this Saint, whose construction appears to go back to the year 1666. This church is a kilometre from the town, at the foot of the mountain, in a pleasant little valley. It is there that the solemn offices are held on the day of the feast, and in the evening the people return in procession with the Most Blessed Sacrament to the church of Dourgne.

In the archives of this church are carefully kept the attestations given by the very persons who have experienced the benefit of our Saint's protection. Moreover, the numerous ex-votos that have been placed in his chapel will always stand there as a sign of the lively gratitude of the infirm who have been relieved, and as an imperishable monument of the miracles that Saint Stapin has worked[1].

We owe this notice to the kindness of the abbé Jauzion, parish priest of Dourgne.

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[2] Mount Tabor, the *Itabyrius mons* of the ancients, the *Jebel-Tor* of the Arabs, is a mountain of Syria, in the pashalik of Acre, south-west of the lake of Tiberias (Tabarieh), 11 kilometres south-east of Nazareth: it is about 1,000 metres high.

[3] The Christians buried them on the very spot that had been sanctified by their blood, and a chapel was afterwards built there. Their relics are kept in shrines placed under the high altar of a collegiate church of the town of Alcalá de Henares (Complutum), of which they are the titular patrons. There is, however, only a small portion left of those of Saint Justus, the rest having been transferred to the abbey of Malmédy (Malmundarium), a town of the Prussian States in the diocese of Cologne. Prudentius, the celebrated Christian Latin poet of the 4th century, praises them in his Περὶ στεφάνων (*Hymns on the Crowns of the Saints*), hymn iv, where he says:

*Sanguinem Justi, cui Pastor hæret, Ferculum duplex, geminumque donum*

*Ferre Complutum gremio juvabit Membra duorum.*

Alcalá may pride itself on possessing the relics of Justus and of Pastor: this double aureole of holiness of two child Martyrs is for the town an effective pledge of the protection of heaven.

[4] The historian Procopius of Caesarea (500–565) relates this of him: "Some Nephthalites (also called *White Huns*) who were scouring the country, having caught sight of him, wished to pierce him with their arrows; but their hands remained as if fastened to their bows and deprived of all movement. The holy Solitary at once restored to them the use of their hands by a single word." — *Vies des Pères des déserts d'Orient*, by Michel-Ange Marin.

[5] See his life on 6 April, vol. iv, p. 245.

[6] See the Roman martyrology for 15 August.

[7] See the life of Saint Lawrence on 10 August.

[8] He is also called Gisilain, Ghislain, Gézelin, Gosselin, Goslin, Joscelin; in Latin *Schetzelo*, *Gotzelinus*, *Scotzelinus*.

[1] When the diocese wished to return to the Roman liturgy, the parish priest of Dourgne was obliged to make new investigations to establish the legitimacy of the cult of Saint Stapin. Mgr the archbishop of Albi, to whom he submitted the result of his researches, wrote to him on 1 June 1860: "Monsieur le curé, the documents you have gathered with the aim of establishing the legitimacy of the cult paid to Saint Stapin have seemed to me conclusive. After examining them with attention, I do not doubt that the parish of Dourgne, under the terms of the decrees of Urban VIII, is entitled to keep a cult which is as dear to it for the graces of which it is the source as it is venerable for its antiquity. I congratulate you, Monsieur le curé, on your zeal for the pious traditions of your parish, and I pray that devotion to Saint Stapin may serve to revive among the faithful the Christian faith and piety which the spirit of the age tends always to weaken. † Eugène, archbishop of Albi."

# 7 August

## Martyrologies

### MARTYROLOGE ROMAIN.

At Naples, the birthday in heaven of Saint Gaetano or Cajetan of Thiene, founder of the Clerks Regular called Theatines, who, full of confidence in God, prescribed to his children the ancient manner of life of the Apostles: illustrious for his miracles, he was placed among the Saints by Pope Clement X. 1547. — At Arezzo, in Tuscany, Saint Donatus, bishop and martyr, who, among other miracles, repaired by his prayers a sacred chalice which the pagans had broken, as Saint Gregory, pope, relates. During the persecution of Julian the Apostate this holy Bishop was arrested by the prefect Quadratianus, and, on his refusal to offer sacrifice to the idols, was condemned to have his head cut off, and thus consummated his martyrdom. Saint Hilarinus, a monk, was put to death with him; but his feast is kept on 16 July, the day on which his body was translated to Ostia[1]. 362. — At Rome, the holy martyrs Peter and Julian, with eighteen others. 3rd century. — At Milan, Saint Faustus or Faustinus, a soldier, who won the palm of martyrdom after several combats, under the emperor Commodus[2]. 2nd century. — At Como, the execution of the holy martyrs Carpophorus, Exanthus, Cassius, Severinus, Secundus and Licinius, who were beheaded for the confession of Jesus Christ.

2nd century. — At Nisibis, in Mesopotamia, Saint Dometius, a Persian monk, who was stoned with his two disciples under Julian the Apostate[3]. 363. — At Rouen, Saint Victricius, bishop, who, while still a soldier under the same Julian, laid aside the military belt for the service of Jesus Christ, and for this was variously tormented by his tribune and even condemned to lose his head; but, the executioner appointed for this execution having been struck blind and the Saint's bonds having come loose, he went away free: afterwards, having become bishop, he brought to the faith of Jesus Christ the Morini and the Nervii, who seemed untameable, and died in peace with the title of confessor of Jesus Christ. 407. — At Châlons-sur-Marne, Saint Donatian, bishop and confessor. 136. — At Messina, in Sicily, Saint Albert, confessor, of the Order of Carmelites, celebrated for his miracles. 1306.

## MARTYROLOGE DE FRANCE, REVU ET AUGMENTÉ.

At Chartres, in the church of Notre-Dame, memorial of the miracle of the tunic of the blessed Virgin Mary, which was preserved from the fire that devoured that church on 7 August 963. This tunic, which is still seen today in that cathedral, was given by the holy Virgin herself to a widow, and remained in Palestine until 460: then Candidus and Gabius, two brothers, having skilfully taken possession of it, carried it to Constantinople, where it was kept until 810; at that time it was given to Charlemagne, who had it placed at Aix-la-Chapelle, whence Charles the Bald, his grandson, had it brought into France (875) and gave it to the church of Chartres, where it is kept in a golden reliquary enclosed in another reliquary covered with plates of gold, worked in mosaic and enriched with diamonds, rubies, sapphires and several other precious stones. — In the diocese of Cologne, feast of Saint Gaetano of Thiene, and memorial of Saint Donatus of Arezzo, named in the Roman martyrology of this day. — In the diocese of Meaux, feast of the same Saint Donatus of Arezzo. — In the diocese of Viviers, Saint Victricius of Rouen, named in today's Roman martyrology. — In the diocese of Autun, Saint Euphronius, bishop of that see and confessor, whose life we gave on 3 August. 485. — In the diocese of Limoges, Saint Celsus, confessor, of whom neither the country, nor the state of life, nor the deeds, nor the century in which he lived are known, but whose head is kept in the cathedral of Limoges. — In Brittany, Saints Friard and Secondel or Secundus, whose life we gave on 1 August. 577. — At Besançon, Saint Donatus, archbishop of that see and confessor. 660. — Also at Besançon, Saint Miget or Megetius, archbishop of that see and successor of Saint Donatus. As eminent for his virtues as he was humble in his sentiments, Miget had been brought up from his youth among the clerics of the metropolitan church and instructed in sacred letters; his promotion to the see of Besançon was for the faithful of the diocese a compensation for the loss they had just suffered in the person of Saint Donatus. The Bollandists place his death on 6 June. 7th century. — In the former Conserans or Couserans (*Consorrani*, a small province of Gascony which today forms part of the department of Ariège), Saint Licerius or Lizier, regionary bishop of that province and confessor. 548. — At Carcassonne, Saint Justus and Saint Pastor, brothers and martyrs, already named in the Roman martyrology of the preceding day, where we gave, in note 2, some details on their life. 304. — At Kientzheim or Koentzen (Haut-Rhin, arrondissement of Colmar, canton of Kaysersberg), in the diocese of Strasbourg, Notre-Dame de Kientzheim. 1466. — At Carpentras (Vaucluse), in the diocese of Avignon, the birthday in heaven of Esprite Jossaude, commonly called the blessed Esprite de Jésus[4]. 1658.

## MARTYROLOGES DES ORDRES RELIGIEUX.

Martyrology of the Carmelites. — At Messina, in Sicily, Saint Albert, confessor, of the Order of Carmelites. 1306.

## ADDITIONS FAITES D'APRÈS LES BOLLANDISTES ET AUTRES HAGIOGRAPHES.

In Spain, translation of the relics of the blessed Mafalda, queen of Castile and afterwards a Cistercian nun. She was the daughter of Sancho I, king of Portugal (1223–1248), and sister of the blessed Teresa and Sancha.

At eleven years of age she was married against her will to Henry I, king of Castile, her kinsman in the third degree. Pope Innocent II annulled this marriage, contracted against the laws of the Church: Mafalda then returned to Portugal, and, having had the monastery of Arouca restored, in the diocese of Lamego, in the province of Beira, she consecrated herself to God there and, with the consent of Pope Honorius III, introduced nuns into it (1228). She also had great embellishments made to the principal church of Porto, founded two monasteries, had a bridge built for the convenience of those living along the Tâmega, and established by her will a regular alms for twelve poor widows of the town of Arouca and a hospice for all travellers. She died on 1 May 1252, aged fifty, and was buried in the church of the monastery of Arouca. Pius VI approved her cult in 1792, on 14 March. 1616. — At Passau (*Patavia*, *Batava castra*, *Bacodurum*), a fortified town of Bavaria, the blessed Ulric or Udalric, also called Dedalric and Oderic, provost of Augsburg and bishop of Passau, who must be carefully distinguished from Saint Udalric or Ulric, bishop of Augsburg (893–973), whose life we gave on 4 July. He was descended from the illustrious family of the counts of Haeft, in the Tyrol, and in 1092, although sixty-five years old, succeeded the blessed Altmann in the see of Passau, which he made illustrious for twenty-nine years. He attended the council of Piacenza (1095) and founded (1105) the priory of the Canons Regular of Herzogenburg, in Austria, near Sankt Pölten. After working for long years to found the kingdom of God in the hearts of his diocesans and to root out the weeds that the intruder Tyemon had made to grow in the Lord’s field, he died, worn out with old age, aged ninety-five. 1121. — At Wolfratshausen, a market town at the confluence of the Loisach and the Isar, not far from Munich (Bavaria), Saint Conrad Nantuin, martyr, also called Nantovin and Nantwin. It is claimed that the manner of his death was like that of Saint Lawrence: this is why the little church of Wolfratzhausen, where his ashes rest, is said to have been dedicated to him jointly with that martyr. His cult was approved by Boniface VIII. 1286. — In the diocese of Naples, feast of the blessed Virgin Mary, full of grace. — At Antioch, today Antakieh, in Asiatic Turkey (Syria), the holy martyrs Sempronius, Venerius or Veneria and seven others, named by Saint Jerome. — Among the Greeks, Saint Hyperechius, priest and confessor. 4th century. — At Imola (*Forum Cornelii*), a fortified town of Italy in the province of Ravenna, Saint Donatus, archdeacon, whose body rests in the cathedral church of Imola. 5th century. — At Padua, a fortified town of the kingdom of Italy, the blessed Jordan Forzat, Benedictine. Arrested in his monastery at Padua, he was taken into captivity in Piedmont on the charge of having conspired against the emperor; after his release he withdrew to Venice, where he died. His remains were later brought back to Padua, where they worked a number of miracles. 1240. — At Aquila, in Abruzzo Ulteriore, Saint Vincent, confessor, of the Order of Friars Minor. 1504.

## Saint Donatus, Bishop and Martyr, at Arezzo, in Tuscany

*362. — Pope: Liberius. — Roman Emperor: Julian the Apostate.*

> *Prius debet orare prædicator, ut sermo Dei currat et fructificet in auditoribus.*
>
> *The preacher must first pray, so that the word of God may penetrate and bear fruit in his hearers.*
>
> *Gloss. int.*

The abbé Ughelli, in volume i of his *Italia sacra*, says that this illustrious prelate was a native of Nicomedia, today Isnikmid, a town of Bithynia on the Propontis. His parents, having undertaken the journey to Rome, brought him there with them in his earliest youth. He was brought up there under the discipline of a holy priest named Pigmenius; but, having lost so good a master, together with his father and mother, who all suffered martyrdom in the persecution of Diocletian, he withdrew to Arezzo, a town of Tuscany, where he first joined a religious named Hilarinus, who was in great odour of sanctity, and who for his part was very glad to receive this excellent servant of God into his company. Saint Satyrus, who was then bishop of the place, also gave him great marks of goodwill, and, having in a short time come to know his learning and piety, conferred on him the sacred order of the priesthood and made him a public preacher of the Gospel and

teacher of Holy Scripture. Saint Donatus discharged this office with so much zeal and success that, God confirming his words by countless miracles, he had the glory of rooting out idolatry from the whole diocese, where it had held its ground until then. Meanwhile the holy bishop Satyrus came to die, and Pope Saint Julius, who was well informed of the eminent virtues of Donatus and of his ardour for the defence of the faith, made him the successor of the deceased in the government of that Church in the year 346, to the great satisfaction of all the people, who passionately wished to see him raised to that see.

Among the wonders this holy prelate worked, Saint Gregory the Great relates the following. The pagans having smashed to pieces a glass chalice which served, according to the custom of that time, for the celebration of the holy Mysteries, he restored it whole by his prayer.

A treasurer of the emperor, named Eustace, having received a large sum of money for the coffers of the treasury, left it in the keeping of his wife, named Euphrosyne, while he went into the country on other business. In her husband's absence this woman heard that soldiers were approaching Arezzo, and, fearing that the money might be stolen, she hid it in a hole she made in the ground. A few days later she died, her husband not yet having returned. Eustace came back and was extremely surprised to find neither his wife nor his money. Meanwhile he was pressed to render an account of it; after making useless searches, he at last had recourse to the holy bishop, who went with him straight away to his wife's tomb, where he prayed, and then commanded the dead woman, on God's behalf, to declare where the money was about which her husband was so troubled. A voice was at once heard coming out of the sepulchre, directing that the ground be dug in such and such a place, where what was sought would be found. And indeed it was found there.

Saint Antoninus relates another incident almost like the first. A man of good faith who feared God, having borrowed two hundred crowns from one of his friends on a written promise, afterwards repaid the sum without thinking of taking back his bond. The creditor, who was a wicked man, on learning of his death, went to oppose his burial until his pretended debt had been paid. The widow found no better means of getting out of so bad a plight than to apply to Saint Donatus, who came himself to her house, and, seeing the body of the deceased, spoke to him as if he had been full of life, and commanded him to say what answer he had to give to this pretended creditor. The dead man rose up, spoke, confounded his adversary, obliged him to give back his discharged bond, and then begged the holy prelate to let him enjoy his rest: which he did.

After Saint Donatus had governed his Church for about sixteen years with all the prudence, holiness and zeal of a worthy and watchful prelate, Quadratianus, then prefect of the emperor Julian, having heard report of his wonders, and above all of the admirable progress he was making the faith of Jesus Christ achieve, to the great detriment of paganism, had him arrested with his dear Hilarinus, intending to force them both to offer incense to his idols; but, seeing that he could neither corrupt them by promises nor cast them down by threats, he resolved to have them die by the extreme punishments. He therefore had Hilarinus beaten to death with clubs on 16 July, as is noted in the martyrology; and as for Saint Donatus, after having his face disfigured with stones and having him kept in the dungeon, loaded with chains and irons, until the following month of August, he had his head cut off in the year of Jesus Christ 362.

For the rest, the people of Arezzo have always honoured the memory of their most holy bishop Donatus; they have recognized him as the principal titular patron of their cathedral, after the holy Virgin, in consideration of his having entirely banished from the diocese the superstition and impiety of idolatry, to make the knowledge and maxims of the cross triumph there; and also because, among the great number of unbelievers whom he converted, there was one named Zenobius, of very illustrious birth and very rich, who gave great possessions to the churches and the poor of the city. These people all count themselves happy to possess the sacred remains of so powerful and zealous a protector, of whom all the martyrologies make honourable mention.

The reliquary that contains the relics of our Saint is kept in the cathedral of Arezzo.

Cf. Godescard and the *Acta Sanctorum*.

## Saint Victricius, Archbishop of Rouen, Apostle of the Morini and the Nervii

*407. — Pope: Saint Innocent I. — Emperor of the West: Honorius.*

*No sacrifice is greater or more pleasing to God than to seek to win souls for Him.*

*St. Lawrence Justinian.*

Victricius was born in the land of the Morini about the year 330, in the reign of Constantine the Great; he was of an illustrious family, received a very distinguished education and embraced the career of arms. He had the happiness of coming to know Jesus Christ, and it is fairly likely that his conversion should be placed at the time when Julian the Apostate undertook to re-establish paganism in his armies.

Victricius used the following means to shelter his virtue from the dangers to which it was exposed. One day when all the troops were assembled, he stepped into the middle of the camp and laid down his military dress with his arms at the feet of the tribune, telling him that he thought now only of clothing himself inwardly with Christian peace and justice. The tribune, who was an idolater, ordered him to be scourged and had him bruised with blows. This torment, says Saint Paulinus, did not cast down the servant of God, because he was strengthened by the cross of Jesus Christ. Having been led to prison, he was laid naked on potsherds, to sharpen still further the keenness of his acute sufferings and to prevent his wounds from closing. This new kind of torture served only to give more lustre to his constancy. As nothing could shake him, he was brought before the count or general of the army, who condemned him to lose his head.

Upheld by the consolations God poured into his soul, he walked courageously to the place of execution. The man who was to carry out the execution insulted him as he led him along, and made a show of marking with his hand the place on his neck where he intended to strike. But he was punished for his insolence by losing his sight on the spot. This miracle was followed by another. The gaoler had bound the Saint so tightly that the chains had entered his flesh. Victricius begged the soldiers to loosen them ever so little. Not having been able to obtain what he asked, he implored the help of Jesus Christ, and at once the chains fell from his hands. No one dared to bind again the man to whom God had restored his liberty. The guards, astonished, ran to announce to the count what had just happened. He, struck by the double miracle, made his report to the prince, became the defender of the man he had condemned, and obtained for him his life with his liberty. All these circumstances are related in the letter which Saint Paulinus wrote to Saint Victricius himself in 399.

It is not known where Saint Victricius withdrew after his conversion. It is likely, however, that he withdrew to the solitude of Ligugé, near Poitiers, and there exercised himself in all the virtues under the direction of the illustrious Saints Hilary and Martin. The rest of his life is a striking proof of the fervour with which he had prepared himself for apostolic labours. We learn from Saint Paulinus that he went to carry the torch of the faith into the region of Gallia Belgica inhabited by the Morini and the Nervii, which now forms part of Picardy, Hainaut and Flanders. The progress of the Gospel there had until then been slight. But no sooner had Victricius appeared there than this uncultivated land, with its sandy shores and its arid wastes, became one of the finest flower-beds in the Bridegroom’s gardens. The name of Jesus Christ resounded on every side, and there was hardly anyone who did not range himself under His rule. Churches were built, monasteries were formed; towns, countryside, islands and forests were peopled with saints: in a word, the idols fell and Jesus Christ reigned. We are following Saint Paulinus here, and even using his expressions.

Some claim that Saint Victricius made this mission before occupying the see of Rouen; others maintain the contrary. The first opinion seems to us the more probable. Perhaps the Saint was then a regionary bishop. According to Saint Paulinus, he was raised to the episcopate by the apostolic See about the year 385.

He had a very intimate friendship with Saint Martin of Tours. He was with him at Vienne, on the Rhône, when Saint Paulinus came to consult him on the choice of his retreat, and he was then pastor of the Church of Rouen. This was the first and indeed the only time that Saint Paulinus saw our holy bishop. He assures us that this short meeting was enough to make him conceive the highest idea of his holiness and to fill him with love and veneration for his person.

We read in Sulpicius Severus that Saint Victricius was again with Saint Martin at Chartres when a man of that town brought to Martin his daughter, dumb from birth, to beg him to heal her. The holy bishop of Tours wished to send her back to Victricius and to another bishop named Valentinian, saying that they were both more powerful than he with God. But they both joined the girl's father in asking for her cure, and they did indeed obtain it.

This friendship, this esteem of Saint Martin for Saint Victricius, rested on the most solid foundations. He knew the fruit that Victricius's prayers, example and labours were producing in the diocese of Rouen, of which he was bishop. "Formerly," said Saint Paulinus, "the city of Rouen was rather little known to other nations; but under Victricius it became a new Jerusalem, and its name was celebrated among the most illustrious Churches of the Christian world. The Apostles chose this city, where they were once strangers, to make their spirit rest there; and, kindling there in the hearts of the faithful the flames of divine love, they make the marvellous effects of the Lord's power shine forth. One sees there a great number of churches, where the sacred psalms are sung in melodious harmony, and numerous monasteries whose inmates, by the perfection of the evangelical counsels, raise new trophies to religion every day. One finds there on all sides virgins who by their purity make of their bodies and their hearts a sanctuary worthy of Jesus Christ; widows who never cease night and day to apply themselves to the service of God and to the exercise of works of charity; persons who, although bound in marriage, keep continence, and who by the fervour and constancy of their prayers give the world the most edifying spectacle." Such is the testimony that Saint Paulinus, from the depths of Italy, gave to the church of Rouen and to the zeal and holiness of its pastor.

Some troubles having arisen among the bishops of Great Britain, Victricius was called to calm them. He justified the idea that had been formed of him; by his patience and charity he succeeded in establishing calm and peace there. This happened forty years before Saint Germanus of Auxerre crossed into the same country to confound the Pelagians.

Victricius had scarcely returned to his diocese when he learned that Saint Ambrose and some other bishops were sending him relics, and that the man bringing them was not far from Rouen. He went out to meet him out of respect. Not long before, he had received, probably by the same channel, relics of Saint John the Baptist, Saint Andrew, Saint Thomas, Saint Luke, Saint Gervase, Saint Protase and Saint Agricola. The new chest contained a larger quantity of them; there were relics of Saint John the Evangelist, Saint Proculus of Bologna, Saint Antoninus of Piacenza, Saint Saturninus and Saint Trajan of Macedonia, Saint Nazarius of Milan, Saints Mucius, Alexander, Datysus and Chindeus, and Saints Rogata, Leonida, Anastasia and Anatolia. Victricius himself gives us the names of all these Saints in the discourse he delivered on this occasion. Saint Ambrose, having discovered the relics of Saint Gervase and Saint Protase at Milan after the death of the emperor Theodosius, which occurred on 17 January 375, and those of Saint Nazarius and Saint Celsus shortly afterwards, died in 397. The sending of these relics to Rouen must therefore be placed about the year 396.

To house them decently, Saint Victricius built a church in his episcopal city, and he carried out their translation with great solemnity when the building had been completed. He has left us a description of this ceremony in the discourse we have just mentioned. In it he takes up the defence of virgins and widows against the heresy of Jovinian, which had recently been condemned in the councils of Rome and Milan. He sets against the Arians an exact profession of faith on the Trinity; he rejoices at having the same faith as the Apostles and the martyrs, and he adds that the confession we make of it, in sorrow as in joy, obtains grace

and salvation. Describing the procession that was held for the ceremony of the translation, he says: “Here comes in a crowd the troop of monks, worn thin by fasting; there numerous swarms of innocent children make the air ring with the joyful sounds of their voices; here the choir of devout virgins carries the standard of the cross; there a multitude of the continent and of widows joins them.” He exhorts the faithful to regard the Martyrs as their protectors. “We must,” he says, “devoutly embrace these precious remains of their torments, and seek in them, like the woman with the issue of blood at the hem of the Saviour’s garment, the healing of our wounds.” He adds, speaking of himself: “You see before you, and at your service, a soldier tried by the years, grown old in combat, hardened to fatigue and to vigils … who values the present life only by its relation to eternity, and who never thinks himself richer than when his hands are laden with the relics of the Saints … Their dwellings are in heaven; but they are here as guests to whom we can address our prayers.” He shows that the gift of miracles and the pledge of their holiness are no less in the small parts of their relics than in the whole.

It is believed that the church Saint Victricius had built for the relics sent to him from Italy is the one that bears at Rouen the name of Saint-Gervais. It stands on the spot where Saint Mellon had been buried, and it may be presumed that an oratory had previously been raised over this Saint’s tomb.

Meanwhile Saint Victricius was accused of erring in the faith, and it is probable that this alleged error concerned the Trinity; but it was not difficult for him to clear himself. Perhaps the journey he made to Rome about the year 403, under the pontificate of Innocent I, should be attributed to this accusation. His desire to rejoin his flock prevented him from going to see his friend Saint Paulinus at Nola. Paulinus complained of this in a letter he wrote towards the end of the year 404. He says in it that he had been unworthy to receive so great a consolation. He includes in it a profession of faith on the mysteries of the Trinity and the Incarnation. He rejoices that Victricius has confounded the calumny, that he has triumphed over his enemies, and that a passing trial had wrought for him an eternal weight of glory.

Saint Victricius having consulted the Holy See on some points of discipline, Pope Innocent I sent him in 404 a decretal containing thirteen articles which chiefly concerned the clergy. Continence was strongly recommended in it to clerics. There were also regulations for virgins who have chosen Jesus Christ for their spouse and have received the sacred veil from the hand of the priest.

Saint Victricius lived some years longer in the see of Rouen, of which he was the eighth bishop. He died about the year 407. His feast is marked on 7 August in the martyrologies of France and in the modern Roman martyrology. It is also on this day that it is celebrated at Rouen.

## CULTE ET RELIQUES.

The relics of Saint Victricius, bishop of Rouen, were carried in the middle of the 9th century (841) to Braine, a town and fortified castle four leagues from Soissons. This was at the moment of the invasion of the Normans, whose rapacity was feared. The land and castle of Braine were the property of the church of Rouen, which had received this gift from its bishop Saint Ouen. The relics of Saint Victricius were first laid in the church of the priory of Saint-Remi of Braine, situated in the suburb on the side of the road to Soissons. The authors of the *Gallia christiana* are mistaken in saying that the church of Saint-Remi later changed its name to that of Saint-Yved or Evode. They are two different churches. That of Saint-Remi was entirely destroyed in the French Revolution; that of Saint-Yved still survives and is today the parish church of Braine. Agnes, wife of Robert of Dreux and countess of Braine, gave a portion of the bones of Saint Victricius to the parish church of Saint-Nicolas of Braine. These bones were religiously kept there from the 9th century until 1793.

The relics of Saint Victricius laid up at Saint-Nicolas of Braine were recognized as authentic by Mgr Languet de Gergy, bishop of Soissons from 1717 to 1731; then by his successor Mgr Lefebvre de Laubrière, who solemnly conducted a canonical inquiry for four days, heard the depositions of a great number of witnesses,

and left a record of twelve quarto pages on parchment, in which he recognizes the authenticity of the relics of Saint Victricius and permits them to be exposed and carried in procession; and in memory of the translation he himself had just made on 5 May 1733, he ordered that in his diocese of Soissons the feast of Saint Victricius should be celebrated on 5 May each year. Today it is celebrated on the Sunday nearest to 5 May.

Dom Pommeraye claimed that the Calvinists had reduced the relics of Saint Victricius to ashes about 1562. The record of Mgr de Laubrière, of 1733, gives a formal denial to this learned Benedictine; it describes five bones of the Saint perfectly preserved.

In 1793 the constitutional parish priest Maugras collected the five bones named in Mgr de Laubrière's record and handed them on to his successor. In 1813 Mgr Leblanc de Beaulieu, bishop of Soissons, recognized the identity and authenticity of the relics of Saint Victricius, which were the same as those previously recognized by Mgr de Laubrière.

In 1865, on 16 and 17 October, His Eminence Cardinal de Bonnechose, archbishop of Rouen, accompanied by Mgr Dours, bishop of Soissons, and a numerous clergy, came expressly to Braine and carried out a new translation of the relics of Saint Victricius; he placed and sealed them in a magnificent reliquary of gilded copper, adorned with enamels and fine stones, a gift of the metropolitan church of Rouen to the church of Braine. In gratitude for this munificence, the church of Braine ceded to that of Rouen a hip bone of Saint Victricius. The reliquary of Saint Victricius that remained at Braine contains a shoulder blade, a fibula, the head of a femur and a fragment of a humerus. In the Soissons Proper the feast of Saint Victricius is fixed on 6 May.

Godescard; *Légendaire de Morinie*, by the abbé Van Drival; Dom Ceillier; and local notes supplied by M. Congnet, of the chapter of Soissons. — Cf. *Acta Sanctorum*.

## Saint Donatus, Confessor, Monk of Luxeuil, then Archbishop of Besançon

*660. — Pope: Vitalian. — King of France: Clotaire II.*

> *He who has kept innocence of heart, and knows how to join humility to it, possesses the two beauties of the soul.*
>
> *Maxim of Saint Bernard.*

Waldelenus, duke of Upper Burgundy, and Flavia, his wife, lamented before God that they had no child. Saint Columban obtained one for them by his prayers (594); he baptized him himself under the name of Donatus, which recalled his miraculous birth, for this word means given by God, *Donatus*. As soon as Donatus had left childhood, his parents placed him in the monastery of Luxeuil, where Saint Columban guided him in virtue and letters. Obliged to leave Luxeuil to go into exile in 610, the holy abbot commended his young disciple to Saint Eustasius, his successor. After receiving in this monastery an education as brilliant as it was solid, together with a crowd of young nobles who later, like him, made the episcopate illustrious, our Saint took the monastic habit there. It is not known at what age he was raised to the priesthood, and he evangelized the people of Helvetia. Placed on the archiepiscopal see of Besançon in 624, he attended in that capacity the Council of Reims (625), composed of forty-one bishops, among whom eleven metropolitans are counted. We have twenty-five canons of this Council, of which this is the last: "No one shall be elected bishop of a city except a person of the country; and the election shall be made by the vote of all the people and with the approval of the bishops of the province." Donatus owed his election in part to this custom, for he was born at Besançon. He made the noblest use of his immense patrimony: he gave his lands of Domblans and Arlay to the churches of Saint-Jean and Saint-Étienne; he founded the vast monastery of Saint-Paul, on the site of the palace of the old Roman governors, as is shown by remains and by excavations made in our time; for the religious of this monastery, where he often went himself to breathe the air of solitude and to wear the monastic habit, and for the Chapters of the two cathedrals of Besançon, Saint-Jean, situated at the foot of the hill, and Saint-Étienne, built on Mount Coelius, he composed a

collection of pious counsels and salutary admonitions intended to guide them in the religious life and in the observance of the rule. Saint Donatus lived now with the clerics of Saint-Étienne, now with the religious of Saint-Paul, always wearing the monastic habit, faithfully observing the rule, living among them as a simple religious, and carrying out exactly the office of a canon. It would be difficult to say how much zeal and activity he displayed to maintain the faith among his people. The fame of his eminent virtues spread far and wide. “We read in our manuscripts,” wrote Dunod, “that Clotaire II showed a particular confidence in Saint Donatus and often took his advice.” A great number of Christians, drawn by his renown, came from all sides to visit the sanctuaries of Saint-Jean and Saint-Étienne, and showed themselves eager to see and hear the holy bishop. Donatus welcomed all these pious visitors with kindness, charming them by the sweetness of his words and strengthening them by the grace of his blessings. When these faithful laid some offering in his hands, as the first Christians once did at the feet of the Apostles, Donatus would never allow these gifts of piety to be used for his own particular use; he devoted them to the relief of all the poor.

The name of Saint Donatus is found in the foundation charters of several monasteries established at this period in various provinces of France. In 650 he took part in the council of Chalon-sur-Saône. In his episcopal city he founded a monastery of nuns under the invocation of the blessed Virgin Mary: it was called Jussa-Moutier, that is, the lower monastery, because it stood at the foot of the hill that dominates Besançon. Gautrude was its first abbess. Sirude, the sister of Donatus, and Flavia, his mother, took the veil there. At their request he composed for them a rule which we still have. It has always been cited with praise; in seventy-seven chapters he sets out in it all the duties of nuns. He says himself that he has drawn on Saint Benedict, Saint Caesarius and Saint Columban, and that he gives as it were the flower of their thoughts. He also took a large part in the direction of the monastery of Bregille, founded by his uncle Amalgaire, second duke of Burgundy. Amalgaire had established this house for his daughter Adalsinde. After governing his Church for about thirty-two years, Saint Donatus gave up his soul to God on 7 August, about the year 660. He was buried in the abbey of Saint-Paul, near his father Waldelenus. God glorified his tomb, and he was honoured as a Saint.

## CULTE ET RELIQUES.

The cult of Saint Donatus spread from Besançon into the various regions of Upper Burgundy. From the 12th century we see two churches placed under his invocation: that of Avoudrey, in the canton of Vercel, which was then in the *pagus* of Varais, and that of Plasne, in the canton of Voiteur. Later the church of Cuvier, in the canton of Nozeroy, also took Saint Donatus as its patron. It was above all at Besançon that his cult had the greatest lustre. In the 12th century a church was built in his honour within the very enclosure of the abbey of Saint-Paul, to which it was annexed in 1173. In 1770 it was demolished, because it was falling into ruin. After the revolutionary troubles had calmed and the churches had been given back to worship, the church of Saint-Maurice was re-established in 1802 under the title of Saint-Maurice and Saint-Donat. As for the relics this church possesses, they are of Saint Donatus, martyr. Where are the relics of Saint Donatus, archbishop of Besançon? According to the most probable opinion, the holy prelate’s body has never been buried. It is his body that was discovered in 1667 when repairs were being made in the church of Saint-Paul. A flat tombstone was raised, without date or inscription, marked only with the pastoral cross. Under this stone were found the bones of a whole body, enclosed in a hollow, round stone a foot and a half deep, surrounded by masonry. The whole was put back under the same stone, on the left side of the choir, at the entrance to the sanctuary. The church of Saint-Paul, raised from its ruins in the 11th century and restored and embellished in the 14th and 15th, has in our century been turned into a storehouse and a stable. The elegant Byzantine bell tower that crowned this church, whose slender spire gracefully dominated the whole neighbourhood, has been made to disappear.

For more details see the *Vie des Saints de Franche- Comté,* by the professors of the college of Saint-François-Xavier at Besançon, from which we have drawn this biography. — Cf. Dom Ceillier.

## Saint Albert of Messina, Confessor, Provincial of the Order of Carmelites

*1306. — Pope: Clement V. — King of Sicily: Frederick I of Aragon.*

> *Evil temptations are for us the tokens of a loving solicitude; they keep us from taking vanity in the virtues in which we are making some progress.*
>
> *Saint Gregory the Great.*

Before Peter the Elder ascended the throne of Catalonia and Sicily, there lived in the latter kingdom, at Mount Trapani or Eryx, today Monte San Giuliano, a lord of most illustrious blood who possessed very great wealth, named Benedict de Abbatibus; he married a lady of birth equal to his own, named Joan de Palizze. They both walked in the ways of the fear of God and of true piety; but they were together for nearly twenty years without having children whom they could leave as heirs to their goods. After taking counsel together, they both resolved to address themselves to the Queen of angels and men and to beg her, with the dispositions of a lively faith, to grant them the grace of a child, adding that if it were a son they would consecrate him for ever to her service in the Order of Carmelites, which was called the Order of the blessed Virgin.

As they joined fasts, prayers and alms to this vow, God heard it favourably. During her pregnancy Joan, and her husband too, saw a lighted torch that seemed to come out of her womb. This marvel made her judge that the child she had conceived would one day be a shining light by which the whole Church would be illumined. When he was born, he was given at the sacred font of baptism, by divine inspiration, the name of Albert, which until then had been unknown in all Sicily. When he had left childhood, his pious parents spared nothing to have him instructed in human letters and in the science of salvation. Little Albert made such progress in them in a short time that everyone was delighted to see him so learned and so virtuous at an age when other children have nothing but what is light and childish.

He was scarcely eight years old when one of the most powerful princes of the island asked his father for him, to marry him to one of his daughters when he was of age to marry. Benedict put off his answer as long as he could; but, being unable to resist any longer the pressing entreaties made to him, he spoke of it to his wife, thinking she would have no difficulty in agreeing to an alliance that seemed so honourable for them and so advantageous for their son. But the pious lady having set before his eyes that they had vowed this son to the holy Virgin, and that they could not break so sacred a promise without deserving a severe punishment from God, he came to himself, changed his mind and would hear no more of the matter.

Meanwhile Joan called her son aside and told him what his father and she had resolved before his birth. Little Albert, already filled with the spirit of God, was extremely glad to know that he was consecrated to the service of so holy a Mistress. He at once ratified his parents' vow; he declared himself ready to carry it out, and, having received their blessing for this, went off to the convent of the Carmelite Fathers at Trapani and asked insistently for the holy habit of their Order. The superior, admiring his zeal and devotion, greatly wished to receive him; but because he learned that the boy belonged to persons of the first rank, he did not dare to admit him without first speaking to them. The child was therefore obliged to go back to his parents without having obtained anything; but the following night the holy Virgin appeared to them and threatened them with a sudden and swift death if they did not fulfil as soon as possible what they had promised to God. And so, a few days later, they themselves took their son to the monastery, where he received the holy habit with an ardour and piety that touched the hearts of all the nobility of the country, who were present at this holy ceremony.

Albert at once applied himself with such fervour to the interior life and to the exercises of penance that the devil was soon alarmed; and, to stifle this precious seed of virtue in his soul, he appeared to him in the form of a young woman endowed with all the graces and beauties capable of winning the most insensible hearts. To this show he added words full of tenderness, and he tried to persuade him not to remain any longer in a

state which was, he said, so ill suited to the delicacy of his constitution, but rather to come and taste the sweetness and pleasures of life in the world, which suited his age and temperament far better. Our young novice was at first astonished at so strange a vision; but, having recognized that it was only an illusion of Satan, he armed himself with the sign of the cross and prayed, and at once the spectre vanished without leaving any bad impression in his mind or in his heart; and far from this horrible temptation making him cool in his vocation, it served on the contrary only to increase his fervour. He did not fail to make his profession at the end of the year, and from then on he led in religion a most rigorous and penitent life; for, besides the austerities common to the whole holy Order of Carmel, he wore the hair shirt three times a week, deprived himself entirely of the use of wine and drank only water, and on Fridays he even took only bread and wormwood, the better to remember the gall and vinegar with which the adorable mouth of Jesus Christ was given to drink on that same day.

Idleness was unbearable to him, and he managed his time so well that he had not a moment that was not given to prayer, to study, to works of charity or to some other occupation in keeping with his state. Such was his piety that, besides the ordinary Breviary of his Order, he recited the whole Psalter every night, kneeling before the crucifix; and once, when the devil did all he could to disturb him in this devotion by trying to put out a lamp that gave him light, Our Lord Jesus Christ appeared to him, and, making all Satan's efforts useless, did not allow him to feel any distraction in his prayer.

When he had been ordained priest, which he allowed only out of pure obedience, he was set to preaching. It was then that he showed with more lustre his zeal for the glory of God, for he discharged this office with so much learning and power that, besides the great fruit he produced among the faithful, he also converted a number of Jews, who embraced Christianity. Our Lord, to give more weight to his discourses, was pleased to favour him with the gift of miracles. When he was at Messina by order of his superiors, the city was besieged by Robert, king of Naples, and that prince pressed it so closely that no provisions could enter it, which in a short time reduced it to extreme famine. Frederick, king of Sicily, wished to set fire to it so that it should not fall into the hands of the enemy; but some pious persons having persuaded the nobles and the people to place their hope in God and to implore His help through the merits of Albert, they all came to find this great servant of God. No sooner had he learned the deplorable state they were in than he offered the holy sacrifice of the Mass with many sighs and tears to merit for them the help of heaven; and then an extraordinary voice was heard in the air, saying these words: "God has heard your prayer." This was confirmed by the event; for at the same time three galleys laden with victuals appeared in the harbour, without anyone ever being able to learn where they had come from or how they had been able to enter, the harbour being besieged and closed on all sides. These supplies were received as gifts from heaven; they were distributed to the inhabitants according to their needs, and by this marvel the city was delivered from the great extremity in which it was and found itself in a position to defend itself. The king came himself with all his court to thank the Saint, and afterwards there was no one in Messina who did not regard him as an excellent protector with God.

Here is another marvel far more considerable. This glorious Saint wished one day to drive the devil out of the body of a young girl who had long been possessed. He went to her house, therefore, at her mother's request; but as soon as he came near her she gave him a slap on the right cheek. The servant of God was not moved by it; but, as he was very well taught in the school of Jesus Christ, he at once offered her the other cheek to receive a second, which so confounded the pride of Satan that he was forced to withdraw from the body of this poor girl. In the town of Trapani Saint Albert delivered a young woman who had already been six days in labour without being able to give birth, simply by giving her a little blessed oil and saying to her: "May Our Lord Jesus Christ heal you through the merits of the holy Virgin!"

On a journey this holy religious made to the Holy Land, he healed there a Jew who was a prey to the falling sickness. This cure of his body brought about the salvation of his soul, for he and all his relatives, who witnessed this marvel, were converted and received from him the Sacrament of spiritual regeneration.

Another time, on the road to Agrigento in Sicily, he saw some Jews on the bank of a river about to drown, because the flood had caught them unawares and they could not save themselves because of the inaccessible heights along the bank. Albert, who was on the other side, promised them that if they would believe in Jesus Christ they would infallibly be delivered. The danger forced them to accept the Saint's proposal, and at once he crossed the river, walking dry-shod on the waters, and, having drawn these unfortunate men out of the death that threatened them, he gave them the Sacrament of life.

Saint Albert, seeing that the great number of miracles he worked drew ever new crowds of people to him, who gave him a thousand blessings and a thousand praises, obtained permission to withdraw to Lentini, so as to shelter himself from the applause of men; but God, who takes pleasure in raising up those who strive to abase themselves in order to glorify Him, made use of his retreat to have him work still greater marvels: for he went on working miracles not only by the real presence of his person, but also by his shadow and by the touch of his garments. Indeed, a young man of high birth, reduced by illness to a state in which the physicians had given him up, was healed during a vision in which Saint Albert appeared to him, and by the touch of one of his garments: at the insistence of the boy's mother, this garment had been brought from the convent while the Saint was not there. A young child of Palermo, whose eye his sister had put out by an unforeseen accident, was healed in the same way: the Servant of God appeared to him and rubbed the eye with oil. Because of this miracle it has always been believed that the water or oil in which his holy relics had been dipped was beneficial for the cure of countless illnesses.

These rare virtues and these wonders of Saint Albert having become known throughout his Order, the general obliged him to accept the office of provincial of Sicily. He discharged this office with all the piety and zeal of a worthy superior. He always made the visitation of the convents under his direction on foot, with no other provisions than an earthenware pot holding a little water, and some bread for his food. One day the brother who accompanied him and carried the vessel dropped it and broke it, which made him very sad and ashamed. Saint Albert, noticing his gloom and learning its cause, ordered him to go back and bring him the pieces of the broken pot. The brother at once went back out of obedience; but he was much astonished to find the pot whole and full of water. He also prevented one of his religious from falling into an act contrary to purity, by reproaching him, through a supernatural knowledge God had given him, with his wretched resolve; for this poor religious, seeing himself found out, at once changed his purpose and did a very rigorous penance for it.

Saint Albert, having reached an extreme old age, wished at last to withdraw entirely from the eyes of men; he went therefore towards Messina and withdrew into a neighbouring solitude, to give himself more quietly to the contemplation of divine things. After spending some time there he fell gravely ill; he had a revelation of the hour of his death, and of that of his sister, which was to come on the same day and at the same hour as his own. He told his religious of it and prepared for it on his side by redoubling his fervour, his penances and his devotions; he continued them to the last breath of his life. At that supreme hour, praying on his knees, after eighty years of an innocent life, he died on 7 August 1306, and his soul was seen going up to heaven in the form of a dove. His body remained on earth, covered with a hair shirt and giving off a sweet fragrance that perfumed all those present. At the same moment a bell which he had had made at Messina rang of itself and told all the inhabitants of this precious death.

The king of Sicily attended his funeral with the chief nobility of his kingdom and several prelates, followed by a countless multitude of people. While the archbishop of Messina was deliberating with the clergy and people which office should be used to celebrate the obsequies of this great Servant of God, two children were seen in the air, each clothed in a white robe, intoning the Mass of a holy Confessor with this Introit: *Os justi meditabitur sapientiam*; the people having learned by this the intention of heaven, that Mass was continued to the end.

As soon as blessed Albert was buried, a countless number of blind, lame, lepers, paralytics and other sick people were seen arriving from all sides at his sepulchre to ask him for health. They fasted and prayed for

three days, and at the end of that time the Saint appeared to them surrounded with light and clothed in a habit of admirable whiteness, and himself gave them the cure they were asking for. Later in the same year, when the scourge of war was afflicting all Sicily, some horsemen were impious enough to go and lodge with their horses in the church where the body of Saint Albert rested; and, as they were laying waste everything in this sacred temple, they did not spare the Saint's tomb, which they smashed to pieces; but they were much surprised when they saw him kneeling at the bottom of his sepulchre, as if wishing to cry to God for vengeance for the outrages they were doing to His altars. Indeed, all the horses died on the spot, and the soldiers, struck too with various illnesses, expiated their sacrilege. From that time the Carmelites, judging this place too exposed to the insults of soldiers, settled in another part of Messina. Later only a few bones of Saint Albert were left in this new convent, and the principal part of his remains was carried to Trapani, so as to satisfy in this way the devotion of the Christians in both places: at Messina, where he had long shown forth a wholly simple and wholly miraculous life; and at Trapani, where he had taken the habit, made his profession and spent the greater part of his life. A cleric who spoke publicly against the holiness of Albert was immediately punished with a grave illness; he could be cured only by the Saint's intercession.

This great servant of God has worked countless other wonders besides. He has brought slaves out of prison without forcing the doors, delivered sailors from shipwreck and raised the dead, besides countless illnesses that are still cured every day by means of the blessed water in which his sacred relics have been dipped. All these wonders are too many to relate. But there is one we cannot pass over: the blessed Mary Magdalen de' Pazzi, a nun of his Order and one of the brightest stars of her century, who died in the year 1608, finding herself one day seized by a violent temptation to leave the religious habit, had recourse to Saint Albert; at that very hour he appeared to her, and, taking a white habit from the side of Jesus Christ crucified, clothed her in it; and from then on she never felt such attacks again.

He is represented: 1° standing, holding a lily and a book; 2° driving away by his blessing the devil, who had presented himself to him in the form of a woman (thus one sometimes sees an animal's feet appearing beneath the robe of this pretended visitor); 3° with a lamp in his hand or placed near him; 4° delivering a possessed girl.

See the life of the Saint in the *Acta Sanctorum*, in Surius and in the Chronicles of the Order of Carmelites. Cardinal Baronius also treats of it in his Notes.

## Saint Gaetano or Cajetan of Thiene, Founder of the Clerks Regular Called Theatines

*1547. — Pope: Paul III. — Emperor of Germany: Charles V.*

> *I shall not stop giving to the unfortunate until I see myself so stripped of goods that I must be buried out of charity.*
>
> *Maxim of the Saint.*

If we apply ourselves with particular care to writing the lives of the great men who have given extraordinary help to the Church by founding religious Orders, we must certainly bring this exactness to the composition of the life of Saint Cajetan, who in the 16th century brought into being in Christendom a new body of clerks regular to combat the heretics and to reform the depraved morals of Catholics. This holy man was born at Vicenza, a city belonging to the republic of Venice, in the year of grace 1480, of the illustrious family of the Thiene, very celebrated for the excellent persons who had come from it and who had been seen for several centuries distinguishing themselves in the dignities of the Church and in the profession of arms. For, besides the famous Gaetano of Thiene, canon of Padua, who left Commentaries on the natural philosophy of Aristotle and passed for the prince of the theologians of his century, as is noted in his epitaph, there have been several prelates, vice-legates and cardinals of this house, governors of Milan and viceroys of Naples;

our France saw in her midst the lord Nicolas de Thiène, who, after being a page of Francis I, was captain of a company of ordonnance under Henry II and highly regarded under the three following kings, his sons, and under Henry IV, their successor. He married Jeanne de Villars, daughter of Honorat of Savoy, marquis of Villars and grand admiral of France, who gave him a happy posterity, which formed the branch of Thiène in Touraine. Our Saint had for father Gaspare of Thiene and for mother Maria Porta, who joined to the nobility of their birth a signal piety. Their eldest son was called Giovanni Battista; but they wished this one to be named Gaetano at baptism, to keep in their family the memory and the name of his great-uncle, Gaetano of Thiene, that learned canon of Padua of whom we have just spoken. Shortly after his baptism, this excellent mother, who wished to have children only for heaven, offered him to the holy Virgin before one of her images, that he might be her servant for ever; the Queen of the world accepted this offering, took little Cajetan under her particular protection, and obtained for him from her Son precocious graces far beyond the reach of his age. From his childhood he was seen practising the highest virtues. He had so great a deference for all the wishes of his parents, his tutors and his masters that it was unheard of for him to resist or to fail in obedience. His compassion for the poor was extreme, and, not having the means to give them anything, he made himself their solicitor and then distributed to them with his own hands the alms he had obtained for them. He took no amusement except in holy things and in innocently imitating the ceremonies he had seen performed in church. In short, his gentleness, his candour, his modesty, his temperance and a thousand other excellent qualities that were seen shining in his conduct made him respected and loved by everyone.

He soon joined study to piety, and succeeded in it so perfectly that in a few years he became a good orator, an excellent philosopher, a learned jurist and a very profound theologian, and even obtained the degree of doctor of canon and civil law, not by favour but for his extraordinary ability, which made him regarded as one of the ablest of his faculty. His restraint during his studies was so great that he lived rather as a religious than as a gentleman: so that he was already regarded as a mirror of wisdom, a model of perfection and a powerful check on the licentiousness of young men, which was extreme at that time. Having become master of his property, he devoted part of it, together with Giovanni Battista his elder brother, to building a chapel at Rampazzo, in the territory of Vicenza, under the name of Saint Mary Magdalen, for the convenience of the inhabitants of that place, who, being too far from their parish, were often in danger of not attending the holy sacrifice. He endowed it with a fair income for the maintenance of a chaplain, who would be obliged to celebrate Mass there regularly. His love for God then made him embrace the ecclesiastical state: in it he was a model of all the virtues by the example of his gravity, his recollection, his assiduous prayer, his frequent communions, his charity towards the unfortunate, his gentleness and patience in adversity, and all the other virtues; he alone reformed almost the whole city of Vicenza; he gained the reputation of a most pious and most holy young man.

The desire to perfect himself further and at the same time to obtain great graces through the merits of the blessed apostles Saint Peter and Saint Paul led him to go to Rome. He wished to remain hidden there and perform his devotions in secret; but his signal piety, joined to his nobility and his learning, soon made him known. Pope Julius II wished to see him, and, recognizing in him marks of an eminent holiness from which the Church might one day draw great advantages, he begged him to remain at his court. This was hardly Cajetan’s inclination, for he sought only to live retired and solitary, so as to be occupied with God alone; but His Holiness bound him to it by giving him at once an office of protonotary apostolic, one of the most considerable prelacies of Rome. The college of protonotaries of that city still acknowledges today the glory it had in having Saint Cajetan in its body, by assembling every year on his feast day in the church of his Order and having a solemn Mass with music celebrated there in his honour, followed by his panegyric. Yet this holy man, far from taking on the morals and manners of courtiers, worked on the contrary with success to make those of the Pope’s court, however disorderly it then was, take on morals and manners in keeping with the maxims of Christian piety. There was then at Rome a congregation called the Oratory of Divine Love, established in the church of Saints Sylvester and Dorothy, whose principal aim was to kindle the fire of the

love of God in hearts and to prevent heresy, licentiousness, the love of pleasure and the passion for gain from driving it out. Cajetan entered this Congregation, which was composed of the most illustrious men of the city. No sooner had he entered it than, joining the force of his words and exhortations to the holiness of his example, he stirred all the members to work with new fervour for their perfection and for the end of their calling. At that time people communicated very rarely, and the most virtuous persons approached the holy Table only three or four times a year: but the Servant of God did so much by his remonstrances that several were soon seen communicating every month, others every week, and others again, besides Sundays and feasts, on some days in the week. This custom, continued since, has spread to the other cities of Christendom, to the great profit of the faithful.

The Pope having given him a brief *extra tempora* and a dispensation from the interstices, he received the subdiaconate, the diaconate and the priesthood on three feasts fairly close to one another. From then on he very often said Mass, and brought to it so much devotion and fervour that at the altar one would have taken him for a seraph wholly consumed with the ardours of divine love. At this time he received a most extraordinary favour from heaven: having entered the church of Saint Mary Major on Christmas Eve, Our Lord showed Himself to him in the state He was in at His birth in time, and the holy Virgin placed in his hands this dear child, who was newly born, and let him touch bodily and sensibly the most pure flesh with which the eternal Word clothed Himself. So he speaks of it himself in one of his letters to Sister Laura, a nun of the convent of the Holy Cross at Brescia. The death of his mother, Maria Porta, for whom by his tears he obtained that she should not pass through purgatory, obliged him to return to Vicenza. The first thing he did there was to join the confraternity of Saint Jerome, one of the Divine Love such as he had embraced at Rome, which also kept the same statutes. His relatives did what they could to dissuade him from it, because it was composed only of artisans and other persons of low condition; but, as he sought neither greatness nor show, but only the means of advancing in virtue, he despised all their remonstrances and had his name written among these poor brethren, with all the more affection because it was bound to draw contempt upon him. The advantages this company received from the help of this zealous servant of God cannot be conceived. He often gave them exhortations and conferences; being himself powerfully touched by divine truths, he then touched them so strongly with them that they were seen to melt into tears, and that none could resist what he proposed to them for their correction and spiritual advancement. He was above all admirably eloquent when he spoke of the love Our Lord shows us in giving Himself to us in the holy Sacrament of the altar: and he so convinced these poor people of it that they established among themselves the holy custom of communicating three times a week. It was not enough for our Blessed one to exercise himself with his brethren in hidden virtues, in the secrecy of their oratory; he wished his charity also to spread over all the sick of the city: he brought about the union of his Confraternity with the hospital of the incurables, called the Misericordia; hence heroic acts of humility, patience, compassion towards the wretched and solicitude to help them. He went into the poorest houses to look for them and bring them to the hospital. He spent almost his whole income and a large part of his patrimony on their relief: he served them himself, however repulsive they were, with invincible courage: he made their beds, dressed their wounds, cleaned the linen and everything they had used, and above all he applied himself to making them confess well and to preparing them in a holy way for death when it pleased God to call them. Yet, as no one is capable of guiding himself well, Cajetan put himself under the direction of the Reverend Father Giovanni Battista of Crema, of the Order of Saint Dominic, an excellent director. It was through this channel that God made His will known to our Saint: he had in this way to apply himself to works which his humility would always have kept him from undertaking. When he was in the greatest fervour of his exercises at the hospital, and his presence there seemed most necessary, whether to maintain good order, or to sustain the devotion of countless persons of the city who after his example ran there every day to serve the poor, or to complete many pious projects he had begun, this faithful guide, who had so to speak the watchword of heaven, ordered him to leave all these commitments at once and go and live at Venice. Cajetan obeyed immediately, and, closing his eyes to every kind of human

consideration that might have held him back, he left Vicenza, his own country, and went to the city assigned to him. This obedience, from whatever side one considers it, is so eminent that we may well compare it with that which the patriarch Abraham showed, not only when he left his country and his father's house, but also when he went up the mountain of Moriah to sacrifice his beloved son there. Vicenza bitterly wept the departure and absence of so holy a person, from whom she received such great benefits; but Venice, where his reputation had already preceded him, received him with a joy that cannot be expressed. If he changed his place, he did not for that change his tastes or his conduct. He lodged in the hospital that had just been built: he was so useful to it by the wise rules he gave it, by the spiritual and temporal help he gave the sick, and by the number of eminent persons whom his example drew there to assist these suffering members of Jesus Christ, that people have not hesitated to call him its founder. He was the universal refuge of all the afflicted of the city. He consoled some, relieved others in their poverty, protected those he found oppressed, encouraged those he saw disheartened, and gave pious and learned solutions to those who were anxious; in a word, no one applied to him without finding in his charity a remedy for his trouble, without going away either better or happier. But what was marvellous was to see this holy Man at the same time, who wore himself out day and night in the laborious exercises of the hospital, content himself with bread and water for his food, and, without regard either to the nobility of his blood, which caused him to be called Count Cajetan, or to his rank as protonotary and prelate of the Roman court, wear only a cassock and a cloak of cheap cloth that could not distinguish him from the poorest country clergy. The Venetians profited greatly by this example, and the reform that took place in the city and throughout the State on this model drew down on them the blessings of heaven and preserved them from the scourges by which at that time almost all the rest of Europe was overwhelmed.

Our Blessed one's director could not sufficiently admire his disciple's progress; he saw that Venice was not the limit of his labours, and that God destined him to serve the universal Church. He thought he ought to send him to Rome, the mother of all the Churches, so that this river might spread from there, as from a spring, over the whole Christian world. He therefore commanded him, as God did a second time to the patriarch Abraham, to leave the place where he had settled and go and exercise his zeal in Rome. When Cajetan had arrived there, he bound himself more than ever to the great men who made up the congregation of Divine Love, sixty in number, all persons illustrious either by their birth, or by their learning, or by the high offices to which they had been raised, and all animated by the same zeal to reform the disorders by which not only the Christian people but also the ecclesiastical Orders were wretchedly disfigured. For at that time, after the wars that had laid waste all Italy and a great part of Europe, vice had been so unleashed and had spread so over the whole earth, and even over the principal members of the Church, that one could in some manner apply to it these words of the prophet Isaiah: *A planta pedis usque ad verticem non est in ea sanitas*; "she has not one sound part from the sole of the foot to the top of the head." The aim of this Congregation was therefore to correct such great evils, and they tried at least to remedy them in the city of Rome, so that, the city which was as it were the head being healed, health might be communicated more easily to all the others.

But as, with all their efforts, they were not making much headway, God inspired four of the leading members of this company to institute an Order of Clerks Regular who, living in the holiest reform that could be imagined, would work continually to restore to the clergy the ancient lustre it had had in the time of the Apostles. The first was Giovanni Pietro Carafa, then bishop of Theate or Chieti, in the kingdom of Naples, and archbishop of Brindisi, and afterwards cardinal and pope under the name of Paul IV; the second was Gaetano of Thiene, the Saint whose life we are writing; the third was Paolo Consiglieri, of the noble family of the Ghislieri, who all his life joined an eminent holiness to a consummate wisdom and prudence; the fourth was Bonifacio da Colle, of an ancient house of the city of Alessandria in the Milanese, who showed well by a great number of heroic actions that he was most worthy to be among these blessed founders.

Saint Cajetan was the one who first proposed a foundation so useful to Christendom. God had given him the thought of it while he was at Venice; but the time to make it known had not yet come. At Rome he communicated it to Bonifacio da Colle, who, meditating the same design, willingly joined him in bringing it about. Moreover the bishop of Theate, to whom the disorders he saw in the clergy caused an inconceivable grief, was secretly forming a similar project and was only waiting for the opportunity to carry it through. So, having been informed that Cajetan had broached the proposal, he came to find him, told him of his joy at so glorious an enterprise, and begged him to receive him as a companion in the new Order he wished to establish. The Saint at first refused, not approving that so great a prelate should leave his Church and the service of the Holy See to become a religious. But the bishop redoubled his entreaties, to the point of throwing himself at his feet and making him answerable for his soul if he refused him this favour. Cajetan was obliged to yield to his wishes. Paolo Consiglieri, who was the keeper of all this bishop's secrets, followed him. And so, these four founders having assembled on the day of the Finding of the holy Cross in the year 1524, they begged Pope Clement VII to release them from their benefices and to approve the institute the Holy Spirit had inspired in them. His Holiness had great difficulty in accepting the resignation the bishop of Theate wished to make of his bishopric; but he yielded in the end to the force of his reasons and his prayers. The sacred college of cardinals was consulted on the project of this new foundation; it too found great difficulties in it, because these zealous founders wished not only to live without endowments and without fixed and assured revenues, like the religious of Saint Francis, but they wished further to bind themselves never to ask for anything and to wait, without begging, for what divine Providence would send them for their subsistence: which most of the cardinals judged impossible. For what likelihood was there, they said, that whole communities could live without having anything, without earning anything with their hands and without asking for anything? Who will know their needs? Who will guess their necessities? And will not the most charitable persons, for want of reflection on their indigence, leave them continually lacking the things most necessary to life? But the bishop of Theate and Saint Cajetan refuted this objection, and showed that this way of life was wholly apostolic and evangelical, being founded on the example and promise of Jesus Christ and on the practice of the Apostles and the first disciples, who possessed nothing and yet did not beg, but waited for their subsistence from the free and forestalling charity of the faithful; and at last they obtained the approval they were asking for. So in the same year 1524, on 14 September, the day of the Exaltation of the holy Cross, these four founders, having renounced all their benefices and all their goods, of which the poor had the better part, made their profession in the church of Saint Peter at the Vatican, in the hands of the lord Giovanni Battista Bonziano, bishop of Caserta and apostolic datary, whom the Pope had delegated to receive their vows. The bull of approval had been dispatched on the 25th of the preceding June: in it the Pope gives them absolutely and without restriction the name of Clerks Regular, as by special right and by pre-eminence. They at once proceeded to the election of a superior, who was the bishop of Theate, to whom His Holiness had kept the title of bishop: hence the name of Theatines given to these religious.

These are the principal ends of this institute: 1° to give a model to the clergy, who were living at that time in grave disorders and were in great need of reform; 2° to give the example of a perfect poverty; 3° to restore the cleanliness of the churches and altars and the majesty of the sacred ceremonies, which, being performed without reverence, gave the heretics occasion to decry them and make them pass for superstitions; 4° to stir up the faithful to frequent the Sacraments, which were then so little used that most Christians confessed and communicated only once a year, and did so without contrition, without purpose of amendment, and with a carelessness that made the few good people who remained groan; 5° to proclaim the word of God in a learned and pious manner, which the preachers of that time often mixed with profane and ridiculous language; 6° to visit the sick to dispose them to receive the Sacraments, and above all to strengthen the dying against the temptations of the devil and the assaults of death; 7° to accompany criminals to execution, so as to make them escape the rigour of eternal punishments; 8° to pursue everywhere the heresies that had been renewed in recent years by the impiety of Luther and some other apostates of Germany. One sees from this

how useful this institute was to the Church, all the more because it also served as a model for the establishment of several other companies of Clerks Regular, which have spread throughout the Christian world and have greatly served there for the strengthening of the faith and the restoration of good morals. When the four founders had made their profession, they withdrew to the Campo Marzio, to a house that had belonged to Bonifacio da Colle. There they joined the exercises of the active life to those of the contemplative life. Cajetan applied himself with even more fervour than the others to prayer, to the celebration of the divine Mysteries, to the administration of the Sacraments, to the preaching of the word of God, to the visiting of hospitals and to the care of the sick. He showed his zeal and generosity above all in a contagious disease that broke out in Italy and spread even to the city of Rome. For the hospitals having in a short time filled with sick people, he was continually seen there with his brethren applying himself to the relief of these unfortunate people, either for the restoration of their health, or to console them and prepare them for their last hour if their illness was mortal. In a word, the life and conduct of these holy clerics were so pure and so edifying that the name of Theatines began to be taken commonly for that of pious and holy: which caused all those in Rome who professed an extraordinary reform and piety to be called Theatines. Several persons of merit also joined this blessed band, and the number of the Clerks Regular rose to twelve, who all had but one heart, one soul, one mind, one will and one inclination: it was to love God and make Him loved by all the world. Their house in the Campo Marzio became too small for their number; they were obliged to take another on the Pincian Hill. They had stayed two years in the first.

They lived hardly more than two years in the second either; they had to leave it at the taking of Rome by Charles of Bourbon, constable of France, who had abandoned the service of Francis I, his king and his lawful lord, to give himself to Charles V, the emperor, whose army he was leading. The acts of violence, the murders, the sacrileges and the impieties committed by this conquering army in the capital city of Christendom cannot be conceived. As it was composed of barbarians, heretics and libertines who had neither faith nor religion, they profaned the churches, overthrew the altars, trampled the holy Mysteries underfoot, burned the relics of the Saints, violated the tombs, and went looking for riches even in the sepulchres of the dead. Their avarice being insatiable, there was no house they did not enter and in which they did not commit unheard-of violence, not only to carry off the money and furniture that were there, but also to make people reveal what they believed to be hidden there. They scourged the most notable citizens, put others to the most horrible tortures, and even hanged or slaughtered several. The Clerks Regular on this occasion performed heroic acts of Christian generosity. They tried to check the insolence of the officers and soldiers, now by their prayers, now by terrible remonstrances, threatening them with the wrath of God.

They went everywhere to help and care for the wounded, to assist the dying, to console those whom the loss of their goods and their children was about to drive to despair, and to show everyone that this chastisement was a just punishment for their criminal and scandalous life. What did Cajetan not do in his own person? How many blows did he not receive? How many wounded did he not carry to their houses to be tended? How many in despair did he not bring back to an entire abandonment to the will of God? How many dying did he not send to heaven by the benefit of sacramental absolution? How many dead did he not carry on his shoulders to bury them in the cemeteries? But when these heroes of charity had endured so many labours and pains for the help of their neighbour, they themselves became the object of the search and fury of this insolent and pitiless rabble. We shall not say how much they suffered from hunger for some days: the richest being reduced to poverty, there was no one to give them the voluntary alms that were all their income; divine Providence, to which they had abandoned themselves, provided them with food by means of a poor man who gathered here and there what the overladen soldiers let fall from their booty, or else some remains of their orgies. One of these impious men, who had once served Saint Cajetan at Vicenza and had since enlisted in the troops of Georg Freisperg, a fanatical and brutal Lutheran who, on his way to Rome, kept showing a golden cord with which he said he meant to strangle the Pope, recognized his former master, and, believing he was still as rich as he had seen him formerly when he was in his service, urged his companions to fall

upon the house of the Clerks Regular and plunder it. The plundering was soon done: this house was so poor that there was hardly anything in it to take; but as these soldiers were persuaded that these priests had hidden their gold and silver somewhere, they made them suffer a thousand ills to force them to reveal it. Saint Cajetan in particular went through very cruel tortures: his fingers were squeezed in the opening of a chest, he was hung up by extremely sensitive parts of the body, he was loaded with blows, and violence was done to him like that once done to the martyrs. When the first soldiers had tired of tormenting him and his brethren, others came along, more furious than the first; these barbarians, having been unable to wring from the mouths of the religious the confession of a treasure they did not have, led them off to prison to torment them more at leisure. The patience of these holy priests amid so many ills was marvellous: they did nothing but bless God, implore His help for the relief of the Roman people, and sing His praises, not only in their church as long as they remained there, but also in the two prisons into which they were dragged. It was this chanting of the divine office that occasioned their deliverance: for a camp-master, having heard their voices and gone to the place where they were, was so touched by their modesty, their gravity and their devotion that he had them set free.

When they had been delivered, being unable to bear the profanations that were going on everywhere in Rome, and not believing they could remedy them, they resolved to withdraw. So they left this plundered and burned city with no other possessions than the clothes they had on their backs and the Breviary they carried under their arm. Providence did not abandon them on this occasion: they found a man who gave them a boat to take them to the port of Ostia. A captain of the Roman troops had a volley fired at them, believing them to be soldiers of the emperor carrying off part of their booty, but none of their company was wounded. This captain, having recognized them, and among them one of his nephews, gave them provisions for their journey; finally, the provveditore general of the Venetian galleys, who happened to be at Ostia, took them aboard his ship and brought them safely to Venice. It was there that the Order of Clerks Regular had its second birth. The republic lodged them first at Sant'Eufemia, a parish outside the city; then they were given the church and house of San Giorgio; finally, to make them more useful to this great city, they were placed at San Nicola da Tolentino.

While they were at San Giorgio, the bishop of Theate's three years as superior having expired, Saint Cajetan was unanimously elected superior. He accepted this office only with regret and against all his inclinations; but this did not prevent it from being continued to him for three years, as it had been continued to his predecessor. He worked wonders during this time for the reform of the morals of the people and clergy of Venice. The example of his solitary and mortified life, his untiring application to hearing confessions, visiting the sick, helping the poor in the hospitals, preaching the word of God and exhorting each to his duty, and finally his perfect disinterestedness in such laborious functions, made such an impression on all minds that people could not refrain from accepting the rules of Christian life he proposed to every condition. One could hardly believe what he did besides in the plague with which the city of Venice was then afflicted. He visited the plague-stricken, dressed their sores with his own hands, administered the Sacraments to them, and was the first to give them every help they could receive in that state. Famine having followed the plague, as the plague had been a fruit of war, Cajetan forgot that he was the father of the Clerks in order to become the father of the poor; a great number of them had withdrawn to Venice because the republic had laid in considerable stores of wheat there; these troops of starving people found in his charity a continual relief for their misery. He was poor like them, and lived only on alms just as they did; but, having nothing for himself, he had much for the other poor, because his exhortations and remonstrances made the purses and granaries of the richest open to help those who were in need.

At the end of three years he had as his successor the bishop of Theate, who had been his predecessor. It was at this time that he went to Verona to persuade the people of that city to receive with submission the wise ordinances of their pastor, who asked nothing else than their correction and sanctification. He found

everyone there in uproar, and the clergy in league with the laity against the reform that the excellent prelate Matteo Giber wished to establish there; but scarcely had he arrived when things changed their face. All the Orders of the city listened with respect to the remonstrances he made to them, and he so perfectly overcame their obstinacy that they at last yielded to the just wishes of their bishop. Thus the clergy was reformed, and the people came out of their disorders to submit to the rules of Christian piety. Saint Charles Borromeo, wishing later to reform his Church of Milan, took no other model than the fine discipline that was observed in the Church of Verona.

Shortly afterwards our Saint was sent to Naples to found a house of Clerks Regular there. He at once set about obeying, although it was in the dog days, when travelling is most uncomfortable and even very dangerous and deadly in Italy. The bishop of Theate, who had a sovereign respect for his virtue and his great merits, begged him to take whatever companion he pleased. “What!” he cried, “that I should take the companion I like best! No, that is not how one obeys. I pray, on the contrary, my Saviour (he turned then towards the crucifix), yes, I pray Him to inspire your Reverence to give me the one He knows to be least in keeping with my temper and my will.” The bishop, admiring his humility, assigned him as companion an excellent priest and preacher named Giovanni Marinoni. Passing through Rome, he went to kiss the Pope’s feet and ask his blessing. The Pope, seeing his face and his companion’s all burned by the heat of the sun, said to them: “How is it, my children, that you set out in the heat of these dog days and with such danger to your lives?” The Saint answered humbly: “It is better, Holy Father, to despise one’s life than to fail in obedience to your commands.”

When he was at Naples, he took possession of a house outside the city which the count of Oppido had prepared for him for this new foundation, and wrote to the bishop of Theate, his superior, to have a greater number of workers. Meanwhile this count, unable to relish the poverty that blessed Cajetan professed, begged him earnestly to accept some revenues to support his nascent community, representing to him that it was impossible for a large company to last long without this help, and that if it then received sufficient alms for its food, it would not be the same in the course of time, when the people’s charity towards it had cooled. But the Saint, persuaded by the words of the Gospel that as long as his religious placed their confidence in God they would not lack the things necessary to life, and indifferent to their fate if they ceased to have this confidence, rejected this proposal entirely as contrary to the spirit and constitutions of his Institute. The count did not consider himself beaten; he employed other religious of great reputation to bend Cajetan’s obstinacy. Then this holy man, who had not renounced his goods in order to grow rich on the alms of the faithful, said to them: “Do me the kindness, my brethren, of telling me what assurance you have of receiving your pensions, your rents and your revenues each year.” — “We are sure of them,” they said, “because the property belongs to us and we are its lawful owners.” — “But who assures you,” he went on, “that your tenants will pay you properly and will not keep for themselves the fruits of your lands and inheritances?” — “It is,” they replied, “that we have contracts and leases for them in due form, by virtue of which we can compel them to pay.” — “Oh! how much better established is our table,” said Cajetan then, “than yours, since it rests not on the writing and signatures of men, but on the word and promise of God Himself, who says to us in Saint Matthew: Be not anxious, saying, What shall we eat, and what shall we do, and wherewith shall we be clothed? for your heavenly Father knows that you have need of all these things: seek therefore first the kingdom of God and His justice, and all these helps shall be given to you.”

He objected that his Order had until then experienced the truth of these promises of God. The count told him that Venice was a different thing from Naples, because at Venice there was little luxury and much wealth, whereas at Naples there was little wealth and much luxury. “I believe nevertheless,” replied the Saint, “that the God of Venice is the God of Naples.” The discussion was ended by this fine saying, and Cajetan’s poverty triumphed over the count of Oppido’s liberality. However, a few days later, the same count having returned to the charge, the Saint, unable to bear that his Order should relax from its very birth an observance

that was its whole support, ordered his religious one morning to take their habits and breviaries, and, going out of the house with them, had its doors shut and sent the keys back to the founder, telling him that they had no business at Naples if they could not live there as Clerks Regular.

So they took the road to Venice; but the count promptly sent after them and had such entreaties made to them that they at last returned to Naples. They did not, however, go back to their first house, but to another which Maria Lorenza, superior of the convent of the Sapienza, had rented for them within the city, near the hospital of the Incurables, whose church is called Santa Maria del Popolo. Saint Cajetan then did in this great city what he had done at Venice, and it received marvellous benefits from it. Many secular priests reformed themselves on the example of the regulars and began to live with more holiness and to discharge their ministry more worthily. The magistrates and the people also profited by his instructions, and luxury was soon seen to diminish, debauchery to become rarer and charity towards the poor to grow notably warmer. The Saint's virtues were so edifying that one could not look at him without being touched with a feeling of piety. From then on he also began to work miracles. One of the lay brothers, going out of the house to some task prescribed to him by obedience, injured himself so badly on an iron grating that the bone near the heel was broken; several abscesses having formed there, the surgeons could find no other means of curing him, or of saving him from death, than to cut off his leg. Saint Cajetan begged them to put off the operation until the next day, and at night, having entered the sick man's room, he unbandaged his foot, kissed the wound, made the sign of the cross over it, and told him to hope in God and implore the help of Saint Francis; then he put back his bandages, said a short prayer and returned to his cell. The sick man fell asleep, and the next day the surgeons, having come to perform the operation, found his foot as sound as if he had never had a wound. This marvel was soon published everywhere, and we find it approved in the inquiries that were made for the canonization of this great servant of God. Another of his religious having lost his reason, he restored it to him by the force of his prayers: which, among the miracles of the Saints, is rather extraordinary.

Pope Paul III, who had succeeded Clement VII, having given the cardinal's hat to the bishop of Theate, superior of the Clerks Regular, our Saint was obliged to make a journey to Rome for the general assembly of his Order. As the three years of his superiorship at Naples were finished, he had another religious of great virtue substituted for him there. This religious complained to him of this arrangement, believing that he had been charged with a burden too heavy for him. But the Saint gave him this wise answer: "The charge that has been given you, my father, will be easy for you to bear, if you take care to make yourself loved in Our Lord by those who are to obey you". He did not fail to return to Naples; there, although he was not superior and had no other wish than to be the last of all the brethren, he nevertheless remained charged with the principal direction of affairs: as indeed, in his quality of founder and institutor, he was bound to be the first mover of all things. Seeing that the house which had been given him near the Incurables was not large enough for a community, and that new obstacles presented themselves every day to his obtaining a more convenient one, he resolved a second time to leave the city and return to Venice: and he would infallibly have carried this out, had not the viceroy, who knew how much fruit the Clerks Regular were bearing in Naples, opposed it and had him given the parish church of San Paolo Maggiore, with a neighbouring house, situated in a very advantageous quarter.

When he was settled in peace in this new dwelling, he redoubled his labours and his care for the spiritual and temporal relief of the whole city. It was by this means that he discovered three pernicious heretics who, under holy habits and a fine appearance of virtue, hid the impiety of Lutheranism with which they were infected and which they spread everywhere. The first was Juan Valdés, a gentleman of Catalonia, who, after sowing his errors in his own country, had passed to Naples in order to seduce the people there and make them Lutheran; the second was Pietro Vermigli, surnamed Martyr, an eloquent man, but one whom his apostasy from the Order of the Canons Regular of Saint Augustine and his rebellion against the Church have rendered infamous in the minds of all true Catholics; the third was Bernardino Ochino, one of the great preachers of

his age, who had even been general of the Order of Capuchins, but whom his vanity, his ambition and his impurity had cast headlong into error. Everything was to be feared from so redoubtable a triumvirate, and one cannot believe how many minds these new preachers, who were regarded as apostolic men, corrupted, and how many people they drew into impiety and heresy. But Saint Cajetan and Father Giovanni Marinoni, having gone to hear them, discovered the poison that these children of Babylon were giving in cups of gold, and without losing time they wrote of it to the Theatine cardinal: at this news the three impostors, fearing to be arrested, left Naples and the whole of Italy. Everyone knows that they afterwards died miserably, hated and detested by all the world, and even by the heretics.

This great service that Saint Cajetan had rendered to the city of Naples increased the affection that all good people bore him. He was nevertheless obliged to absent himself from it and return to Venice, where, after his three years of obedience, he had again been elected superior. But this absence also lasted only three years; and at the end of that time he was restored to Naples by the general Chapter of his Order, which gave him for the second time the government of that house. These various changes changed nothing in his manner of life. He was always the same, severe and pitiless towards his own body, but full of gentleness and kindness towards all others. His mortification was so great that when the emperor Charles V came to Naples after the defeat of the infidels in Africa and the taking of the city of Tunis, although the pomp of his entry was one of the most brilliant and magnificent that was ever made for any emperor, and the Saint had only to open his window to see the greater part of this magnificence, he nevertheless deprived himself of it for the love of God and remained in prayer during the whole time of the ceremony. He was never without some bodily penance: the hair shirt or the cilice was his ordinary garment; his temperance and sobriety were so great that they were well worth a continual fast; he even sometimes spent whole nights tearing his shoulders with bloody and pitiless disciplines, which came from his extreme hatred of his flesh, which he regarded as a dangerous and irreconcilable enemy. One day he let fall the remark that he hated it no less than the devil. There was never a man more passionate for the glory of God, or more ardent in procuring the salvation of souls, than he; that was his continual application, and it was this that earned him the fine surname of Hunter of souls (*Venator animarum*). As he was very assiduous in prayer and remained in it seven or eight hours at a stretch, all bathed in tears and wholly absorbed in God, so he received in it inestimable graces and favours. We have already noted the one with which he was honoured at Rome, when the Blessed Virgin placed the adorable Child Jesus in his hands. Another time Our Lord appeared to him with His bleeding wounds and invited him to put his mouth to His side, to draw from it the sweetness that flows abundantly from His Heart. And yet another day this divine Sufferer called him, that he might help Him to carry His cross. It was doubtless the cross of the iniquity of men, whose weight and bitterness Cajetan keenly felt, and which made him weep and groan continually. His ecstasies and raptures were frequent, and in them he received great lights and even prophetic knowledge of things absent and of what had not yet come to pass. His particular devotions, after the worship and adoration of God, had for their object the Blessed Virgin, whom he always joined to her Son, scarcely ever pronouncing the name of Jesus without adding these words, “Son of Mary”; the apostle Saint Andrew, because of the most ardent desire he had to suffer for Jesus Christ; and Saint Francis of Assisi, because of his great love of poverty. This virtue was also the dearest to Saint Cajetan; he was on the point of leaving Verona because the bishop treated him too well and more splendidly than religious poverty required. Finally, to sum up all his virtues in a word, he was a wholly heavenly man who, having almost nothing more upon earth, desired and relished nothing but God alone; and so, one day during his prayer, it seemed to him that his heart was detaching itself from his breast and flying away to heaven.

The necessities of the Church, afflicted on all sides by the rebellion of the heretics and by bloody wars between the Catholic kingdoms, made him redouble his penances and prayers to appease the anger of God kindled against His people. He was further moved to this by a horrible sedition which arose on the occasion of the Inquisition that the Pope and the king of Spain wished to establish there to check the course of heresies, but which the people would not receive, as contrary to their privileges. Every day, therefore, he had

processions made and litanies sung, in which this prayer was added: *Ut civitatem istam defendere, pacificare, custodire, et conservare digneris, te rogamus audi nos*; "Deign, Lord, to defend this city, to pacify it, to protect it and to preserve it. We beseech Thee, hear us". Then these words of Daniel were said: *Exaudi, Domine, placare, Domine, attende et fac, ne moreris propter temetipsum, Deus meus, quia nomen tuum invocatum est super civitatem istam et super populum tuum*; "Hear us, Lord; be appeased, Lord; cast upon us an eye of compassion and goodwill, and do what we await from Thy goodness. Delay not, my God, to help us. Thy honour and Thy glory are at stake, because Thy name is invoked upon this city and upon Thy people".

Meanwhile, by a secret judgment of divine Providence, the evils, far from diminishing, grew sharper and increased still more, and crimes multiplied; the Council of Trent, which had been assembled to condemn the heresies and to reform the morals of Catholics, was transferred because of the plague, and there was hardly any longer any likelihood that the disorders of Christendom would soon end. These great calamities afflicted Saint Cajetan so sorely that, being besides much weakened by his extraordinary austerities and his continual tears, he fell gravely ill of them. The physician, having come to visit him, wished to have him lie on a mattress: "I, on a soft bed!" said the Saint; "God forbid; I wish and I ought to die on ashes and haircloth. Yes, on ashes and haircloth; it is the least I can do, since Jesus Christ died on a cross, pierced with nails and thorns". Nor would he allow a consultation to be held for him, telling the same physician "that these extraordinary remedies were not fitting for a contemptible body like his, and that it was enough for a poor religious to be cared for by one physician". His children did not leave him, for fear of losing a single one of his words. He exhorted them to perseverance in the severe poverty of their institute, to the apostolic functions for the salvation and sanctification of souls, to close union among themselves and to the defence of the Church against the heretics. Then he humbly asked their pardon, although he did not believe he had ever offended any of them either by deed or by word, which is truly marvellous in a man who had led and governed them for so long. Finally, after receiving the three Sacraments with which the Church succours the sick in this extremity, holding in both hands a crucifix which he gazed upon with eyes full of love and yet bathed in tears, and before which he repeated at every moment these words of Daniel, *Placare, Domine, attende et fac*, he gave up his spirit to God, to be crowned with immortal glory, on 7 August 1547, in the twenty-third year of the foundation of his Order and the sixty-seventh of his age.

On the day of his death the troubles of that city were entirely appeased: everyone saw in this a mark of Cajetan's eternal happiness and of his great credit in heaven. God has since worked thousands of miracles through the invocation of his name. A person who had devotion to him, having implored his assistance, he appeared to her and told her that, to deserve to be heard, she must say, for nine days together, the *Pater*, the *Ave Maria* and the *Gloria Patri* nine times before his chapel or before one of his images; which she did with very happy success. Since then this devotion has been practised by a multitude of Christians who have experienced its power, and it is still experienced every day, since the wonders worked through the intercession of Saint Cajetan are so numerous that it is said everywhere that God pours them down like rain.

The earlier miracles had led Pope Urban VIII to beatify Saint Cajetan in 1629; the newer ones led Pope Clement X to canonize him in 1669.

Two years after Cajetan's death, in 1549, Carafa was named archbishop of Naples, but the Spaniards prevented him from occupying his see. The same year he obtained the bishopric of Sabina; he took part in the conclave of 1550 in which Julius III was elected, and finally, after the twenty-one days of the reign of Marcellus II, Carafa was elected Pope under the name of Paul IV. He gave his congregation of Theatines the parish church of San Silvestro on the Quirinal; later it obtained a still more considerable residence in Rome, the duchess of Amalfi, Costanza Piccolomini, having given it her palace, beside which the Theatines built the magnificent church of Sant'Andrea della Valle. Paul IV granted various favours to his congregation, placed superiors in the houses of Venice, Naples and Rome for five years, and in 1555 separated the Somaschi from

the Theatines, with whom they had been united in 1546. In 1557 Paolo Consiglieri died, and a year later Bonifacio da Colle. The ordinance issued by Paul IV for the appointment of superiors did not survive its author, and in 1560 the Clerks Regular decreed at Venice that they would meet in chapter and that the statutes of the chapter would direct the congregation. There resulted a great number of excellent ordinances, which applied to a multitude of houses that sprang up one after another, and in a short time, at Padua, Piacenza, Milan, Capua, Cremona, Spoleto, etc., all supervised from 1572 onwards by special visitors. The Theatines founded besides six houses at Naples, two at Rome and two at Venice, and spread into Spain, Poland, Germany and Bavaria. In 1644, under the ministry of Cardinal Mazarin, they obtained a house in Paris; but it was the only one they possessed in France. They built a church there, whose first stone was laid by the prince of Conti in the name of Louis XIV, and the office began to be said there on 1 November 1669. This fine church no longer exists; it was demolished in 1827. Their intrepid missionaries advanced as far as Mingrelia, Georgia, Arabia, Persia, the islands of Borneo and Sumatra, and Armenia. Besides Pope Paul IV, the Church owed to the congregation of Theatines a great number of cardinals, archbishops, bishops and learned theologians. One of the glories of the Order was Cardinal Giuseppe Maria Tommasi; then Paolo Aresi and Clemente Galano did honour to their society; Fathers Giovanni Battista Tuffo and Giuseppe de Silos compiled the annals of the Order, the one in Italian, the other in Latin. Father Ventura, in modern times, made the Order illustrious by his eloquent preaching and his prodigious learning. The Order of Theatines saw its riches grow and, unhappily, the zeal of its members diminish. The statutes of the Theatines are very mild. Their dress consists of the cassock of clerks regular; only they wear white stockings. The Order is not in a very flourishing state; nevertheless it still possesses houses at Naples, Rome, Messina, Palermo, Bologna and Florence.

Benedict XIV, by a brief of 20 March 1743, gave the Theatines in perpetuity a place as consultor of rites, because of the learned commentary on the rubrics that Father Merati had composed, which is much more extensive than that of Father Gavanti, Barnabite. It was reprinted at Rome in 1762.

Eight congregations of Clerks Regular are ordinarily counted in Italy: 1. the Clerks Regular of Saint Paul, called Barnabites, instituted in 1533; 2. those of the Society of Jesus, instituted in 1540; 3. those of Saint Majolus, or Somaschi, instituted in 1530; 4. the Clerks Regular Minor, instituted in 1588; 5. the Clerks Regular Ministers of the Sick, also called Crociferi because of the red cross they wear on their cassock, instituted in 1591; 6. the Clerks Regular of the Pious Schools, instituted in 1621; 7. those of the Mother of God, instituted at Lucca in 1628; 8. finally, the true Theatine Clerks Regular, according to the first institution. These different congregations have much the same habit. Father Thomassin says that the life of the Clerks Regular comes close to that of the Canons Regular. There is nevertheless a difference, namely that the ancient canons regular had the fasts, the abstinences, the night vigils and the silence of monks, whereas the clerks regular embraced in their institute all the functions of the ecclesiastical life, and not those great austerities of religious consecrated to solitude.

One Christmas night, as Saint Cajetan was meditating on the Incarnation in the Liberian basilica, the Blessed Virgin appeared to him and placed the Child Jesus in his arms. It is thus that he is often represented. Romanelli has represented him surrounded by nine blessed spirits, one of whom, kneeling before the Saint, holds the book in which he is writing his constitutions at the dictation of Jesus Christ.

## CULTE ET RELIQUES. — ÉCRITS.

Saint Cajetan was buried in the common cemetery of San Paolo, which adjoined the church. A subterranean vault was afterwards made in that church, into which his bones were carried with those of the early religious. Inscriptions were placed there to preserve the memory of this translation; but it is no longer known exactly in what spot he lies. Thus it has not been possible to carry out the elevation of his body, and his relics cannot be exposed. Devotion to Saint Cajetan is so great at Naples, of which he is one of the principal patrons, that in

some churches sermons are preached on nine successive Sundays or feasts on some virtue of this Saint, in preparation for the celebration of his feast.

In France, Saint Cajetan was especially honoured among the Capuchins of Marseilles and the Augustinians of Amiens. His statue, with that of Saint Januarius, is to be seen over all the gates of the city of Naples.

We have several letters of Saint Cajetan. Eight are addressed to Laura Mignana, an Augustinian nun of Brescia; they were printed in the History of the monastery of these Augustinian nuns, which appeared at Brescia in 1764. The others are found in the *Historical Memoirs on the Life of the Saint* by Father Zinelli. These Memoirs were printed at Venice in 1553.

The nuns of Brescia gave up almost all the originals of the Saint's letters in favour of several houses of Theatines, which placed them in reliquaries. To complete Father Giry we have used the continuators of Godescard and the *Dictionnaire encyclopédique de la théologie catholique* by Goschler. — Cf. *Esprit des Saints*, by the abbé Grimes; the various lives of the Saint published in Italian, of which the catalogue is found in the Bollandists; two other lives written in Latin, one by Fr. Antonio Caracciolo, printed at Cologne in 1612, in-4°, the other by Fr. Giovanni Battista Caracciolo, published at Pisa in 1738; the lives of the same Saint written in French by Charpi de Sainte-Croix and by Fr. Bernard, Theatine; Hélyot, *Hist. des ordres relig.*; Raynaldus, *Contin. Baron.*, ed. Luc., ad an. 1547; Fr. de Tracy, in his lives of Saint Cajetan and the other Saints of the same Order.

## Saint Donatian, Confessor, Second Bishop of Châlons-sur-Marne

It is a constant tradition that Saint Donatian was converted and baptized by Saint Peter; that he was given by that supreme head of the Church to Memmius as deacon and companion; that he came with him to Châlons; that he succeeded him immediately in the episcopate of that city; and that he was its second bishop.

We read in a manuscript of the church of Châlons a short but most complete eulogy of Saint Donatian: "Every day he immolates to the Lord as a holocaust not another's body, but his own body; he never fails to offer the august sacrifice of the Mass; he celebrates the memory of the Passion which has procured our salvation; he offers to God a victim for those for whom he knew he would render account. A sweet joy always shone upon his face. A very wide learning adorned his mind; a river of eloquence flowed from his mouth. His conversation was full of charm and gentleness. He was dead to all earthly pleasures and lived only on spiritual delights. Neither writing nor words can express what this active man, leaning on divine help, taught by his discourses and by his examples. He always had before his eyes his weakness and his nothingness. He said unceasingly, groaning with the Psalmist: 'I am poor, and in labours from my youth'".

How shall we recount the wonders of his zeal? He extended and strengthened the Christian faith in a singular manner by his sweat and the holiness of his life. He is given ten years of episcopate, and he died in 136, on the seventh of the ides of August. He was buried in the same place as Saint Memmius, under a white marble.

On 27 May 1341 his body was raised from the ground, with that of Saint Domitian, his successor, and placed in a reliquary of pure silver which is preserved in the cathedral of Châlons.

*Extracted from the* Beautés de la Champagne, *by the abbé Boitel.*

## Saint Licarius[1] or Lizier, Regionary Bishop of the Couserans, Now in the Diocese of Pamiers

*About 548.*

Saint Licarius was a Spaniard by birth, perhaps from the city of Lérida (Catalonia). Having crossed the Pyrenees, he came and placed himself under the guidance of the blessed Faustus, bishop of Tarbes; when

death had taken him from him, he withdrew to Quintianus or Quintin, who governed the Church of Rodez and who ordained him priest. Having afterwards become bishop of the Couserans, he occupied the episcopal see for forty-four years and was distinguished by his vigilance, his zeal and his charity. He was one of the Fathers of the celebrated council of Agde (chief town of a canton in the department of the Hérault), which was held in 506, and at which wise regulations were made to restore discipline, which had become extremely relaxed through mingling with the heretics. Saint Caesarius of Arles presided over it; Saint Quintianus of Rodez and Saint Galactorius of Béarn also took part.

Saint Licarius died about the year 548. His feast is celebrated in the Couserans on 27 August, and is of the solemn rite of the first class. His relics are still preserved there and are the object of the particular veneration of the people of that country.

It is by mistake that some martyrologists make this Saint bishop of Lérida. The opinion of those who distinguish two bishops of the Couserans, naming the first Glycerius and the second Lycerius, is entirely destitute of proof.

Under the episcopate of Durand, bishop of Toulouse, and the reign of Philip I, king of France (1060–1108), there was in the country of Savès, in the Toulousain, a deserted place where ancient ruins of a church of Saint-Lizier were to be seen, which confirms the tradition that has come down to us that this holy Bishop preached in those regions, either before or during his episcopate. To the west of the parish of Le Burgaud (Haute-Garonne, arrondissement of Toulouse, canton of Grenade-sur-Garonne) there are some hillocks called Mont-Louziu (*Mons Licerii*), and it is believed that it was from the top of these hillocks that our Saint proclaimed the Gospel.

*Godescard, completed with the* Histoire générale de l'Église de Toulouse, *by the abbé Salvan, canon.*

## Our Lady of Kientzheim, in the Diocese of Strasbourg

*1466.*

Our Lady of Kientzheim (Haut-Rhin, arrondissement of Colmar, canton of Keyserberg), in the diocese of Strasbourg, is a celebrated pilgrimage which was established in the year 1466 in the church of Saint Felix and Saint Regula, on the occasion of the translation of a statue of the Virgin into it. This statue, together with a statue of Saint John the Evangelist, had previously been the object of public veneration in the church of Siegolsheim; but at that time, since the war that was ravaging the region and was already at the gates of Siegolsheim gave reason to fear that these two statues would be profaned by the enemy, they were carried to Kientzheim, a safer and better fortified place. Scarcely had they been installed in their new sanctuary when they showed, by a striking miracle, the compassion that the calamities afflicting the country inspired in them. "In the year of grace 1466", says an authentic document of the time, "on the seventh day of August, the two statues of Our Lady and of Saint John were seen weeping openly at the hour of Vespers by me the undersigned, sworn notary, assisted by respectable witnesses; the tears flowed fresh as pure water from the eyes of each statue; they furrowed the cheeks and reached as far as the neck…". This event, the official report of which was signed by more than thirty witnesses, nine of whom were priests and the others eminent persons, landgraves, lords and barons, drew a multitude of visitors to the Virgin of Kientzheim; and from then on the pilgrimage acquired such celebrity that, to meet the prodigious influx of the faithful, the church had to be enlarged three years later. In 1470 the finished building was solemnly consecrated and enriched with indulgences; three priests were established there to preach and hear confessions, and even so they could hardly cope with the work, so great was the multitude of pilgrims. The emperor Frederick III himself came there with a large retinue in 1473, endowed the church with rich presents, and left there, as a sign of respect, his hat embroidered with gold and silver. The chaplains of Our Lady of Kientzheim carefully verified the miracles worked before the holy image and entered them in a register. This register lists one hundred and

eighty-seven of them from 1466 to 1507; and among these wonders are raisings of the dead, cures of the blind, the deaf, the crippled and the possessed, and persons delivered from great perils by invoking Our Lady of Kientzheim. If there is no register later than 1507, the quantity of ex-votos, crutches, chains and other emblems that fill the sanctuary, as well as the great number of pilgrims, prove that Mary has always shown herself there the help of Christians, the health of the sick and the comforter of the afflicted.

*Extracted from* Notre-Dame de France, *by the curé of Saint-Sulpice.*

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[1] See his mention in the Roman martyrology of 16 July.

[2] His body rests in the church of the nuns of Sant'Apollinare, at Milan. It is to him that we owe the erection of the magnificent church called after his name the Faustinian Basilica, of which Saint Ambrose often speaks. — *Acta Sanctorum*.

[3] Here is another version of his martyrdom: "Crossing the desert plain of Cyrrhestica in his expedition against the Persians, Julian saw a considerable crowd pressing round the grotto of a holy hermit named Dometius. They were sick and afflicted people who came to ask the man of God for the healing of soul or body. The emperor stopped and said to the solitary: Did you not freely choose this desert to live alone in it? Why break your vow in this way? — My soul and my body, answered the Saint, are truly shut up in this cave; but I cannot send away all these people, whose faith comes to seek me in the desert. — Is that all? said Julian; I will help you. — And he ordered the grotto to be walled up, at the bottom of which the martyr of solitude died of hunger." — Darras, *Histoire générale de l'Église*, vol. x.

[4] We shall give her life in the volume devoted to the Venerables.

[5] Alias: Sizier, Lézer, Liger, Léger, *Glycerius, Licerius Consuaranensis*.

# 8 August

## Martyrologies

### MARTYROLOGE ROMAIN.

At Rome, the holy martyrs CYRIACUS, deacon, Largus and Smaragdus, with twenty others, who were beheaded on 16 March during the persecution of Diocletian and Maximian. Their bodies, buried on the Via Salaria by the priest John, were afterwards translated on this same day by Pope Saint Marcellus to the field of a Christian woman named Lucina, on the road to Ostia. But later they were brought into the city and placed in the church of Santa Maria *in Via Lata*, title of a cardinal-deacon. 303. — At Anazarbus, in Cilicia, Saint Marinus, an old man, who, after being scourged, hung on a gibbet and torn with whips, was at last exposed to the wild beasts, which killed him: this happened during the persecution of Diocletian, under the governor Lysias. 290. — The same day, the holy martyrs Eleutherius and Leonides, who consummated their martyrdom in the flames. 3rd c. — In Persia, Saint Hormisdas, martyred under King Sapor.[1] About 420. — At Cyzicus, on the Hellespont, Saint Aemilian, bishop, who, because of the cult of holy images, ended his life in exile after suffering much ill-treatment by order of the emperor Leo. 820. — In the island of Crete, Saint Myron, bishop, illustrious for his miracles. About 350. — At Vienne in Dauphiné, Saint Severus, priest and confessor, who undertook a very arduous journey for the preaching of the Gospel and, having come from the Indies to that city, converted by his word and his miracles a great multitude of pagans to the faith of Jesus Christ.[2] 5th c.

### MARTYROLOGE DE FRANCE, REVU ET AUGMENTÉ.

In Holland, Our Lady of Schiedam (South Holland, on the Schie, near its mouth in the Maas). A merchant who had stolen this image and taken ship intending to sell it at the fair of Antwerp could not leave the deck until he had given it back to the inhabitants, who carried it solemnly into the church of Saint John the Baptist of that town. — At Laeken, an eastern suburb of Brussels, Our Lady of Laeken, "whose church", says Molanus, "was built at the express order of the most holy Virgin, who marked out all its measurements with a cord that is still shown today". It is one of the most ancient sanctuaries of the Virgin in Belgium: some authors attribute its foundation to Charlemagne (768–814) and its consecration to the sovereign pontiff Leo

III (795–816). The statue to be seen there deserves special attention from the archaeological point of view. — At Mons (*Castri locus*), in Hainaut, the anniversary of the installation of the Confraternity of the Immaculate Heart of Mary in the church of Sainte-Waudru. 1845. — In the diocese of Carcassonne, Saint Felix of Gerona, martyr, mentioned in the Roman martyrology of 1 August. 304. — In the diocese of Cologne, Saints Cyriacus, Largus and Smaragdus, Roman martyrs, mentioned above. — In the diocese of Besançon, Saints TERNATIUS, GERVASIUS and GEDEON, archbishops of that see and confessors. 680, 685 and 797. — In the diocese of Paris, the translation of the relics of Saint Justus or Justin, a young child of nine who was martyred in the diocese of Beauvais for the faith of Jesus Christ, and whose life we shall give on 18 October, which is believed to be the day of his death. He has already been named on 1 August. About 287. — In the diocese of Troyes, Saint LEOBALD or Liébault, confessor, founder of the Benedictine monastery of Fleury or Saint-Benoît-sur-Loire (*Floriacum ad Ligerim*), in the diocese of Orléans. 650. — At Trier, Saint Agape, virgin. 3rd c. — At Bordeaux, Saint MUMMOLUS, second abbot of the same Benedictine monastery of Fleury-sur-Loire, in the diocese of Orléans. 677. — At Châlons-sur-Marne, Saint POMA, virgin, sister of Saint Memmius, bishop of that see, whose life we gave on 5 August. She has already been named in the martyrologies of 27 June and 5 August. 1st c. — At Soissons, Saint SIGRADA, widow, mother of Saint Leger, bishop of Autun. 680. — In the monasteries of Saint-Florent-lès-Saumur (Order of Saint Benedict), in the diocese of Angers, and of Micy or Saint-Mesmin (Order of Saint Benedict), in the diocese of Orléans, the Venerable Robert of Blois, abbot, illustrious for his birth, his angelic chastity, his sagacity, his prudence, his activity, his moderation, his eminent holiness and his profound humility. He was buried in the cloister of the abbey of Micy. 1011.

## MARTYROLOGES DES ORDRES RELIGIEUX.

Martyrology of the Friars Preachers. — At Lucera, in the kingdom of Italy, in the Capitanata, the Blessed Augustine, bishop and confessor, of the Order of the holy patriarch Dominic, who made himself an illustrious name by his humility, his patience and his charity towards the poor. He delivered the Church of Lucera from the errors of Islam by his prayers, his preaching and the holiness of his life.[3]

## ADDITIONS FAITES D'APRÈS LES BOLLANDISTES ET AUTRES HAGIOGRAPHES.

In the former Benedictine monastery of Tegernsee, in Bavaria, the Venerable Hartwich, abbot, formerly a monk of Saint-Maximin of Trier. Charged with restoring monastic discipline in the degenerate monastery of Tegernsee, he was overtaken by death before he could attain his goal. 982. — In the former monastery of Diessen, in Bavaria, Blessed Rathard, priest and confessor, canon of Augsburg, founder (815) of the church of Saint George of Diessen and of the Canons Regular of the same town. His body was buried (1114) in that church of Saint George and rested there nearly four hundred years. In 1478 his relics, enclosed in a reliquary, were placed under an altar of that basilica, which had just been raised from its ruins. In 1620 they were translated beneath the high altar, and later into the church of the Canons Regular of Diessen. 9th c. — At Gottwich (Kettwein), a Benedictine monastery situated on a mountain of the Crimée, in Austria, and later called, because of its riches, the Abbey of the Ringing Penny, Blessed Altmann, founder of that abbey. He was born in Westphalia, became canon of Paderborn and of Aix-la-Chapelle, where he was made chaplain to the emperor Henry III, then bishop of Passau (1095). He worked with great zeal to destroy the simony that reigned in his diocese and applied himself to restoring order and regularity in the monasteries. Pope Saint Gregory named him apostolic legate, and in that capacity he took part in several conciliar assemblies, such as those of Trebur, not far from Mainz (1076), of Goslar (1077) and of Quedlinburg (1085). He died after holding the see of Passau for twenty-six years. Boniface VIII and Alexander VI ratified his public cult (1300 and 1496) and attached several indulgences to it. 1091. — In the diocese of Naples, Saint Emygdius, bishop of that see and martyr, already named on the 5th of this month. — At Nicomedia, today Isnikmid, a city of Bithynia on the Propontis, the holy martyrs Nazarius, Eutychian, Corinthopus and Diomedes, and the holy

women Juliana, Agape and Metrodora, virgins and martyrs. — In the ancient city of Fescennia, today Galese, a small town of Italy near Città di Castello, in the former States of the Church, Saint Famianus, hermit and confessor, of the Order of Cîteaux. A native of Cologne, he left his country to undertake pious pilgrimages in Italy. After twenty-five years of penance, which he spent in a deep forest, cut off from all communication, he took the habit of Cîteaux and went to die at Galese, where a church has been built over his tomb. It is said that he was called Quard, and that his reputation for holiness caused him to be called Famianus (*fama*, reputation). He died at sixty years of age. 1150. — At Vercelli, in the intendancy of Novara, in Italy, Blessed Hugolina, virgin, who left the riches of her father's house to put on the poor habit of an anchoress, and spent forty-five years in the desert, meditating unceasingly on death and on the love of Jesus Christ. 1300.

## Saint Poma, Virgin at Châlons-sur-Marne, Sister of Saint Memmius, First Bishop of That See

*1st century.*

> *The power of true prayer lies in perfect charity.*
>
> *Maxim of Saint Gregory the Great.*

When the persecution against the Christians had begun to rage at Rome, Poma, in order to place her faith and her virtue beyond all danger, thought of turning to her brother. She seized such an opportunity with joy, to go and behold the admirable successes of his ministry, the happy news of which had been carried to Rome.

It is believed that she was able to undertake her journey easily through the good offices of the prefect Lampas, governor of Châlons for the Romans, who had frequent dealings with Rome because he was bound to send there from time to time the sums arising from the tributes he was charged with collecting. It was a happiness for him to have the sister of the holy apostle who was evangelizing that city conducted to Châlons, together with several other Roman virgins, in order to place them beyond the dangers they might run at Rome.

It was about the year 53 of Our Lord, which was the eleventh of the emperor Claudius, a year marked by the conversion of Dionysius the Areopagite, apostle of Paris, whose eyes were opened to the faith when Saint Paul preached the Gospel in the Areopagus of Athens, that Poma left her country, her parents, her riches and all the grandeurs of the earth, to come and lead a heavenly life at Châlons. She showed generous courage in thus tearing herself away from all the enjoyments of the world.

What chiefly determined her to leave Rome was the desire to keep her virginity, which she had vowed to God in the hands of Saint Peter, her spiritual father. For the Apostles were preachers of virginity as well as of the Gospel. Several of them died in defence of this virtue.

Poma possessed all the advantages that are so highly esteemed in the world. Her beauty was perfect; every grace shone in her face. She came of an illustrious family and enjoyed a considerable fortune. Not so much was needed for her to be sought in marriage. But she had vowed her virginity to God. To escape all importunities, she came to seek a sure refuge with her brother. What was her consolation when she saw the true God known, adored, loved and served by all the inhabitants of Châlons!

Memmius received his sister with a holy joy, like Abraham when Sara, his sister and his wife, returned to him after the impious Abimelech had been forced to let her depart from his palace. He assigned her a separate dwelling in a street adjoining the rue Grande-Étape, which was later called rue Saint-Lazare, and which is not far from the church of Notre-Dame. Even now, every year, a halt is made before this house when the solemn procession of the reliquaries is held on the Tuesday of Pentecost, and the curé of Notre-Dame incenses the reliquary of Saint Poma.

This pious virgin, being thus placed in the centre of the city, could more easily fulfil the mission destined for her. Memmius served her as guide in the way of perfection and made her practise the exercises of the contemplative life and of the active life. Now, like Mary, she listened to the words of salvation that flowed from the mouth of the holy pontiff, or to the voice of God Himself in meditation; now, like Martha, she received the poor, who are the suffering members of Jesus Christ. Here were two noble rivals in the race of good. If Memmius was the model of men, Poma became the mirror of women, and above all of Christian virgins. She seconded her brother admirably by the care she gave to persons of her own sex and by her virtues. Her modesty was perfect. She had so renounced worldly pomps that, far from taking her for a person of noble birth, one would have thought her only a servant. She went out only with her head veiled and her face covered. Her gown was simple and her bearing modest. She sought to please only her heavenly Spouse; she had given Him her heart and consecrated her body to Him.

Nothing is more difficult to observe than silence, which is the guard of virginity. Poma had strength enough to make a pact with her tongue; she had fixed the hours during which she was to keep it in chains, unless charity or great necessity compelled her to speak. How she loved to dwell in the solitude she had made for herself in her heart! When she was obliged to converse with men, her conversation was extremely amiable. As the mouth speaks from the abundance of the heart, her talk turned only on the greatness of God, the charms of virtue and the happiness of serving one’s neighbour. Her words, set on fire by divine love, seemed like so many burning darts, which inflamed those who listened to her. Calumny, slander, rash judgment, biting jest and reticence, which is crueller still, never rested on her lips.

Her most ordinary occupation was hospitality. Travellers and the poor all had a place at her table, found a place of rest in her house, and experienced how inexhaustible her charity was. She knew that what is done to the least of the disciples of Jesus Christ is done to Himself, that alms cover a multitude of sins, that all our works of mercy are inscribed in the great book of life, and that the supreme Judge will reward us for them a hundredfold. Her affection for the unfortunate was so ardent that all her happiness consisted in relieving them. She practised besides another work, far more painful to nature and for that very reason far more pleasing to God. In concert with Memmius she established a hospital, where she received all the sick. This hospital was within the first enclosure of Châlons, on the west side, at the place where the railway has just been built, where a statue of Saint Poma has been found, as well as medals of Tiberius. Poma nursed the sick with her own hands, rendered them the most repellent services, and reserved to herself alone the care of dressing the most foul ulcers. How God took pleasure in beholding His chaste spouse in these exercises, so humble that a servant would not have wished to undertake them!

It was a wonder to see a girl of rank spend her life among the poor, render them with affability every service they needed, treat them with a mother’s tenderness, and console them with words so touching, so affectionate, that she imprinted patience in the depths of their hearts. What divine balm she poured into the souls of the sick! She made them understand the great mystery of afflictions, inspired them with invincible courage, and even made them say with the Apostle of the nations: “I superabound with joy in all my tribulation”: *Superabundo gaudio in omni tribulatione mea*.

God often honoured His servant, who humbled herself thus for love of Him, by miraculously healing the sick whom she tended. Tradition relates that she raised one or several dead persons to life. But far from glorying in these marvellous works, she referred all the honour of them to God. She took extreme care to hide them. When they were noticed, she never failed to say that God gave His blessing to the remedies she had the sick take, because of their faith.

It was in these exercises of the most heroic charity that she spent her days and nights from her arrival at Châlons until her death. She had come, like her divine Master, not to be served but to serve. The memory of the works of charity of this holy virgin remained so deeply imprinted in the hearts of the people of Châlons that it has not been effaced through the long succession of centuries. All antiquity attributes to Saint Poma,

sister of Saint Memmius, the establishment of the first hospital at Châlons, and the old hospital has always been called the hospital of Saint Poma. These works of mercy towards her neighbour made her no less assiduous in fulfilling her duties towards God; it seemed, on the contrary, that she lived on prayer alone. Far from the love of God being incompatible with the love of neighbour, the two, joined together, sustain each other, kindle each other and do all things in a divine harmony. Poma always prayed and always worked. Bodily labours did not interrupt her prayer, nor her prayer her works of charity, because she did both from the same desire to please her God. When she prayed, she spoke to God. Did she nurse the sick? It was the suffering members of Jesus Christ whom she relieved. Thus, praying and working, she was always united to God. That is true piety, which knows how to reconcile its duties towards God with its duties towards one's neighbour.

Poma did something greater still. She was not content to practise so many virtues herself; she wished to teach a great number of young girls to walk in her footsteps. She served as mistress to all those who fled the world, consecrated their virginity to God and devoted themselves to the relief of the unfortunate. But she showed herself the humblest of them all, and formed them to virtue and to works of charity more by her example than by her words.

We must admit that most of the actions of this holy virgin are known to God alone, who takes account even of a cup of cold water given to a poor man in His name. The misfortunes of the times have robbed us of the history of her life, her good works, her miracles and her death, precious in the sight of God.

Poma, who should be regarded as the queen of the virgins of Châlons, continued her pious exercises for thirty years. Memmius assisted her in her last moments, helped her soul to fly to the bosom of God, and rendered funeral honours to her body. He laid her mortal remains in a tomb which he had dug in his retreat at Buxerre. It is there that he himself will soon rest. Later their bones will be placed in the same reliquary, so that those whom nature had united during their life will be united still more after their death.

Poma passed from this earthly life to heavenly glory on 27 June, the day on which her feast was celebrated annually; it was ordered by Saint Alpinus when he canonized her by erecting an altar and an oratory over her tomb. Today she is honoured on 8 August.

As this holy virgin had honoured God by the highest virtues, God, who never lets Himself be outdone in generosity, honoured her, during her life and after her death, with the gift of miracles.

Father Rapine, who has given us most of these details, saw in 1624 the precious bones of Saint Poma, which were in a reliquary of silver gilt. Now these bones were distinguished from all the others of the holy bodies examined at that time by a bright golden colour, which is a testimony to the living gold of her virginity and of her charity towards God and towards her neighbour, with which this happy virgin burned during her life. It can only be by a particular miracle that they remain so solid and so brightly coloured. By this the Saint makes it understood that her power with God is always great on behalf of those who invoke her.

Since the revolution of '93 the relics of Saint Poma have been enclosed separately in a reliquary of painted wood.

*Extracted from the* Beautés de l'histoire de la Champagne, *by the abbé Boitel.*

## Saint Cyriacus, Deacon, and His Companions, Martyrs at Rome

*303. — Pope: Saint Marcellinus. — Roman Emperors: Diocletian and Maximian.*

*Confitebor tibi, Domine Deus meus, in toto corde meo, et glorificabo nomen tuum in æternum.*

*I will praise Thee, O Lord my God, with my whole heart, and I will glorify Thy name for ever.*

*Ps. LXXXV, 11.*

When the emperor Diocletian had associated Maximian Herculius with himself in the empire, the latter, to please his benefactor, undertook to build him a fine palace with magnificent baths. He resolved to make all the Christians work on this construction. Soon, then, men of the highest rank, weak and delicate persons, old men worn out with years, clerics and priests were seen working there as slaves, just as in the time of Pharaoh the children of Israel were forced to labour on the public works of Egypt. Some dug foundations, others carried sand and stones; these made mortar and those served the masons as labourers; and in spite of the heat of the sun and the weakness of their age or constitution, they were given no relief. It was plain from the way the persecutors fed them that their design was to be rid of them. This palace, called the Baths, the fruit of the sweat of these glorious confessors, has since been changed into a church under the name of Our Lady of the Angels.

Meanwhile Thraso, a Roman lord to whom God had given great wealth, learning of the cruelties being practised against the Saints and the want of all things in which they lay, sent them from time to time the means of relieving their misery. For this he made use of Saint Sisinnius, Saint Cyriacus, Saint Largus and Saint Smaragdus, who carried alms to them at the risk of their lives, and who also used this occasion to encourage them to perseverance and to fortify them against the faint-heartedness of nature and the temptations of the devil. The Pope, who according to Baronius was Saint Marcellinus, although the Acts say Saint Marcellus, being informed of what was happening, recognized the merit of the first two by raising them to the order of deacon. A little later all four were surprised as they were carrying provisions on their shoulders to the blessed confessors, and they themselves were condemned to work at the Baths with those whom they had set out to relieve. These excellent Christians felt no grief at it; they willingly took up the basket to carry sand, they joyfully drew the cart to haul stones, and their zeal was so great that, not content with their own task, if they saw another Christian overwhelmed by the weight of his burden, they ran to help him and did part of his work. This is what they did for an old man named Saturninus, who was sinking under the load of the labours imposed on him. The officers who were in charge of the construction, admiring this action, and seeing that these Saints, in their greatest exhaustion, did not cease to sing canticles and hymns joyfully in honour of God, informed Maximian of it. But that barbarous prince, far from being touched by any compassion for them, ordered them to be put in a dungeon and their trial to be held as soon as possible. This is not the place to speak of Saint Sisinnius, who was beheaded shortly afterwards together with the old man Saturninus, whom he had relieved in the rigour of the work on that proud edifice. As for Saint Cyriacus, he remained longer in prison; there he healed blind men and several other sick persons who had recourse to him to obtain health through his prayers. Meanwhile God, wishing to glorify him on earth before consecrating him by the sword of martyrdom, permitted Artemia, daughter of the emperor Diocletian, to be seized by a raging demon which tormented her most cruelly. Uttering loud cries, she said that she could be delivered only by means of Cyriacus, deacon of the Christian Church. Diocletian, who loved her tenderly, then forgot his natural ferocity and his rage against the Christians, and sent to bring Saint Cyriacus out of prison, with Largus and Smaragdus, his companions, who were shut up with him. Having come to the princess, he commanded the demon to come out of her body. It came out, and Artemia believed in the most holy Trinity, following the pious exhortations of Saint Serena, her mother, who was a faithful disciple of Jesus Christ. Diocletian, to show his gratitude to Saint Cyriacus, gave him a house in Rome, where he allowed him to live in complete safety. Some time afterwards, the daughter of the king of Persia, named Jobia, being likewise possessed by a demon, cried out like Artemia that she could be delivered by no one but the deacon Cyriacus, who was at Rome. That king sent an ambassador to Rome to the same Diocletian, to beg him to send him Cyriacus. Diocletian asked his wife Serena to persuade the deacon to make this journey. Cyriacus undertook it joyfully with Largus and Smaragdus, his blessed companions. He made part of the journey by sea, the rest on foot, staff in hand, singing the praises of God continually and imploring His help and His blessing. When he arrived, the king threw himself at his feet and begged him to have pity on his daughter. Cyriacus promised to deliver her; and indeed, having adjured the demon by the dread name of

Jesus Christ, he forced it to come out of her body and leave her free; which brought about her conversion, that of the king her father, and that of four hundred infidels, who received baptism at the hands of the blessed Deacon. That prince wished to acknowledge so great a benefit with rich presents; but none of the three Saints would accept anything, and they told him that it was a maxim of Christians to give freely what they had freely received, and not to sell the gifts of God. Their expenses, too, were very slight, since they ate only bread and drank only water.

Forty-five days later they took ship again and returned to Rome, with letters of thanks which the Persian wrote to the emperor. The emperor again let them live in peace. But when he had left Rome to visit the provinces of his empire, Maximian, not forgetting that they had helped the Christians at the time of the building of the Baths, had them arrested again and imprisoned. Carpasius, vicar of Rome, was charged with examining them, bringing them to the worship of the gods, and, in case of refusal, concluding their trial and putting them to death. Never was refusal more constant and more generous. All three protested that they knew no other divinity than that of Jesus Christ, and that they would die for so holy and so glorious a confession. Carpasius ordered the executioners to pour melted, boiling pitch on Cyriacus's head. The Saint suffered this torment with heroic patience; he was also stretched on the rack and broken with blows of cudgels; in the midst of these torments he said: "Glory to Thee, Jesus, my sovereign Lord; have pity on me, who am only a most unworthy sinner". At last, by an order of Maximian, he was beheaded with these same companions Largus and Smaragdus, and twenty other confessors, who by this death became most illustrious Martyrs. This execution was carried out outside the walls of the city, on the Via Salaria, in a place called the Baths of Sallust. The holy bodies were translated by Saint Marcellinus, pope, to the field of Lucina on the road to Ostia; this happened on 8 August, and so the feast of our three saints is kept on this day. The Roman martyrology makes a most honourable commemoration of them, and notes that their bodies were afterwards translated into the city and laid with honour in the deaconry of the Blessed Virgin Mary *in Via Lata*. In 1049 Pope Leo IX granted the arm of Saint Cyriacus to the abbey of Altorf in Alsace. It is from this that the abbey bears the name of Saint-Cyriaque in the old charters. The arm of the holy martyr is still honoured today in the abbey church.

*Acta Sanctorum and Godescard.*

## Saint Ternatius, Saint Gervasius and Saint Gedeon, Archbishops of Besançon

*680, 685, 797. — Popes: Agatho; Saint Leo III. — Kings of France: Theuderic III; Charlemagne.*

> *Multis virtutibus debet splendere vita pontificis.*
>
> *The life of a pontiff should shine with the brightness of all the virtues.*
>
> *Saint Antoninus.*

Although history has handed down to us very few details of the life of these Pontiffs of the metropolitan Church of Besançon, the popularity they enjoy among the faithful of Franche-Comté makes it a duty for us to devote a few lines to their praise.

For want of a panegyrist, the works of Saint Ternatius will speak for him. The city of Besançon was already rich in religious monuments; he enriched it further with a new church, which he had built on the ground of Chamars under the title of Saint Marcellinus, priest, and Saint Peter, exorcist. This church, made a parish, was placed under the dependence of the cathedral of Saint John the Evangelist. Rebuilt in the eleventh century by Archbishop Hugh II, consecrated then under the title of Saint Vincent, martyr, and united to a monastery of Benedictines, it has today become, under the title of Notre-Dame, one of the parish churches of Besançon. The two holy martyrs Marcellinus and Peter, to whom Saint Ternatius wished to dedicate it, had suffered for Jesus Christ during the persecution of Diocletian (304). Their bodies, thrown by the executioners into a cave, were taken out of it by a pious Christian woman named Lucilla and buried honourably in the

cemetery of Saint Tiburtius, a league from Rome. Pope Honorius restored the tomb of these two holy martyrs; their cult became celebrated at Rome and soon spread throughout the Christian world.

It was during his episcopate that Saint Leger was shut up in the monastery of Luxeuil (673), and afterwards murdered by order of the perfidious Ebroin (678). King Theuderic III then reigned over Burgundy. But in the midst of the confusion that Ebroin's detestable intrigues had thrown into public affairs, this weak and unfortunate king had not been able to establish his authority very firmly. Several bishops had deserted his party. They were accused of disloyalty, and the king had a synod convoked to examine the matter at his castle of Marly-le-Roi, near Paris (677). All the bishops of Burgundy and Neustria were summoned to it, and Saint Ternatius attended with four other metropolitans. The case of some accused bishops was discussed there, and Cramlin, bishop of Embrun, who had obtained his see by intrigue, was deposed. The acts of this assembly have come down to us and bear the signature of Saint Ternatius, bishop of Besançon.

It is believed that this holy prelate died about 680. The manuscripts of the abbey of Saint-Paul attest that he was buried in the church of that monastery. The most ancient diptychs of the church of Besançon give him the title of Saint.

Gervasius had learned from domestic examples to defend the truth with ability and to practise virtue with great austerity. He was the brother of Saint Ternatius, who conferred holy orders on him and associated him early in the administration of the Church of Besançon. But Saint Gervasius was more drawn to the exercises of piety than to the works of zeal. Leaving to the archbishop the government of his vast diocese, he undertook journeys of devotion and spent part of his time visiting the tombs of holy persons, the places that had witnessed their miracles, or the churches raised in their honour. In spite of the aversion he thus showed for public affairs, he could not escape the honours for which Providence had destined him. After his brother's death the clergy and people of Besançon cast their eyes on him to make him their chief pastor. However reassuring this testimony was, Gervasius nonetheless put up a long resistance to such unanimous wishes. He begged as a favour to be allowed to keep to the end the modest habits he had contracted, which seemed to him incompatible with the cares of the episcopate. His wishes were not granted. Obliged to yield, he at last mounted the see of Besançon about the year 680 and occupied it for about five years. The purity of his morals, which was truly angelic, won him universal esteem. The chronicles also praise his attachment to the faith and the precautions he took to keep his flock safe from errors and novelties. His death came about 685. He wished to rest beside his brother in the church of Saint-Paul, which had become singularly dear to the bishops of Besançon in memory of Saint Donatus, its founder. We have no relics of Saint Gervasius left, but all the monuments of the history of Franche-Comté agree in giving him the quality of saint. This honour, which the admiration of men bestowed on him because of the public virtues he had practised, was only a pale image of the heavenly joys with which God filled him in reward for the works and virtues, a thousand times more meritorious still, which he had known in secret.

The death of Herveus having left the see of Besançon vacant, Gedeon was elected to replace him (790). Like his predecessors, he was of high birth, and the modesty of his manners, far from making his nobility forgotten, enhanced its merit still further. At the beginning of his episcopate he had a dispute with Saint Ribert, abbot of Saint-Claude, over the monastery of Lauconne, where the body of Saint Lupicinus rested. Both equally desirous of possessing a place sanctified by the presence and the miracles of a great servant of God, the two prelates each pressed their claim, and referred the decision of the matter to Charlemagne. Saint Gedeon at first won his case, but the abbot of Saint-Claude renewed his claims, and the king, to judge the dispute with more deliberation, sent to the spot Dodo, his natural son, who was abbot of Luxeuil, and Count Adelard, one of the lords of his court. The commissioners pronounced in favour of Saint Ribert, and Charlemagne issued a charter dated at Reims to end this dispute.

Saint Gedeon had countless evils to repair in the course of his episcopate. In 778 fire broke out in a monastery of nuns established near the church of Sainte-Madeleine, spread rapidly through the whole extent

of the city, and carried its ravages as far as the cathedral of Saint-Jean. The wars undertaken by Charlemagne in Germany and Italy further contributed to depopulating the two Burgundies. To crown the misfortune, a frightful famine reduced the inhabitants of Besançon to the greatest poverty; the revenues of the churches of Saint-Jean, Saint-Pierre and Saint-Paul could no longer suffice for the maintenance of a few priests. In the end the archbishop himself was reduced to living on alms. The effect of these great calamities was still being felt under the episcopate of Saint Gedeon. This prelate generously provided for the needs of his people, repaired the ruined buildings, increased the number of priests and restored to divine worship all its splendour. Charlemagne's conquests had served to re-establish peace; his benefactions helped to make the misfortunes of war forgotten. No one was more favourable than that great emperor to the authority of bishops.

Besides Sequania, which he administered directly, Saint Gedeon also extended his jurisdiction, as metropolitan, over Upper Alsace and over part of Burgundy. But the legends tell us that he governed far more by the authority of his virtues than by that of his see. Great gentleness was the distinctive trait of his character. It was this virtue above all which, after winning him the affection of his flock during his life, earned him after his death a place among the saints. It is thought that he died about 797, after seven years of episcopate. Although the Church has not decreed him the honours of a public cult, he nonetheless figures with the title of saint in the ecclesiastical annals of the church of Besançon.

*Extracted from the* Vie des Saints de Franche-Comté.

## Saint Leobald or Liébault, Confessor, Founder of the Monastery of Fleury or Saint-Benoît-sur-Loire, in the Diocese of Orléans

*650.*

Saint Liébault (*Leobaldus*) came of a rich and wealthy family. The goods of the earth were nevertheless unable to hold him in the world, and he bade them a generous farewell to withdraw to the Benedictine monastery of Saint-Aignan at Orléans. He soon made himself noticed there by his admirable patience and his rare virtues, and he deserved to be chosen to govern the community. But God was calling him to be the spiritual father of another religious family; He inspired him with the desire to found a monastery. Liébault therefore went to the king of France, Clovis II, begging him to allow him to build a monastery on the territory of Fleury (Loiret) and offering him in exchange all the goods he had inherited from his parents. The king consented, and Liébault began the works, which, being promptly finished, gave shelter to a great number of religious. He set at their head the illustrious Mummolus, whose life we give on this day. Liébault, full of days and merits, went at last to receive his eternal reward about the year 650. His head long rested in the reliquary of Saint Mesmin, at the priory of that name, and Mgr Louis de Lorraine inspected it on 15 April 1554. The nuns of Notre-Dame-aux-Nonnains at Troyes possessed a considerable bone, which they had enclosed in an arm of silver. In the year 1612 a fragment was detached from it and given to the church of the village of Saint-Liébault (today Estissac). The greater part of these precious relics must have been dispersed by the revolutionary storm.

*The* Saints de Troyes, *by the abbé Defer.*

## Saint Mummolus, Confessor, Second Abbot of Fleury-sur-Loire, in the Diocese of Orléans

*677.*

Saint Mummolus, second abbot of Fleury-sur-Loire (Loiret), is celebrated for his monastic virtues, but above all for the incomparable treasure he procured for France: we mean the body of Saint Benedict, which rested at Monte Cassino (Terra di Lavoro). The Lombards, who were ravaging Italy, having destroyed the

monastery of Monte Cassino, Mummolus received from heaven the order to have the remains of the holy patriarch, which were exposed to profanation, carried to Fleury. He entrusted this business to Aigulphus, his disciple, who was later abbot of Saint-Honorat of Lérins, in the former diocese of Grasse, now the diocese of Fréjus. Aigulphus, under God's guidance and with His help, accomplished this mission successfully.

The life of Saint Mummolus was adorned with every kind of virtue; but nothing equalled his kindness and his gentleness. He confessed at the point of death that, with God's help, he had never been troubled by the least movement of anger. To add new jewels to the crown that awaited him in heaven, he came, though laden with years, into Aquitaine, with the design, it is believed, of reviving the spirit of regular observance in a monastery that had been placed under the dependence of the abbey of Fleury. But he fell ill at Bordeaux and died in the monastery of Sainte-Croix, of the Order of Saint Benedict, where, as the rule of that Order required, he was given all the care of the most charitable hospitality. The religious had him piously buried. His tomb soon became the goal of a devout concourse because of the miracles worked there. The possessed, the paralytic, the crippled and the sick of every kind obtained their cure there by praying to God through the intercession of Saint Mummolus. He had died in the fifth year of the reign of Clovis II (677), as is shown by an epitaph engraved on a marble slab and fixed to the wall beside his tomb. His feast is celebrated in the diocese of Bordeaux, with the rite of a double, on 8 August.

He is represented holding a reliquary in his hand. This recalls that it was he who brought the relics of Saint Benedict and Saint Scholastica to France.

*Proper of Bordeaux.*

## Saint Sigrada, Widow and Nun, Mother of Saint Leger, Bishop of Autun

*680.*

Sigrada, mother of Saint Leger, the illustrious bishop of Autun and martyr, was honoured as a saint on the fourth day of the month of August in the abbey of the nuns of Notre-Dame of Soissons. Relegated to this monastery by order of Ebroin, who was persecuting that whole noble family, she had seen her goods confiscated, one of her sons, Count Guérin or Guarin (*Gerinus*), stoned, and Saint Leger subjected to the cruellest tortures while awaiting the consummation of his martyrdom. Adoring, in the excess of misfortune, Him who was trying her in order to purify her, she embraced the religious life at Notre-Dame of Soissons with a fervour that made her feel her own disgrace less than that of her children.

To console her, Saint Leger addressed to her, from the monastery of Fescamp, a letter which has come down to us. It is a precious monument of his eloquence and his lofty piety. After showing her the advantages of sufferings by the authority of the holy Scriptures, he speaks to her of those of the religious life. "No tongue", he says to her, "can express the joy you ought to feel in the Lord. You have left what had to be abandoned. The Lord has heard your prayers; He has seen the tears you have shed in His presence. He has cut away from you what seemed to hold you back in the way of salvation, so that, freed from the bonds that attached you to the world, you may henceforth live to God, tasting how sweet Christ is. It is He who is our God, our King, our Redeemer! It is He who is the way, the truth and the life!… O happy death that gives life! Happy loss of goods, which merits eternal riches! Happy sadness, which procures the joy of the angels! You have already experienced the mercies of the Lord; He has inspired you with contempt of the world to make you practise the observances of a holy rule. He has delivered your children from the miseries of the world and has given them the hope of an eternal life; whereas you would have had to weep for them as dead if, in dying, you had left them on the earth". The rest of Saint Leger's letter is full of the finest strokes of firmness in affliction, of love for enemies and of detachment from created things. We do not know the date of Saint Sigrada's death. Her relics were preserved with those of Saint Guérin, her son, at Notre-Dame of Soissons. An oratory situated in a valley of the Morvan is dedicated to Saint Sigrada.

*Extracted from the* Légendaire d'Autun.

[1] He is represented driving camels. This saint belonged to an illustrious family of Persia. King Varanes V, son of Yezdegerd I (389–399), having vainly tried to make him deny Jesus Christ, punished what he called his obstinacy by stripping him of his dignities and his riches. Relegated half-naked among the slaves, he was condemned to drive the camels of the army. Privations and the heat of the sun soon made him unrecognizable; the king, meeting him one day, was moved with compassion and had a linen tunic given to him, saying: "Renounce at last, then, the son of the carpenter". The Saint tore up this garment, declaring that he would not renounce his God for that. The king in his anger had him put to death.

[2] Saint Severus came to Vienne at the time when that church was governed by Saint Isicius. He began to preach the Gospel and to confirm his word by miracles; struck by these wonders, the pagans were converted in crowds, and the city soon completely changed its aspect. Vienne then possessed a pantheon where all the gods of paganism were worshipped; Saint Severus purified it and made of it a church consecrated to Saint Stephen. Saint Germanus of Auxerre had promised him to be present at the consecration of this temple, which was henceforth to serve for the worship of the true God; and at the moment when the ceremony was beginning, his body was brought there, being carried back from Italy, where the Saint had breathed his last. Saint Severus, after a life full of good works and miracles, died on 8 August; his body was buried in the church of Saint-Étienne.

[3] Everything leads us to believe that this is Saint Augustine of Gazothe (*de Gazothis*), bishop of Zagreb in Slavonia, then of Lucera in the kingdom of Naples, of whom we spoke in the additions from the Bollandists on 3 August. He was canonized by Pope Clement XI. 1323.

# 9 August

## Martyrologies

### MARTYROLOGE ROMAIN.

The Vigil of Saint Lawrence, martyr. — At Rome, Saint ROMANUS, a soldier, who, moved by the firmness of Saint Lawrence in confessing the faith, asked him for Baptism; immediately brought before the judge, he was beaten with cudgels and afterwards beheaded. 258. — In Tuscany, the birthday in heaven of the holy martyrs Secundinus or Secundianus, Marcellian and Verian, who, in the time of the emperor Decius, by order of the consular Promotus, were beaten, stretched on the rack, torn with iron hooks and burned on the sides. At last, losing their heads, they obtained the palm of martyrdom. 261. — At Verona, the holy martyrs Firmus and Rusticus, in the time of the emperor Maximian.[1] — In Africa, the memory of many holy Martyrs who, during the persecution of Valerian, encouraged by the exhortations of Saint Numidicus, won the crown of heaven by the fire, in which they were consumed. As for Saint Numidicus, although he had been thrown into the furnace with the others and then overwhelmed with stones, he was nevertheless drawn out from beneath that heap by his daughter and found still with a little life. He was cared for, and after his recovery he deserved by his virtue to be made a priest of the Church of Carthage by Saint Cyprian. 3rd c. — At Constantinople, the holy martyrs Julian, Marcian and eight others, who, for having set up an image of the Saviour over the Bronze Gate, were beheaded after several torments by order of the emperor Leo.[2] 730. — At Châlons-sur-Marne, Saint DOMITIAN, bishop and confessor. 2nd c.

### MARTYROLOGE DE FRANCE, REVU ET AUGMENTÉ.

In the diocese of Limoges, Saint Martin of Brive-la-Gaillarde (*Briva Curetia*), in the diocese of Tulle, martyr. He was born in Spain towards the end of the fourth century, of parents very distinguished by their birth, but idolaters. He was baptized from his tender infancy, passed into Italy and from there into Gaul, and stayed for a fairly considerable time in Périgord. At Brive he entered the temple of the false gods at the moment when the idolaters were offering them one of their abominable sacrifices, and overturned the altars of the sacrificers. The crowd rushed upon him and overwhelmed him with stones: a madman, breaking away from the mob, cut off his head with a stroke of a scimitar. He was buried at Brive, and a fine church soon rose over his tomb; the relics of Saint Martin are preserved with great care in that church: they are enclosed in a very well made bust representing a young man of about twenty-five. About 407. — At Rouen, Saint MAURILIUS, archbishop of that see and confessor. 1067. — At Metz, Saint AUCTOR (*Adinctor*), thirteenth

bishop of that see and confessor. 5th c. — At Tours, Saint Euphronius, archbishop of that see and confessor, whose life we gave on 4 August. 573. — At Soissons, Saint BANDARIDUS, bishop of that see and confessor. 566. — At Saint-Bertrand-de-Comminges (*Lugdunum Convenarum*, Haute-Garonne), in the present diocese of Toulouse, Saint Africanus (*Africanus*), fourth known bishop of that ancient see and confessor. We gave his life on 28 April, the day on which he is honoured at Rodez. 540. — At Marseilles, Saint SERENUS or Sérène, bishop of that see and confessor. 604. — At Troyes, the memory of the translation of a particle of the crown of Jesus Christ, which was given to that city in 1239 and which, saved from the hands of the sacrilegious in 1794, is today in the cathedral. — At Avignon, Saint AUSPICIUS, first bishop of the ancient see of Apt (*Apta Julia*, Vaucluse) and martyr. His death is marked in the martyrology of France of 2 August. 1st c. — In the diocese of Coutances, Saint Exuperius or Spire, whose life we gave on 1 August. 140. — In the diocese of Arras, Saint Victricius, archbishop of Rouen and confessor, whose life we gave on 7 August. 407. — In the dioceses of Cologne, Lyons, Marseilles, Meaux, Metz, Reims, Versailles and Viviers, the memory of the Vigil of Saint Lawrence, deacon and martyr, and of Saint Romanus, martyr, mentioned in the Roman martyrology of this day. — In the dioceses of Ajaccio and Reims, Saint Emygdius, bishop and martyr, whose life we gave on 5 August. 304. — At Cologne, Saint Margaret, virgin and martyr, whose life we gave on 20 July. 275. — In the diocese of Viviers, Saint Venantius, bishop and confessor, whose life we gave on 5 August. 544. — In the diocese of Versailles, Saint Yon, priest and martyr, already named in the martyrology of France of 5 August and mentioned in the Roman of 22 September. — At Lyons, the Vigil of Saint Blandina, virgin and martyr, whose life we gave on 2 June. 177. — In the diocese of Mainz, Saint Afra and her companions, martyrs, of whom we spoke on 5 August. — In the solitudes of the Passais (Orne), in the original diocese of Le Mans, Saint ERNEUS and his companions ALNEUS, BOHAMAD, AUVIEU, FRONT, GAULT or GAL and BRICE, solitaries. 6th c. — In the diocese of Le Mans, Saint DEMETRIUS, confessor, companion of Saint Martin, bishop of Tours. Date uncertain. — In Franche-Comté, Saints Amator and Viator, martyrs, who are believed to have been officers of the famous Theban legion, but whose life is very little known. The little town of Saint-Amour (Jura) glories in having possessed relics of these holy Martyrs.

## MARTYROLOGES DES ORDRES RELIGIEUX.

Martyrology of the Order of Saint Benedict. — The Vigil of Saint Lawrence, martyr. — Saint Stephen, abbot, and the religious his companions, martyrs, who are mentioned on 6 August.

Martyrology of the Cistercians. — The Vigil of Saint Lawrence, martyr. — The holy martyrs Cyriacus, deacon, Largus and Smaragdus, with twenty others, whose feast is celebrated on the eve of this day. 303.

Martyrology of the Friars Preachers. — At Florence, Blessed John of Salerno, confessor, of the Order of Friars Preachers, who received the habit from the hands of Saint Dominic, imitated his virtues and, sent into Etruria to spread our Order there, fought much for the faith at Florence, especially against the heresy of the Patarines.[3] 1242.

Martyrology of the three Orders of Saint Francis. — The Vigil of Saint Lawrence, martyr. — The same day, Saint Vincent de Paul, who fell asleep in the Lord on 27 September, but whose feast is kept on 19 July. 1660.

Martyrology of the Order of Friars Minor. — The Vigil of Saint Lawrence, martyr. — Saint Vincent de Paul, confessor, whose memory is celebrated on 19 July. 1660.

Martyrology of the Order of the Blessed Virgin Mary of Mount Carmel. — The Vigil of Saint Lawrence, martyr. — Saint Cajetan of Thiene, whose birthday in heaven is celebrated on the 7th of this month. 1547.

Martyrology of the Order of Hermits of Saint Augustine. — The Vigil of Saint Lawrence, martyr. — At Ascoli, in the March of Ancona, Saint Emygdius, bishop and martyr, who, consecrated bishop by Pope Saint Marcellus and sent into that country to preach the Gospel, received the crown of martyrdom in confessing

Jesus Christ under the emperor Diocletian. His feast is celebrated on the 5th of this month, but he is honoured today in our Order. 304.

## ADDITIONS FAITES D'APRÈS LES BOLLANDISTES ET AUTRES HAGIOGRAPHES.

At Paderborn, in Westphalia, Blessed Hathumar, also called Hadumar and Harimar, first bishop of that see and confessor. He was one of the twelve children of the leading families whom the Saxons, subdued by Charlemagne, handed over to their conqueror. Instructed early in learning and piety through the care of that great conqueror, he soon deserved to be ordained priest and then to occupy the episcopal see of Paderborn. He strengthened his flock in the knowledge of Christianity, rooted out pagan superstition, built churches and placed in them priests fit to consolidate the faith in the hearts of the faithful. 815 or 816. — In the East, the holy martyrs Crescentian, Largus, Tiberius, Amie, Tiberian, Theodotus, Nomedianus, Laudacus, Julian, Polycarp, Primus, Xystus, Agathopus, Felicissimus, Carpophorus, Zemaragdus and twenty-one others, mentioned by Saint Jerome. — At Alexandria, the holy martyrs Onion, Tiburtinus, Valerian, Dionysius, Felix, Euticianus, Gaius, Melciades, Stephen, Urban, Lucius, Mamore, Sastire, Mimide, Ladique, Julian, Polycarp, Magnus and Silvanus, mentioned by the same. — Among the Greeks, Saint Antoninus, martyr. A native of Alexandria, he had the happiness of receiving Baptism. That was enough for the idolaters to seize him and try to force him to sacrifice to the idols. Antoninus generously refused. The pagans then hung him on a cross, where he was made to suffer a thousand outrages; at last he was thrown on a pyre, where he expired in the flames. — At Constantinople, Saint Samuel, priest of the Church of Edessa and confessor. Gennadius (priest of Marseilles and historian, 495) says that he composed writings to overthrow the doctrine of the enemies of the Church, particularly the Nestorians, the Eutychians and the Timotheans. He died at Constantinople, where he was buried. 5th or 6th c. — In Calabria, a province of Italy, Saints Falco (*Falcus*) and Nicholas, hermits. 14th c. — At Venice, Blessed John Plebanus and Leo Bembo, whose bodies were found (1503) in the church of San Lorenzo in that city. 1348. — In Italy, Blessed John of Fermo, confessor, of the Order of Friars Preachers. He long dwelt in the solitudes of Mount La Verna, in the Apennines, and so he is sometimes called John of La Verna.[4] 1312.

## Saint Romanus, Soldier, Martyr at Rome

*258. — Pope: Sixtus II. — Roman Emperors: Valerian and Gallienus.*

> *Faith and baptism are two means of salvation, inseparable from one another.*
>
> *Saint Augustine.*

Romanus was a soldier of the guard of the emperor Valerian, and in that capacity he was obliged to be present at the interrogations and the various tortures of Saint Lawrence. He therefore remarked the constancy and the joy with which Lawrence endured all the torments that the emperor's cruelty had inflicted on his body, and he could not marvel enough that a man made of flesh and bone like himself could be beaten with leaded cords and torn with scorpions without opening his mouth to complain. While he was in this astonishment, which was insensibly disposing him to the faith, he perceived before the blessed archdeacon a young man of incomparable grace and beauty, who, with a handkerchief in his hand, was wiping the sweat that ran down his face and the blood that flowed from his wounds. So marvellous a sight increased Romanus's wonder. He recognized by it that Lawrence's religion was the only true one, and that Christians, for a moment of pain and affliction in this life, procured for themselves an eternity of happiness in the other. Enlightened, then, by this light, he approached the holy Martyr and, declaring to him what he saw, besought him not to abandon him, but to have the goodness to receive him among the number of the faithful. Lawrence was in no state to confer Baptism on him, having his feet and hands bound and his whole body stretched on the rack. But God at once changed his condition: for the emperor, seeing himself vanquished by his

constancy, had him untied from the stake to which he was bound and led back to prison. Then Romanus, who burned with the desire to see himself a Christian, went to find him and, presenting him with a ewer full of water, besought him not to delay conferring on him the sacrament of regeneration. He therefore knelt down, and Lawrence, having blessed the water, baptized him: which he did not do by immersion, as was then done when convenience allowed, but by infusion, as is done now, and as was already done in those days in case of necessity. The emperor was soon informed of Romanus's conversion, because in fact the servant of Jesus Christ did not seek to hide, but wished everyone to know that he was a Christian. So he had him arrested and commanded that he be brought before his tribunal with blows of the cudgel.

The Saint came there with more constancy than he had ever shown in fighting the enemies of the empire; and, without waiting to be questioned, he cried out as soon as he was before the tribunal: "I am a Christian! I am a Christian!" This confession was the cause of his martyrdom: for Valerian, without further form of trial, sent him to be beheaded; which was done outside the Salarian Gate, on the ninth day of August of the year 258, the eve of the martyrdom of Saint Lawrence.

The body of Saint Romanus was carried off by night by a holy priest named Justin and buried in the Campus Veranus, in a cave. His relics were afterwards transferred to Lucca, and they are kept there under the high altar of the church of his name. He is particularly honoured in some churches of France, as at La Ferté-Gaucher, in Brie, of which he is the patron.

He is seen here and there in stained-glass windows devoted to the legend of the holy deacon Lawrence. The soldier approaches him, presenting a vessel of water so as to receive baptism at once, while Saint Lawrence is in the hands of the executioners.

One of his relics is preserved at the Ursulines of Abbeville.

*Cf.* Acta Sanctorum.

## Saint Bandaridus or Bandry,[1] Bishop of Soissons

*566. — Pope: John III. — King of France: Chilperic I.*

> *Gravis semper est pravis moribus vita bonorum.*
>
> *The life of the good is always a burden to those whose morals are corrupt.*
>
> *S. Greg. Mag., lib. I Dialogi.*

After Saint Lupus, thirteenth bishop of Soissons, who died in 533, the episcopal see remained vacant for some time. It was only in 540 that Bandry (*Bandaridus*, Bandared, Banderik), of a Germanic or Frankish family, was elected to succeed him by the unanimous wish of the clergy and people. He had piously spent his youth in the clerical school of Bazoches, founded by Saint Lupus, and had distinguished himself there by his progress in learning and in virtue. He was, according to the author of his life, a capable man full of merit, *homo industrius et eximiis meritis egregius*. King Clotaire I (511–561) did not hesitate to confirm his election. Bandry gave everyone the example of an edifying life, spent entirely in prayer, vigils and fasting. He took great pleasure in retirement or in the midst of his clerics, carried out all the episcopal functions with zeal, regarded himself as the father of the poor and distributed to them the greater part of his revenues. He instructed his people in the truths of the faith and the precepts of Christian morality; he preached vehemently against all vices, above all against pride, ostentation, covetousness, avarice, licentiousness and impurity. The life of the court left much to be desired in the matter of morals; the courtiers believed themselves attacked in his sermons and resolved on his ruin. They went to the king and told him that until then the bishops had always made him presents, and that Bandry was the only one who exempted himself. Clotaire charged them with recalling the bishop to his duty and demanding of him the customary presents. Bandry, who stripped himself of everything to relieve the misery of his flock, possessed nothing worthy of being offered to the

prince; yet his refusal was put down to ill will and contempt for the royal majesty. These spiteful emissaries said to Clotaire: “We went to Bishop Bandry’s house, and we found nothing but madness in his words; he does not know how to administer the goods of his bishopric and he squanders them; he has sworn not to frequent your palace and to pay no honour either to you or to the people of your court. If you do not avenge this affront, you will soon no longer be master in your kingdom”.

Clotaire at once condemned the bishop to exile, without having convoked a synod to examine his case. Bandry, driven from the episcopal residence, made for the sea-coast towards the west, and there, having found a ship ready to set sail for the land of the Anglo-Saxons, he went aboard, after inscribing on a rock on the shore the year, the day and the hour of his departure. Having landed, he at first wandered at random; then he presented himself at the gate of an abbey and asked to be admitted there as a religious, without making known the dignity with which he was invested. He was given the office of gardener, and for seven years he discharged these laborious duties with zeal and intelligence. God rewarded him by granting him the gift of miracles. He healed the sick either by laying his hands on them or by giving them to drink a potion he had prepared.

Meanwhile the diocese of Soissons was a prey to every sort of calamity. Famine and an epidemic disease, *lues forte inguinaria*, were decimating those unhappy populations, who regarded these scourges as a punishment for the unjust exile of their bishop. Clotaire, moved by their outcries and supplications, revoked his sentence.

For a long time the place of Bandry’s retreat was sought in vain. At last the emissaries, having discovered by chance the inscription written on the rock, went over to England.

One day, when they had gone into a monastery to pray God to favour their search, they heard one of the brethren calling Bandry. Surprised to hear a name known to them pronounced, they turned round to see which monk would answer the call, and, recognizing their bishop, they threw themselves at his knees, begging him with tears to return with them to Soissons. “What you ask, my children, is impossible! Shall I leave the father whom God has given me and who has deigned to welcome me, a stranger and a wandering traveller, to return to those who drove me out like a mad dog? I no longer belong to myself; I have vowed obedience to the abbot of this holy house”.

They ran at once to inform the abbot of what was happening; and Bandry, released from his engagements by his superior, left the monastery. All the monks accompanied him to the shore, where he took ship to return to his diocese (554).

Informed of his coming return, the inhabitants of Soissons went out in crowds to meet him. Having arrived in the forest of Retz, at a place called Aisdin, Auditin or Audin (*Aidisius, Aiditius*), near the highway that runs from Paris to Soissons, six miles or three leagues from that city, the multitude was seized with a burning thirst caused by fatigue and excessive heat (*locus in silva Rhetia positus inter Vauldrenum et capellam Metairicam*). The Saint was touched with compassion; he thrust his staff into the ground and implored the help of heaven, making the sign of the cross. At once an abundant spring gushed from the parched soil, and the people quenched their thirst with cries of joy and gratitude. This miraculous fountain still exists and is known by the name of the fountain or chapel of Mantard (*Metairicam*) or Demantard; it must not be confused with the fountain of Saint-Blaise, which is in the village of Arthèse, today called Saint-Bandry. The fountain of Mantard became a goal of pilgrimage. Every year the curé or prior of the village of Arthèse (today called Saint-Bandry) came on the day after Pentecost with all his flock on pilgrimage to the chapel of Mantard or Demantard, two leagues distant from Arthèse. Mass was celebrated there and solemn supplications were addressed to the holy bishop of Soissons. (Quite recently the president of the archaeological society of Soissons discovered tombs in the midst of the ruins of the chapel of Mantard.) Muldrac, in the *Valois royal* and in the chronicle of Longpont, also speaks of the chapel of Mantard. It was therefore not at Arthèse that

the holy bishop worked the miracle of the fountain, but ten leagues farther on and quite near Longpont, as we have indicated above. The exiled Saint was received at Soissons with enthusiasm by the people and by the clergy, both canonical and monastic; on his return to his episcopal city the scourges ceased their ravages. His authority grew still further through the new miracles of which he was the instrument. The only daughter of Clotaire I was possessed by the devil and was inwardly driven to throw herself into water or fire. Bandry having delivered her by his prayers, the king, in gratitude for this benefit, had his notary draw up a precept (*præceptum*) by virtue of which Bandry would enter into possession of the fisc of Celles near Condé and of several other lands. The generous prelate in his turn made a gift of them to the basilica of Saint-Crépin. He took advantage of the favour he had recovered with the king to advance the building of his cathedral, begun by that prince, and also to found the abbey of Saint-Crépin-le-Grand.

An imposing ceremony further distinguished the episcopate of Saint Bandry: the translation to the fisc of Crouy of the body of the bishop of Noyon, Saint Medard, who had died at the castle of Noyon about the year 543 (others put his death as late as 558). We refer to the life of Saint Medard (8 June) for the details of this translation, which gave Clotaire a new occasion to show his generous inclinations. The king made a gift to Saint Medard of the whole fisc of Crouy, reserving only for himself and his successors the palace he was accustomed to inhabit. While awaiting the erection of a basilica, the coffin or shrine of the Saint was laid in a hut of branches. Monks of Saint Benedict were called to serve their future basilica, and the buildings of this monastery, of which Clotaire I is the founder, were begun immediately. The king's tomb was placed in front of that of Saint Medard. Sigebert completed the building of the church and the monastery.

About three or four years after rendering the funeral honours to Clotaire I, who died at Compiègne in 561 or 562, Saint Bandry died of fever on 1 August 566, and was buried at Saint-Crépin-le-Grand, near the altar of the Blessed Virgin, as he had asked. The many miracles worked at his tomb led the abbot of Saint-Crépin, Anselle, to raise his body from the ground in 1044 and to place it in a magnificent reliquary glittering with gold and precious stones. The Calvinists seized the reliquary in 1567 and threw the Saint's bones on the ground; Dom Lépaulard, prior of Saint-Crépin, in 1567 took care to enclose them in another reliquary of gilded wood. Until the French Revolution the inhabitants of Saint-Bandry (the former Arthèse) had the privilege of carrying the body of Saint Bandry, their patron, in the general procession of the religious of Saint-Crépin on the Monday within the octave of the Ascension. Today the city of Soissons possesses nothing more of the precious remains of this holy and celebrated pontiff. In the old Soissons rite the feast of Saint Bandry was celebrated on 2 August, the day after his death. Since the return to the Roman breviary, the Soissons Proper fixes his feast on the ninth day of the month of August. Baillet, that other unearther of Saints, had struck Saint Bandry out of his hagiographical calendar. But at no time has the celebration of his feast been interrupted in the diocese of Soissons. It was Nicolas de Beaufort, a Johannite religious of Soissons, who wrote the legend of Saint Bandry that the

Bollandists inserted in the *Acta Sanctorum*, and this is not the only important document for which those indefatigable hagiographers are indebted to that pious and learned man of Soissons.

*We owe this biography to M. Henri Conguet, of the chapter of Soissons. — Cf.* Annales du diocèse de Soissons, *by the abbé Pécheur.*

## Saint Erneus[1] and His Companions, Saints Alneus, Bohamad, Auvieu, Front, Gault or Gal and Brice, Solitaries in the Passais, in the Original Diocese of Le Mans

*6th century.*

*Desertum omni amœnius civitate et ad quoddam paradisi instar sanctorum cœtibus obsidetur.*

*The most seductive city will never know the delights of the desert, which the Saints conquer as they would conquer paradise.*

*S. Jerome, ep. ad Theodos.*

Saint Erneus was born of a powerful family of Aquitaine; but, instructed from childhood in the doctrine of the holy books, and called besides by divine grace, which had great designs for him, he left the world early and went away from a country where his family was influential and honoured. Saint Alneus and Saint Bohamad came with him into the solitudes of the Passais (Orne), they too leaving the more cultivated regions of Aquitaine; it is certain, moreover, that many other solitaries accompanied them.

Erneus is clearly designated in the most ancient historians as the head of this pious band. It appears also from the same records that Bishop Innocent gave them a favourable welcome, and that his reputation for holiness and the marked protection he showed to the monastic order helped to draw them into his diocese. The prelate, knowing the regions best suited to their design, where at the same time they could make themselves useful by the labours of preaching, pointed out to them the Passais, a country newly joined to the church of Le Mans by the suppression of the church of the Diablintes. Innocent even conferred the priesthood on a great number of these solitaries.

Erneus settled in the part of this solitude that offered the more fertile soil, and which was known by the name of *Celsiacus* (Ceaucé).[1] Alneus established his cell at some distance from that of his friend. Erneus first built an oratory, which he dedicated to Saint Martin; then he had a monastery raised around it, where he soon had the consolation of seeing as many as thirty monks, living in perfect observance of the rules he had prescribed and in admirable fervour. The humble cloister built by Saint Erneus had already existed for many years when it received within its walls a guest whose passing was to leave long memories there. It was in the year 560. Clotaire, then king of all Gaul, had seen his son Chramn revolt against him for the second time, and that young prince was supported in his rebellion by the chief of the Cymry of Lower Brittany, Conomor. The Frankish king had resolved to crush this revolt by arms, and he was advancing at the head of his soldiers when he learned that in the country he was crossing there was an abbot and a community enjoying a great reputation for holiness. The march of his army took him near the monastery; he resolved to visit it. Erneus, informed of this plan, went out to meet the monarch with all his religious, and they received him into their cloister with the chants of the Church, as it was the custom to receive kings when they visited the servants of God. The abbot offered refreshments to the king and his suite; but as wine was not plentiful in the monastery, God deigned by a wonder to come to the help of His servants, and nothing was lacking in this respect to the needs of Clotaire and those who accompanied him. Erneus foretold to the king his victory over the rebels, and contributed by his prayers to obtaining for him a complete triumph.

In return for the hospitality he had received, Clotaire made considerable gifts to the abbey of Ceaulcé and enriched it with several estates; for, says the historian of our Saint, that king loved the servants of God and desired to extend the power and greatness of the Church; and so in his time and under his brother Childebert a great number of monasteries and hospitals were seen to be built. The king’s protection was the source of another advantage for the monastery of Ceaulcé: the holy house found itself thenceforth more independent in its existence.

Erneus continued to give examples of every virtue; what was admired in him above all was his abstinence, his vigils, his spirit of prayer, and his love and generosity towards the poor. Often he contented himself with bread and water as his only food, and gave the rest of his meal to the needy. Often, too, he took this modest refreshment on the bare ground, so as to enjoy the longer his converse with God and the angels in prayer. So many merits were rewarded with the gift of miracles.

One day, when he was at work with the brethren some distance from the monastery, a woman brought him her child, who was dumb, and said to him in a voice full of tears: “Servant of God, I had a vision last night,

and I saw a friend of God who told me to bring you this child, and that you would give him back the use of speech". The Saint, quite astounded at these words, said to her: "O good sister, it is the Lord who will heal him, and not I, a sinful man. Go then and pray for this child in the church, and make an offering; as soon as I have come back from work I will pray on my side for this intention". The woman did what the man of God had told her, and he himself, as soon as he had returned, set himself to prayer with the community; he anointed the child's lips with holy oil, and he did not interrupt his prayer the whole night, until the next day he at last obtained the grace he was imploring.

Shortly afterwards a very old man who had lost his sight was brought to the man of God. Erneus touched him with his spittle, anointed him also with holy oil, then invoked over him the name of Jesus Christ, and at that instant the blind man recovered the light.

Later, one of the religious of the monastery fell into an illness so grave that he seemed about to breathe his last; the other brethren all ran to help him with their prayers, and at the same moment the news of this religious's approaching death was brought to Erneus. "The Lord can give us back this brother", said the abbot to the monk who was speaking to him; "He can grant that we shall not have to weep for his loss, but that we shall still be helped by him". Then he added: "Go quickly; order this brother, in the name of obedience, not to leave us before I am there". "My father", said the messenger, "if you do not hurry to come, you will no longer find him alive; for I myself no longer hope to see him living". Erneus said to him: "Go, and do what I command you; meanwhile I am going to sing Mass, and when the office is over I will follow you to bring this brother divine communion". The man of God did all that he had just said, and as soon as the office was ended he brought to the dying religious, to strengthen him, the body and blood of the Saviour. At once the dying man, already deprived of speech and no longer able to breathe, found himself restored to perfect health. He lived a long time afterwards, and he himself related the miracle to the historian of the holy abbot.

During the long years in which Erneus directed the abbey of Ceaucé, he was not content with instructing and directing his religious; he also proclaimed the Gospel throughout the region. Moreover, in order to make all the monks of his monastery fit to preach the word of God, he applied them to the study of letters. Carrying his charity even further, he admitted into his cloister school clerics and men belonging to different classes of secular life, which shows that there were among the monks of this monastery able and renowned masters.

At last, at a very advanced age and under the episcopate of Saint Domnolus, Erneus died in his monastery on the fifth of the ides of August, about the year 560.[2] God reserved a sweet consolation for His servant at that supreme moment: He sent to all the religious, to the pupils of his school and to several priests the revelation of this imminent death. All hastened to witness the holy Abbot's passing, and they were present at his funeral, which was remarkable above all for the miracles worked there. Two blind men recovered their sight, and four other sick persons were healed. For a long time these wonders continued in the church of Saint-Georges, where the body of Erneus rested, in the village of Ceaucé. The monastery did not cease to be a centre of light for several centuries, and it lasted until the Norman invasions. At that time the relics of our Saint were translated to the church of Notre-Dame at Beaune, in the diocese of Dijon.

Saint Alneus, the companion of Saint Erneus, was also a native of Aquitaine; he came into the diocese of Le Mans to seek there a retreat suited to his desire to live unknown to the world and to devote himself to the conversion of the infidels. He accompanied Saint Erneus and Saint Bohamad, for all three had one and the same design. They were followed by a fairly large number of persons desirous of monastic perfection, which allowed Alneus to build a monastery at once. This cloister was on the territory of Ceaulcé, near that of Saint Erneus, and was dedicated under the patronage of Saint Peter.

Alneus applied himself with his monks to cultivating the waste lands around the monastery, and for all that he did not neglect the preaching of Christian truths among the neighbouring peoples. Soon the fame of his

virtues and of those of his religious drew new disciples to him, eager to receive his lessons and to live under his direction. One even saw, a remarkable thing at that period, priests leave a freer life to submit to the observances of the regular life in the monastery of Saint Alneus. Several rich persons distributed their goods to the poor and came to shut themselves up with the servants of God.

Clotaire, returning from the expedition in which he had quenched the rebellion of Chramn in the blood of that guilty prince, passed near the monastery of Alneus. The holy Abbot made it his duty to go and present eulogiae to the monarch. As he was taking off the monastic cloak he wore on his shoulders and handing it to one of the bystanders to hold for a moment, the man pretended to stretch out his hand to take it, but contrived to let it fall to the ground. That treacherous hand was suddenly struck with paralysis and deprived of all movement. By a new wonder, a ray of sunlight held up the garment so that it should not touch the ground. This miracle lasted long enough to be seen and admired by the king and all his court, so that the esteem in which the holy Abbot was already held became greater still, and he could not withdraw until he had been loaded with honours and presents by the monarch and all the great men around him.

Other wonders of the holy Abbot are related, the account of which can serve to acquaint the reader with the ecclesiastical and monastic manners and customs of that time. One night, at the moment when Alneus was entering the oratory with the community to sing Vigils, the light which always lit that holy place was found to be out. The Abbot prostrated himself and prayed; the brethren meanwhile hastened to look for light, but in vain; not a spark of fire was found in the house. The hour of the office was passing, and the holy man, absorbed in his prayer, paid no heed. Some of the brethren, seeing this delay, warned the abbot of it; at once he rose, made the sign of the cross over a candle, and the light was suddenly rekindled before the eyes of all the monks.

A man who lived in the neighbourhood of the monastery, named Bondus, hurrying to reach the basilica one day when the feast of the Assumption of Our Lady was being celebrated,[3] did not see, in the speed of his running, a well that lay in his path, and fell into it. The neighbours promptly pulled him out, but he was already dead. The Saint was told how this man had met his death in the eagerness with which he was going to the monastery to attend divine service: this news grieved him deeply, and he ordered the corpse to be brought to him. He touched it and anointed it with blessed oil, then set himself to prayer with the whole community and continued his prayer for a long time; at last, in the presence of all the onlookers, the dead man came back to life.

A man called Anserius had been sick for many years, and all human remedies remained useless. Having been brought to Alneus, the Saint prayed for him and anointed him with blessed oil, and he recovered his health. Later a girl possessed by the devil was brought to him, and he healed her likewise by praying for her. Many other wonders worked by the Servant of God used to be related, but the details have not come down to us. This holy Abbot died on 11 September and was buried by his disciples and monks with great honour in the cell he had inhabited. Numerous and striking miracles were worked at his tomb, according to his historian, who seems to have been one of his disciples, for there was a school for the study of letters in the monastery of Saint Alneus.

Saint Bohamad (*Bohamadus*) very probably established his little monastery in the neighbourhood of Saint Erneus and Saint Alneus, in the Passais, near the source of the stream of Beaudouet, but the ancient records give us no certainty on this point. In the monastery there was a religious who had been tormented for several years by a continual fever; Bohamad restored him to health by anointing him with blessed oil. By the power of the sign of the cross he healed an old man who had lost the use of one hand, and a woman who suffered from a contraction of the sinews of the arms and legs.

A rich woman of high position, who had long suffered the keenest pains, was delivered from them by the Saint’s prayers. To show him her gratitude and veneration, she entrusted her son to him, begging him to have

the boy brought up in the school of his monastery. The pupil soon became the imitator of his master's virtues; having tasted the sweetness of contemplation, he would no longer consent to leave it for the enjoyments the world offered him. He survived the holy Abbot, who died on 5 August, about the year 550.

The place where Saint Bohamad established his monastery is still believed to be recognizable; it is marked by a parish church and a town which took its place after it had been overthrown by the peoples of the North;[4] it is today Saint-Bomer, near Domfront.

Very little is known of the abbot Saint Auvieu, founder of a monastery in the Passais. This Saint was born in Aquitaine and probably came in the company of Erneus and the other holy monks who had followed him. In the cloister he built in the midst of the forests of the Passais he had disciples and successors, who also led a holy and penitent life; but in the end this monastery disappeared, with a great number of others, in the ravages of which the province of Maine was the scene. A simple chapel still preserved the memory of the servant of God on the very spot where he had lived. The religious of the abbey of Savigny, of the Order of Cîteaux, were obliged to maintain a priest to celebrate Mass there.

Saint Front chose his retreat in the solitudes of the Passais at the same period. This anchorite, born in the neighbourhood of Trier towards the end of the fifth century, left his family and his country while still young and withdrew to the abbey of Micy. After practising the religious virtues there for some time under the direction of Saint Maximinus, the desire for contemplation made him long for the eremitical life. He communicated his thought to a religious of the same monastery named Gallus, commonly called Saint Gault. Divine grace had put the same dispositions into the heart of this religious, who, not content with approving his design, declared to him that he would join him in order to imitate him.

The two Saints obtained from Maximinus permission to withdraw into the desert, and they made for Maine, on the news given them that the bishop Saint Innocent loved to see the solitudes and forests of his diocese peopled with monks.

The two religious first presented themselves to Saint Innocent, and with his approval they established their dwellings in two parts of the diocese far from each other. Gault fixed his abode in the forest of Concise, near the place where the town of Laval was later built; Front chose the solitudes of the Passais. His cell was situated on a rock rising above a vast forest and washed by a little river today called the Varenne; it is on this same hill that the town of Domfront is seen today, which grew up around the oratory of our holy anchorite and still bears his name.[5]

Saint Front was not, like most of the other solitaries of whom we have spoken so far, the father of a new monastery; after building a little cell and an oratory with his own hands, he gave himself up there entirely to contemplation. Yet he did not fail to go out from time to time to evangelize the neighbouring peoples and teach them to know Jesus Christ. He found many idolaters there and converted a good number. He destroyed a temple dedicated to Ceres, worked several miracles which the legend-writers have not related in detail, and died the death of the just about the middle of the sixth century. He was buried in an oratory he had built below the rock of Saint-Vincent.

Saint Gault or Gal, the friend, confidant and companion of Saint Front, was also born in the neighbourhood of Trier towards the end of the fifth century, of a family distinguished for its piety. He early had serious inclinations and was led by grace to renounce the world, so as to occupy himself only with the things of eternity. Having embraced the monastic life in the abbey of Micy, he showed himself there constantly observant of the rule and was a subject of edification to all his brethren. But after having been long tried in the exercises of the cloistered life, according to the doctrine of the holy Fathers, he asked Saint Maximinus for the favour of passing into the desert. The great abbot of Micy allowed him to follow his desire, and Gault set out with his blessing.

The new anchorite came then into the diocese of Le Mans and fixed his dwelling near the forest of Concise, at that time much more extensive than it is today, in a country almost entirely deserted. The detailed account of the actions of the Servant of God has not come down to us; it is only known that he distinguished himself by the holiness of his life and by a great number of miracles. His death came about the year 550, a few years after that of Saint Innocent.

At the same period people admired the virtues and wonders of a holy hermit named Brice (*Brictius*), who lived in the solitudes of the Passais. He too had first led the cenobitic life in the abbey of Micy, and the love of contemplation had led him to seek a deeper retreat. He followed Saint Avitus and Saint Carileffus when they left the abbey near Orléans, and came to establish his cell a short distance from the one Saint Front had already been inhabiting for some years. Today, on the very spot where Saint Brice's hermitage stood, there are a town and a church which bear his name and acknowledge him as patron. This parish is now in the diocese of Séez. There is also in the diocese of Le Mans another parish which bears the same name and honours the same patron. In this solitude Brice led a wholly angelic life and, in spite of his austerities, reached an extreme old age; for he died towards the end of the sixth century.

*Taken from the* Histoire de l'Église du Mans, *by Dom Piolin.*

## Saint Serenus or Sérène, Bishop of Marseilles and Confessor

*604. — Pope: Saint Gregory the Great. — King of France: Clotaire II.*

> *We must watch over ourselves with all the more care and fear because we do not know how much of life remains to us.*
>
> *Saint Gregory the Great.*

The beginnings of Saint Serenus, successor of Saint Theodore, were marked by the arrival at Marseilles of the monks whom Saint Gregory the Great was sending to England to evangelize that people, whose spiritual misery had touched the heart of that great Pope. Gregory had given them a letter for the bishop of Marseilles: "Although with bishops full of the charity that is pleasing to God", the Pope said, "religious need no recommendation, nevertheless, since a favourable occasion of writing to you has presented itself, we have taken care to send our letter to your fraternity, recommending the bearer of these presents, the servant of God Augustine, whose zeal is well known to us, with other servants of God (John, Peter and Lawrence), whom we are sending yonder for the good of souls, with God's help… Further, we commend to your charity in all things the priest Candidus, our son and yours, whom we are sending to govern the little patrimony of our Church". This letter, preserved in the works of Saint Gregory the Great, is dated 20 July 596.

Saint Augustine and his companions achieved the finest apostolic successes in Great Britain. Augustine even came later to be consecrated bishop at Arles, and Saint Serenus, who had helped him with his assistance and his recommendations, was probably one of the three consecrating prelates. In 599 Saint Augustine's envoys brought back from Rome a new letter of Saint Gregory the Great to Saint Serenus.

The same Pope wrote, moreover, several letters to our bishop. Some concern an excess of zeal shown by Saint Serenus against the idolaters, when he went so far as to break the images of the Saints in some churches of Marseilles. Others relate to calumnies the Pope had received about the allegedly excessive forbearance of Serenus towards one of his subordinates who was at fault. The bishop of Arles took up the defence of our holy Pontiff, and Gregory the Great soon gave back his full esteem to a bishop whom people had tried to discredit with him. Happy and comforted by the marks of affection which the sovereign Pontiff afterwards gave Saint Serenus, the latter wished to go and visit the tombs of the Apostles and venerate Peter in the person of his worthy successor. On his return from Rome he was obliged by a sudden illness to stop at Blanderat, a small town of the Milanese. He died there a holy death, and his tomb, miraculously discovered long after his death, became celebrated for the wonders that are still worked there in our own days. A

precious relic of Saint Serenus was given by Mgr Solaro, bishop of Vercelli, to Mgr de Belsunce in 1747. The Revolution profaned it, and it was dispersed with so many other treasures of the Church of Marseilles. But in 1840 Mgr de Mazenod went himself to Blanderat, asked Mgr d'Angennes for a new relic, and obtained a whole arm, since entrusted to the keeping of the chapter of Marseilles. A particle of this notable relic was given in 1842 to the parish church of the Holy Trinity, which, while keeping its old title, is placed under the patronage of Saint Serenus. It is even in memory of the translation of the relic given to that parish that the feast of Saint Serenus is celebrated there on the second Sunday after the Epiphany.

*Taken from the* Histoire des évêques de Marseille, *by Canon Ant. Ricard, who summarized the life of the Saint by the abbé Bayle.*

## Saint Maurilius, Abbot of Santa Maria of Florence, Archbishop of Rouen and Confessor

*1067. — Pope: Alexander II. — King of France: Philip I.*

> *Petri vicem et ligando et solvendo obtinent, qui locum sancti regiminis fide et moribus tenent.*
>
> *They fulfil the mission of Peter in binding and loosing who discharge the sacred functions with a spirit of faith and pure morals.*
>
> *Saint Gregory the Great.*

One of the holiest and most vigilant prelates of his century, Maurilius was born in the diocese of Reims of a noble family. Brought up in the Church of that city, he made his first studies there and went afterwards to perfect them at the school of Liège, then very flourishing. Maurilius, after being instructed there in all the liberal arts and in the three parts of philosophy known in his time, passed into Saxony and for some years taught with honour as scholasticus in the Church of Alberstadt.

Soon giving up this post and all the hopes that his learning and the credit of his relatives might have led him to conceive, he returned to France and, filled with the desire to consecrate himself to God, went to bury his talents in the obscurity of the cloister. The abbey of Fécamp was the one where he took the religious habit of Saint Benedict, under Abbot William, and consequently before 1030. Maurilius lived there for a considerable time, and his piety and fervour soon edified all the monks, his brethren. Resolved, however, to go and live with greater austerities, he begged his abbot to allow him to withdraw to Italy. Having obtained this permission, he passed into Tuscany and settled in a little hermitage, where he led the life of the first anchorites of the Church. At this period he associated himself with Gerbert, another holy and learned monk, who was afterwards abbot of Saint-Wandrille, and the two of them, working with their hands, occupied themselves only with God and the heavenly fatherland. Maurilius could not, however, hide himself so well that the brightness of his virtue did not betray him. The marquis Boniface II, lord of the country, informed of his merit, gave him the abbey of Santa Maria in Florence itself, vacant by the death of its abbot; but it was not without difficulty that the pious cenobite, pressed by the counsel of all good men, accepted this charge. Mabillon, it is true, has some difficulty in finding him a place among the abbots who governed that monastery at that time; but the reason he alleges cannot outweigh the authority of several contemporary writers who attest it, notably William of Poitiers and Orderic Vitalis. Maurilius had the rule observed there as exactly as he could, and shone there by his virtue above all the other abbots. But the monks, accustomed to the gravest disorders under his predecessor, paralysed all his generous efforts and even tried to poison him to be rid of him. In this extremity the prudent abbot imitated the example of Saint Benedict, his spiritual father and teacher, who had found himself in a similar case. He left Florence with Gerbert, the companion of his penance, and came back to live at Fécamp in the most exemplary piety, until the moment when Duke William proposed him to the council of Lisieux to replace Mauger in the metropolitan see of Rouen. His consecration took place in the month of September 1055.

The Church of Rouen had long been groaning under three successive archbishops who bore its title without fulfilling its duties. It needed a pastor to console it and repair its losses, and it found in Maurilius all it could wish. He united in himself birth, holiness of life, learning and love of ecclesiastical discipline. The episcopate changed nothing in his manner of life, which he continued for the rest of his days, and served only to give new lustre to his fasts, his prayers and his alms, and to show that to so many eminent qualities he could also join zeal, vigilance and pastoral solicitude.

Maurilius assembled a provincial council at Rouen in the very first year of his pontificate. All his suffragans and Duke William attended this council. Fine regulations were made there on various points of discipline which the negligence of his predecessors had allowed to fall into disuse and whose infringement their example had authorized. The celibacy of priests was the most important of these articles and the one that then met the greatest opposition, particularly in Normandy, where a great number of priests, following the example of the last archbishops of Rouen, were publicly married.

It does not appear that the regulations Maurilius made to oblige his clergy to celibacy stopped the evil; but at least they served to prevent its becoming established by prescription.

This prelate, who also watched with great care over the preservation of the faith, wished further, in this council, to preserve his flock from the new heresy of Berengar, archdeacon of Angers. This heresy, called that of the Sacramentarians, was causing sad ravages. To put an end to it and to make sure of the faith of suspected persons, he had a formulary drawn up in terms capable of parrying every equivocation, of which this is the translation: “We believe in our heart and confess with our mouth that the bread offered on the altar is only bread before the consecration, but that by virtue of the consecration the nature and substance of the bread are changed by the ineffable power of God into the nature and substance of the flesh: not of any other flesh, but of that flesh which was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit, which was born of the Virgin Mary, which suffered for us and for our salvation the torment of the scourging, was fastened to a cross, was laid in the tomb, rose again the third day, and is seated at the right hand of God the Father. We believe likewise that the wine mixed with water, which is put in the chalice to be sanctified, is changed truly and substantially into that same blood which flowed so happily for the redemption of the world from the wound that the soldier’s lance made in the side of Our Lord; and we pronounce anathema against those who, through a spirit of pride and heretical obstinacy, follow opinions contrary to this holy and apostolic belief, and have the audacity to attack it with impious and rash words”.

This formulary of the council was not the only remedy opposed at that period to the heresy of Berengar, who, after solemnly acknowledging his error at the synod held at Tours in 1055, afterwards maintained it with still greater obstinacy and taught it anew. The illustrious Lanfranc, a religious of the abbey of Le Bec and later archbishop of Canterbury, refuted the blasphemies of the archdeacon of Angers in several councils and notably in his famous work entitled *Treatise on the Body and Blood of Our Lord, against Berengar*. The province of Rouen also furnished in that century several learned religious of the Order of Saint Benedict who, like Lanfranc, devoted their learning, their eloquence and their pens to upholding the orthodox faith, such as Guitmond, monk of Saint-Leufroi and later archbishop of Aversa in Italy, and Durand, abbot of Troarn.

Attentive to all that went on throughout his metropolitan province, Maurilius went the following year to the abbey of Saint-Évroul, accompanied by Hugh of Lisieux, the diocesan bishop, Ansfrid, abbot of Préaux, Lanfranc, prior of Le Bec, and several other persons of deep wisdom, in order to restore peace there between Abbot Thierry and the prior Robert de Grandmesnil, in which they succeeded, for a few months at least. The whole time of his episcopate was an unbroken succession of cares and attentions to have the rules of the Gospel and those of ecclesiastical discipline observed. In 1056 or 1057 he held another council for this purpose; it is very likely that he did the same every year. On 9 December of this last year, 1057, he presided at the solemn dedication of the cathedral of Coutances. In 1059 Robert, count of Eu, founded on his advice

the abbey of Saint-Michel du Tréport. The following year Maurilius subscribed to the foundation of the abbey of Saint-Sauveur at Évreux by Richard, count of that city.

In 1061 he presided at Caen over a provincial council convoked to put an end to the anarchy of the private wars then ravaging Normandy. The Truce of God was imposed there on all the lords of the province under pain of excommunication. The curfew law proclaimed by the same council was likewise aimed at repressing the disorders and crimes that stained that age with blood.

The works on the cathedral were finished under the episcopate of Maurilius. This pious prelate raised the stone spire that bore his name, and which lightning brought down in 1177. He dedicated the church under the invocation of the Virgin on 1 October 1063, in the presence of Duke William, the bishops his suffragans, several abbots of the province and a great number of lords and people. A little earlier he had translated into the church the bodies of the dukes Rollo and William, and buried the first near the south door and the second beside the north door, as Orderic Vitalis tells us. In 1066 Maurilius attended the famous assembly of Lillebonne at which William's expedition to England was decided, and on 18 June of the same year presided at the dedication of the abbey of the Holy Trinity at Caen. He then subscribed to the letters of exemption given to this monastery by Duke William and Duchess Matilda. On 1 May 1067 he consecrated the abbey church of Saint-Pierre-sur-Dives, on 1 July following that of Jumièges, and, having reached the age of sixty-eight, died full of merits and virtues on 9 August of the same year.

## CULTE ET RELIQUES. — ÉCRITS.

He was buried in the middle of the nave of his metropolitan church, and an old chronicler tells us that his tomb rose three feet above the ground. A copper plate bore his epitaph, composed by a certain Richard, son of Herluin and canon of Rouen. The tomb of Maurilius was held in great veneration in that city. "The deacon, on certain days, goes after the offertory to incense the tomb of this holy prelate", says Lebrun des Marettes, author of the *Voyages liturgiques de France*, who wrote in 1718.

The name of this pious archbishop has been inserted in the martyrology of France and in that of the Benedictines. Several ancient and modern authors even give him indifferently the titles of saint and of blessed. Yet neither his cathedral church nor the abbey of Fécamp, which were the eyewitnesses of the holiness of his life, have decreed any public cult to his memory. William of Malmesbury and Alberic of Trois-Fontaines relate two very extraordinary circumstances about him, one concerning the hour of his death, the other his body already lifeless; the contemporary or nearly contemporary authors, however, make no mention of them. We owe to the learning of the zealous Maurilius: 1. Some fragments of the Decrees he made in holding the Councils of his province; we have quoted the translation of his Formulary against Berengar. Dom Bessin has also published thirteen regulations of his on penance for those who kill in war. 2. The Epitaphs of the dukes Rollo and William Longsword; Orderic Vitalis's way of expressing himself leaves no doubt that Maurilius is their author. The first is composed of twenty Latin verses, the other of fourteen, all elegiac. The prelate expresses very well in them the character of these two warriors and gives an exact account of their most memorable actions. 3. A Letter to the bishop of Évreux, one of his suffragans, which also bears the name of John, abbot of Fécamp. It is short, but well written, and is of interest for establishing the right of regular superiors to exercise correction over their subjects independently of the bishops, who, in the terms of Maurilius's Letter, must not interfere in it.

*Extracted from the* France Pontificale *of Fisquet.*

# Saint Demetrius, Confessor, in the Diocese of Le Mans

*Date uncertain.*

Demetrius had borne arms with the bishop of Tours, Saint Martin, and it is added that he was born, like him, in Pannonia; but, by a happier resemblance, he too had advanced in the ways of God and had a taste only for the things of heaven. The fame of Martin's holiness filled the whole of Gaul and even flew far beyond it. Demetrius, having heard the marvels told of him, resolved to go and find him and ask his help to make new progress in piety. He was making directly for Tours, but, learning that the servant of God was at Le Mans, he turned his steps towards that city. When he arrived, Saint Martin had already left again and had gone towards the country of the Andegavi (the peoples of Anjou): Demetrius set out once more in the hope of soon overtaking him. Towards the close of day he came into a great forest, situated between Oisé and the forges later called du Deffais de Vadré, at the place where the parish of La Fontaine-Saint-Martin (Sarthe, arrondissement of La Flèche, canton of Pontvalain) is seen today. This forest, then very extensive, contained a sanctuary much frequented by the pagans of the whole region; there they worshipped the goddess Isis, or some Gaulish divinity disguised under that foreign name. Demetrius met some woodcutters, who received him kindly and lodged him in their hut. During the night he saw in a dream the holy bishop of Tours coming to meet him; and indeed, the next day he met Saint Martin not far from the place where he had stopped.

The holy bishop gave Baptism in that country to a great number of persons who were still idolaters. He then exhorted Demetrius to remain in that district in order to strengthen these new Christians in the faith and to work for the conversion of the pagans. Demetrius followed this advice; he knew how to join to a hermit's life of prayer the ardent zeal of an apostle: many idolaters were converted by his preaching.

The life of this holy man was marked by several wonders. A troop of demons had withdrawn into a neighbouring forest, from where they attacked passers-by and tormented in a thousand ways the inhabitants of Mézerai, Ligron and Courcelles; these spirits of darkness took flight and vanished as soon as they saw Demetrius advancing towards them, carrying the holy Eucharist in his hands.

Demetrius died at a very advanced age; his body was laid in an oratory he had had built, which was afterwards consecrated in honour of Saint Martin. In 1818 some workmen, digging the foundations of a chapel added to the parish church of La Fontaine-Saint-Martin, took out of the ground some bones which were judged, with reason, to be those of Saint Demetrius, because it was in that very place that from time immemorial he was believed to have been buried and that people came to implore his help. These bones were gathered with respect and placed in a reliquary; they are venerated throughout the region.

*Taken from the* Histoire de l'Église du Mans, *by Dom Piolin.*

## Saint Auspicius, First Bishop of Apt and Martyr

*1st century.*

After the martyrdom of Flavia Domitilla, Auspicius, a Roman who had educated that princess, received episcopal consecration at the hands of Saint Clement and then set out for Gaul with Euphrasius and Aemilius, his companions in the preaching of the Gospel. Divine Providence directed him to the city of Apt in Provence, an important Roman colony. He laboured there ardently for the spread of the faith and made many conversions. The number of believers was growing day by day, and the light of the Gospel was spreading from the city into the surrounding countryside, when the priests of the idols complained to Trajan that Narbonese Gaul was wholly troubled by the Christians, and that the city in particular, stirred by the voice of a single man, had almost entirely renounced the religion of its ancestors. Orders were given to the lieutenants Dactilius and Tertulla; Auspicius, the author of the alleged trouble, was arrested, then loaded with chains and thrown into prison, where he worked at the conversion of his guards. After a delay of a few days, Dactilius had Auspicius appear before his tribunal and offered him the choice of worshipping the gods or suffering capital punishment. A statue of Jupiter was brought; Auspicius went up to it as if he were about to worship it, but with a kick he overturned it and broke it. The judge, furious, first had his right foot cut off, and then for

seven days had his limbs cut off piece by piece, one after another. Auspicius bore this long martyrdom with admirable firmness and invincible constancy; he consummated it at Apt on 2 August, under the emperor Trajan and the governor Dactilius. His body was buried by the Christians in an underground crypt; it was discovered long afterwards and placed in the cathedral of Apt.

*Proper of Avignon.*

## Saint Auctor, Thirteenth Bishop of Metz and Confessor

*5th century.*

Saint Auctor, thirteenth bishop of Metz, succeeded Saint Legontius at the time when, after the death of Constantine, the barbarians crossed the Rhine and invaded Gaul. Saint Servatius, bishop of Tongres, had assured him that the valley of Metz would be laid waste; consequently our Saint had all the little children who had not yet received that Sacrament baptized. The barbarians, having taken the city, put everything to fire and sword: in the midst of the conflagration that devoured the whole city, the sanctuary of Saint Stephen, today the cathedral, alone was miraculously preserved, according to the prediction of Saint Servatius. This wonder did not stop the barbarians; as they withdrew they carried off into captivity Saint Auctor and many citizens, inhabitants of the city of Metz. But when they had come to Dieuze (Meurthe, arrondissement of Château-Salins), a place so named because it is thirty miles distant from the city (*Decempagi*), by a miraculous effect of divine protection the holy bishop was set free, and the barbarians gave him back the other captives. Saint Auctor repaired the disaster of this invasion by his wisdom and his other virtues. He defended the divinity of Christ against the Arians and attended the Council of Cologne for that purpose. After discharging his episcopal office piously for the space of forty-nine years, he went to enjoy the sovereign good, which is the vision of God, under the reign of Valentinian. He was buried in the crypt of Saint-Clément.

The chronicles speak of a fountain which Saint Auctor made to gush forth and whose waters were salutary for little children. It existed behind the church of Saint-Simplice at Metz, and was levelled with the surrounding buildings when the church was demolished at the beginning of the nineteenth century.

In 830 the relics of our Saint were translated by Bishop Drogo of Metz, under Louis the Pious, to the Benedictine abbey of Maurmoutier (*Mauri Monasterium* or *Cella Leobardi*, founded about 599 by Saint Leobard), in the diocese of Strasbourg. They were dispersed during the war of the Rustauds (a war that broke out in Alsace in 1525, whose movers were the peasants stirred up by the Anabaptists and led by Erasmus Gerbert of Molsheim). Nevertheless some relics of Saint Auctor are still preserved today in the church of Many, a village of the diocese of Metz (arrondissement of Metz, canton of Faulquemont).

*Taken from the Proper of Metz and from the Notes of the abbé Noël, archpriest of Briey.*

## Saint Domitian, Third Bishop of Châlons and Confessor

*2nd century.*

The whole tradition of Châlons, all the historical records, all the catalogues of bishops and all the old manuscripts make Saint Domitian a companion of Saint Memmius, his second successor, and the third bishop of Châlons.

Nothing is more touching than what remains to us of his history, which is read in an old manuscript of the church of Saint-Étienne at Châlons: “Domitian succeeded Donatian. The sincerity and fullness of the law were in his heart, truth and all the charms of gentleness in his mouth. All who addressed themselves to him in their needs admired his wisdom and the penetration of his mind. Equity and justice appeared in all his actions. The purity and innocence of his life shone out even in his conversation. He had a fine bearing and

fulfilled his functions with great gravity. He showed particular affection to, and bestowed ecclesiastical dignities on, the clerics in whom he observed the most piety. No seats adorned with sumptuous carpets were seen in his house, but he always had before his eyes the throne he was to occupy in eternal life. This great doctor, this famous preacher, had many churches built, gave them priests, and completed the winning of the whole people to Jesus Christ. His blessed soul went out of the prison of his body on the fifth of the ides of August".

On 27 May 1341 his body was raised from the ground with that of Saint Donatian, his predecessor, and placed in a reliquary which is still to be seen in the cathedral of Châlons.

*The abbé Boitel*, Beautés de la Champagne.

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[1] They were both natives of Bergamo (Lombardy) and close relatives; they were beheaded outside the city. Their bodies, which had been exposed to the beasts, were carried off by merchants on their ships to a city near Carthage, where they were buried. Later, a demoniac of Capri (a village on an island of the Mediterranean) having been brought to their tomb and delivered, his father carried the holy relics to Capri, from where Mary of Verona, called the Consoler, bought them back for their weight in gold and brought them to Verona. On their arrival God sent an abundant rain upon the earth, which had become barren through a great drought that had lasted seven years. — Ribadeneira.

[2] The eight companions are, according to the Bollandists: Saint Gregory, the Spatharius (or maker of *spatæ*, a kind of sword); Saint John, Saint James, Saint Alexis, Saint Demetrius, Saint Leontius, Saint Photius, Saint Peter.

[3] John was born at Salerno in 1192, was at Bologna for his studies during Saint Dominic's stay in that city, and asked him for the habit of his Institute, which was granted him. He afterwards returned to the world; but later he re-entered religion and made himself noticed by his regularity and his fervour. Saint Dominic charged him with spreading his Order at Florence; the heads of that republic gave John and his companions for this purpose the church of San Pancrazio, then that of San Paolo, and finally Santa Maria Novella, or Our Lady of the Vines, which still belongs to the Dominicans today. Under his wise direction John's monastery became very celebrated. Towards the end of his days he had to combat the heresy of the Patarines (Waldensian sectaries who claimed that the prayer of the *Pater* sufficed for all prayer, and taught that man and the world were the work of the devil). Blessed John fell asleep in the Lord at fifty-two, in 1242; miracles were worked at his tomb. His relics, preserved in the church of Santa Maria Novella, were placed (1571) in a marble monument raised in his honour. His cult was approved by Pope Pius VI (2 April 1783).

[4] See his detailed biography in our *Palmier Séraphique*, at 9 August.

[5] Alias: Bandared, Banderik, *Bandaridus*.

[6] Alias: Herné, Erinée, Ernié; *Ernæus*, *Erineus*, *Herneus*.

[7] This parish has been joined to the diocese of Séez; it keeps Saint Erneus as its patron.

[8] On 9 August; however, his feast is kept in the diocese of Le Mans on 11 September.

[9] This feast was then celebrated, in the Gallican liturgy, on 18 January.

[10] *Acta Sanctorum*, ad diem XI septembris, p. 808, annot. A. — This parish has been joined to the diocese of Séez. Although it honours today Saint Bomer, a solitary in the diocese of Le Mans at the same period, but in the deserts on the banks of the Braye, we believe we can recognize that the resemblance of the names has produced a confusion, and that originally the holy abbot of whom we have just spoken was the patron of this parish.

[11] Domfront, town and parish of the archdeaconry of the Passais, in Normandy, today joined to the diocese of Séez.

# 10 August

## Martyrologies

### MARTYROLOGE ROMAIN.

At Rome, on the Via Tiburtina (the road to Tivoli), the birthday in heaven of Saint LAWRENCE, archdeacon, who, during the persecution of Valerian, after enduring prison, the torments of the whip, of scorpions, of knotted cudgels, of leaded scourges and of burning plates, was at last roasted on an iron gridiron and completed his martyrdom by that torture. His body was buried by Saints Hippolytus and Justin, priests, in the cemetery of Cyriaca, in the Campus Veranus. 259. — Also at Rome, the execution of one hundred and sixty-five blessed soldiers, martyred under the emperor Aurelian. 4th c. — At Bergamo, in Lombardy, Saint Asteria, virgin, martyred under the emperors Diocletian and Maximian. — At Alexandria,

the memory of the holy Martyrs who, during the persecution of Valerian, suffered various torments of unheard-of cruelty under the governor Aemilian, and obtained the crown of martyrdom by various kinds of death. 3rd c. — At Carthage, the holy virgins and martyrs Bassa, Paula and Agathonica. — At Rome, Saint Deusdedit, confessor, who every Saturday gave to the poor what he had earned during the week by the work of his hands. — In Spain, the apparition of the most holy Virgin to have the Order of the Redemption of Captives instituted under the name of Our Lady of Mercy.

## MARTYROLOGE DE FRANCE, REVU ET AUGMENTÉ.

In the diocese of Lyons, Saint Aredius or Arige, thirty-second archbishop of that see and confessor, who must not be confused, as many hagiographers have done, with Arige, bishop of Gap. It was to Saint Arige of Lyons, and not to Saint Arige of Gap, that Saint Columban addressed a memorial on the question of Easter. Among the works undertaken by Saint Arige, some historians of Gap mention the foundation of a church under the title of the Holy Cross in that city, the restoration of the ancient church of Saint-Just, where he was buried, and considerable embellishments made to the primatial church of Saint-Jean. It is also believed that he was the founder of the abbey of Saint-Martin d'Ainay at Lyons. Arige sat eight and a half years and died at the age of fifty-five. 611. — At Cambrai, Saint Gaugericus or Géry, bishop of that see and confessor, whose life we shall give on the following day. 614. — At Arles and at Aix, Saint RUSTICULA, abbess of Saint-Césaire of Arles, called the Great Monastery. 632. — At Auxerre, Saint Hugh of Montaigu (*Hugo de Sinemuro*), bishop of that see and confessor, nephew of the great Saint Hugh, abbot of Cluny. 1136 or 1141. — At Meaux, Saint Agilberta, abbess of Jouarre or Jorax (*Jotrum*, a celebrated abbey of women of the Order of Saint Benedict, near the town of that name, canton of La Ferté-sous-Jouarre, department of Seine-et-Marne). Sprung from a very noble race among the Franks, she was born in the territory of Meaux; it is said that she had for brother the blessed bishop Ebregisil, and that she was related to Saint Ado, founder of the abbey of Jouarre, to Saint Theodechildis, abbess of that house, and to the Venerable Agilbert, bishop of Paris. After governing her community in holiness, she was called by God to enjoy in heaven the reward of her virtues. Her body was buried by the nuns beside that of Saint Theodechildis, in the crypt of Saint Paul the Hermit. What remains today of the mortal remains of these two abbesses rests in a great reliquary, but in separate reliquaries within it, in the church of Jouarre. 7th c. — At Beauvais, Saint DINAULT or DONOALD and Saint ARNOUL or ARNULPHUS, martyrs. 5th c. — At Metz, Saint Auctor, bishop of that see, whose life we gave on the preceding day. — In the Benedictine monastery of Moyenmoutier (*Medianum monasterium*), in the diocese of Saint-Dié, Saint Spinus or Spinulus, a monk under Saint Hidulphus. In 1104 his relics were given to the monastery of Belval (*Bella Vallis*) in the Ardennes and placed in a fine silver reliquary. Spinus died at Bégon-Celle, near Saint-Blaise (Vosges, a hamlet of Moyenmoutier), and many wonders were worked at his tomb, which became a place of pilgrimage. — At Cotignac (arrondissement of Brignoles), in the diocese of Fréjus, OUR LADY OF GRACE. 1519. — In the diocese of Nîmes, the Venerable François de Chanciergues, founder of the seminaries of the Providence, born at Pont-Saint-Esprit on 1 January 1634, and died at Paris. The cause of his canonization has been pending at Rome for a century. 1691. — In the Limousin, the Venerable Louise de David, a nun, of the noble and ancient house of Ventaux, near Solignac, two leagues from Limoges. Grace went before her from her earliest years, and although she had all that was needed to please the world, birth, education and fortune, and the world on its side offered her everything that can flatter the heart of a young person, she despised it as soon as she knew it and shut herself up in the convent of Bost-Morbaud, then commonly called the Monastery of the Nuns' Wood, two leagues from Limoges: there she gave the example of all the Christian and religious virtues. She died at ninety-five in the odour of sanctity. 1647. — At Autun, Claude-Joseph Jouffret de Bonnefonds, priest of the Congregation of Saint-Sulpice, superior of the Minor Seminary of Autun and martyr for the faith. He was born at Gannat, in the diocese of Clermont. Condemned to deportation in 1793, he died during the crossing and was buried on the Île d'Aix. 1794.

## ADDITIONS FAITES D'APRÈS LES BOLLANDISTES ET AUTRES HAGIOGRAPHES.

In Scotland and the Hebrides, Saint Blane or Blain, bishop, abbot and founder of the monastery of Dunblane. His knowledge of Scripture and of letters made him illustrious in the eyes of the world, but he had no other ambition than to know Jesus crucified. His love of solitude, far from slackening his zeal for the instruction of his neighbour, enabled him to proclaim the word of God with that heavenly eloquence which is drawn from the school of charity and the exercise of contemplation. He was honoured against his will with the episcopal character, and fulfilled its duties for several years with truly apostolic zeal. About the year 1000. — Also in Scotland, Saint Blaan, bishop of the Picts. He was a disciple of Saint Comgall and Saint Kenneth. Consecrated bishop of the Picts, he fixed his residence at Kinngaradha. The place where he was buried afterwards took his name and was always an episcopal see until the suppression of the Catholic bishops in Scotland. We have of Saint Blaan several sacred Hymns, Instructions for catechumens and some other works of piety. 446. — At Huesca, a city of Spain (Aragon), Saint Orentius, father of Saint Lawrence, martyr, named in the Roman martyrology of this day, and Saint Patience, his mother. 3rd c. — At Lismore, a city of Ireland (Munster), in the counties of Waterford and Cork, Saint Malchus, bishop of that ancient see and confessor. He was first a monk of Winchester (*Wintoniense monasterium*), an abbey of the Order of Saint Benedict in England: his great reputation for holiness drew him from the cloister and placed him on the episcopal see of Lismore, which he made illustrious by his virtues and his miracles. 12th c. — At Milan, Blessed Amadeus, confessor, of the Order of Saint Francis, founder of the Congregation of the Amadeists. Of a noble and ancient family of Portugal, he had for father Rodrigo Gomez de Silva, governor of the forts of Campo Maior and Ouguela, and for mother Isabel Menez, whose name he kept, according to the custom of Spain and Portugal. He was given in baptism the name of John, on the advice of an angel who appeared to his parents in the form of a pilgrim. He took the habit of the Order of Hermits of Saint Jerome in the convent of Our Lady of Guadalupe, and for ten years carried out there, out of humility, all the lowliest offices. Three times he was warned by the Blessed Virgin, by Saint Francis and by Saint Anthony of Padua, who appeared to him, to pass into the Order of Friars Minor and to go to Italy to take the habit of that Order in the convent of Assisi; he obtained permission for this on 11 October 1452 from Gonzalo de Illescas, prior of Guadalupe. It was then that he founded the Congregation that bears his name. Later, under Pope Julius II, it was united to the Franciscans of the Observance. Blessed John died at Milan, and his tomb witnessed striking miracles. 1482. — At Rome, Saint PHILOMENA, virgin and martyr. 3rd c.

# Saint Lawrence, Archdeacon of the Church of Rome and Martyr

*259. — Pope: Saint Sixtus II. — Roman Emperors: Valerian and Gallienus.*

> *Igne me examinasti, et non est inventa in me iniquitas.*
>
> *Psalm XVI, 3.*
>
> *Segnior fuit ignis qui foris ussit quam qui intus accendit.*
>
> *The fire that devours his body is nothing beside the one that sets his soul ablaze.*
>
> *S. Leo, Serm. de S. Laurentio.*

If Spain boasts of having seen the very illustrious martyr Saint Lawrence born, Rome glories in having served as the theatre of his triumph, and France is happy to have him for one of her protectors and to preserve in several of her churches a part of his sacred remains. He was born in a country house situated two miles from Huesca, which has preserved to our own day the name of Lorêt. His father was called Orentius and his mother Patience. Their life was altogether holy and their memory is in benediction; hence the city of Huesca solemnises their feast on the first day of May. All monuments are silent on his education and his earliest childhood. Like those of the Saviour, his first years pass in silence and obscurity, to appear to the world

already encircled with the halo of holiness.

Only two traditions exist on his early years. One, in his native land, at Saragossa, which claims the honour of having seen begin there the literary education of the young levite; it would also have been in its university that Sixtus made the acquaintance of this pious youth, and formed with him that sweet and holy friendship which ended only with their martyrdom. The other, at Genoa, where the two Saints received the hospitality of the Christians of the city on their way to Rome. And when, some years later, rumour brought to the faithful of Genoa the astonishing martyrdom of the first deacon of Rome, they remembered their guest and consecrated to him a rather modest monument, which has become, with the centuries, the superb cathedral of Genoa.

When Saint Sixtus was called to mount the chair of Saint Peter, the post of archdeacon, which became vacant by his promotion, was entrusted to his beloved disciple Saint Lawrence, so much confidence did the virtues and talents he had already displayed in the clergy of Rome inspire, and so much were they counted on for his devotion to so difficult an office.

When Saint Lawrence was thus placed at the head of the seven deacons who, in imitation of the seven chosen by the Apostles at Jerusalem, presided over the different quarters of the city, he had not passed what might be called the middle of ordinary life; consequently he was still in the full flower of his youth and the beauty of his age. That at least is the memory tradition has left us of him, in agreement with the monuments which have survived the ruins of time.

The chief functions attached to his new dignity were to assist the Sovereign Pontiff, to dispense the divine mysteries to the faithful, to take care of the poor, the infirm, and the virgins consecrated to God. To these duties common to all deacons he added the administration of the domains of the Church and of the ecclesiastical offerings; for already at that time the Roman Church possessed some landed property, a great number of houses, and even palaces in the city.

It was therefore on the archdeacon Lawrence, faithful guardian and equitable dispenser of all these goods, that the burden of this great administration weighed. “Lawrence, in the midst of treasures, rich gifts, so much gold that the faithful and the Church entrusted to his hands, was nevertheless poor,” says Saint Peter Chrysologus, “and lived the life of the poor.” This faithful minister knew that if God demands of the mighty of this world an exact account of their riches, the account He will require of the goods of the Church — patrimony of Christ and of the poor, price of sins — will be still more severe and rigorous.

And so it was precisely his scrupulous fidelity in the management of the Church’s revenues, and in the observance of the sacred duties it imposes, that won him the palm of martyrdom.

No symptom foreshadowed the approach of a persecution for Christians when Valerian took the reins of the empire. A prince of gentle character and inclined to clemency, he showed himself full of kindness toward them, and even favoured them more than any of his predecessors, not excepting the Philips, who passed for Christians. “His palace,” says Eusebius, “was full of adorers of the true God; you would have taken it rather for a Church with its various ministers than for a profane dwelling.” About the year 257, obliged to pass into the East to repel the Barbarians who were invading the empire on every side, this prince had the further grief of seeing his army and a part of the Roman provinces ravaged by plague. These misfortunes together had a harmful influence on his naturally weak mind. He believed he had found in the secrets of magic the only efficacious remedy for all calamities. Then, ceaselessly besieged by a troop of Egyptian diviners who prescribed to his superstition the most infamous and inhuman sacrifices, he was at last persuaded by them that the only obstacle to his personal happiness and to that of his empire was the worshippers of Christ. From that time Valerian began to remove the Christians from his court and to withdraw his favours from them; there were even here and there in the provinces some of the faithful who suffered martyrdom; yet, without any order from the throne, the persecution had not yet become general.

The Church, always resigned but prudent, was not ignorant of the secret dispositions of the Emperor. She therefore expected to see the violent edicts reappear, and the blood of Christians flood the empire. Suddenly the rumour spread that Valerian, from the depths of Asia, had just addressed a new rescript against them to the Senate. In fact the whole violence of the persecution was to weigh, as usual, on Rome, privileged city of the martyrs, on her deacons, her priests, and above all on her Pontiff.

Saint Sixtus was the most cruelly attacked. The Emperor ordered him to be seized and forced to offer incense to his idols; but this generous defender of the faith having refused to do so, he was loaded with chains and irons and cast in that state into the Mamertine prison. Saint Lawrence, having learned that this blessed Pontiff had been arrested and would soon lose his life for the faith, desired, as the true deacon of so holy a priest, to keep him company in this sacrifice, and to obtain this grace he spoke to him in the following terms, full of zeal and tenderness, which Saint Ambrose puts into his mouth:

“Whither are you going, my father, without your child? What do you intend to do, holy priest, without him whom you chose as minister of the holy altars? I have never seen you offer our holy Mysteries without your officers: what have you found in me that displeased you? Do you think me capable of any cowardice or weakness? Try me, I pray you, and you will see that I am not an unfaithful minister. Until now you have always entrusted to me the dispensing of the blood of Jesus Christ, and today you refuse me the honour of mingling my blood with yours. Do you not fear that, if your courage in martyrdom is praised, your conduct nevertheless will be blamed for thus abandoning your disciple? How many conquerors have won more victories by the courage of their subjects than by their own battles? Finally, did not Abraham lift his arm to immolate his own son, and did not the Prince of the Apostles yield to Saint Stephen the glory of being the first of all the Martyrs? Why then, most holy father, will you not allow your children to bear witness to your wisdom and your virtue by dying generously with you? Do not put off the sacrifice of a child whom you have raised; the palm he will win in your presence will serve as an ornament to your crown, and his triumph will be your own triumph.”

Saint Sixtus, touched by the sentiments of his deacon, answered him in this manner to console him:

“I am far from abandoning you, my son; but the faith of Jesus Christ calls you to greater combats than mine. Since we are already broken with old age, only light trials are prepared for us; but for you, who are in the flower of your age and in vigorous youth, the tyrants will give you matter for a far more glorious triumph. Cease then to shed tears; if I go to shed my blood for the Gospel, you will shed yours also for the same cause. Three days more of patience, and you will see your lot like mine. This term is necessary to you; it would not be honourable for you to conquer in the wake of another, as though you needed someone to animate you for the combat! Why do you wish to take part in my victory, since a crown entire and complete is offered you? Why do you so desire my presence? Elijah, ascending to heaven, left Elisha on the earth, and that disciple did not lose courage for that. Only take care to distribute, according to your prudence, the treasures of the Church which I have left to you.”

After this discourse Saint Sixtus gave the kiss of peace to Saint Lawrence and parted from him.

This holy deacon, overcome by these words, obeyed his sovereign pastor. He went through all the places of Rome to seek out the poor Christians in the cellars where they were hidden, in order to relieve them in their needs. First he ran to the Caelian Hill, where there was a holy widow named Cyriaca, who had taken into her house many of the faithful, and even priests and other ministers of the Church who had taken refuge with her. Saint Lawrence entered this house by night, and, to show his respect for these ecclesiastics, he washed the feet of them all; then he laid his hands on the head of the widow Cyriaca, who had long been afflicted with a great pain in the head, and adding the sign of the cross he cured her perfectly; then he gave to each of them alms according to his condition. The same night he went to the quarter of the Canaries,[1] to another house, that of one Narcissus, where he found again a great number of Christians who had taken refuge there. He

performed there the same works of humility and charity that he had done at the widow Cyriaca's. He also restored sight to a blind man named Crescentius by the sign of the cross. From there he directed his steps toward the foot of the Viminal, in the region of the Vicus Patricius, or Patricians' quarter, and went down into the Nepotian catacomb, where there were about sixty-three Christians, men and women; he entered with tears in his eyes, gave them the kiss of peace, and distributed to them the help he had brought. He met in that place a holy priest named Justin who had been consecrated by Saint Sixtus. Lawrence, recognising his character, wished to kiss his feet. Justin did what he could to prevent it; but at last Lawrence, by his pressing entreaties, won the victory in this combat of humility; he kissed his feet, washed them, and did the same to all the other men.

Having spent the whole night in these exercises of charity, and having fully satisfied the intentions of Saint Sixtus, he saw, the next day, that blessed Pope being led to execution. From as far off as he perceived him, he began his sighs again and cried out anew: "Ah! do not abandon me, Holy Father; I have done all you commanded me; I have distributed to the poor the treasures you entrusted to me."

The soldiers who were guarding Saint Sixtus, hearing this word "treasure," seized Lawrence and led him to the tribune Parthenius, who reported the fact to Valerian. The Emperor was greatly delighted: he had him brought before him, questioned him on various points, and commanded him to declare the place where he had hidden these treasures. The holy deacon deigning to make no answer, he put him into the hands of Hippolytus, a Roman knight, with orders to examine him again on these treasures of the Church. Hippolytus led him to his dwelling, situated in the Vicus Patricius, and shut him up with other prisoners in a prison which one still sees today under the church of Saint Lawrence *in Fonte*. There was among them one named Lucillus, who had been there a long time and who, by dint of weeping over his misery, had become blind. Saint Lawrence, whose life had been spent in relieving misfortune, spoke to him of Him who had once opened the eyes of the man born blind, and of the prodigies He did not cease to work in favour of His own. Then he said to him: "Take comfort, my brother, for if you will believe in Jesus Christ, I promise to cure you."

Lucillus consented with joy, and declared that he had long desired to be baptized. At once the holy deacon conferred on him this sacrament of our regeneration, and, in giving him the light of the soul, he gave him at the same instant that of the body.

The report of this miracle spread at once through the city, and drew to Lawrence's prison a great concourse of other blind men, who came to throw themselves at his feet to receive from him a like benefit. He cured them all by the sign of the cross. Hippolytus, who was beginning to be shaken at the sight of so many wonders, begged Saint Lawrence, in terms full of gentleness and courtesy, to let him know about the treasures of which he had spoken. The holy deacon took occasion from this to instruct him. "O Hippolytus," he said to him, "if you will believe in God the Father almighty and in His Son Jesus Christ, I undertake to show you great treasures, and I promise you eternal life."

These words made so strong an impression on the mind of Hippolytus, and grace at the same time worked so powerfully in his heart, that he suddenly changed his sentiment; he was converted to the faith, and received baptism at the hands of Saint Lawrence together with all his family, made up of nineteen persons.

Meanwhile Valerian commanded that Lawrence be brought to him. Hippolytus, who took his interests since he had become a Christian, gave him notice of this order, and the holy deacon, instead of being astonished, said to him: "Let us go, Hippolytus, let us go; there are crowns of glory for you and for me." Brought before the tyrant and questioned again about his treasures, he asked the term of three days to gather them; the tyrant granted it to him, with orders to Hippolytus to accompany him everywhere. Saint Lawrence assembled all the blind, the lame and other poor that he could find, and went with this retinue to the palace of the Emperor and said to him: "August prince, here are the treasures of the Church that I have brought you: eternal treasures

that ever increase without ever diminishing, that spread everywhere and that everyone can possess."

The Emperor, indignant at this surprise, commanded that he be stripped and that his skin be torn with scorpions; and, to frighten him further, he had brought before him all the instruments of the tortures that were made the Martyrs endure, threatening to make him feel all their rigours on the spot if he would not adore his gods. The generous disciple of Jesus Christ, without being moved, answered him with a wholly Christian constancy: "O unfortunate man! who think to frighten me with these tortures, know that if they are torments, it is only in your eyes and not in mine; for I make them my joy, and for a long time I have had no more ardent desire than to eat at this table and to be satisfied with these delicious dishes." The Emperor commanded that he be loaded with chains and irons, and led in that state to the palace of Tiberius, built on the Palatine Hill, to be questioned again. Then he had him brought back before his tribunal, in the temple of Jupiter; there he pressed him with fresh urgency to reveal the treasures, to sacrifice to the gods, and no longer to put his hope in the riches he held hidden, because they would not be able, he told him, to shield him from the punishments prepared for him. Our invincible Martyr continued to answer with as much gentleness as firmness: "I trust in the treasures of heaven, which are piety and divine mercy, and which will keep my soul free while my body is exposed to your tortures."

The Emperor had him beaten with rods, and the holy deacon, as if to insult him, said to him: "Know now, wretch, that the treasures of Jesus Christ make me triumph, since I feel no torment." The Emperor, seeing this, had him hung up in the air and his sides burned with plates of iron made red-hot in the fire. But the Saint, scorning this torment too, addressed his prayer to Our Lord in these terms: "Adorable Jesus, only Son of the true God, have mercy on Your servant, who, being accused, was not so cowardly as to disown Your name, and who has upheld its glory in the midst of the most horrible tortures." This tranquillity of spirit which Saint Lawrence displayed served only to enrage the tyrant the more against him; he attributed so miraculous a victory to diabolical enchantments and threatened him with new tortures. The Saint replied with the same courage: "By the grace of my God I do not fear the torments, which cannot be of long duration: do not cease then to mistreat me, boldly do what you can to make me suffer."

The Emperor, beside himself at this new defiance, had him beaten with leaded whips so cruelly that the holy Martyr, thinking he was losing his life, raised his eyes to heaven and prayed God to receive his soul; but he heard a voice telling him that he was not yet at the end of his sufferings and that he had still hard combats to endure. The Emperor himself heard this voice and cried out: "Do you not see, O Romans, that demons come to the help of this sacrilegious man, who fears neither the gods, nor your princes, nor the most rigorous tortures?"

He then had him stretched on the rack to dislocate all his limbs, and had his skin torn with scorpions and other instruments of torture. But the Martyr, ever constant and generous, mocked his executioners, and addressing God, said to Him from the depths of his heart: "Blessed be You, my Lord and my God, who show such great mercies to one who is unworthy of them. Grant me the grace, my adorable Saviour, to make known to all who compose this assembly that You will never abandon Your servants, but that You will console them in the time of tribulation."

At once the Father of mercies sent him an Angel to console him and give him some relief in his martyrdom; the Angel wiped with a cloth the sweat of his brow and the wounds of his body, as was reported in the life of Saint Romanus.

The same day the Emperor, who had had a tribunal set up for himself in the Baths of Olympias, situated on the Viminal Hill and near the palace of Sallust, summoned Saint Lawrence before him there again, and, to cast terror quite into his heart, he had brought before him once more all the instruments of torture with which a human body could be afflicted. He questioned him on his country, his birth and the whole course of his life. "As to my country," said Saint Lawrence, "I am a Spaniard, though I was brought up at Rome from my

youth. I was made a Christian from the cradle, and I have always been brought up in the knowledge and practice of the divine laws." "Ah!" said the Emperor, "can you boast of recognising a divine law, you who despise the gods and mock the just chastisements of impiety?"

"It is true," replied Saint Lawrence, "that, by the mercy of my God, I do not acknowledge idols and do not fear torments; but it is in this that I obey the orders of the divine law." The Emperor threatened him, if he did not change his sentiment, to leave him all night in the tortures.

"If that be so," said the Martyr, "this night will be to me a resplendent day and a light without darkness."

He had him struck on the mouth with stones; but this trial served only to strengthen him the more in the faith. At last the tyrant, no longer able to restrain his fury, had an iron bed in the form of a gridiron set up in his presence, and having had our holy Martyr stretched on it, he had a small fire of coals lit beneath to roast him at leisure, in order to make his death more cruel by making it last longer. While he was in so intolerable a torture, the Emperor, instead of having compassion on him, insulted him by pressing him with more rage than ever to sacrifice to his gods; the executioners stirred up the fire and thrust great iron forks into the body of this admirable Saint, to arrange him as they pleased. But Saint Lawrence, ever unshaken, turning to the tyrant, said to him with a resolution worthy of him: "Know, wretch, that your fires have only refreshment for me, and that they reserve all their ardour to burn you yourself eternally without ever consuming you." Then, with a smiling face all radiant with light, he said to him again: "Do you not see that my flesh is roasted enough on one side? Turn it then to the other." When the executioners had turned him, he said to the judge: "My flesh is now roasted enough; you may eat of it."

At last, the term of his victory having arrived, he gave thanks to God for opening to him so happily the gates of heaven; then he rendered up his spirit into His hands and went to receive the crowns that were due to his zeal and constancy.

The next morning Hippolytus and the priest Justin had the body of the holy Martyr carried to the catacomb of the Cyriaca Way, near the Tiburtine road, called the Campo Verano, situated two kilometres from the walls of the city. Many of the faithful were present at this funeral pomp, and remained in that place for the space of three days and three nights, which they spent in fasting, watching and weeping at the tomb of the holy archdeacon who had done them so much good. At the end, the blessed Justin celebrated Mass and gave Communion to those present, who then all withdrew, because the report of their devotion was already spreading in Rome and the enemies of the Church were preparing to seize them. Such was the martyrdom of the very illustrious Saint Lawrence, on which Saint Ambrose made a beautiful discourse. Saint Augustine and Saint Leo, pope, say that Rome was no less honoured by the martyrdom of Saint Lawrence than the city of Jerusalem by that of Saint Stephen. Saint Maximus equals him to the Apostles. Saint Peter Chrysologus, Saint Symeon Metaphrastes and other authors also speak with extraordinary admiration of his virtues and his courage. Prudentius, in his beautiful verses, describes his combats and victories, and says that the martyrdom of Saint Lawrence was the death of idolatry, because from that time paganism began to decline and the name of Christian to become victorious.

Saint Lawrence is invoked against fires. A pilgrimage is made to Forestmontiers to ask of him the cure of burns and irritations of the skin which are called "Saint Lawrence's evil".

One sees, on a fragment of glass preserved in the Vallicellana Museum, the bust of Saint Lawrence with the monogram of Christ behind the head, the usual place of the halo. This symbol signifies that Christ, expressed by this figure, had made His dwelling in the soul and spirit of the Blessed. He carries a great cross on his shoulders to show that he faithfully followed his Master by bearing his cross. — The ancient paintings and mosaics of Rome represent him with this great cross in his hand, because it was the office of the deacon to carry it in the sacred functions. — He is also painted on the cover of a very ancient manuscript in the Vallicellana library. For a reason more or less analogous, he has been given the volume of the Gospels in his

hand in the frescoes of the cemetery of Saint Valentine, in the mosaic of Saint Lawrence Outside the Walls, and in those of the apse of Santa Maria in Trastevere and of Saint Clement. — Saint Lawrence is again represented between the apostles Peter and Paul, seated on a *lectisternium*, a kind of seat having the form of our modern sofas. All three wear the *paenula* or ancient chasuble. — He is also seen standing, clothed in the toga, with the volume of the Gospels half unrolled. — In an ancient engraving going back to the first centuries, two executioners are seen holding Saint Lawrence, one by the feet, the other by the hands, and turning him over on the gridiron. Above the Saint his soul, in the form of a little figure with arms outstretched, rises toward heaven to receive from the hand of God the crown due to his triumph. The tyrant who presides at the execution wears the crown and holds the sceptre in his hand. — A painting represents Saint Lawrence conferring baptism on Saint Romanus, with the same bronze vase which is still preserved in the sacristy of Saint Lawrence Outside the Walls. — In the frescoes of the apse of the ancient church of Santa Cyriaca on the Caelian, one sees at the feet of Saint Lawrence the coined money and the rich golden vessels used for sacrifice, which he is preparing to bestow on the crowd of Christians and a few clerics who surround him. Farther on, he kneels before them and humbly washes their feet. In the third picture a woman is shown prostrate before the Saint; he, standing, his eyes toward heaven, lays on her head the linen he has just used in the washing of the feet. This woman was the pious widow Cyriaca, whose dwelling served as refuge to the persecuted faithful. — In the church of Saints Nazarius and Celsus at Ravenna he is represented holding his triumphal cross; beside him are the gridiron with the brazier on which he consummated his martyrdom, and a cupboard or library in which are seen three volumes bearing the names Mark, Matthew, Luke; the fourth, John, is in the Saint’s hands. — He is also represented in a dalmatic, holding in one hand his gridiron, and in the other the palm of martyrdom.

## CULTE ET RELIQUES.

The miracles that took place at the tomb of the holy Martyr made him celebrated; a multitude of temples were raised on every side in his honour. But it was above all at Rome that his protection was felt; Saint Leo the Great says that his patronage was for the city of Rome what that of Saint Stephen was for Jerusalem, and Prudentius attributes the conversion of the former of these cities chiefly to his martyrdom. Hence the cult of this great Saint was always particularly in honour there. Constantine had a basilica built over his tomb, which is one of the five patriarchal basilicas and one of the seven principal stations, governed today by Canons Regular of Saint Augustine. The body of this holy Martyr is honoured there. Some pieces of the gridiron on which he was roasted are also preserved there; and in the apse, behind a gilded grille, is shown the marble on which the body of Saint Lawrence was laid after his martyrdom and rested for many years. The traces of blood and of liquefied fat are perfectly visible there, although some have been removed in several places to be distributed as relics. Pope Alexander II granted a perpetual indulgence of forty years and as many quarantines to all who, having confessed and communicated, should visit, on any Wednesday of the year, a church placed under the invocation of Saint Lawrence.

Pope Damasus also honoured his memory with another church, which is collegiate, and is called Saint Lawrence *in Damaso*, where are preserved some of his ash and of the coals that served to roast him. There is still in the same city Saint Lawrence *in Pane et Perna*, built on the place of his martyrdom, where one of the bones of his arms is kept, with some other coals from his brazier. Saint Lawrence *in Fonte*, at the spot where this great Saint caused a fountain to spring forth, which he used to baptize the new Christians. Saint Lawrence *in Lucina*, where there is some of his burnt flesh stained with his blood and ashes. One also sees there the iron fork which the executioners used to stir up the fire, and the cloth with which an angel came to wipe his wounds. There are besides Saint Lawrence *in Borgo Vecchio*, Saint Lawrence the Little and Saint Lawrence *in Miranda*. In the rest of Italy the cathedrals of Viterbo, Perugia and Genoa are dedicated to Saint Lawrence; and in Spain the great church of Huesca, where he was born, and the cathedral of Burgos.

At Constantinople the Empress Saint Pulcheria had a beautiful church built in his name, in which she placed his relics; and the Emperor Justinian afterwards made it even more magnificent. Taken from his tomb at an unknown date (Francesco Posterla thinks it was in the time of Pope Saint Sylvester), the head of Saint Lawrence was carried first to the Sancta Sanctorum, which was the chapel of the Popes when they dwelt in the Lateran palace, then to the Sistine Chapel at the Vatican, and finally to one of the chapels of the Quirinal palace, where it still is today. This venerable head is very well preserved. The face is covered with its skin, perfectly smooth; the mouth has kept all its teeth; the upper lip is visibly contracted by the action of fire, as are the eyes, one of which especially is as if dried up. This head is enclosed in a beautiful reliquary of Gothic form, of gilded silver, adorned with bas-reliefs and enamels.

In 1860, at the approach of the Piedmontese invasion, the holy Pontiff Pius IX had it solemnly brought down into the middle of Rome, to the church of Saint Lawrence *in Damaso*, so that the people, by still more pressing prayers, might come to implore the help of the great defender of the patrimony of the Roman Church.

Today, although Rome has made numerous distributions of relics of the holy Martyr to the churches, the greater part of the body still rests in the place where Saint Justin laid it. About the year 519 Pope Hormisdas detached some particles of the gridiron to send to the Emperor Justin, who had earnestly asked for it by his ambassadors.

The church of Saint-Martin at Laon, diocese of Soissons (Aisne), has exhibited, since the middle of the thirteenth century, the *left arm* and right hand of Saint Lawrence, deacon and martyr. Here is what a constant tradition, going back more than six hundred years, relates. A Premonstratensian religious of Laon felt himself inspired to go in search of a relic of the blessed Martyr, for whom he had a particular devotion. He leaves the monastery and goes to Jerusalem. There some Franciscan religious enjoin him to return to his monastery. The religious obeys, and after much fatigue he arrives in Hungary at a monastery of Premonstratensians. Many relics were neglected there, among others a small shrine containing the left forearm and hand of Saint Lawrence. His great devotion impels him to carry off this relic neglected by the religious of that monastery. He takes it indeed and conveys it to Laon with much fatigue. When he had reached the neighbourhood of the town he sent word to Gautier or Vautier of Douai (Walterus), abbot of Saint-Martin. A few days later an immense procession was organised to come and fetch the notable relic. Anselm, fifty-first bishop of Laon, accompanied by the Chapter of his cathedral, came to receive it at the foot of the hill and deposited it in the church of Saint-Martin. It was kept, honoured and exposed there until the French Revolution. A pilgrimage had gradually grown up and many favours had been obtained from God by the pious pilgrims. The feast of Saint Lawrence was celebrated very solemnly on 10 August, on the Sunday in the octave and on the octave day. On each of these three days the shrine in which the arm was enclosed was carried in procession. All the pilgrims who came to venerate the holy face at Montreuil-sous-Laon did not fail to go also to honour the relic of Saint Lawrence. The shrine, gift of the piety of a king of France, weighed 105 marks of gilded silver. The arm was placed on a plate of gilded silver weighing 9 marks. Around the arm was a small plate of very fine gold on which was engraved in Gothic letters: “Arm of Saint Lawrence.” The thumb, which was missing from the hand, had been detached to be given to a queen of France. A painting hung in the church represented the religious bringing the arm of Saint Lawrence.

On 30 September 1793 the shrine and the basin were sent to the mint. M. Selleux, administrator of the parish church of Saint-Martin, being present at the inventory of the furnishings, had the good fortune to rescue the arm of Saint Lawrence from the impiety of the revolutionaries. He recorded his declaration in a *procès-verbal* of 28 September 1793. Several former Premonstratensian religious of the abbey of Saint-Martin gave written attestations of the identity of this relic with that which they had always seen in the church of Saint-Martin. At the re-establishment of worship in 1804, Selleux presented the relic of the arm of Saint Lawrence to the ecclesiastical authority with all the documents attesting its authenticity. Mgr Leblanc

de Beaulieu, Bishop of Soissons, had the witnesses appear, had a series of *procès-verbaux* concerning the removal and the identity of the relic examined, and examined them himself, and permitted its public exposition in the church of Saint-Martin (15 April 1804). In 1837 Mgr de Simony had the shrine brought to him, opened it, examined the documents, and after venerating the precious relic, took out two small bones from the tip of the index finger, sealed the shrine anew and confirmed the permission to expose it to the veneration of the faithful.

In the diocese of Ferentino in Italy there is preserved, from time immemorial, a glass ampoule containing the Martyr's blood, dried and adhering to the walls of the vessel. During the greater part of the year it remains in this state of coagulation; but on the approach of 10 August, from the evening of the first Vespers of the feast, it begins to liquefy and to boil. In the sixteenth century Pope Paul V had the authenticity of this miracle verified, and had a few drops of this miraculous blood enclosed in a rich reliquary of gold, and deposited in the treasury of Santa Maria Maggiore. One still sees at Rome, in the church of Santa Barbara, a great part of his tunic. The rest of his garments is preserved in the ancient chapel of our Saint in the Lateran palace, called, on account of the notable relics that the Popes had gathered there, Saint Lawrence *ad Sancta Sanctorum*.

The cathedral of Nancy possesses a rib of Saint Lawrence; it was preserved during the Revolution, recognised and approved on 30 January 1803 by Mgr Ormond, and deposited in the shrine of Saint Sigisbert. The church of Bouxières-aux-Dames near Nancy possesses a fragment of rib of the same Saint. The church of Tonnay, canton of Saint-Nicolas-de-Port, possesses a fine fragment of bone, coming from a monastery of Germany. The Churches of Sens, Le Mans and Paris formerly obtained from the Sovereign Pontiffs some relics of the holy Martyr. That of Le Mans lost them during the Revolution.

Besides the relics we have just mentioned, here are others honoured under the name of Saint Lawrence: At Rome, of his arm, at Saint Lawrence Outside the Walls and at Saint Lawrence Paneperna. Of his ribs, at Saint Peter's in the Vatican, at the Twelve Apostles, at Santa Croce in Gerusalemme, at Santa Maria in Portico, at Santa Maria degli Angeli, at Santa Prassede. A vertebra, at Santa Maria Maggiore. At Santa Cecilia, a half-burnt bone. At Saint Lawrence *in Damaso*, three links of his chain, ashes and coals. At Santa Maria in Cosmedin, of his gridiron. At Antwerp, two of his fingers. Of the bone of his legs, at Florence, at Padua, at Santa Maria delle Vergini, at Naples. Of the bone of his shoulders, at Tongres, at Cologne. Of his gridiron and ashes, at the Escorial, at Perugia. Of his blood and flesh, at Liège. At Aix-la-Chapelle, a particle of his skull, in the church of Saint John the Baptist at Burtscheid; of his shroud and dalmatic, in the church of Saint Theresa. Of his bones, at Venice, at Padua, at Auxerre. At Sens, a vertebra; at Molay, in the same diocese, of his gridiron and bones. At Removille, diocese of Saint-Dié, half a tooth. At Nevers, two teeth. At Montreuil-sur-Mer, a rib.

To complete this biography we have made use of the *History of Saint Lawrence* by the abbé Labosse; of the *Hagiologie nivernaise* by Mgr Crosnier; of local notes supplied by M. Henri Congnet, of the chapter of Soissons, and by the abbé de Blaye.

## Saint Philomena, Virgin and Martyr at Rome, Called the Wonder-Worker of the Nineteenth Century

*3rd century.*

> *Jam sponsa Christi quæ adhuc arbitra sui per ætatem esse non poterat.*
>
> *Christ chose her for His bride before her age allowed her to choose another betrothed for herself.*
>
> *Saint Ambrose.*

"The memory of the just," according to the Psalmist, "survives all ages; it shares in the eternity of God." We find a fresh proof of this divine word in the finding of the relics of our Wonder-Worker. For about fifteen

centuries they had lain buried and unknown to the whole world, and suddenly they appear crowned with honour and glory before the eyes of the universe, in 1802, on the 25th of the month of May, during the excavations that are customarily made at Rome every year in the places consecrated to the burial of the martyrs. That year these underground operations were being carried out in the catacombs of Saint Priscilla, on the New Salarian Way. First the sepulchral stone was discovered, which drew attention by its singularity. It was of terracotta and offered to view several mysterious symbols alluding to virginity and martyrdom. They were cut across by a transverse line formed by an inscription whose first and last letters seemed to have been effaced by the tools of the workmen who were trying to detach it from the tomb. It read thus: (Fi)Lumena pax tecum fi(at). "Philomena, peace be with thee! So be it."

The learned Father Marien Paternio, a Jesuit, believes that the last two letters, fi, should be joined to the first word of the inscription, according to the ancient usage, he says, which was common to the Chaldeans, the Phoenicians, the Arabs and the Hebrews; and even, he adds, some traces of it are found among the Greeks. The same Father points out that "on the sepulchral stones that the Christians placed on the tombs of the martyrs who confessed the name of Jesus Christ in the first persecutions, instead of the formula *In pace*, which was generally little used, they put this one, which has something more animated and lively about it: *Pax tecum*."

When the stone had been removed, the precious remains of the holy martyr appeared, and close beside them a vessel of extremely thin glass, half whole and half broken, whose sides were covered with dried blood. This blood, a certain sign of the kind of martyrdom that ended the days of Saint Philomena, had been gathered, according to the custom of the primitive Church, by pious Christians who, when they could not do so themselves, sometimes applied to the executioners of their brethren to obtain their venerable remains and their sacred blood, offered with such generosity to Him who on the cross, by the shedding of His own, sanctified the sacrifices, the sufferings and the death of His children.

While they were busy detaching from the various pieces of the broken vessel the blood that was stuck to it, and gathering with the greatest care the smallest particles of it into a crystal urn, the persons present, among whom were men of talent and cultivated mind, are astonished to see the urn on which their gaze had been fixed for some moments suddenly sparkle before their eyes. They draw nearer; they consider this prodigious phenomenon at leisure, and with feelings of the liveliest admiration joined to the deepest respect they bless God, who "is glorified in His Saints." The sacred particles, as they fell from the vessel into the urn, were transformed into various precious and shining bodies, and the transformation was permanent: some had the brilliance and colour of the most refined gold; others, of silver; others, of diamonds, rubies, emeralds and other precious stones; so that instead of the matter whose colour, as it came away from the vessel, was brown and dark, one saw in the crystal only the mingled brilliance of various colours, such as shine in the rainbow.

This brilliance is but a shadow of the heavenly brightness promised in the holy books "to the body and soul of the just." It is at the same time the sign and pledge of the resurrection of bodies, when the elect shall be transformed into the glory of Jesus Christ. This prodigy, as we have said, is permanent; it still excites today the admiration of those who go to venerate this precious relic.

The martyrdom of Saint Philomena is known only through the symbols painted on the sepulchral stone of which we have just spoken, and through revelations made to various persons by the Saint herself. Let no one be alarmed at this word revelations; for it is certain that from the beginning of the world God has revealed to men several things that were known to Him alone. He has done so, says Saint Paul, at sundry times and in divers manners; but above all in these last times by His beloved Son. Now, what He has so often done for us, who would dare, even in our own day, to contest His right to do, or to forbid Him the exercise of it? If it is man's littleness or his unworthiness that people seek to urge against revelations, is not our God the God of infinite mercies?… Is not man, however wretched he may be, His child, the work of His hands and of His goodness, destined to be one with Him in blessed eternity? If it is the uselessness of this kind of

communication between God and man that is objected, where are the proofs that will be given of it? Not so did the learned and great pontiff Benedict XIV reason, whose words carry such great weight in these matters; for he holds that revelations, if they are pious, holy and profitable to the salvation of souls, should be admitted in the processes conducted at Rome for the canonization of Saints. He therefore did not regard all revelations as useless. Now if, after mature examination, after consulting learned persons versed in these matters, and even, as happened with these, after submitting them to ecclesiastical authority, permission has been obtained to publish them for the glory of Our Lord and the edification of men, who would dare to say that such revelations, full moreover of piety and holiness, are useless and harmful? Ah! for pity's sake, let not the faithful deserve from the Holy Spirit the reproach He makes to the impious, of blaspheming what they do not know! We certainly do not wish anyone to imitate the imprudence of those who admit indiscriminately everything they hear called by the name of revelation; that, we agree, would be the most dangerous of follies. But we must repeat with Saint Paul that no revelation, any more than any prophecy, may be despised, and that pious belief must be given to those which, according to the rules approved by the Church and followed by the Saints, bear the marks of truth.

Such are the revelations of which we are going to speak, and which are in perfect agreement with the hieroglyphs traced on the sepulchral stone.

The first is an anchor, a symbol not only of strength and hope, but also of a kind of martyrdom such as that to which Trajan condemned Pope Saint Clement, who was thrown into the sea by his orders with an anchor tied to his neck.

The second is an arrow, which on the tombs of the Martyrs of Jesus Christ signifies a torment like that by which Diocletian tried to put to death the generous tribune of the first cohort, Saint Sebastian. The third is a palm, placed roughly in the middle of the stone; it is the sign and as it were the herald of a brilliant victory won over the cruelty of the persecuting judges and the rage of the executioners. Beneath it is a kind of whip used for scourging criminals, whose thongs, weighted with lead, sometimes did not cease to furrow and bruise the bodies of innocent Christians until they had deprived them of life.

Next come two more arrows, arranged so that the first has its point upward and the second the opposite way. Might the repetition of this sign indicate a repetition of the same torments, and its arrangement a miracle such, for example, as the one that took place on Mount Gargano, when a herdsman, having shot an arrow at a bull that had taken refuge in the cave afterwards consecrated to Saint Michael, saw, as did several other persons who were present, that same arrow come back to him and fall at his feet?

Finally there appears a lily, symbol of innocence and virginity, which, joined with the palm and the bloodstained vessel already mentioned, proclaims the double triumph of Saint Philomena, over the flesh and over the world, and invites the Church to honour her under the glorious titles of Martyr and Virgin.

As for the three revelations that make known to us the history of our Saint, they have been submitted to ecclesiastical authority, and permission has been obtained to publish them for the glory of Our Lord and the edification of men. They are in perfect agreement with the hieroglyphs traced on the sepulchral stone. They were made to three different persons: the first is a young artisan well known for the purity of his conscience and his solid piety; the second is a zealous priest, a canon, in 1836; the third, finally, is one of those virgins consecrated to God in an austere cloister, who was about thirty-four years old in the same year 1836, and was living at Naples. These three persons did not know one another, had never had the least relations with one another and lived in places very distant from each other, and yet their accounts agreed in substance and in circumstances. We shall relate only the revelation made by our Wonder-Worker to the nun of Naples; we do not know exactly how long after the finding of these holy relics. The holy Martyr had for a long time given this nun several sensible marks of a quite particular protection; she had delivered her from the temptations to distrust and impurity by which God had willed to purify His servant further, and for the painful state into

which these attacks of Satan had put her she had substituted the sweetness of joy and peace. In the intimate communications that took place at the foot of the crucifix between these two brides of the Saviour, the Saint gave her counsels full of wisdom, sometimes on the direction of the community of which this nun had been put in charge by her superiors, sometimes on her personal conduct. What they spoke of together most often was the value of virginity, the means Saint Philomena had used to keep it always intact even in the midst of the greatest dangers, and the immense goods to be found in the cross and in all the fruits it bears. These extraordinary graces, granted to a soul which, penetrated with its own wretchedness, judged itself wholly unworthy of them, made her fear illusion. She had recourse to prayer and to the prudence of those whom God had given her as guides of her conscience; and while her wise directors were submitting the various favours with which heaven had honoured this nun to a slow and judicious examination, revelations of another kind are made to her through the same Saint; they all tended to make her name more glorious.

The person of whom we speak had in her cell a small statue of Saint Philomena made on the model of her holy body as it is seen at Mugnano, and more than once the whole community had noticed with admiration on the face of this same statue changes that seemed to them to partake of the miraculous. This had inspired them all with the pious desire to expose it in their church, celebrating it with the greatest possible solemnity. The feast took place, and from then on the miraculous statue remained on its altar. On communion days the good nun would go before it to make her thanksgiving; and one day, when there arose in her heart a lively desire to know the precise date of the Saint's martyrdom, so that, as she said to herself, her devotees might honour her more particularly, suddenly her eyes closed without her being able, in spite of all her efforts, to open them again, and a voice full of sweetness, which seemed to her to come from the place where the statue was, addressed these words to her: "My dear sister, it was on the 10th of the month of August that I died in order to live and that I entered triumphant into heaven, where my divine Spouse put me in possession of those eternal goods which are incomprehensible to the human mind. And it was for this reason that His admirable wisdom so disposed the circumstances of my translation to Mugnano that, in spite of the settled plans of the priest who had obtained my mortal remains, I arrived in that town not on the 5th of this month, as he had fixed, but on the 10th; nor to be placed quietly in the oratory of the house, as he also wished, but in the church where I am venerated, and amid cries of universal joy, accompanied by so many marvellous circumstances, which made of the day of my martyrdom a day of true triumph." These words, which bore with them proofs of the truth that had dictated them, renewed in the nun's heart the fear she had already had of being deluded. She redoubles her prayers and begs her director to undeceive her; the means was easy. They therefore write to Dom Francesco, the priest of whom the Saint had spoken, and, while recommending secrecy to him about what had happened, they beg him to answer clearly about those circumstances of the revelation that concerned the resolutions he had taken. He finds them perfectly in accord with the truth, and his answer not only consoles the afflicted nun but also encourages her directors to make use, for the glory of God and of Saint Philomena, of the means she herself seemed to point out to them, in order to know better the details of her life and martyrdom.

They therefore order the same person to make the most earnest entreaties to the Saint for this purpose; and as obedience, as the holy books say, is always victorious, one day when she was praying in her cell to obtain this grace, her eyes closing again in spite of her resistance, she hears the same voice saying to her:

"My dear sister, I am the daughter of a prince who governed a small State in Greece. My mother was also of royal blood, and as they were without children, both of them, still idolaters, continually offered sacrifices and prayers to their false gods to obtain some. A physician from Rome named Publius, now in paradise, lived in the palace and was in my father's service. He professed Christianity. Seeing my parents' affliction and deeply touched by their blindness, he began, at the prompting of the Holy Spirit, to speak to them of our faith, and went so far as to promise them offspring if they consented to receive baptism. The grace that accompanied these words enlightened their understanding and triumphed over their will; and, having become

Christians, they had the much-desired happiness of which Publius had promised that their conversion would be the pledge. At the moment of my birth I was given the name of Lumena, in allusion to the light of faith, of which I had been, so to speak, the fruit; and on the day of my baptism I was called Filomena, or Daughter of the light (*Filia luminis*), since on that day I was born to the faith.[1] The tenderness my father and mother bore me was so great that they wanted always to have me near them. That was why they took me with them to Rome, on a journey my father was compelled to make on account of an unjust war with which he saw himself threatened by the proud Diocletian. I was then thirteen years old. Arrived in the capital of the world, we went all three to the emperor's palace, and he admitted us to an audience. As soon as Diocletian had seen me, his eyes fastened on me, and he seemed preoccupied in this way the whole time my father took to set out warmly everything that could serve for his defence. As soon as he had stopped speaking, the emperor answered him that he need no longer be anxious, but that, banishing all fear from then on, he should think only of living happily. 'I will put at your disposal,' he added, 'all the forces of the empire, and in return I ask of you only one thing: the hand of your daughter.' My father, dazzled by an honour he had been far from expecting, readily agreed on the spot to the emperor's proposal; and when we had returned to our lodging, he and my mother did all they could to make me yield to Diocletian's will and to theirs. 'What then?' I said to them. 'Do you want me, for the love of a man, to break the promise I made to Jesus Christ two years ago? My virginity belongs to Him; I can no longer dispose of it.' 'But,' my father answered me, 'you were then too much a child to contract such an engagement.' And he joined the most terrible threats to the order he gave me to accept Diocletian's offer. The grace of my God made me invincible; and my father, having been unable to make the prince accept the reasons he alleged to free himself from the word he had given, found himself obliged by his order to bring me before him. I had to sustain, a few moments later, a new assault of his fury and his tenderness. My mother, in concert with him, strove to overcome my resolution. Caresses, threats, everything was used to subdue me. At last I see them both fall at my knees, and they say to me with tears in their eyes: 'My daughter, have pity on your father, on your mother, on your country, on our subjects.' 'No, no,' I answered them, 'God and the virginity I have vowed to Him before all things, before you, before my country! My kingdom is heaven.' My words plunged them into despair, and they brought me before the emperor, who also did everything in his power to win me; but his promises, his blandishments and his threats were equally useless. He then flies into a violent fit of anger and, driven by the devil, has me thrown into one of the prisons of his palace, where I soon find myself covered with chains. Thinking that pain and shame would weaken the courage my divine Spouse inspired in me, he came to see me every day; and then, after having me unbound so that I might take the little bread and water he gave me as my only food, he renewed his attacks, some of which, but for the grace of God, could have proved fatal to my virginity. The defeats he always suffered were for me the prelude to new torments; but prayer sustained me; I did not cease to commend myself to my Jesus and to His most pure Mother. My captivity had lasted thirty-seven days when, in the midst of a heavenly light, I see Mary holding her divine Son in her arms. 'My daughter,' she said to me, 'three more days of prison, and after these forty days you will come out of this painful state.' So happy a piece of news made my heart beat with joy; but when the Queen of Angels had added that I would come out of it to sustain, in frightful torments, a combat more terrible still than the preceding ones, I passed suddenly from joy to the cruellest anguish; I thought it was going to kill me. 'Courage, then, my daughter,' Mary then said to me; 'do you not know the love of predilection I have for you? The name you received in baptism is its pledge, by the likeness it bears to my Son's name and to mine. You are called Lumena, as your Spouse is called Light, Star, Sun; as I too am called Dawn, Star, Moon in the fullness of her brightness, and Sun. Fear not, I will help you. Now nature, whose weakness humbles you, asserts its rights; at the moment of combat grace will come to lend you its strength; and your Angel, who was also mine, Gabriel, whose name signifies strength, will come to your help; I will commend you especially to his care, as my best-beloved daughter among the others.' These words of the Queen of Virgins gave me back my courage, and the vision disappeared, leaving my prison filled with a wholly heavenly fragrance.

“What had been announced to me was not slow to come to pass. Diocletian, despairing of bending me, resolved to have me tortured publicly, and the first torment to which he condemned me was that of scourging. ‘Since she is not ashamed,’ he said, ‘to prefer to an emperor such as I a malefactor condemned by his own nation to an infamous death, she deserves that my justice treat her as he was treated.’ He therefore ordered that I be stripped of my garments and bound to the pillar, and, in the presence of a great number of gentlemen of his court, he had me beaten with such violence that my body, all bloody, was nothing but a single wound. The tyrant, perceiving that I was about to faint and die, at once had me removed from his sight and dragged back to prison, where he thought I would breathe my last. But he was disappointed in his expectation, as I was in the sweet hope I had of soon going to rejoin my Spouse; for two Angels, resplendent with light, appeared to me and, pouring a healing balm on my wounds, made me more vigorous than I had been before the torment. The next morning the emperor was informed of it; he has me brought into his presence, looks at me with astonishment, then tries to persuade me that I owe my cure to the Jupiter he adores. He absolutely wanted me, he said, as empress of Rome; and joining to these seductive words the most honourable promises and the most flattering caresses, he strove to complete the infernal work he had begun; but the divine Spirit, to whom I owed my constancy, then filled me with so much light that to all the proofs I gave of the soundness of our faith neither Diocletian nor any of his courtiers could find anything whatever to answer. He then flew into a rage again and commanded that I be buried, with an anchor at my neck, in the waters of the Tiber. The order was carried out; but God did not allow it to succeed; for at the moment I was being thrown into the river, two Angels again came to my help, and, after cutting the rope that bound me to the anchor, while the anchor fell to the bottom of the Tiber, where it has remained to this day, they carried me gently, in the sight of an immense crowd, to the banks of the river. This prodigy produced happy effects on a great number of the spectators, and they were converted to the faith; but Diocletian, attributing it to some secret magic, had me dragged through the streets of Rome and then ordered that a hail of darts be shot at me. I was all bristling with them, my blood flowed on every side; exhausted and dying, he commands that I be carried back to my dungeon. Heaven honoured me there with a new grace. I fell into a sweet sleep, and on waking I found myself perfectly healed. Diocletian learns of it. ‘Well then!’ he cried in a fit of rage, ‘let her be pierced a second time with sharp darts, and let her die under this torment.’ They hasten to obey him. The archers bend their bows and gather all their strength; but the arrows refuse to second them. The emperor was present; he raged at the sight, he called me a sorceress; and thinking that the action of fire might destroy the enchantment, he orders the darts to be made red-hot in a furnace and then aimed at me a second time. They were indeed; but these darts, after crossing part of the space they had to travel, suddenly took the opposite direction and flew to strike those who had shot them. Six of the archers died of them; several of them renounced paganism, and the people began to bear public witness to the power of God who had protected me. These murmurs and acclamations made the tyrant fear some further unfortunate accident, and he hastened to end my days by ordering that my head be cut off. Thus did my soul take flight to its heavenly Spouse, who, with the crown of virginity and the palms of martyrdom, gave me a distinguished rank among the elect whom He allows to enjoy His divine presence. The day of my entry into glory, so happy for me, was a Friday, and the hour of my death the third after noon (that is, the same hour that saw her divine Master expire).”

As the Saint herself revealed, the translation of her relics to Mugnano del Cardinale, in the diocese of Nola, did not take place without miracles. One of the greatest was that she worked none in a church of Naples, to show that she was not to be left in that city; as soon as she was taken out of the church and placed in a simple oratory with the intention of carrying her to Mugnano, three cures were obtained miraculously. During the journey one of those who were carrying Philomena’s body, who had been ill since the eve of the departure, was cured. People were astonished too at the lightness of the precious burden. “Oh! how light the Saint is,” said the bearers; “she weighs no more than a feather.” At night a pillar of light guided the shrine through thick darkness. At the township of Cimitié it became so heavy that all arms were powerless to lift it; but

when some inhabitants of Mugnano had joined the exhausted bearers, it at once recovered its former lightness. On the eve of her arrival in that town, while the bells were being rung in her honour, an abundant rain, asked for by the inhabitants, followed a long drought. When she appeared and was uncovered, the eager crowd rushed around her crying: “Heavens! how beautiful she is!… what beauty of Paradise!” But suddenly there arises a horrible hurricane, formed no doubt by the breath of the evil spirits; it falls on the terrified multitude and makes even for the shrine. It is soon driven back by an invisible hand and goes to die away on a neighbouring mountain, some of whose trees are uprooted. From that happy day the town of Mugnano was the theatre of prodigies that it would take too long to relate. Let us cite only those in which a loving Providence seems to have taken delight in surrounding its beloved virgin, on earth, with some rays of the glory she enjoys in heaven. The bones of our Martyr were covered with a figured body which the unskilful hand of the workman had made too small, inelegant and set in an attitude that did not seem decent enough. The magnificent garments with which it was adorned could not wholly make up for these defects. Now one morning in 1814 the visitors saw the holy body, which until then had remained lying down, modestly seated; all the ornaments had followed this miraculous movement so as to give the Saint a more graceful pose. What are we saying! the face had lost its first features; the chin had rounded like that of a young person asleep; the lips, which had formerly disfigured the face, now parted with a marvellous grace which, joined to the amiability of the countenance and to the bright colour of the cheeks, once whitish, pleasantly charmed the eye; the hair, formerly hidden for the most part either behind the neck or beyond the left shoulder, now showed itself entirely and floated here and there with an elegant lightness; and yet the four seals of the bishop of Potenza remained perfectly intact, and the key of the shrine was at Naples; heaven had taken care that the miracle should be evident to the most incredulous. That is not all: soon it was noticed that the Saint’s garments were falling into tatters; an invisible hand detached from them every day now one piece, now another; God, jealous of the outward glory of the holy body, indicated by this that it must be clothed with new magnificence. This was seriously undertaken. But a difficulty arose: in taking the measurements it was observed that the Saint’s hair, perfectly arranged toward the right shoulder, left some gap on the left, because of the small number of silk hairs that had been put there when she was clothed for the first time. To make it up with women’s hair did not seem fitting; time did not allow silk hair to be procured. In this difficulty, on the eve of Pentecost, at the moment the holy relics were being uncovered, the care of Providence was seen once again, a care minute in the eyes of human wisdom but admirable in those of faith: new and long tresses of hair appeared on the side where formerly that gap had been seen which they despaired of being able to fill. They seemed freshly washed and combed; their sheen and their fine arrangement spread a new grace over the Saint’s appearance. People cried miracle in the same way, and with good reason, when it was observed on various occasions that the Saint was becoming not only more beautiful but much taller than before. One day something severe, we know not what, suddenly darkened the features of our Saint, formerly so radiant. The faithful at once begin to pray; this prayer of humble hearts was heard: on the instant the cloud scatters and the former serenity returns; nothing could be more attractive than the virgin’s amiability; the joy of heaven shone on her face, a joy caused by the conversion of a sinner, who declared with tears in his eyes and in the humblest tone that, an unbeliever a moment before, he had been touched by the prodigy. His heart, opened to the truth, poured itself out in thanksgiving to the Saint. He begged her to accept a rich offering for the adornment of her altar.

We could cite an infinite number of similar miracles: one would see not only sinners but even apostles of impiety changed inwardly in so marvellous a way that they afterwards became zealous apostles of virtue. Several times, too, wonderful movements took place in the Wonder-Worker’s eyes, and that was when some extraordinary favour was being asked of her. One evening the sky was darkened with so many clouds, and the rain fell so abundantly, that in spite of six large lighted candles the beloved features of her who was being invoked could be seen only very imperfectly. All present were saddened by this, when suddenly a ray of light, springing from a large window that faced the East, falls on the Saint’s face and allows it to be

contemplated at leisure. That was a first miracle, for the sun was in the West. It was accompanied by a second, no less prodigious; for at that moment the eyes of the Virgin martyr were seen very distinctly to open eight separate times and with admirable vivacity. The inhabitants of Castel-Vetere, during a procession, admired the same prodigy on an image of Saint Philomena. She opened her eyes, and there came from them flashes that pierced souls and awakened in them the most delightful feelings. The women stripped themselves of all their ornaments and threw them on the litter as a sign of their gratitude and devotion to the Saint; the rest of the procession was as though seized with tenderness and respect. On the eve of this procession a lady of distinction of Fontemarano, who had been suffering for three months, seeing her pains grow sharper, had lost all courage and had cried out: “All remedies are useless to me; there is no Saint in paradise who has pity on me. Jesus, send me death; life has become too great a burden to me.” As she finished these words she fell into a deep sleep; and then there appears before her a young and lovely virgin accompanied by two angels, who, looking at her with a severe air, said to her: “Is it really true, then, that you have found no Saint in heaven who takes an interest in you?” Then, smiling, she added: “Kiss this image of the virgin and martyr Saint Philomena, and you will obtain the grace you desire.” The lady kisses it with respect, and at once the two angels, applauding, cry out: “The grace is granted! the grace is granted!” It was indeed. On waking, no more illness, no more pain. This lady and her husband came to Castel-Vetere to take part in the feast and to thank the Wonder-Worker publicly for the benefit they had received from her.

Several times, when the statues of the Saint were carried on litters, streets that were too narrow seemed to widen; at least the Saint passed through them at ease as through a great square. At Lucera, devotion to Saint Philomena spread through a great number of miracles. A canon at the point of death from a disease of the chest was cured by applying the image of our Saint to the diseased part. Many unbelievers who mocked these prodigies were converted by those very prodigies. One of these men, whose family, full of confidence in our Saint, venerated her image in a small oratory, often repeated that to believe in such nonsense was the sign of a small mind. One day it seemed to him, in his sleep, that he was in the church; he sees there the holy Martyr surrounded by a great number of persons. All were asking her some favour, and all went away fully satisfied. Desiring, he too, to see realised something he had much at heart, he draws near and addresses his prayer to her. “Away from here! away from here!” the angry Virgin answers him at once. “Are you not that man who puts no faith in the prodigies I work? What! you dare to ask me for graces!” These words, spoken in a severe tone, made the liveliest impression on his heart, and he woke. He was no longer the same man. From that moment he judged quite differently; he did not cease to weep over his error, and by the tenderness of his devotion to the Wonder-Worker he obtained many favours from her. It often happened that the oil burning in the lamps of Saint Philomena was miraculously multiplied. The same was true of the images that reproduced her features and of the books that related her history and her miracles. One cannot help seeing that our Saint, after the example of her divine Spouse, had a particular predilection for little children. A poor mother had commended her own child to her, and it had died in spite of her prayers. Grief, instead of extinguishing her faith, rekindles it; she runs to the image of the Saint hanging on a wall, takes it down and, throwing it on the corpse that is the object of her grief, asks with loud cries and floods of tears that this beloved son be given back to her. At the same instant the little dead child rises as if waking from sleep; he jumps down from the bed, and the eyes that were already weeping over him see him not only raised to life but without the slightest symptom of illness. What happened at Monteforte is no less marvellous. The daughter of Lelio Gesualdo and of Antonio Valentino, then twelve months old, slips from the arms that were carrying her and falls into the street: the height was twenty-four palms. The fall must have been very rapid, for the child, striking her head as she passed against a pipe made of bricks, knocked several fragments off it; from there she fell again onto the cobbles of the pavement, when her mother, present at this deplorable scene, cries out from the top of the house: “My good Saint Philomena, this child is yours if you save her for me!” The father of little Fortunata, who was in the street at the same moment, uttered the same cry in his terror and, running to the child, who was lying on the ground, picks her up, examines her, and sees on her no wound, no bruise; there was on the

little girl's whole body no other sign of her fall than the breaking of a silver ornament she wore around her neck.

Our Saint showed herself above all the mother of the little girls who bear her name. In 1830 little Philomena Tedesco, having put out one of her eyes with scissors, the injury was judged incurable by the physicians. But the child was suddenly cured by washing with oil taken from the Saint's lamp; everyone even remarked that there was something livelier and more brilliant in that eye than in the other. A poor woman called Teresa Bovini had commended herself to the Saint and had explained to her that she had not the least rag to cover the child she was about to bring into the world. The child sees the light before the prayer is granted; there is nothing to cover it with; at last they search in a chest where the mother says something worn and half torn should be found. What was the astonishment of the person who opened it on seeing a little layette in which nothing was lacking, either for cleanliness or for arrangement, or even for elegance! There came from it a fragrance so sweet that the air was perfumed with it. She takes this treasure and kisses it; the mother, overjoyed, does the same, and does not know how to show her gratitude to her heavenly benefactress. The child, thus richly swaddled, is carried to the baptismal font; the news of the miracle spreads, and people come from all sides to see and kiss the miraculous swaddling clothes and to breathe the heavenly fragrance they give off. The Saint did not stop there. The following night Teresa is woken by the wailing of the little creature. By the light of the poor lamp that lit the room she looks for the child, who is no longer in the place where she had put her. Uncertain and timid, she turns the other way, and she sees, O prodigy! a young person clothed in white and of a wholly heavenly beauty. Her arms were holding the little girl, and with her hands she caressed her lovingly. What a sight for the poor mother! Seized with respect, joy, confusion and gratitude, she could only cry out: "Ah! Saint Philomena!" And Saint Philomena, rising then from the chair on which she was seated, gives the child a kiss, puts it back in its place and disappears. For several days Teresa was in a kind of ecstasy over it.

But the greatest miracle, beyond dispute, of all those the Lord has worked in favour of the holy Martyr is the astonishing rapidity with which her cult has spread. Like light, which in a few instants crosses the immense space between heaven and earth, the name of Saint Philomena, especially since the miraculous (and well-attested) sweat that was seen in 1823 on one of her statues set up in the church of Mugnano, has reached in a few years the ends of the earth. The books that speak of her miracles and the images in which she is depicted have been carried by zealous missionaries into China, into Japan and into several Catholic settlements of America and Asia. In Europe her cult goes on spreading every day more and more, not only in the countryside and the villages but also in the most illustrious and populous cities. Great and small, pastors as well as their flocks, unite to honour her. At their head are seen cardinals, archbishops, bishops, heads of religious orders and ecclesiastics distinguished by their dignities, their learning and their virtues. From the height of the Christian pulpit the most eloquent orators publish her glory, and all the faithful who know her, in the kingdom of Naples above all and in the neighbouring countries, where they are counted by millions, give her with one voice the name of Wonder-Worker.

France has a great devotion to our holy Wonder-Worker; her statue or her image is found in many of our churches, and after the medals of the Immaculate Mother of God there are few that the faithful seek more eagerly than those of Saint Philomena. Let us cite, among the churches or chapels of our country that are dedicated under the title of Saint Philomena and are at the same time places of pilgrimage: Sainte-Philomène of Ars; of Fourvière, at Lyons; of Saint-Gervais, at Paris; of Sempigny, near Noyon (Oise); of Le Thivet (Haute-Marne); of Neuville-sur-Seine (Aube); of Saulles (Haute-Marne); of Lavilleneuve-au-Roi (Haute-Marne), etc.

Saint Philomena is above all the patroness of the little and of the innocent. Children stricken with some bodily ailment have often obtained their cure through her intercession; young girls who keep unstained the delicate flower of honour have also chosen her as their patroness. In Italy, throughout the neighbourhood of

the town of Lugnano, where her cult is held in such honour, young girls have placed themselves under the authority of this holy memory in a sort of spiritual community whose chief rule is the strictest observance of the vow of chastity. They are known in Italy by the name of *Monacelle di santa Filomena*, that is, little nuns of Saint Philomena.

At Neuville-sur-Seine, in the diocese of Troyes, a chapel was built in her honour in 1844. Since that time the name of the young virgin martyr is on every tongue. Devotion to her has won every heart; her medals, her images and her litanies are found in every house, and mothers are happy to place their daughters under her powerful patronage. Every year a preparatory triduum begins on 7 August, and on the 11th of the same month, from dawn until noon, a great number of priests from the neighbouring places offer to God the holy sacrifice of the Mass, imploring the suffrages of the glorious martyr, some of whose bones rest beneath the altar.

Great spiritual advantages draw numerous pilgrims to this place. Not to speak of the privileged altar which every secular or regular priest may enjoy on every day of the year, our Holy Father Pope Pius IX, by a rescript from Rome dated 26 April 1852, has deigned to grant the favour of a plenary Indulgence to all the faithful who, coming on pilgrimage to the chapel of Saint Philomena, receive holy communion there during the octaves of the feast of Saint Philomena, that is, from 11 to 18 August, and of the anniversary of the blessing of the chapel, that is, from 11 to 18 September. His Holiness Pius IX further grants an indulgence of a hundred days, which may be gained every day, to all who visit the chapel, provided they are at least contrite of heart.

At Ars, in the chapel of Saint Philomena, which possesses a considerable particle of her bones, the finest scenes of the Saint’s life are seen reproduced on the eight panels of the charming cupola of that chapel. In the first picture the emperor Diocletian, seated on his throne, offers a golden crown to Philomena and announces to her that, enraptured by her graces, he has chosen her to raise her to the rank of empress. The Saint remains indifferent to such flattering advances and rejects the brilliant diadem with disdain. She declares that she will never have any other spouse than Jesus Christ, the immortal King of ages.

In the second picture Diocletian, furious at meeting with a refusal he was far from expecting, calls archers and orders them to pierce this ungrateful girl with flaming arrows. Here the scene becomes alive: Philomena appears bound to a stake; her countenance is calm, one might almost say holily proud; her whole attitude breathes courage carried to heroism. The shafts fly, leaving a long luminous trail behind them. But, astonishing thing! these darts turn back on themselves and go to pierce the executioners, whom they lay dying at the young Virgin’s feet. Philomena, at the sight of the miracle, recollects herself and gives thanks to her God.

In the third picture Diocletian, disconcerted at the news of the prodigy, has the heroine shut up in a dark dungeon. She is seen in a contemplative attitude in the midst of that darkness. One would say an athlete resting peacefully after a glorious and painful combat.

In the fourth picture the scene represents the river Tiber. A vessel carries Philomena to the middle of the waters. There the tyrant’s satellites, fastening a heavy anchor to the neck of the innocent victim, cast her to the bottom of the waters. But three angels watch over the safety of the heroic virgin. One of them breaks the chain of the anchor and carries the Saint gently to the shore. The other two dart onto the boat and sink it with all who are aboard. The expression of happiness painted on the face of Philomena, miraculously delivered, and the despair of the executioners as they go down, make a happy contrast. The fifth picture shows the beheading of the Saint. She bows her head with an eagerness mingled with joy; one sees that she longs to reach the end of her combats.

The sixth picture represents the funeral procession carrying the body of the Saint, so gloriously mutilated. The scene takes place in darkness: it is during the night that the touching procession makes its way to the

catacombs. Two groups of virgins accompany the Virgin martyr; one of them carries with respect the sacred phial containing the blood of the new Heroine. Grief and recollection are painted on every brow. The seventh picture represents the catacombs. A sculptor in ancient costume engraves on the stone behind which the Saint's body rests the name of Philomena, which was to remain sixteen centuries buried in obscurity and then become so famous. A keeper of the catacombs holds in his hand an earthenware lamp that casts a few pale gleams on this silent scene.

The eighth picture represents heaven. It is the apotheosis of the young Saint. Diocletian thinks he has crushed the young Virgin under the weight of his mighty anger. Unable to overcome her virtue, he has broken her under his lictor's axe! And behold, at the moment when he seems to triumph, the heroine enters into glory and takes possession of an immortal throne. There she contemplates face to face the God whom she preferred to all the glories of earth, and the blessed Spirits, enraptured by the triumphs of her love, cast at her feet lilies, palms and crowns.

In the chapel at Ars there is also to be seen a bas-relief representing the young martyr at the moment when she is taken up and laid by the angels on the bank of the Tiber. The virginal body, of admirable suppleness and flexibility, seems to be transfigured under one's gaze at the touch of the angelic hands that lift it. The ornament that accompanies it is in exquisite taste and of charming poetry: a border of lilies and doves. The churches of Liettres (Pas-de-Calais), of the Madeleine at Paris and of the Sacré-Cœur at Amiens, etc., possess some of her relics.

We have drawn this abridgement from the *Life and Miracles of Saint Philomena, Virgin and Martyr, Called the Wonder-Worker of the Nineteenth Century*, translated from the Italian by M. B. F. B., of the Society of Jesus, and we have completed it with the *Annales de la Sainteté au XIXe siècle* and the *Vie des Saints de Troyes* by the abbé Defer. *Cf.* the abbé J. Darche, *Vie très-complète de sainte Philomène, vierge et martyre*, Paris, Régis Ruffet, 1867.

## Saint Rusticula or Rusticle, Abbess of Saint-Césaire at Arles

*632. — Pope: Honorius I. — King of France: Dagobert I.*

> *Modesty is the companion of moderation and of chastity; it keeps the rules of humility, it safeguards the tranquillity of the soul, it loves continence and chastity, it maintains decency and uprightness, it moderates the appetites by reason, it is insensible to outrage, and it does not answer it with insult.*
>
> *Saint Augustine.*

Marcia Rusticula, born of a noble family, came into the world in the year 555 at Vaison in Provence. She lost her father on the very day of her birth. She had an elder brother who died in infancy. When she was still only in her fifth year she was carried off by a lord named Chéran, who intended to marry her when she reached marriageable age. The venerable Liliola, abbess of Saint-Césaire at Arles, was informed of this abduction and contrived, through Syagrius, bishop of Autun, to rescue the young Rusticula from the hands of her abductor. She received her into her community and had her brought up in the maxims of piety. Rusticula showed the happiest dispositions for virtue; she conceived a great contempt for all the things of earth and resolved to spend the rest of her days in the monastery where she was. In vain did her mother make efforts to draw her back into the world.

Having become a nun, she occupied herself only with the fulfilment of her rule. She learned by heart all the books of Scripture. She strove to forget the fine qualities of body and mind that she had received from nature, and distinguished herself only by her modesty and humility. She was so esteemed by her community that she was elected abbess after the death of the venerable Liliola, although she was little more than eighteen years old. She answered the hopes that had been conceived of her. Her zeal for austerities was astonishing; often she took only one meal in three days. She watched over each of her nuns, although they numbered three

hundred.

Clotaire III, king of Soissons, after having put Brunehaut, queen of Austrasia, to death, was searching everywhere for the late queen's grandson Childebert, who had escaped from his hands, in order to make him suffer the same fate. A rumour spread that this prince was hidden at Arles in the monastery of Saint-Césaire. Clotaire, alarmed, at once had the abbess Rusticula arrested. She was taken to the court. Her slanderers already regarded her ruin as certain. But God confounded her enemies and made her innocence shine forth. Domnolus, bishop of Vienne, openly declared himself the defender of the abbess of Arles against her accusers, and foretold to the king that in punishment for the ill-treatment he had made the handmaid of the Lord suffer, he would lose his son. The young prince did in fact die. The holy abbess confounded the calumny still better by the brilliance of her miracles and her virtues, which edified the whole court. Clotaire, persuaded that heaven was taking up the cause of this holy Religious, gave her back her liberty. Rusticula bore this trial with great resignation and forgave all those whom malice or prejudice had armed against her.

Back in her community, she continued to govern it with the same edification. She took care not to require of her nuns labours beyond their strength; but at the same time she kept them always occupied, to protect them from the danger of idleness. She died in 632 and was buried in her monastery by Theodosius, bishop of Arles. Her body was afterwards carried into the cathedral dedicated under the invocation of Saint Trophimus. But her head was left in the abbey of Saint-Césaire, which at the time of the Revolution had long been under the rule of Saint Benedict, and which was commonly called the Grand-Couvent.

She is often represented shedding tears, either because of the gift of tears she had received from God in her prayers, or because of the persecutions she had to endure.

Florentius, priest of Saint-Paul-Trois-Châteaux, has left us her life, which is very elegantly written.

## Saint Donoald or Dinault and Saint Arnulph or Arnoul, Martyrs at Beauvais

*5th century.*

The young Donoald flourished in the 5th century. It was the time of the invasion of the Huns into Gaul. A band of these barbarians, roaming through the Beauvaisis, came upon an artless and innocent child in the meadows of Milly (Oise, arrondissement of Beauvais, canton of Marseille), toward the north, at the edge of a spring. They questioned him about his religion. Dinault (for it was he), full of fervour, fearlessly confesses the true faith, prays to God and, bowing his little head, offers himself to Him as a willing victim. A sword-stroke won him the triumph of martyrdom on 11 August. He soon became in that place the object of the veneration of the faithful: in the 12th century a college of eight canons and six chaplains was established for the keeping of his body in the church of the Blessed Virgin Mary at Milly. In 1442, the Burgundians having thrown down the walls of Milly, the young Martyr's relics were translated to the monastery of Saint-Lucien, where his feast was thenceforth kept every year. But the spring of Milly did not for all that cease to be visited by the sick, who came there to seek their cure. The Saint is invoked above all against epilepsy.

Arnoul was born in Lorraine in the 10th century. When he was a youth he left his native land to visit Saints and enjoy their instruction. Having met near Beauvais, in the forest of Froidmont, some pious persons who, after renouncing everything, were leading the life of the ancient hermits, the desire for heavenly things kept him among them. Constantly in solitude, he seemed to have dealings only with the Angels and no other thought than that of salvation. Surprised one day by a band of brigands, he was mortally wounded. His companions run up at his cries. "Come to my help," he said to them; "procure me the body of Our Lord by the hand of a priest, and bury me in my oratory." God honoured this Martyr of the eremitical life with miracles.

The faithful used formerly to go there to implore the Blessed one to preserve them from fever or to obtain their cure of it. Although this chapel is today put to profane uses, some pilgrims still do not fail to visit it. They have kept the very ancient custom of passing under a tombstone that is seen in this chapel, on which these words are read: *Hic jacet sanctus Arnulphus, martyr et eremita, fundator hujus capellæ*: "Here rests Saint Arnoul, hermit and martyr, founder of this chapel." This stone is raised three feet and supported on four pillars. The structure of this building and the inscription on the stone seem to date from the 11th century.

The religious of the abbey of Froidmont celebrated the feast of Saint Arnoul on 24 October. On this solemnity they devoutly carried his statue to a spring about five hundred paces from the chapel.

Former Proper of Beauvais. — *Cf. Vie des Saints du diocèse de Beauvais*, by the abbé Sabatier.

## Notre-Dame de Grâce at Cotignac, Diocese of Fréjus (1519)

The diocese of Fréjus possesses a much-venerated sanctuary of Mary: Notre-Dame de Grâce at Cotignac (Var, arrondissement of Brignoles). Here is its origin according to popular tradition. On 10 August 1519 Jean de la Baume, otherwise called de la Sacco, going early in the morning to his work in the fields on the hill of Verdale, saw a great brightness, and in the midst of this brightness the Mother of God, who ordered him to make known to a community of ecclesiastics established at Cotignac, and to the notables of the town, that she wished to be specially honoured on this hill and to have a chapel there under the title of Notre-Dame de Grâce, and that she would justify this title by numerous benefits. Jean de la Baume fulfilled his mission; but he was not taken at his word. The Virgin therefore appeared to him a second time and summoned him to repeat to the clergy and the people the order to build her a chapel on the hill. This new instance was obeyed, and they went in procession to Mount Verdale to bless the first stone of the future building. In a short time the chapel was finished, and soon numerous pilgrims flocked to it. Leo X, struck by this concourse, granted abundant indulgences there, basing them on the apparition of the holy Virgin to Jean de la Baume.

The parish priest of Cotignac, who was charged with the service of this pilgrimage, soon found himself unable to meet the needs of the crowd of pilgrims who claimed his ministry; and he offered the service of the chapel to a community of eminent priests, some canons, others doctors of theology or theologians of Grasse and Marseilles, on condition that they observed the rule of Saint Philip Neri. Clement VIII approved this plan, and the community began at once.

This house received a great honour from the holy Virgin. Brother Fiacre, a Discalced Augustinian, was earnestly praying the holy Virgin to obtain for Anne of Austria an heir to the throne of France, when on 3 November 1637 Mary appeared to him and gave him the assurance that Anne of Austria would have a son, but on condition that the queen should have three novenas made, the first of which should be at Notre-Dame de Grâce at Cotignac. What the holy Virgin had ordered was carried out; Anne of Austria's pregnancy was confirmed, and on 5 September 1638 she brought into the world a child who was later Louis XIV.

From that moment the chapel of Notre-Dame de Grâce became dear and venerable to the court of France. After the death of Louis XIII the queen had her son portrayed on his knees, offering the Virgin his crown and sceptre, and charged Brother Fiacre to carry the picture to Cotignac, accompanied by one of his religious. The picture was placed on the wall on the Gospel side, almost in the middle of the nave, and remained exposed there until '93. Louis XIV, when grown up, seized every occasion to show his gratitude to Notre-Dame de Cotignac; and when, on the journey he made to the frontiers of Catalonia to marry the Infanta of Spain, Maria Theresa, he visited several towns of Provence, accompanied by Anne of Austria, the duke of Anjou and a numerous suite, he took good care not to forget Notre-Dame de Grâce. He arrived there on 21 February 1660, by a road newly made expressly for him, which is still called today the road of Louis XIV. He said his prayers there, and on leaving he fastened his blue ribbon to the bust of the Virgin, while Anne of Austria founded six Masses to be said in perpetuity in the holy chapel.

Back in Paris, the monarch had a statue of the Child Jesus made in silver-gilt, of ordinary size, for Notre-Dame de Cotignac; and if, on certain advice that was given him, he diverted it from its destination to send it to Our Lady of Loreto in Italy, he made it up to Notre-Dame de Grâce by sending it, through Brother Fiacre, a magnificently bound volume containing the act of his marriage and the treaty of the Pyrenees, so as to place both under the protection of the holy Virgin.

In 1684 Notre-Dame de Grâce became a house of retreat for infirm or aged religious, and the pilgrimage was more frequented than ever. Unhappily ’93 came; the religious were driven out, and the chapel, with the buildings attached to it, was demolished; but the memory of so many graces obtained in this place was too deep for these ruins to remain for ever in the dust. On 8 September 1810 a new chapel was inaugurated, rebuilt by the piety of the faithful on the dimensions and plan of the old one; and since then the pilgrimage has resumed its course.

Taken from *Notre-Dame de France*, by the parish priest of Saint-Sulpice.

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[1] This quarter occupied the approaches of the Cloaca Maxima, and the place where the church of Saint George *ad Velum Aureum* now stands.

[2] Dom Francesco observes here that in giving this etymology of the name Philomena in the first edition of his work he himself hesitated to believe it, but that an inner impulse always drove him, in spite of his reluctance, not only to write it then but to repeat it again in the following editions. It seemed in fact more natural to take the root of this name from the Greek language, which gives a different though analogous sense: that of Beloved, as the Saint indeed particularly is.

# 11 August

## Martyrologies

### MARTYROLOGE ROMAIN.

At Rome, between the two Laurels, the birthday in heaven of Saint TIBURTIUS, martyr, who, during the persecution of Diocletian, having walked barefoot on burning coals and persevering more than ever in the confession of Jesus Christ, was sent by the judge Fabian about three miles from the city, where his head was cut off. 286. — Also at Rome, Saint SUSANNA, a virgin of high birth and niece of Pope Saint Caius, who merited the palm of martyrdom under the emperor Diocletian by losing her head for Jesus Christ. 295. — At Comana in Pontus, Saint ALEXANDER, bishop, surnamed THE CHARCOAL-BURNER, who, from being a most eloquent philosopher, became skilled in the sublime science of Christian humility, was raised to the episcopal throne of that Church by Saint Gregory the Wonder-Worker, and became most illustrious, not only by the brilliance of his preaching but also by a generous martyrdom that he endured in the flames. 250. — The same day, Saint Rufinus, bishop of the Marsi, and his companions, martyred under the emperor Maximian. 4th c. — At Évreux, Saint TAURINUS, ordained bishop of that city by Saint Clement, pope; he greatly extended the Christian religion by the preaching of the Gospel, for which he accomplished great labours, and fell asleep in Our Lord, famous for the brilliance of his miracles. 5th c. — At Cambrai, Saint GÉRY, bishop and confessor. 614. — In Further Abruzzo, Saint Equitius, abbot, whose holiness is attested by Pope Saint Gregory.[1] About 540. — At Todi, a town of Italy (Spoleto), Saint Digna, virgin.[2] Date uncertain.

### MARTYROLOGE DE FRANCE, REVU ET AUGMENTÉ.

In the diocese of Meaux, Saint Agilberta, virgin, abbess of Jouarre, already named yesterday in the martyrology of France, where we gave some details of her life. 7th c. — At Arles, Saint Rusticula or Rusticle, abbess of Saint-Césaire in that city, whose life we gave on the preceding day. 632. — In the dioceses of Bayeux, Rouen and Viviers, Saint Taurinus of Évreux, named in the Roman martyrology of this day. — In the diocese of Arras, Saint Géry, bishop of Cambrai and confessor, named in today’s Roman

martyrology. — In the diocese of Beauvais, Saints Dinault and Arnoul, martyrs, whose life we gave on the preceding day. 5th c. — In the diocese of Cologne, feast of the Division of the Apostles. — In the dioceses of Albi, Cologne, Cambrai, Meaux, Sens and Verdun, memorial of Saint Tiburtius and Saint Susanna, martyrs, cited in the Roman martyrology of this day. — In the diocese of Verdun, Saint Memmius, bishop of Châlons-sur-Marne, whose life we gave on the 5th of this month. 126. — In the diocese of Albi, Saint Philomena, virgin and martyr, whose life we gave on the preceding day. 3rd c. — In the diocese of Nevers, Blessed NICOLAS APPLEINE, priest, canon of the collegiate church of Saint-Marcel at Prémery. 1466. — At Paris, Sens and Troyes, feast of the Translation of the holy Crown of Thorns of Our Lord. We shall speak of it at length in the life of Saint Louis (25 August), who enriched France with this precious relic. 1239. — In the Limousin, Sister Antoinette-Pacifique de Bardoulat, Ursuline nun. Born of one of the most considerable houses of the town of Eymoutiers, about seven leagues from Limoges, she entered early the community of the Ursulines of that town and applied herself there above all to practising the interior mortification of the passions. The devil strove to cast some thoughts of vainglory into this soul so pure, and went so far as to try to hurl her into despair: she triumphed over all these attacks through the intercession of the holy Virgin, in whom she had great confidence, and fell asleep gently in the Lord, aged only twenty-seven; she had spent six years in religion in the practice of the most exact regularity and of all the Christian and religious virtues. 17th c. — Also in the Limousin, Brother Pierre de Saint-Yrieix, Dominican. He was born at Saint-Yrieix-la-Perche (Haute-Vienne) of an obscure family, which he afterwards made illustrious by his virtues. Having entered the convent of the Dominicans of Limoges, he led there a wholly heavenly life and died in the odour of sanctity. 1265. — In Brabant, translation of Saint Trond, patron of Haspengheim, and of Saint Eucherius, bishop of Orléans. — At Reims, translation of Saint Callixtus or Calliste, pope and martyr, whose feast is kept on 14 October, the day under which we shall give his life. 223.

## MARTYROLOGES DES ORDRES RELIGIEUX.

Martyrology of the Basilians. — Saint Philomena, virgin and martyr.[3] 3rd c.

Martyrology of the Camaldolese. — Saint Dominic, confessor, Founder of the Order of Friars Preachers, whose feast is celebrated on 4 August.[4] 1281.

Martyrology of Vallombrosa. — Saint Alphonsus Liguori, bishop and confessor, who is commemorated on 2 August.[5] 1787.

Martyrology of the Carmelites. — Blessed Jane Scopelli, virgin, of the Order of Carmelite nuns, whose birthday in heaven is celebrated on 9 July.[6] 149.

Martyrology of the Hermits of Saint Augustine. — At Fabriano in Italy (province of Macerata), memorial of the blessed kinsmen Pierre and Jean Beccheti, who, having embraced the eremitical life among the Augustinians, became illustrious by the preaching of the word of God and still more by a most austere penance and a most fervent devotion to the passion of Our Lord, and happily ended their lives.

Martyrology of the Discalced Carmelites. — Saint Emygdius, bishop and martyr, whose birthday in heaven is celebrated on the 5th of this month.[7] 303 or 304.

## ADDITIONS FAITES D'APRÈS LES BOLLANDISTES ET AUTRES HAGIOGRAPHES.

At Barcelona (*Barcino*), a city of Spain, institution of Our Lady of Mercy by James, king of Aragon, in consequence of a vow he had made of it to the most holy Virgin while still a captive, and after a revelation that the Mother of God made of it to him, to Saint Raymond, Dominican, and to Saint Peter Nolasco. 1218. — At Rome and in Campania (today the Terra di Lavoro), with Saint Tiburtius, cited in the Roman martyrology of this day, Saint Chromatius, his father, and his companions. 286 or 287. — At Nicopolis, today Nicopoli, a fortified town of Turkey in Europe (Bulgaria), several holy Martyrs whose names are not

known, and who are mentioned in the martyrology of Saint Jerome. — In the diocese of Sora (in the ancient town of *Castrum*

*Gallinarium*), in Italy, Saint Gerard, confessor. Of French origin, he died unknown in that little town. His holiness was revealed by a pilgrim whom he had cured and to whom he appeared after his death. A church soon rose over his tomb, which witnessed an infinity of prodigies. The sick of every kind miraculously recovered their health there, and the name of Saint Gerard became popular throughout Italy. About the year 1100. — At Spalatro (*Spalatrum*, Salona), a town and port of the Austrian States in Dalmatia, Blessed Rainerius, archbishop of that see and martyr, at first a monk of the Camaldolese monastery of the Holy Cross of Fonte Avellana and bishop of Cagli. We gave, under 4 August, in a note to the martyrology of the Camaldolese, the few details known of his life. 1180.

## Saint Alexander the Charcoal-Burner, Bishop of Comana in Pontus, Martyr

*250. — Pope: Saint Fabian. — Roman Emperor: Decius.*

> *Qui vere humilis est, magis optat vilis et abjectus haberi, quam sanctus.*
>
> *He who is truly humble would rather pass for vile and abject than for holy.*
>
> *Louis de Blois.*

Saint Alexander was from the province of Pontus, of an honourable birth, which gave him sufficient means to apply himself to study. As he had much intelligence, he became an excellent philosopher and acquired all the fine accomplishments that could make him esteemed and honoured in the world. He had besides a grace and a beauty without equal, which drew upon him the eyes of all who met him. His virtue and piety surpassed even all these natural qualities; and, having been brought up in the maxims of Christian morality, he feared nothing so much as offending God, and had nothing more at heart than to observe all His commandments exactly. His delicacy of conscience was so great that, fearing on the one hand that his learning might lead him to vanity, and on the other that his beauty might be an occasion of scandal to someone and rob him himself of the priceless flower of chastity, he resolved to hide both, so that they could no longer do him harm. With this design he sold his goods, distributed the price of them to the poor, came to live in the city of Comana, and took up the trade of charcoal-burner, which consisted in carrying and selling charcoal. He loved abjection so much that, not content with having his hands and face blackened, he was usually in rags and half naked, so as to draw on himself the contempt of the world. He did not fail, however, to be assiduous at church, to pray with great fervour in his poor room, and to read attentively the word of God in the Old and New Testaments, which was his most delightful food.

While he was living thus in obscurity, the bishop of Comana happened to die, and the leading members of the clergy of the city, being unable to agree on the successor they should give him, sent to beg Saint Gregory, bishop of Neocaesarea, to come to them to preside over their election and to help them recognise the one whom God Himself had chosen. When he had arrived there, he found opinions much divided, but united on this point, that they stopped at the false glitter of the world and proposed men recommended either by their nobility, or by their great wealth, or by their offices, or by their eloquence and good grace, or by some other outward qualities. Saint Gregory listened peaceably to all these proposals; but he resolved to wait until God should make known to him more distinctly the one he was to consecrate. In the meantime he assembled the priests and clerics with the leading men of the people, and after explaining to them the obligations of a bishop and how important it was to make a good choice in this matter, lest the guidance of the sheep of Jesus Christ be given to a hireling or a wolf, he told them that they should not dwell too much on persons considerable for their wealth, their birth or their services, and that it would be imprudent to exclude others less known, because great souls whose virtue makes them worthy of the episcopate are often found in middling conditions.

This proposal was rather ill received by those who had the chief share in the election. One of them in particular mocked it and said to the Saint jeeringly: “If the most honourable subjects of our city do not please you, then we must take to govern us someone from the dregs of the people, and instead of giving our votes to these men of merit, give them to Alexander the Charcoal-Burner, who, with his rags and his blackness, will be very fit to sit on the throne of this church.” At these words Saint Gregory was touched by a divine impulse that made him understand that it was not without reason that this Charcoal-Burner had been named rather than anyone else. He asked who he was and whether there was a way of seeing him. He was sent for at once, and he appeared in that fine assembly all black and dressed in tatters that did not even cover his whole body. Everyone began to laugh; but Gregory perceived beneath the blackness and the rags of this man something extraordinary and divine. He could not admire enough his modesty, his gravity and the signs of joy he gave in the midst of these jeers; for his profound humility made him delighted to be the laughing-stock of everyone, and he was no more moved by it than a proud man would be on being given great praise. And so the blessed bishop, not doubting that this was the one whom divine Providence had chosen to govern the church of Comana amid the storms of persecution, took him aside and obliged him, on God’s behalf, to tell him who he was, what his exercises had been during his youth, why he had chosen so vile an occupation, and finally what graces he had received from heaven. Alexander was constrained to tell him that it was neither the condition of his birth nor the necessity of earning his living that had reduced him to being a charcoal-burner, but only the fear of God and the desire to put his own salvation and that of others in safety; he had studied philosophy and sacred Letters, and his occupation did not prevent him from exercising his mind in them, so as to apply himself more perfectly to the knowledge and love of his God. After this confession Gregory declared to him that it was the divine will that he should let himself be consecrated bishop, and that he must in no way resist this disposition, because humility, however profound it may be, must not refuse offices when God commands submission to them. Having said this, he commanded his clerics to wash this charcoal-burner, to give him other clothes and then to vest him in his ecclesiastical garments. While they were carrying out this command he went back into the assembly and began to speak to those present of the supernatural qualities that should adorn the soul of a good bishop. His discourse lasted until the clerics brought in Alexander, vested as a bishop, with much reverence and solemnity. Those who had mocked him could not then admire enough the beauty of his face, the majesty of his bearing, the modesty of his looks and the singular decorum that appeared in his whole person. Gregory, therefore, addressing them, said: “This man whom I present to you is the very Charcoal-Burner whom you mocked. Your senses had deceived you and hidden from you the great gifts with which the divine goodness has filled him. You judged by the outside, and on that outside you rejected him who was worthy of this whole city; but God, who watches over His flock and wishes to give it a pastor after His own heart, has used your own mockery to draw him out of the dust and set him on the candlestick of His Church. The devil, who foresaw that this excellent man would destroy his empire, also did his utmost to prevent him from having authority among you; but Our Lord has destroyed all his artifices, and in spite of his efforts He wills to give him to you today as your head, your bishop and your father.” There was no one in the whole assembly who dared contradict these words, which the Saint spoke in the Spirit of God; and so, the election having been made unanimously, he proceeded to his consecration, first conferring on him all the Orders up to the priesthood, according to the custom of the Church.

As soon as the consecration was finished, the new bishop was asked to give a word of instruction to the people; he therefore went up into the pulpit and, without any preparation, preached an excellent sermon, not enriched with fine periods and the vain flowers of worldly rhetoric, but full of the Spirit of God and supported by powerful reasons and by passages of holy Scripture very aptly applied. It was clearly seen from this that Gregory’s choice had been most judicious, and no one any longer doubted that it had been inspired in him from heaven. There was only one young scatterbrain, lately come from the schools of Athens, who mocked this discourse as not having the ornaments of Athenian eloquence; but he quite changed his opinion

and his language when he saw around Alexander a multitude of young doves, emblem of the heavenly words of the holy bishop.

That is how Saint Alexander the Philosopher became a charcoal-burner, and from charcoal-burner was elected and consecrated bishop. There is no doubt that he acquitted himself most worthily of this office and converted many unbelievers to the faith, according to the prophecy of Saint Gregory that he would destroy the empire of the devil; but ecclesiastical History has taught us nothing of him after his ordination, except that from bishop he became a most illustrious and most glorious martyr, having been seized and burned in the cruel persecution that was stirred up against the Christians in the year 250 by the emperor Decius.

We have taken this life from what Saint Gregory the Wonder-Worker wrote of it. — *Cf.* Tillemont; Baillet; Godescard; Saint Gregory of Nyssa.

## Saint Tiburtius, Martyr at Rome

*286. — Pope: Saint Caius. — Roman Emperor: Diocletian.*

> *The prospect of death holds nothing so bitter that the death of Christ does not sweeten it.*
>
> *Saint Augustine.*

Saint Tiburtius was the son of Chromatius, prefect of Rome, who, charged by the emperor with putting to death Saint Mark and Saint Marcellian, brothers, and having on that occasion entered into conference with Tranquillinus their father, whom Saint Sebastian had converted, himself also recognised the truth of our faith. He embraced it with incredible courage and fervour, even to giving liberty to four hundred slaves he owned and to taking into his country houses all the weak and faint-hearted Christians he could find, who did not seem generous enough to withstand the rigour of the persecution. Tiburtius imitated his father’s example, and, having received baptism with him, at once gave signs of a firm faith, of perfect confidence in God and of consummate charity. Pope Saint Caius wished him to absent himself from Rome for some time, so as not to be exposed so soon to the cruelty of the tyrants; but the new soldier of Jesus Christ, feeling the desire for martyrdom seething in his heart, begged the blessed Pontiff to allow him to remain in the city with the holy Confessors, so as to fight there for the religion he had just embraced and to be stirred up more and more by the example of those who would endure death for Jesus Christ.

The greatness of his holiness appeared in a miracle he worked a short time after his conversion. Coming out one day from the house where all the Confessors were assembled, he found in the street a man who had fallen from an upper storey and was so broken that he gave no further hope of life. He went up to him and, by invoking the adorable name of Jesus Christ, restored him on the spot to perfect health; this was the cause of his conversion and of that of his nearest kin, whom Tiburtius led to Saint Caius to receive baptism. He so ardently desired that all who bore the name of Christians should edify everyone by their words and the example of their lives that he could not see a single one of them in disorder without charitably rebuking him, lest he cause the name of Jesus Christ to be blasphemed. So, having noticed that a man named Torquatus was a Christian only in name, living very softly, always going about curled and perfumed with musk, and even keeping up dishonourable relations, he did not fail to rebuke him for it and to exhort him to reform his morals according to his faith. Torquatus took this remonstrance very ill; and, to avenge himself, he arranged with some officers that, one day when he would be praying to God in the church with Tiburtius, they should arrest them both as Christians, so as to bring them before the prefect’s tribunal.

The thing was carried out according to his plan. The traitor went out with Tiburtius and went to pray with him; the officers came upon them and took them without either of them offering resistance. They were brought before the prefect Fabian, who, being in the secret, said to Torquatus: “What then, Torquatus! do you too acknowledge a crucified man for your God?” At this question the impious man began to laugh and said, pointing to Tiburtius, that he had no other God than the one this Blessed man had made known to him.

Tiburtius saw clearly that this was a traitor who had tricked him and delivered him to the tyrant, and who was mocking our religion. So, taking up the word, he said to him in a grave and terrible tone:

“Do not think, Torquatus, that your artifice is unknown to us; we never took you for a disciple of Jesus Christ. It is not being a disciple of that great Master to frequent lost women, to give oneself up continually to debauchery and to be always drunk. The abominable works by which you have dishonoured the Church have shown clearly enough that you had no belief in the Gospel. You were among us, but you were not of us; the betrayal you have done me is a further evident mark of it; but know that instead of harming me you have procured me a very great good, since there is nothing I desire more passionately than to give my blood and my life for Him who died on a cross for love of me.”

Fabian, irritated by this speech, told Tiburtius that it was not a question of talking but of sacrificing to the gods of the empire.

“I sacrifice,” said Tiburtius, “only to one God, Creator of the world, who reigns on earth and in the heavens; and my greatest desire is to be immolated and sacrificed myself for this confession.” “Yet you must,” replied Fabian, “either obey us or walk barefoot on burning coals.” “I will walk on them gladly,” said Tiburtius, “and those coals will be more pleasant to me than roses.”

At that very hour the executioners covered a space with coals red with fire, from which the flame still leapt violently. Tiburtius did not wait to be unshod; but, having taken off his shoes himself and made the sign of the cross, he stepped onto these coals and walked about on them without receiving any harm, any more than if he had been walking on a bed of flowers or a carpet of tender grass. Then, turning to the judge, he said to him: “Learn now, Fabian, the strength and power of faith, and acknowledge by the miracle you see that there is no other Divinity than the one I adore, and no salvation to be hoped for except by embracing the Christian religion.” Fabian was too hardened to be won by this marvel; but, fearing that other pagans might be shaken by it, he pronounced the sentence of death against Tiburtius on the spot and sent him to be beheaded at a place three miles from the city, which was between two laurels. It was on 11 August of the year 286, six months and twenty-one days after Saint Sebastian. The body of Saint Tiburtius was carried to the abbey of Saint-Médard in 828. Part of his relics is kept in the cathedral of Soissons.

He is represented carrying burning coals in his hand, or walking barefoot on the glowing embers; sometimes in military dress, because he was the son of the prefect of Rome.

*Cf. Acta Sanctorum*, and *Annales du diocèse de Soissons*, by the abbé Pécheur.

## Saint Susanna, Martyr at Rome

*295. — Pope: Saint Caius. — Roman Emperors: Diocletian and Maximian.*

> *This world is worthy of contempt, even when it flatters and caresses the heart with prosperity.*
>
> *Saint Gregory the Great.*

Saint Susanna was the daughter of Saint Gabinius and niece of Saint Caius, pope, his brother, who were of a most illustrious race and close kinsmen of the emperor Diocletian. Her father, who had become a priest after her birth, brought her up with great care in the fear of God and the love of Jesus Christ; and when she had grown up she consecrated herself entirely to His service and resolved never to have any other spouse than the King of Virgins and of holy souls. It happened, however, that Valeria, daughter of Diocletian, whom Maximian Galerius had married, died; and the emperor, wishing to give him another wife from his own kindred, cast his eyes for this purpose on Susanna, whose intelligence, wisdom and beauty were extraordinary and charmed everyone. He knew that Caius, her uncle, was the sovereign Pontiff of the Christians and that Gabinius, her father, was a priest; but at that time he had not yet risen against his own blood, and he was not such an enemy of the faithful that he did not prefer the establishment and

aggrandisement of his house and his kindred to the ruin of Christianity. With this thought he called a Roman lord named Claudius, who was also his cousin and was still more closely related to the two brothers, the father and the uncle of Susanna, and begged him to go to Gabinius and courteously make him the proposal of a marriage between his daughter and Maximian. Claudius felt greatly honoured by this mission and undertook it with joy. He came therefore to find Gabinius and proposed to him the affair, which he thought must be very agreeable to him. The holy priest did not rebuff him, but only asked him for a few days' delay to speak of it to the Pope and to his daughter. They therefore conferred together, and at first these blessed brothers were not far from consenting to the alliance the emperor desired, in the view that it might make this prince, and Maximian his son-in-law, who was to succeed him, more favourable to the Christians. But Our Lord, who did not wish to establish His religion by these human and political means, gave another thought to Susanna. She declared to them, then, "that, according to the good instructions she had received from their charity, she had consecrated herself to the King of kings and would never have any other spouse than Him; even if she had not resolved to keep her chastity inviolably, she would not wish to marry a man defiled by the abominations of idolatry and by the massacre of an infinite number of Christians, as was Maximian, who had often taken part in the persecution Diocletian had waged against them; and so she begged them to break off entirely all these marriage negotiations." Caius and Gabinius praised her resolution exceedingly and exhorted her to persevere in it constantly, so that neither promises nor threats should ever make her change it.

Claudius, returning after three days, repeated in the Pope's presence the proposal he had made. The holy brothers told him that the young girl's will must be ascertained on this point, and in fact had her called at once. When she entered the room, Claudius wished to kiss her as a mark of honour, as his kinswoman; but she repulsed him, telling him that her mouth had never been defiled by any man's kiss and that she would certainly not receive one from a person whom the worship of false gods and the murder of Christians made foul and abominable before God. Claudius, taken aback by these words, excused his action on the ground that it had seemed to him that, being her near kinsman, he might well use this familiarity with her. And as for the defilements she imputed to him, he begged her to tell him by what means he could be delivered from them. "It will be," answered Susanna, "by doing penance and receiving holy baptism." Caius and Gabinius supported these words and spoke so effectively to this lord of the advantages of our religion that, troubling himself no more about his mission, he embraced Christianity and had himself baptized, with Praepedigna his wife and two sons he had, named Alexander and Cuthias. Meanwhile the emperor, receiving no answer to the proposal he had sent him to make to Gabinius, inquired into the reason for his delay. He was told that Claudius had fallen ill and that this had prevented him from coming to find His Majesty; the emperor, who loved him and was impatient to know the outcome of his message, sent to him Maximus, count of his household affairs, to visit him and learn from him the result of this negotiation. Maximus, who was his brother, was much surprised to find him in the state of a penitent, with tears in his eyes, a hair shirt on his back, and prostrate before an oratory; he asked him the reason for this change. Claudius told him openly that God had given him the grace of opening his eyes to know the truths of the Christian religion, and that, recognising how guilty he was of having adored idols and shed the innocent blood of Christians, he was doing penance for it. Maximus, touched by his words and his example, asked to be enlightened in the mysteries of our faith. Claudius took him to Saint Caius, who baptized him and gave him at the same time the sacraments of Confirmation and the Eucharist. Claudius and Maximus, having thus entered the bosom of the Church, sold all their goods to have the means of helping the poor faithful whom the long persecutions had reduced to extreme poverty. The emperor was informed of it, and learned at the same time that instead of persuading Gabinius to give his daughter in marriage to Maximian, they had embraced his religion and were among the first to persuade that holy girl to remain a virgin. This news angered him. He forgot that they were his near kinsmen; he had them arrested with Praepedigna, Alexander and Cuthias and banished them to the port of Ostia, where they were put to death. He also had Gabinius imprisoned with Susanna, and after fifty-five days of prison he begged the empress Prisca, his wife, to bring this illustrious girl to consent to his

wishes. Prisca had her brought to her apartment; but, as she herself was a Christian, far from advising her anything against her resolution and her vow, she on the contrary strengthened her in her generous purpose. Diocletian, learning that she was unshakeable, had her taken back to her house and allowed Maximian to go there to use violence. The prince went there; but when he entered her room he saw beside her an angel of marvellous brightness, who was guarding her. Terror seized him, and he withdrew in confusion without having dared to attempt anything. Diocletian attributed this to magic and sent one of his officers named Macedonius to compel the Saint to adore the idols. This officer presented her with an image of Jupiter, ordering her on the emperor's behalf to offer it incense. Susanna then raised her eyes and her heart to heaven, and at the same instant the statue disappeared and was found in the street, thrown to the ground. Macedonius, unable to gain anything by gentleness, had recourse to threats and tortures; he ill-treated her in her own house, beat her cruelly and tore her body with blows of the whip. At last the emperor, learning that she was still inflexible, commanded that she be beheaded, which was carried out secretly in her house on 11 August 295.

The empress Prisca was soon informed of what had happened; she felt extreme joy at learning that Susanna had kept her faith and her innocence in spite of all the efforts of the powers of the earth. She went herself by night to the place of her execution and, having found her bathed in her blood, took the veil from her head and dipped it in that precious liquid. Afterwards she had this veil enclosed in a silver box and placed it in her oratory, where she prayed assiduously without the knowledge of Diocletian, her husband. As for the body of our Saint, she embalmed it, shrouded it with her own hands and had it buried in the very grotto of Saint Alexander, beside an infinite number of other martyrs. The house that had been the place of her birth, of her conversion on earth and of her most precious death was changed by Saint Caius into a church, where he said Mass in her honour. It was on the Quirinal, in the street of Mamurius, before the market of Sallust. This church still exists and is occupied by Cistercian nuns; it is also a cardinal's title, and some of the Eminences who have held it have taken care to have it embellished.

Saint Susanna is seen in her images with a crown at her feet. Out of love for virginity she would not marry the son of Diocletian; this is an allusion to that fact.

*Cf. Acta Sanctorum*, and *Histoire de l'Église*, by the abbé Darras.

## Saint Taurinus of Rome, First Bishop and Apostle of Évreux

*5th century.*

> *Via Dei pax, via Dei humilitas, via Dei patientia est.*
>
> *The way of God is peace, it is humility, it is patience.*
>
> *Saint Gregory the Great.*

The birth of this holy bishop was illustrious according to the flesh; he came of parents noble and rich in the world, but history does not record distinctly what their offices were. Rome was the city that had the happiness of seeing so holy a personage born; it is held that his birth was foretold by an angel. His father was called Tarquin and lived in the darkness of unbelief; his mother, Eutitia, had the advantage of being a Christian: it has even been written that she had the glory of being a martyr. The birth of Taurinus was preceded by miraculous signs, like that of the greatest Saints. His mother, like another Elizabeth, lived in the practice of God's commandments with extreme fidelity; as she had no children, she prayed God with great humility and perseverance to give His blessing to her marriage and to grant her its fruit. Her vows and prayers were not without effect: the Angel of the Lord appeared to her and made known to her that she had been heard. This pious lady, who had no other aim than to please her God, at once made Him an offering of the child she expected from His goodness; she vowed him to His service, to procure His greater glory. This act, done in a spirit of lively faith and with a most sincere heart, was very pleasing to God; and so it was not

without reward; for her child, having received the grace of baptism and having reached an age that could already reveal something of his bent, seemed to have had all the inclinations of the old man converted into those of Jesus Christ. Nothing was noticed in him but impulses that tended toward good, and the more he advanced in age, the more he was seen to grow in wisdom and virtue; it was thus that God was preparing him for the great designs He had for him.

When he was far enough advanced in his studies and his mind was mature enough to think of choosing a state of life, he did not depart from the intentions of his pious mother; but, following the impulse of the same spirit that had guided that holy woman when she had once offered this dear son, destining him to the service of the altar, our holy young man did not resist the inner inspiration that called him to the priesthood. He therefore embraced the ecclesiastical state from most disinterested motives, having no other thought in it than to accomplish the will of God and procure His glory; for, had he wished to follow the inclinations of nature and the life of the senses, he was free to do so, his parents having great wealth and being highly considered in the world.

As grace cannot remain barren in a faithful heart, Taurinus was not content with having entered the ecclesiastical state by the right door; but, wishing to answer worthily the first duties of that noble state, that is, after the example of Jesus Christ, the conversion of peoples and the publishing of the Gospel, he conceived the design of leaving his country and his kin, in imitation of the greatest Apostles, to go and preach the name of Jesus Christ in places where it was not yet known. Those of his kin who were less enlightened than his pious mother, and who had in view only family interests and natural affection, opposed the designs of this worthy priest of Jesus Christ; but Eutitia, who had asked of heaven and obtained from God this dear son only to consecrate him to His service, urged him rather to be faithful to the grace that called him to the conversion of peoples than to remain in the country, as everyone wished.

Taurinus therefore left Rome, the place of his birth, to go to a distant country, where he could expect nothing but rebuffs, contempt and every other kind of cross. He could have taken with him some considerable sums of money without wronging his family or committing any injustice; but, having already a truly apostolic heart, he neglected all human precautions; he made no provision and thought of no comfort; but, generously leaving everything and relying only on divine Providence, whose care is of greater help than all the riches of the earth, he arrived at last in the country of Évreux, in Normandy, to proclaim there the holy Gospel of Jesus Christ. He laboured with admirable constancy and charity at the conversion of that people, who were then groaning under the harsh tyranny of the demons and in ignorance of Christian truths. His successes were so considerable, and the light of the Gospel began to spread with such brilliance, that the prince of darkness, unable to bear the diminishing of his empire in this way, opposed our Saint’s mission in an infinite number of ways. He appeared to him in the horrible forms of the cruellest beasts to intimidate him and interrupt his work; but this holy missionary, having an invincible faith and perfect confidence in the sovereign power of the three persons of the holy Trinity, always triumphed gloriously by the sign of the cross alone, to which he had recourse on every occasion.

The malice of men scarcely yielded to that of the devil against our Saint. The prefect of the city, the priests of the idols and the magicians conspired together to put him to death. The prefect, whose name was Licinius, ordered his soldiers to seize him and bring him to him at the village of Gisay, where he then was, some leagues distant from the city of Évreux. This order was carried out; the Saint appeared; the prefect asked him where he came from, who he was and what purpose had brought him into the country. Then the apostolic man began to speak to him with incomparable zeal of the mysteries of the Christian religion, of the resurrection of the dead, of the infinite duration of eternity, of the incomprehensible rewards promised to those who serve and adore the true God in spirit and in truth, and of the eternal torments that unbelievers and sinners will suffer in hell; he added a discourse on the vanity of idols, works of men’s hands, unworthy of men’s adoration. Licinius, not approving the holy boldness of this man of God and closing his ears to the

truth he proclaimed, commanded that he be cruelly scourged and that this torture be inflicted on him until he lost his life. The executioners tried to carry out this order; but divine Providence disposed otherwise: for while a hail of blows was falling on the body of the blessed Martyr, a heavenly voice was heard telling him to fear nothing, and at the same moment the executioners' hands became motionless, which made them unable to continue their wretched design.

This miracle and the great truths that Saint Taurinus had had the courage to proclaim brought about the conversion of Leonilla, the prefect's wife; she made a public profession of the Christian religion on the spot. This threw her husband into such a rage that he commanded that she be taken with Saint Taurinus to a frightful prison; she thus became a sharer in the sufferings this holy priest had the glory of enduring for Jesus Christ. There is still shown today, near the parish church in the village of Gisay, the place where the Saint was scourged. But just as the great apostle Saint Paul, after suffering the whip and prison, assures the Thessalonians that his coming among them was not without fruit, so we see that the arrival of Saint Taurinus in the country of Évreux produced a thousand blessings, which were as it were the fruit of his torments. He raised to life the daughter of the man in whose house he was staying, and at the sight of this miracle a hundred and twenty persons were converted and received holy Baptism. Having gone to a temple of Diana, he commanded the demon who dwelt in an idol to show himself, and at once a mournful voice was heard by which he declared that his power had been bound ever since Taurinus, the disciple of Jesus Christ, had arrived in the country. This was the cause of the conversion of two thousand unbelievers, and afterwards of twelve hundred others. This holy confessor of the Christian name, going afterwards from village to village and through all the townships of the country, proclaimed everywhere the holy Gospel of Jesus Christ, casting down the idols and having small buildings put up to lodge the poor and provide for their needs. He had a particular respect for the holy Virgin and had her honoured everywhere; he established her as special protectress and patroness of the country of Évreux, consecrating to God under her invocation the first church that was built there, and changing the false worship of Diana into that which was due to the Mother of God, as happened formerly in the city of Ephesus when the first Apostles, preaching the Gospel there, destroyed the false worship paid to that same divinity.

At last, after this glorious Apostle had destroyed the idols everywhere and established on their ruins the worship of the true God, it pleased divine Providence to reward him. An angel announced to him the moment of his death. He went therefore that day to the church consecrated to the holy Virgin, whom he had chosen as his special protectress; there he celebrated the divine Mysteries; he exhorted the people and confirmed in the true faith those whom he had converted to Jesus Christ, assuring them of a special protection of divine Providence over them if they remained in their good dispositions; he gave them his blessing, and while all the people were melting into tears at the thought of the loss they were about to suffer, the holy bishop gently expired, to go and unite himself more closely than ever with Him for whose glory he had laboured so much on earth. Several miraculous signs appeared at his precious death; and, as he had had a singular devotion to the holy angels during his life, there were seen at his death a great number of these blessed spirits, who sang praises in his honour and consoled the people. It was also an angel who marked the place of his burial. It is not without reason that the Roman martyrology says that our Saint was illustrious for his miracles, since he worked an infinite number of them, both during his life and after his death. During his life at least eight blind men are counted to whom he restored sight, and several deaf and dumb to whom he restored hearing and speech; he even raised the dead, and almost none of the sick who turned to him failed to receive their cure. All these prodigies, preceded by a perfectly exemplary holiness of life, were the powerful motives that led not only the people of Évreux but also all the inhabitants of the surrounding countries to embrace the faith of Jesus Christ. The prefect himself, Licinius, who had so persecuted the Saint, was so terrified by the greatness and the multitude of the miracles worked through the merits of our Saint, and so penetrated with fear of the true God whom Saint Taurinus adored, that he at last opened his eyes to the lights of grace and submitted to the laws of the Gospel. This great change in the prefect came immediately after our holy bishop had raised to

life his son, named Marinus, and one of his officers, named Paschal. All the miracles our Saint had worked during his life were renewed after his death.

Father Giry relates two that happened in his own time. A lady named Anne Le Tac, who had been afflicted for seven years with a grievous paralysis that no remedy had been able to dispel, was at last perfectly cured in an instant on the seventh day of a novena she had made with great confidence at the tomb of Saint Taurinus. This miracle happened on the 17th of the month of August in the year 1690; it is attested by several physicians. It was followed by the true and sincere conversion of this lady's husband, who, having been a Calvinist and having abjured his heresy only in appearance, had not until then believed in the intercession of the Saints; but, having fallen dangerously ill and having used, in a spirit of faith, some linen cloths that had touched the shrine of Saint Taurinus, he found such prompt relief for his illness in this new remedy that he renounced his former errors and gave glory to God for the cure he had just received through the merits and intercession of His holy servant. The other miracle happened in the year 1691, on the 10th of the month of May, in the person of Jacques Valée, aged ten, living in the township of Damville in the diocese of Évreux. This child was subject to epileptic fits that took him every day and were followed by a paralysis and loss of use of both legs, so that he could neither walk nor stand; and the physicians having judged this illness incurable, the sick boy's father made a novena at the tomb of Saint Taurinus. On the ninth day, returning from Évreux, he was much surprised to see his son coming toward him in perfect health; he had received his cure at the very hour at which his father had had the sacrifice of the Mass offered for him in honour of Saint Taurinus. From that time the boy never felt any attack of his terrible illness.

## CULTE ET RELIQUES.

At the time of the invasion of the Northmen, in the 9th century, Guntbert, bishop of Évreux, carried out the translation of the body of Saint Taurinus, assisted by some pious monks of the abbey of Saint-Taurin. After hiding part of the relics in the convent cemetery, they wrapped the head and the other bones in a silk cloth and placed them in a portable shrine. Then they fled in all haste and did not stop until Lezoux, arrondissement of Thiers (Puy-de-Dôme). They deposited the relics in the church dedicated to Saint Peter, where they worked a great number of miracles and drew to that church a prodigious concourse of the surrounding peoples. In 912 the Northmen, converted, laid down their arms; it was then that the inhabitants of Évreux thought of recovering possession of the relics of Saint Taurinus. They sent three young clerics to take them secretly. Having accomplished their pious theft, these arrived safely at Gigny about the year 914 or 915, where they were held back for three days without being able to leave. The relics were carried into the abbey and placed on one of the altars, where they worked a great number of miracles. It is there that they are still exposed to the veneration of the faithful. The misfortunes of the times more than once made it necessary to hide them, to save them from pillage and profanation, for example in 1477, 1595 and 1635. In 1636 they were taken to the castle of Cressia, where they remained ten years, and were not returned to the priory until 11 August 1646, to be placed for the time being in a vaulted closet of the prior's house until the restoration of the church. A little before 1685 the religious of Gigny renewed the shrine of Saint Taurinus and splendidly rebuilt his altar. In 1760 the monastery of Gigny was secularised and changed into a collegiate church. In 1788 the collegiate church itself was suppressed and its goods given to the Canonesses of Lons-le-Saunier and of Migette. At the beginning of 1794 the silver of the shrine was removed, and the shrine itself relegated to the sacristy. In the night of 23 Fructidor of the same year the revolutionaries broke the shrine, carried off the head and the bones and nailed them to the tree of liberty. They were, however, saved for the most part and put back in the shrine after the evil days. These precious remains are, among others, a lower jaw, a femur, a forearm bone, and a fragment of rib enclosed in an iron tube hidden in a silver cross. In 1840 a new shrine of wood, gilded and glazed, was made. The cult of Saint Taurinus is as widespread as it is ancient in the Church. He is honoured particularly in Normandy, Auvergne, Burgundy, Franche-Comté and Lorraine, and even outside France, at Rome and in Ireland, but above all in the churches enriched with his relics. The

old missals and breviaries of Besançon make no mention of Saint Taurinus, because Gigny belonged to the diocese of Lyons until 1742. His office was introduced in 1761, with the rite of a semidouble, into the breviary of Besançon, on 6 September. But at Gigny his cult has always flourished, both in the monastery and in the parish. The feast of Saint Taurinus was celebrated there on 11 August and on 5 September, the day of the second finding of his relics at Évreux, with all possible solemnity.

Évreux still possesses in part those relics of Saint Taurinus that remained at the abbey of that city when the others were carried to Lezoux in the 9th century. They had then been buried in the cemetery, from which they were not raised until after the pacification of the country, about the year 912. This translation took place on 5 September, and it is on that day that it is celebrated at Évreux with the rite of a double minor. But the principal feast is solemnised on 11 August, the day of the first finding of the relics of Saint Taurinus, in 600, by Saint Landulphus, bishop of Évreux. He is the first patron of the city and the diocese.

The Churches of Rouen and Bayeux likewise honour him with a special cult. As for the other Churches that possessed some particles of his relics, it is enough to name the cathedral of Chartres, where his cult was held in great honour, and the church of Saint-Pierre at Lezoux, where he has a special chapel and is venerated as the second patron of the parish. The abbey of Saint-Claude also possessed a finger of Saint Taurinus, and that of Cluny a bone of his shoulder.

This life, as to its principal facts, is taken from an ancient manuscript kept in the archives of the cathedral of Évreux and from other ancient manuscripts preserved in the archives of the abbey of that place. We have also made use of the *Histoire de la vie de saint Taurin*, composed by Henri-Marie Boudon, archdeacon of Évreux, and of the *Vie des Saints de Franche-Comté*.

## Saint Géry,[1] Bishop of Cambrai and Confessor

*614. — Pope: Boniface V. — King of France: Clotaire II.*

> *We must pray for our enemies, either to obtain their conversion, or so that they may see in us an image of the heavenly goodness.*
>
> *Saint Prosper.*

Saint Gaugericus, commonly called Saint Géry, and among the Flemings Saint Gurx, was born in the diocese of Trier at Yvoie, today Carignan, chief town of a canton of the department of the Ardennes. His father was Gaudentius and his mother Austadiola, persons of high virtue. His parents had him brought up under their own eyes in the knowledge of letters and the practice of virtue. He accustomed himself early to vigils and prayer; from childhood, too, he loved to relieve the misery of the poor. The education he received in his father’s house preserved him from the corruption that is only too common among young people; and while those of his age were swallowing the poison of vice under the pretext of training themselves in the sciences and the manners of the world, he was able to keep the precious treasure of his innocence.

Saint Magnericus, successor of Saint Nicetius in the see of Trier, having come to Yvoie, had occasion to become acquainted with Géry there. He was so charmed with his talents and his virtue that he ordained him deacon. Then Géry redoubled his fervour in the practice of good works. He applied himself with tireless zeal to fulfilling the duties of his state and above all to instructing the faithful. The reputation of his learning and holiness drew upon him the attention of all the Churches round about; and so, at the death of Saint Vaast, bishop of Cambrai and Arras, some notable inhabitants went to Childebert II and begged him to give them Géry as their pastor. The pious Magnericus’s grief was great at this news; there was being taken from him the one who, he hoped, would one day succeed him. Nevertheless he yielded to the royal request, which he regarded as the expression of the will of heaven, and his beloved disciple had to go to Reims, to Giles, metropolitan of the province, to be ordained priest and receive episcopal anointing. The new prelate hastened immediately afterwards to go into the midst of his flock.

On his entry into the city of Cambrai, as the bishop was passing through the crowd along the streets that led to the church, cries of grief and supplication rang in his ears. Saint Géry stops at once and, asking the cause of these lamentations, learns that they come from the public prisons, where twelve criminals condemned to death were begging him to have pity on their fate and obtain their pardon. The bishop, turning at once to Wado or Gaud, governor of the city, who was walking at his side, asked him to pardon these prisoners and entrust them to his pastoral charity. Wado refused; then the bishop, full of confidence in God, besought Him to grant what the justice of men refused him. A few moments later, as Saint Géry was entering the church, the prisoners, set free by an effect of divine power, came running there in the presence of all the people. Such, among the many bishops who were then the glory of the Church of the Franks, was the worthy and pious figure of Saint Géry; but there is in his life a particular trait that distinguishes him among all: “It is that never in his presence or to his knowledge could prison and chains hold the unfortunate.” This miracle is peculiar to him along with many other holy bishops.

It was above all from the height of the sacred pulpit that he loved to make himself heard by his flock, putting himself, so to speak, within reach of every intelligence and raising the simplicity of his discourse by a gentle gravity and a kindly expression. “Now,” continues the author of his acts, “Saint Géry spoke readily of the love of God and of neighbour, of the observance of the Lord’s commandments, of frequent prayer and of the rules of a holy life. He explained the ceremonies used in the celebration of the sacred mysteries and the sacraments. He also spoke to his hearers of the importance of religion, of justice, of peace, of long-suffering, of the pardon of enemies and the relief of the poor, of the care with which the Christian virtues must be maintained in one’s soul, of meditation on the last things and of the desire for heavenly and eternal goods.” It was by his instructions and the benign influence of his example that Saint Géry worked numerous conversions among his people. “Violent men became gentle, the proud practised humility, the voluptuous continence, the irascible fraternal charity, the avaricious learned charity, and the intemperate put an end to their excesses”; and thus souls were gradually formed in the sweet virtues of Christianity. From the first years of his stay at Cambrai, Saint Géry had noticed on the hill that overlooks the city on the east one of those dense woods to which the pagans used to go to adore their idols. The traditions of the country and remains still existing attested this former use of a place that had become a kind of den of thieves. It was called Bublemont or the Mount of Oxen. There the venerable bishop built a house of prayer and placed a community of religious, to whom he gave as abbot his brother Lando. It was the first monastery erected in the region. Saint Géry dedicated it to Saint Médard and Saint Lupus, some of whose relics he always carried on him, and he himself chose a place there for his burial. The rest of his life shows us that he had rather intimate relations with King Clotaire II. It would be difficult to indicate their origin; but one may suppose that the virtues and works of the bishop of Cambrai had drawn upon him the attention of a monarch so favourable to the clergy. Clotaire, then, whether he visited Saint Géry in travelling through the provinces or called him to the palace, loved to hear his exhortations, and following his example the great men of the court honoured him with all their affection. “He, for his part, spoke to them of contempt for the world, of the fear of judgment, of the glory of the Saints and of the eternity of the happiness of the just. All his words breathed Jesus Christ, and his sentiments were sentiments of peace and piety.” One day among others our Blessed one had gone to the royal house of Chelles to take care, says the biographer, of the lives of the wretched. While he was near the monarch he learned that two young men, held in prison by the orders of the lord Landri, were to expiate by their death on the morrow the crimes they had committed. At this news he felt his heart moved, and approaching the noble leude respectfully he besought him, by the love of Jesus Christ, to pardon these malefactors and entrust them to him, so that he might set them back on the right path they had had the misfortune to leave. Landri remaining deaf to these prayers, the holy bishop called the disciples who accompanied him and went with them to recite prayers all night in a neighbouring church. In the morning the prisoners, miraculously delivered, came running to the church to thank God and His worthy minister, promising him that they would purify their consciences and lead a new life. A few moments later Landri

himself entered the church to pray there, and, struck by what he saw before his eyes, ratified the deliverance of the two condemned men by a word of pardon.

This incident, which caused a great stir at court, inspired King Clotaire II with still greater goodwill toward the holy bishop of Cambrai; so much so that, according to the historians of the time, he made him one of the private distributors of his alms. On this occasion above all considerable gifts were granted him so that he might satisfy his desire to relieve the poor. And so we see him, on the pilgrimage he made to the tomb of Saint Martin on leaving the royal residence, scattering largesse everywhere on his way. As, surrounded by the crowd of the people, he was approaching the city of Tours, a beggar blind for thirty years and led by another poor man came and threw himself at his knees, beseeching him to restore his sight. At this sight Saint Géry was moved with compassion, and, putting his confidence in the Lord, he made the sign of the cross over the blind man, saying aloud this prayer: “O almighty Jesus Christ, light of the world, You who once deigned to open the eyes of a man born blind, heal this man too, Your servant, of his infirmity, and in Your goodness give him the light he desires, so that, seeing this cure, Christians may give You glory by their gratitude.” Scarcely were these words finished when the blind man, uttering cries of joy, was blessing God for having restored his sight through the power of His servant. This prodigy was quickly known in the city of Tours, where the monks of the monastery charged with the keeping of the body of Saint Martin received the wonder-worker with every mark of respect. When he had satisfied his devotion and distributed abundant alms to the poor, he went on as far as the country of the ancient Petrocorii (Périgueux), where the Church of Cambrai had property; then, after settling the affairs that concerned his dear flock, he visited the tomb of Saint Front or Fronto, apostle of the region, paid him his homage and returned full of joy to his episcopal city. The many journeys Saint Géry had to make during his long episcopate had already made his name popular in his two vast dioceses; and the traditions preserved by the city of Brussels in particular give a glimpse of many other deeds of the same kind that took place in the wildest regions of Brabant. “There indeed,” says one author, “stretched whole regions still sitting in the shadow of death. The rare inhabitants of these wildernesses seemed less men than beasts. At every step the Christian missionary found the distressing spectacle of the grossest idolatry. Saint Géry was probably the first who dared to venture through this wild country. Neither dangers nor fatigues could deter him. Staff in hand, he goes on his way praying, through woods without paths or dwellings. Fierce men flee at his approach, and only by dint of benefits and prodigies does he succeed in drawing them to him. He thus arrives at a small island formed by the Senne. The Christian Hercules set the limit of his apostolic journeys there by raising a small chapel, which the zeal of the converts soon changed into a church. Such is the humble origin of the city of Brussels, today one of the finest cities in the world. Four centuries later this island became the capital of the duchy of Lothair, when Charles of France came to shelter his palace in the shadow of the ancient church and fix his residence in the island of Saint-Géry.”

Lest the multitude of affairs should make him forget what he owed to himself, and lest, by neglecting the care of his own salvation, he should become less fit to procure that of others, he joined to the exercise of his functions the spirit of recollection and prayer. He withdrew from time to time into some solitude to converse with God and commend to Him both his own needs and those of the souls entrusted to him. At last, worn out with fatigue, he went to enjoy eternal rest on 11 August 619. He was buried in the church he had had built under the invocation of Saint Médard. This church having been demolished by Charles V, who had a citadel built on the site, the canons who served it withdrew to that of Saint-Vaast, where they deposited the Saint’s relics. From that time this church bore the name of Saint-Géry; but it too was pulled down at the time of the Revolution. The title of Saint-Géry had to be transferred to that of the former abbey of Saint-Aubert, today one of the two parishes of Cambrai.

He is represented: 1° healing a leper; thus he was seen on one of the bas-reliefs of his shrine; 2° with a dragon at his feet, probably because he banished from his diocese the last vestiges of paganism. He is

regarded particularly as the apostle of the region of Brussels.

Godescard; *La France Pontificale*, by Fisquet; *Vies des Saints des diocèses de Cambrai et d'Arras*, by the abbé Destombes.

## Blessed Nicolas Appleine, Canon of the Collegiate Church of Saint-Marcel at Prémery, in the Diocese of Nevers (1466)

During the 15th century there lived at Prémery (Nièvre, arrondissement of Cosne) a holy priest, a canon of the collegiate church of Saint-Marcel in that town; his name was Nicolas Appleine. It may be said of him, as of many other Saints: "His life remained hidden in the Lord." That is indeed all that is known of Blessed Nicolas Appleine, in spite of the research that has been done to discover some details of his life. He died at Prémery on 11 August 1466 and was buried on the left side of the altar of the collegiate church.

The miracles that took place every day at his tomb bore witness to the power he enjoyed with God. The sick of the surrounding districts went or had themselves carried to Prémery to obtain their cure at the tomb of this holy priest, and their hope was not disappointed. And a few years after the death of Blessed Nicolas Appleine it was no longer only the inhabitants of Prémery and the neighbouring parishes who came to prostrate themselves before his tomb; people flocked there from the neighbouring dioceses. Louis XI, then ill, also wished to have recourse to the prayers of the holy priest; he wrote to Pierre de Fontenay, bishop of Nevers, asking him to send him the cassock of the venerable canon of Prémery. The bishop of Nevers could not refuse the king what he asked, and charged the Blessed man's sister to carry this precious relic to the prince herself. It is not known whether the king felt any relief from it; one would be inclined to believe so from the letter he wrote to Pierre de Fontenay when he sent it back to him. Eustache de Chéry, bishop of Nevers, carried out the elevation of his body and placed his bones in a lead box two and a half feet long, which he enclosed in masonry, above which there was a tombstone with an inscription.

In 1731 Charles Fontaines des Montées, bishop of Nevers, who was making his visitations, went on 2 May to the said tomb, appointed two surgeons, whom he put on oath, to establish the state of the bones, took them out of the lead box that contained them, and wrapped them respectfully in a white cloth. They were placed carefully in the sacristy, in a cupboard that was sealed with the episcopal seal; on 11 May they were placed in a chest of oak wood, which was also sealed with the bishop's arms and put in the sacristy until the new altar intended to receive it should be ready. This altar was set up behind the altar of the collegiate church in the form of a charnel-house, that is, square, hollow inside, with an opening in front fitted with an iron grille locking with two keys. It was on 3 July 1731 that Charles Bernard, parish priest and archpriest of Saint-Saulge, commissioned for the purpose, took the relics from the sacristy and carried them solemnly to the new altar in the presence of a great concourse of people. By his ordinance of 2 May, Charles Fontaines des Montées allowed holy Mass to be celebrated at this altar in honour of the holy Trinity and of Blessed Nicolas on the anniversaries of his death and of the translation of his relics, and whenever it should be requested, and he confirmed everything his predecessors had done.

Taken from the *Hagiologie nivernaise* by Mgr Crosnier.

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[1] Saint Equitius peopled the whole of Valeria (an ancient province of Italy) with fervent monks, who lived dispersed in the countryside and the woods and divided their time between prayer and the work of their hands. The Saint often visited them to instruct them. Sometimes too he went through the townships and villages to bring the people to the love and service of God. He spent the whole day working in the fields, except when he was visiting his disciples; in the evening he returned to his hermitage to take some rest there. His clothes were poor; his outward appearance inspired love of penance and lively feelings of charity and devotion. He consented to take charge of the direction of a numerous community of nuns. His relics are kept at Aquila, in the church of Saint Lawrence. — Alban Butler and Baillet.

[2] Her body rests in the church of Saint Fortunatus at Todi. — *Acta Sanctorum*.

[3] See her life on the preceding day.

[4] See his life on that day.

[5] See his life on 2 August.

[6] See 9 July.

[7] We gave his life on 5 August.

[8] Alias: Gaugeric, Guric.

# 12 August

## Martyrologies

### MARTYROLOGE ROMAIN.

At Assisi in Umbria, Saint CLARE, virgin, Foundress of the Poor Ladies of the Order of Saint Francis; famous for the holiness of her life and for her miracles, she was placed in the catalogue of the holy Virgins by Pope Alexander IV. 1253. — At Catania in Sicily, the birthday in heaven of Saint EUPLIUS or EUPLE, deacon, who, after being long tortured for confessing the name of Jesus Christ under Diocletian and Maximian, at last obtained, by losing his life, the palm of martyrdom. 304. — At Augsburg, Saint Hilaria, mother of Saint Afra, martyr, who, while watching at her daughter's tomb, was burned in the same place by the persecutors for the Catholic faith, with Digna, Eupraepia and Eunomia, her servants. Quiriacus, Largio, Crescentian, Ninge, Juliana and twenty others were also put to death the same day in the same city.[1] 4th c. — In Syria, the holy martyrs Macarius and Julian. — At Nicomedia, the holy martyrs Anicetus, count, and Photinus or Photius, his brother, with several others, executed under the rule of Diocletian. 305 or 306. — At Faleria in Tuscany, the martyrdom of Saint Gracilian and Saint Felicissima, virgin, who were first struck on the mouth with stones and then beheaded, and received the palm of martyrdom which they ardently desired, under Galerius Maximian. — The same day, the holy martyrs PORCARIUS, abbot of the monastery of Lérins, and five hundred monks, who were killed by the Barbarians for the Catholic faith and merited by their death the crown of martyrdom. 731. — At Milan, the death of Saint Eusebius,[2] bishop and confessor. 475. — At Brescia, Saint Herculanus, bishop. 552.

### MARTYROLOGE DE FRANCE, REVU ET AUGMENTÉ.

At Mons (*Mons Hannoniæ*), a town of Belgium in Hainaut, translation of the relics of Saint Waltrude or Vaudru, first abbess of Mons and foundress of that town, whose life we gave on 9 April, the day on which she is cited in the Roman martyrology. On 7 October 1349 her relics were carried in procession through the streets of Mons to implore the mercy of God against the plague, which was causing frightful ravages. History has not preserved the memory of the translation of 12 August. — At Vernon (Seine-et-Marne), between Melun and Montereau, original diocese of Sens, present diocese of Meaux, Saints Felix and Felicissimus, martyrs. In the course of time their bodies were transferred to the metropolitan church of Sens. The church of Donzy (Nièvre, arrondissement of Cosne), diocese of Nevers, possesses a considerable bone of Saint Felicissimus. Middle of the 3rd c. — In the diocese of Coutances, Saint Clare of Assisi, virgin, abbess and foundress of an Order, cited in the Roman martyrology of this day. — In the diocese of Soissons, memorial of Saint Géry, bishop of Cambrai and confessor, whose life we gave on 11 August. 614. — At Brive in the Bas-Limousin, death of Father Renaud Clareti or de Claret, Dominican. He was a young deserter from the world who, touched by grace and disgusted with the things of earth, regarded as the finest day of his life the one on which he was able to renounce everything for Jesus Christ. He pronounced his vows in the convent of the Dominicans of Limoges, and, as he showed there all the virtues that could be expected of a young religious full of piety, he was made to receive the Order of priesthood. God gave him the grace of calling him to Himself while he was still in all the fervour of the first years of his priesthood. 1313. — At Chavigny, diocese of Autun, Father Paul-Jean Charles, claustral prior of Septfonts, of the reform of Cîteaux, and a native of that place. He was a victim of the Revolution of 1793, and was put aboard a ship, where he died,

aged fifty. 1794. — At Vesoul (Haute-Saône), blessing by His Eminence Cardinal Mathieu, archbishop of Besançon (1855), of the first stone, and inauguration (1857), of the chapel of Notre-Dame de la Motte, fruit of a vow made in 1854 to the most holy Virgin, who had preserved the town from cholera. This chapel forms a vast portico with four faces, of red stone, open on all sides and surmounted by pinnacles; in the centre rises the colossal statue of Mary, three metres fifty centimetres high, her head crowned with flowers, her robe and mantle covered with gold, her hands outstretched and her eyes turned toward the town. It is a much-frequented pilgrimage.[3] — At Remiremont (*Romarici Mons*), in the diocese of Saint-Dié, Blessed Cecilia, also called Clare, abbess of the Benedictine monastery of that place. She was doubly the daughter of Saint Romaric, who begot her for the world and for Christ, and founded for her and her sister Adzaltrude the abbey in which she distinguished herself by a high perfection. 7th c.

## MARTYROLOGES DES ORDRES RELIGIEUX.

Martyrology of the Camaldolese. — Saint Dominic, confessor, founder of the Order of Friars Preachers, whose feast is celebrated on 4 August.[4] 1221.

Martyrology of the three Orders of Saint Francis. — At Assisi in Umbria, Saint Clare, virgin, of the second Order, the first daughter of the patriarch Saint Francis, famous for the glory of her virtues and illustrious for her miracles. The sovereign pontiff Alexander IV inscribed her in the calendar of the Virgins. 1253.

Martyrology of the Friars Minor. — At Assisi in Umbria, Saint Clare, the first plant of the poor women of the Order of Friars Minor, famous for the nobility of her birth, her contempt of the world, the innocence of her life, her other heroic virtues and her heavenly gifts; whom the sovereign pontiff Alexander IV, on account of her miracles, placed among the holy Virgins. 1253.

## ADDITIONS FAITES D'APRÈS LES BOLLANDISTES ET AUTRES HAGIOGRAPHES.

On this day the most holy Virgin, being near her death, gave two of her shifts to two widows, her neighbours; they were offered to Charlemagne in the year 810 by the emperor Nicephorus and the empress Irene. One of these two shifts is to be seen at Aix-la-Chapelle, the other at Chartres. We spoke of the latter in the martyrology of France for 7 August. — In Istria, a province of the Austrian States (Illyria), Saint Julian and his companions, martyrs, mentioned by Saint Jerome. — At Benevento, a fortified town of the kingdom of Italy, Saint Cassian, bishop of that see and confessor. Persecutions were not lacking to him, but he triumphed over them by patience. He had the spirit of prayer, took great care of the poor of his diocese, and fed his flock by word and example. Marvellous cures took place at his tomb. His relics rest in the church of Santa Maria at Benevento. Middle of the 4th c. — Among the Greeks, the holy martyrs Sergius and Stephen. — Also among the Greeks, the holy martyrs Pamphilus and Capito, who perished by the sword.

# Saint Euplius or Euple, Deacon and Martyr in Sicily

*304. — Pope: Saint Marcellinus. — Roman Emperors: Diocletian and Maximian.*

> *Offer te illi, et da te totum Deo, et erit accepta oblatio.*
>
> *Offer yourself to God, give yourself wholly to Him, and your offering will be received by the Lord.*
>
> *S. Thomas à Kempis.*

On 12 August 304, in the ninth consulship of Diocletian and the eighth of Maximian, Euplius, deacon of Catania in Sicily, was brought to the governor's audience chamber. Standing near the curtain that closed off the place where the judge was, he cried out that he was a Christian and desired to die for the name of Jesus Christ. Calvisianus (that was the governor's name) heard him and ordered him to appear before him. Euplius came in holding the book of the Gospels in his hand. One of the governor's friends, named Maximus,

reproached him for daring to appear with a book that contained a doctrine proscribed by the emperor's edicts. "Where did you get these writings?" Calvisianus said to him; "do you bring them from your house?" "I have no house," answered Euplius, "but I had this book with me when I was arrested."

The judge having told him to read something from it, he opened it and read the following passages: "Blessed are they that suffer persecution for justice' sake; for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. He that will come after me must take up his cross and follow me." Calvisianus asked him what that meant. Euplius: "It is the law of my God, which has been given to me." Calvisianus: "By whom?" Euplius: "By Jesus Christ, Son of the living God." The judge, having taken the advice of his assessors, said: "Since the confession of Euplius proves evidently that he is a Christian, let him be handed over to the executioners and stretched on the rack." This was done on the spot. At the second interrogation that he underwent on the rack the same day, Calvisianus asked him whether he still persisted in his first sentiments. Euplius, then making the sign of the cross on his forehead with one of his hands that was free, answered: "I have already declared to you, and I declare to you again, that I am a Christian and that I read the holy Scriptures." He added that he would offend God by handing over these sacred writings; that he would rather die than commit such a crime, and that his death would be followed by an eternally happy life. Calvisianus having had his torments redoubled, he made this prayer: "I give You thanks, Lord Jesus, that I suffer for love of You: save me, I beseech You." Calvisianus: "Give up this folly; adore our gods, and I will have you set at liberty." Euplius: "I adore Jesus Christ; I detest the demons. Do what you please; condemn me, if you will, to new torments, for I am a Christian. I have long desired to be in the state in which I now find myself." The judge, weary of seeing him tortured, ordered the executioners to stop and said to him: "Adore the gods, wretch that you are; adore Mars, Apollo and Aesculapius." Euplius: "I adore the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit; I adore the holy Trinity; there is no other God." Calvisianus: "Sacrifice, if you wish to have life." Euplius: "I make the sacrifice of myself to Jesus Christ, my God. You try in vain to make me change my resolution. I am a Christian." Then Calvisianus gave orders that the tortures be redoubled. Meanwhile Euplius prayed thus: "I give You thanks, O my God; help me: it is for love of You that I endure these torments." He repeated this prayer several times. As his strength failed, his lips could still be seen moving. At last the judge, going behind the curtain, dictated the sentence, which a clerk wrote down. After that he came back with tablets in his hand and read the following: "We order that Euplius, convicted of being a Christian, have his head cut off, in punishment for his obstinacy in despising the edicts of the prince and blaspheming against the gods. Let him be executed." The book of the Gospels that he had on him when he was arrested was tied around his neck, and a public crier, walking before him, said aloud: "Here is Euplius, that Christian, that enemy of the gods and of the emperors." Euplius, gathering the little strength he had left, said as he went: "I give You thanks, Lord Jesus; confirm what You have wrought in me." Having reached the place of execution, he prayed long on his knees; then he offered his head to the executioner, who cut it off. The Christians buried his body after embalming it and laid it in a venerated place, where Our Lord has been pleased to work numerous miracles. Saint Euplius is named in the martyrologies. He formerly had a particular cult established at Rome. Pope Theodore had a chapel built in his honour outside the Gate of Saint Paul about the year 645, which was rebuilt about the year 772 by Pope Adrian I. The city of Lucca in Tuscany also formerly honoured him as one of its patrons and had near its suburbs a very ancient church in his honour. We do not know that any of his relics were carried out of Sicily. It seems that in the time of Saint Gregory the Great a subdeacon of the church of Messina had some of them, since he had a church that he had built and endowed from his own goods consecrated under his name.

Dom Ruinart; Baillet; Godescard.

## Saint Clare of Assisi, Virgin and Abbess, Foundress of the Poor Ladies of the Order of Saint Francis

*1253. — Pope: Innocent IV. — Emperor of Germany: William of Holland.*

> *A solid soul, truly penetrated with the greatness of its destiny, is far from placing its happiness in satisfying its sensuality.*
>
> *Spirit of Saint Clare of Assisi.*

Clare was born at Assisi, in the States of the Church, like the seraphic Father Saint Francis, of a noble and wealthy family in which almost all the sons had followed the profession of arms. Her father was named Favorino Sciffi. The imposing ruins of Sasso-Roso, a castle he owned on the southern slope of Mount Subasio, are still shown today. Her mother, of the ancient house of Fiumi, was named Hortolana. She was a very pious lady who out of devotion made the pilgrimages of Jerusalem, of Saint Michael on Mount Gargano and of Saint Peter's in Rome, and who, after her husband's death, entered the Order her daughter had founded, where she lived and died in the odour of sanctity. One day, as she was praying before a crucifix to merit the help of heaven in her confinement, she heard a voice saying to her: "Fear nothing, Hortolana; you will happily bring into the world a light that will enlighten the whole world." This voice was the reason why she had her daughter given the name of Clare in baptism. She had two others besides, Agnes and Beatrice, whom we shall soon see, following the example of their elder sister, renounce all the things of earth to become poor disciples of Saint Francis.

Clare's childhood was perfectly innocent; grace so went before her that nothing was seen in her of the usual liveliness of that age. She was modest, quiet, docile, truthful in her words, obedient, and always ready to pray to God and to perform the devotions her mother prescribed for her. When her reason had developed, she soon showed that she would always take the side of virtue: fasting, almsgiving and prayer were her dearest exercises. When she was older she was obliged, to please her parents, to dress like persons of her rank; but under her clothes she wore a small hair shirt to crucify her virginal flesh. Her parents made vain efforts to engage her in marriage. She would have no other spouse than Jesus Christ. Eager to hear Saint Francis of Assisi, she managed to obtain that happiness and was enraptured by it. She even desired to have an interview with him. Having obtained it, she came to see him in his little convent of the Portiuncula and disclosed to him the sentiments God was imprinting on her heart. The Saint confirmed her in the design of keeping her virginal purity inviolate and of leaving all the goods of earth so as to have no other inheritance than Jesus Christ. As Clare afterwards paid him other visits, he formed her more and more according to his spirit of penance and poverty, and made her conceive the resolution of doing for her sex what he himself had done for men. Thus, in the year 1212, on Palm Sunday, which fell on 19 March, the day on which the feast of Saint Joseph is ordinarily celebrated, she appeared in the morning in the cathedral church of Assisi with whatever jewels and precious clothes she had; in the evening she went to the little church of the Portiuncula, where, having been received with very great joy by the holy patriarch and his religious, who all held a candle in their hands, she stripped herself of all her ornaments of vanity, gave her hair to be cut off, and was clothed in a sack and a cord, as the true livery of a God who was poor, suffering and humbled. After so generous an action, the Saint, who could not take her into his convent, and who besides had as yet no house where he could lodge her apart, led her to the Benedictine nuns of Saint Paul.

When Clare's resolution became known, everyone spoke of it according to his fancy. Some attributed it to youthful lightness, for she was only eighteen years old; others to an indiscreet fervour and an ill-regulated devotion. Her relatives above all were extremely angered by it, and they spared nothing to persuade her to come back to her father's house and to accept an advantageous match that had already been proposed to her. They wanted to use violence and drag her by force from the sacred refuge in which she had taken shelter; but, to take from them all hope of ever seeing her again in the world, she showed them her shorn hair and clung so tightly to the altar cloths that she could not be torn from them without sacrilege and profanation. So, after several days of pursuit, they ceased to torment her, and Saint Francis, who was ever watching over her sanctification, moved her from the monastery of Saint Paul, where he had placed her, to that of Sant'Angelo

di Panso, also of the Order of Saint Benedict, which was outside the town. It was there that this dear lover of Jesus, prostrate at the feet of her Spouse, earnestly begged Him to give her as companion the one He had given her as sister, namely little Agnes Sciffi. Her prayer was granted, and only sixteen days after this retreat that dear sister secretly left her parents' house and came to join Clare, to practise with her the exercises of penance and mortification of which Clare gave such rare examples. If the flight of the elder had so greatly angered their parents, that of the younger offended them still more. They come, twelve in number, to the monastery of Sant'Angelo, and, as Agnes refuses to follow them, they rain kicks and blows on her, drag her by the hair and carry her off by force, as a lion or a wolf carries off a sheep after seizing it in the middle of the fold. All that this innocent virgin can do is to cry to her sister to have pity on her and not to suffer so unjust an abduction. Clare sets herself to prayer, and at once, by a great miracle of divine Providence, little Agnes, who had already been carried quite far, becomes so heavy and so immovable that these twelve men can neither lift her from the ground nor move her. In his rage Monaldo, her uncle, tries to kill her; but at that very moment he is seized with so great a pain in the arm that he can hardly stand. At last, while they are all in confusion, Clare arrives and by her remonstrances obliges them to give her back her dear sister. She therefore brings her back to the monastery, and shortly afterwards Agnes receives the habit from the hands of Saint Francis, although she is only fourteen years old. He then placed the two sisters in a little house adjoining the church of San Damiano.

It was there, properly speaking, that the Order of the nuns of Saint Francis began, as that of the friars had begun in the church of the Portiuncula. The two sisters soon had a great number of companions; for, as the odour of the virgin Clare's holiness spread everywhere, many women and girls wished to have her as their mother. The chief among them, besides Hortolana, her mother, and Beatrice, her youngest sister, were the venerable ladies Pacifica, Amata, Christina, Agnes, Frances, Benvenuta, Balbina, Benedicta, another Balbina, Philippa, Cecilia and Lucy, all excellent religious, whom God made illustrious by miracles, as is written in the martyrology of the Saints of that Order. Clare was at first appointed their superior by Saint Francis, into whose hands they all promised obedience; but when she saw their number increase, she wished to resign that office, preferring to serve God in humility and submission rather than to command daughters whom she believed more virtuous than herself. But the Saint, who knew how much his new plant would profit by the cultivation of so holy an abbess, confirmed her in her office for life. The community applauded this measure; for, although it was full of excellent subjects, who were even employed in new foundations, none was nevertheless so capable of governing as Clare, who possessed in an eminent degree the spirit of the blessed patriarch. And so, far from growing proud of her prelacy, she used it only to humble herself the more. She was the first to practise the exercises of mortification and penance. The lowest employments were those that seemed most agreeable to her. She herself gave her sisters water to wash their hands, and often, when they were at table, she remained standing and served them. She also washed the feet of the serving girls who came from outside, and kissed them with respect and humility. Nothing is so repugnant or so contrary to the delicacy of young girls as the services that must be rendered to the sick in the infirmaries; but she did not think her dignity as superior ought to exempt her from them, and if she appointed some sisters to take charge of them, it was on condition that they often let her do what was most difficult and what the others would have found most distasteful.

From this great humility was born in her heart an ardent love for holy poverty. Her father's inheritance having fallen to her at the beginning of her conversion, she kept nothing of it for herself or for her monastery, but had it distributed entirely to the poor. Not only did she refuse to let her house possess any rent or revenue, but she did not even allow large provisions to be kept in it, being content with what was necessary to live from day to day. She preferred that the brothers who begged for her monastery should bring back pieces of bread already dry rather than whole loaves. In short, her whole design was to resemble Jesus Christ in His poverty, who never possessed anything on earth, and who, born quite naked in a poor stable, died quite naked on the poor bed of the cross. She obtained from Pope Innocent III the privilege of poverty, that is, the right to

be established on the sole foundation of the charity of the faithful, with the excellent quality of poor as a title of honour and glory: that is why her Order is commonly called the Order of the Poor Ladies. And when Pope Gregory IX, judging so great a poverty too rigorous for women, wished to mitigate it by dispensing them from the vow they had made of it and by giving them revenues, she thanked His Holiness for the offer and earnestly begged him to change nothing in the original arrangements of her foundation; and he granted it. God often justified this conduct of His servant by miracles, and showed that He watches to help those who trust in Him. One day there was only one rather small loaf in the monastery, and, dinner time having come, she ordered the sister in charge of provisions to send half of it to the friars who served them and to divide the other half into fifty pieces, for as many Poor Ladies as then made up her community. The sister did with blind obedience what she was commanded, and by an astonishing marvel these pieces grew so much that they were enough to feed all the nuns. Another time there was no more oil in the monastery: Clare took a small cask, washed it, and sent for the questing brother so that he might go and have it filled with oil as an alms. He came at once, but instead of finding it empty he found it quite full. This made him think the good ladies had meant to make fun of him, and he complained of it; but he changed his complaints into admiration and thanksgiving when he was told that the cask had been put empty on the turn, and that the oil he had seen in it was miraculous oil.

As for the austerities of our Saint, she was clothed only in a mean tunic and a small mantle of coarse cloth; she always went barefoot, without clogs or sandals, slept on the hard ground, fasted the whole year except on Sunday, and often on bread and water; she kept perpetual silence except for the indispensable duties of necessity and charity. It is true that these practices were common to her and her sisters. But what proportion was there between a body as delicate as hers and a garment of pigskin, whose hairy, bristling side and hard, prickly bristles she applied to her flesh to make it endure a continual martyrdom! She also used a hair shirt made of horsehair, which she bound still more tightly with a cord of the same weave, armed with thirteen knots. Her abstinence was so severe that what she ate would not have been enough to nourish her had not the power of God sustained her. During the great Lent and that of Saint Martin she lived only on bread and water, and even then she ate nothing at all on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays. The bare ground, or a heap of vine branches, with a piece of wood for a pillow, made up at first the whole furniture of her bed; later, feeling too weak, she slept on a leather mat and put straw under her head. In short, she was so insatiable of pains and sufferings that Saint Francis was obliged to moderate that ardour and to have it moderated by the bishop of Assisi. They therefore ordered her to sleep on a straw mattress and not to let a day pass without eating. But her meal on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays in Lent consisted of an ounce and a half of bread and a mouthful of water, which served rather to provoke her hunger and thirst than to appease them.

As she was entirely dead to the world and had a perfectly pure heart, nothing prevented her from giving herself to prayer and from occupying herself at all times and in all places with the greatness and goodness of her God. Her custom was to spend several hours in prayer after Compline with her sisters before the Blessed Sacrament, where she shed many tears and stirred the others to groan and sigh by the example of her fervour. When they withdrew to take a little rest, she still remained steadfastly in the choir, to hear there, as it were by stealth, in solitude, the secret movements of the Spirit of God. There, all bathed in tears and prostrate on the ground, she now detested her offences, now implored the divine mercy for her people, now lamented the sufferings of Jesus Christ, her beloved. One night the angel of darkness appeared to her in the form of a little child all black, and said to her: “If you do not put an end to your tears, you will soon lose your sight.” And she answered him on the spot: “He will see very clearly who shall have the honour of seeing God.” This obliged the monster to withdraw in confusion. He came back nevertheless after Matins and added that by dint of weeping she would make herself ill. But she again repulsed him vigorously, telling him that he who serves God fears no discomfort. The favours she received in this holy exercise cannot be described. One day Sister Benvenuta, one of her nuns, saw during this time a globe of fire resting on her head, which made her wonderfully beautiful and luminous. Another time Sister Frances saw on her knees a perfectly beautiful child

lavishing most loving caresses on her. Being ill one Christmas night, it was impossible for her to rise and go to Matins; yet she set herself to prayer, and on her poor bed she distinctly heard the whole office that was sung by the friars of Saint Francis in the church of Our Lady of the Portiuncula, a long way from her monastery; and, what is more marvellous, she had the happiness of seeing the Child Jesus lying in His crib. When she came out of her communications with God, her words were all fire, and they shed a certain unction that won and carried away the hearts of all who had the happiness of hearing her. Besides, she had so much credit with God that she easily obtained all she asked of Him. No other proof is needed than what happened in regard to the army of Saracens which the emperor Frederick II, in his quarrels with the Holy See, sent to lay waste the duchy of Spoleto, and which came to besiege the town of Assisi and to plunder the convent of San Damiano. Defenceless women had everything to fear from Barbarians without shame or religion. In so great a cause of terror and dread they all ran to Saint Clare, who was ill in the infirmary, as chicks run under their mother's wings when they see the kite coming to swoop on them. She told them to fear nothing, and, in the confidence with which she was filled, she dragged herself as best she could, supported on their arms, to the door of the convent, where she had the most holy Sacrament placed before her, enclosed in a silver ciborium and an ivory box. There, prostrating herself before her sovereign Lord, she said to Him with tears in her eyes: "Will You suffer, my God, that Your servants, weak and defenceless, whom I have nourished with the milk of Your love, fall into the hands of the infidels? I can no longer guard them, but I place them in Your hands, and I beseech You to protect them in so terrible and pressing an extremity." She had hardly finished these words when she heard a little voice, as of a child, which answered her: "I will always guard you." Then, feeling bolder, she added: "Permit me, my Lord, to implore Your mercy and help also for the town of Assisi, which feeds us with its alms." "It will suffer several damages," answered the Saviour, "but I will prevent it from being taken." After such favourable answers the Saint raised her head and said to her daughters: "I give you my word, my sisters, that you will come to no harm; only trust in God."

The Saracens had already scaled the monastery, and some had entered the cloister; but at the very moment this prayer was finished they were seized with a panic terror, climbed back hastily over the same walls and left the servants of God in peace; and shortly afterwards they raised the siege of Assisi and left Umbria entirely.

The same town was at another time hard pressed by Vitale d'Aversa, captain of the imperial army; he had sworn not to go back until he had taken it by force or it had surrendered at discretion. The Saint, touched by this misfortune, assembled all her daughters and represented to them that it would be ingratitude on their part if, after receiving so many charities from the inhabitants of Assisi, they did not employ all the credit they had with God to obtain the deliverance of the town. She therefore had ashes brought, covered her own head with them first and then the heads of all the others; and in that state they pressed the goodness of God so effectively to look upon the town with an eye of pity and mercy that that very night the whole army of this new Holofernes was routed; and he himself, obliged to withdraw in confusion, died shortly afterwards a violent death, the just punishment of his pride.

Saint Clare's devotion to the most holy Sacrament was admirable. In her worst illnesses she had herself raised to a sitting position in order to work on corporals for the parishes around Assisi. She also made corporal cases of silk or purple, and, although she supremely loved poverty, she did not fail to use the richest fabrics when it was a question of making some ornament for the celebration of that great mystery. She received Communion all bathed in tears, having no less respect for her God hidden under the veils of the Sacrament than for Himself thundering in the heavens and governing the whole visible and invisible world. She also felt an extreme tenderness for the mystery of the Passion and for the wounds of her crucified Saviour, which she contemplated with an ardour and a love that cannot be expressed. One day she was so absorbed in the consideration of the goodness of her dying God that she remained in ecstasy from Holy Thursday until the night of Holy Saturday. The devil, unable to bear this affection for a mystery he so abhors,

once gave her a blow that made her eye bleed and left her cheek all livid; but the Saint only laughed at it and felt extreme joy at suffering from the devil himself what her Saviour suffered from one of his ministers in the house of Caiaphas. She worked great miracles by the power of the sign of the cross. In particular she healed by this means a man named Stephen, sick with a burning fever, whom Saint Francis had sent to her; and she restored health to several of her daughters afflicted with various infirmities. One day a child whose eye was quite disfigured having been brought to her, she had him taken to Blessed Hortolana, her mother, so that she herself might make this saving sign over his eye; it was so effective that the child was healed at the same moment. As she hungered greatly for the bread of the word of God, she listened with joy to the preachers who distributed it in her church; and, having heard that the Pope had forbidden the friars of her Order to go to the nuns without his permission, she sent away also those who did the questing, saying that it was not reasonable to have friars who brought material bread and to have none who brought spiritual bread; this made His Holiness at once revoke the prohibition. She gave admirable instructions to her daughters: she taught them to despise the importunate demands and feigned necessities of the body, to restrain their tongues and carefully keep interior and exterior silence; to detach themselves from affection for their relatives and to place their inclination and love in Jesus Christ alone; to shake off every kind of sloth and negligence, and to make prayer follow work continually. However severe she was to herself, and however careful that her rule should be inviolably observed, she was nevertheless full of compassion and kindness for her sisters, and took extreme care of all their bodily needs. And so there was never seen a more united community than hers, nor nuns more attached to their superior than her daughters were to her.

At last it pleased Our Lord to satisfy the desires of His Spouse, who asked with incredible ardour to enjoy Him in blessed eternity. For forty-two years already she had been faithfully and assiduously practising all the exercises of religion, without several violent illnesses, which she had endured for twenty-eight or thirty years, having wrung from her mouth one word of complaint or murmur, or being able to diminish the fire of her zeal and charity. She had also foretold two years before that she would not die until the Lord had come to visit her with His disciples. The time of her reward having therefore come, Pope Innocent IV, who had an extraordinary esteem for her virtue and loved her perfectly in Jesus Christ as the most faithful Spouse that this lovable Saviour had on earth, returned from Lyons to Perugia with the sacred college of cardinals. He learned in that city that Clare was dangerously ill and that her end was very probably near. He went as quickly as possible to Assisi with his court, and in her convent of San Damiano, accompanied by his cardinals as Our Lord was by His disciples, he gave her his apostolic blessing with the plenary indulgence of all her sins, which this already wholly heavenly soul asked of him with great insistence and received with very deep humility. She had received the holy Viaticum the same day from the hands of the provincial of the Minors, and, when it was being administered to her, there had been seen in the sacred host a child of inestimable beauty, with a globe of fire above it. When His Holiness had withdrawn, Saint Clare, all bathed in tears, her hands joined and her eyes raised to heaven, said to her sisters: “Give thanks to God, my dear daughters, that I have had today an honour that heaven and earth could never repay, having been so happy as to receive my Saviour and to be visited by His vicar.” Her sister Agnes begged her not to leave her on earth but to take her with her to heaven. “Your hour has not yet come,” she answered; “but rejoice, for it is not far off, and before dying you will receive from your beloved Spouse a great consolation.” The thing came about according to this prediction.

Her nuns did not leave her, and troubled themselves neither to eat nor to sleep, provided they lost not one word of so dear a mother and so holy a lover of the Saviour. Following the example of Saint Francis, she dictated a testament, not to bequeath to her daughters temporal goods, of which she was entirely destitute, but to bequeath to them holy poverty and perfect detachment from all things, which is a greater treasure than all the goods of this world. Brother Regnault having come to her bed to give her a little exhortation on the advantages of patience, she told him with heroic strength that, since Our Lord had called her to His service by means of His friend Saint Francis, no pain, by His grace, had been irksome to her, no penance difficult

and no illness disagreeable. Several cardinals and several bishops visited her privately; and, what is marvellous, although it was impossible for her to take anything, which lasted seventeen days, there was always seen in her an extraordinary presence of mind and vigour. She received these prelates with all the piety and devotion that the honour of their visit required, and she even exhorted to piety all who came near her, just as if she had enjoyed perfect health.

In this extremity she was also assisted by Brother Juniper, Brother Angelo and Brother Leo, three excellent companions of Saint Francis, who, mingling their flames with those of the Saint, made of them a furnace of love that cannot be expressed. At last Clare, being near death, spoke herself to her soul and said to it: “Go forth boldly, my soul, fear nothing; you have a good guide and a good safe-conduct. Go forth boldly, I say; for He who created you, who sanctified you, and who loved you as a mother loves her daughter, is Himself ready to receive you.” Then, addressing her Saviour, she said to Him: “And You, my Lord and my God, who gave me being and life, be blessed.” At the same moment Our Lord appeared to her with a blessed company of virgins crowned with flowers of matchless beauty and fragrance; one of them, whose crown was closed and gave more light than the sun (it was the holy Virgin), came near to embrace her. The others vied with one another in spreading over her body a cloth of priceless fabric; and during this action, which she made known to her sisters, her all-pure soul flew away into the bosom of the Divinity, there to possess for ever its sovereign happiness. It was in the year 1253, on the eleventh day of the month of August, the day after the feast of Saint Lawrence, although her feast has been put on the 12th, the day on which she was buried.

When the news of this blessed death spread, the whole town of Assisi, so to speak, ran to the monastery of San Damiano to see the body that had housed so holy a soul. The Pope himself, attended by the cardinals, went there to be present at her funeral. The friars of the Order of Saint Francis were also called there to sing the office: they began to intone the office of the dead, but the Pope stopped them and told them that the office of a holy Virgin should be sung, as though he wished to canonize her before she was buried; and that would have been done had not the cardinal of Ostia pointed out to His Holiness that in a matter of such importance time should always be taken to decide it. This same cardinal gave the funeral oration, in which, after showing the vanity of all the things of the world, he set forth with much force and eloquence the merit of this Saint. For the rest, although Saint Clare never left her monastery of San Damiano during her life, her Order nevertheless spread even in her lifetime to several parts of Europe, and she sent some of her daughters to various places to found new monasteries. It has since multiplied without end and divided into various branches, of which some have kept inviolably to the ancient observance, or have taken it up again through the reform of Saint Colette, and retain the original name of Poor Ladies of Saint Clare; others, which fell away from the great poverty of the original institute by accepting revenues with the permission of Pope Urban IV, are called Urbanists; others, which have added some particular constitutions to the one or the other, are called Capuchinesses, or Conceptionists, or Annonciades, or Recollectines, or Cordelières. All these Orders together have nearly four thousand convents and nearly a hundred thousand nuns. The number of saints they have given to the Church cannot be counted. Above all, one could never sufficiently admire the austerity of the nuns of the Ave Maria in Paris, who lived in a body as though they had none, and were on earth as though they were already entirely separated from the earth. That community has no longer existed since the Revolution, and the house has become a barracks.

She is ordinarily represented at the foot of the most holy Sacrament of the altar; sometimes with Saint Francis of Assisi, both rapt in ecstasy while they conversed together; in various circumstances before a Pope: either when she refuses the dispensation from the strict poverty she had professed; or when, as she blessed the table in the refectory by order of the sovereign Pontiff, all the loaves were found marked with a cross; or when the Pope chose to take upon himself to give her the Viaticum and to attend her obsequies solemnly with the cardinals.

## CULTE ET RELIQUES.

Her body was buried at Assisi in the convent of San Giorgio, which Pope Gregory IX had given her, and to which that of Saint Francis had also been carried, so that they might be safer and less exposed to the raids and outrages of enemies. So great a number of miracles at once took place there through the Saint's intercession that Pope Alexander IV, Innocent's successor, did not hesitate to canonize her only two years after her death (1255). Since 1260 her sacred remains have been transferred to a church built in her honour, which was dedicated to her in 1266 in the presence of Pope Clement IV. They remained there, not exposed to the veneration of the faithful, but buried. After five hundred years, that is, on 23 August 1850, it was resolved to bring this holy body out of the obscurity of the tomb. The necessary excavations were made for this purpose; it was discovered; the tomb was opened with all the pomp befitting so great a feast, and the bones were juridically identified. They were preserved whole, and not reduced to dust, despite the dampness of the vault; they were placed in a shrine, except for one rib, the one nearest the heart, intended for the sovereign Pontiff, and some fragments reserved for the Poor Clares of France (23 September 1850). Several miracles were worked on this occasion. The dark recess where the relics of Saint Clare had rested for centuries was turned into an underground church. Saint Clare's veil is preserved entire in the convent at Florence, and God still uses it to work several miracles, particularly in favour of children fallen into lethargy.

We have her life in Surius, written by an author of her time, in accordance with the order he had received from Pope Alexander IV after he had canonized her. Father Artus du Moustier, in the martyrology of Saint Francis, gives a long list of authors who have written her praise. — Cf. Godescard; the *Dictionnaire des Ordres religieux*, by Hélyot; the *Dictionnaire encyclopédique de la théologie catholique*, by Goschler; and the *Vie de sainte Claire*, by the abbé Demore, of Marseilles, where the most precise information will be found on the most recent discoveries of the relics of the holy abbess.

## Saint Porcarius, Abbot of Lérins, and His Companions, Martyrs (731)

Saint Porcarius had merited by his eminent virtue to be placed at the head of the celebrated abbey of Saint-Honorat of Lérins, in the diocese of Fréjus. As the Saracens were preparing in 731 to cross to the island on which his monastery stood, he had the youngest of his religious, thirty-six in number, put on board for Italy, together with some children whom he had been asked to receive as boarders. He then exhorted the rest of his community, which was very numerous, to die for Jesus Christ. This exhortation could not fortify two of his monks, Eleutherius and Columbus, against fear; they went and hid in a cave on the shore. The others, sustained by their abbot's example and strengthened by holy Communion, awaited death without dread. The Saracens, having made themselves masters of the abbey, which they found defenceless, massacred out of hatred of Christianity the five hundred religious who made up the community. They began with the old men, intending to intimidate the younger ones; but there was not a single one who did not prefer to die rather than renounce his religion. Columbus, ashamed of his timidity, rejoined his brethren and shared in their triumph.

The Saracens spared the lives of four, whom they took away with them. They put them aboard one of their ships, which put in at the port of Agay (*Agatonis portus*, Var, commune of Saint-Raphaël); and as these religious were allowed to go ashore, they escaped while no one was watching them, and hid so well in a neighbouring forest that they could not be found. They walked all night and reached Arluc (*Ara luci*), a monastery of women near Antibes, which was under the direction of the abbots of Lérins. They stayed there until the Saracens had evacuated Provence.

After the departure of these barbarians they returned to Lérins. Eleutherius, coming out of his cave, joined them. When they had paid the last duties to their massacred brethren, they went to fetch those who were in Italy, and chose Eleutherius as abbot. He repaired the monastery and revived the ancient discipline there.

The inhabitants of Monverdan, near the Lignon, in Forez, believe that Saint Porcarius withdrew to their district and was later martyred there by the Saracens. But if the Saint of that name whom they honour is the same as the abbot of Lérins, it must be some translation of his relics that gave rise to the establishment of the

cult they render him.

The feast of Saint Porcarius was formerly celebrated at Lérins on 12 August.

Godescard, Baillet, Mabillon, Bulteau, Dom Rivet.

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[1] See in the Roman martyrology of 5 August a note (note 3) concerning these holy martyrs.

[2] He had a great devotion to Saint Lawrence, through whose intercession he one day worked a striking miracle. While, still only a deacon, he was carrying to the altar a crystal chalice of magnificent workmanship, he let it fall to the ground and broke it. He sadly gathered up the pieces, placed them on the altar and ardently invoked his favourite saint. Soon the chalice repaired itself, and the crowd remained full of wonder. When he became bishop, Eusebius applied himself to the repair of the churches of his diocese and to the adornment of the house of God. To him are owed great reforms in the morals and discipline of his diocese and the creation of important establishments. — Father Sollier, in the *Acta Sanctorum*.

[3] *Cf. Notre-Dame de France*, by the parish priest of Saint-Sulpice, tome VI, page 291.

[4] See his life on that day.

# 13 August

## Martyrologies

### MARTYROLOGE ROMAIN.

At Rome, the triumph of Saint HIPPOLYTUS, martyr, who, for having gloriously confessed the name of Jesus Christ under the emperor Valerian, was, after several other torments, tied by the feet to the necks of untamed horses and cruelly dragged through thistles and thorns, and, with all his limbs torn, gave up his spirit to God. Saint Concordia, his nurse, was also martyred the same day with nineteen others of his household. The first had her body broken with leaded cords and died before the Saint's execution. The others were beheaded outside the Tiburtine Gate. They were all buried with him in the Ager Veranus. 258. — At Imola in Italy, the triumph of Saint CASSIAN, martyr. This generous confessor having refused to adore the idols, the persecutor summoned the children he taught, who did not love him because of the punishments they had received from him in their studies, and gave them power to put him to death; this was all the more cruel because these children, on account of their weakness, could kill him only by dint of blows and over a long space of time. 4th c. — At Todi, Saint Cassian, bishop and martyr, under the emperor Diocletian. 311. — At Burgos in Spain, Saint Centolla and Saint Helen, martyrs. — At Constantinople, Saint Maximus the Confessor, monk, illustrious for his learning and his zeal for Catholic truth. Having vigorously fought the Monothelites, he was condemned by Constans, a heretical emperor, to have his hands and tongue cut off; after which he was taken into exile in the Chersonese, where he gave up his spirit. At the same time two of his disciples, both called Anastasius, and several others suffered various torments and a very harsh banishment.[1] 662. — In Germany, Saint WIGBERT, priest and confessor. 747. — At Poitiers, Saint RADEGUND, queen, whose life was resplendent with miracles and virtues. 587.

### MARTYROLOGE DE FRANCE, REVU ET AUGMENTÉ.

In the diocese of Albi, Saint Radegund, cited in the Roman martyrology of this day. — In the diocese of Fréjus, Saint Porcarius and his companions, martyrs, whose life we gave on the preceding day. 731. — In the diocese of Mainz, Saint Wigbert, abbot of Fritzlar, cited in today's Roman martyrology. — At Évreux, Saint LAU or LANDULPHUS, canon of the cathedral church of that city, then bishop of that see and confessor. About 640. — At Langres and at Ellwangen in Swabia, Saint Herulph and Saint Ariolf or Hariolf, bishops of Langres, then solitaries. Herulph, brought up among the monks of the abbey of Saint Gall in Switzerland (founded about 700), was the son of the count of Ellwangen and of the family of the dukes of Swabia. He became bishop of Langres about the year 760. In 769 he was one of the twelve bishops of France chosen to attend the council of the Lateran, presided over by Pope Stephen III and directed against the heresy of the

Iconoclasts. Later Charlemagne placed him among the inspectors general known by the name of *missi dominici*. Without letting himself be dazzled by human greatness, Herulph yielded his mitre to his brother or his nephew Ariolf and withdrew to the abbey of Ellwangen, which he had founded from his patrimony. About 780 Ariolf joined him in solitude. 8th c. — At Poitiers, Saint JUNIAN, recluse, then abbot of Mairé. Spiritual director of Saint Radegund, he died on the same day and at the same hour as she. 587. — Also at Poitiers, Saint Ruremond or Annemond, disciple of Saint Junian and, like him, abbot of Mairé and confessor. 6th c. — At Artonne in Auvergne (arrondissement of Riom), Saint VITALINA, virgin, already cited in the martyrology of France for 21 February. 390. — Dedication of Notre-Dame of Rouen, which Robert, duke of Normandy (called Raoul before his conversion), had built, and which Richard, fourth king of England, endowed with great possessions, and the kings of France with numerous privileges. — At Louvain, anniversary of the erection of a confraternity of the holy Virgin in the collegiate church of Saint Peter. This confraternity honoured in a special way the miraculous statue that was formerly under the doorway of the said church. In 1261 this image of the Virgin was already carried solemnly in the September procession, and it drew a great concourse of pilgrims. 1439.

## MARTYROLOGES DES ORDRES RELIGIEUX.

Martyrology of the Camaldolese. — Saint Emygdius, bishop and martyr, of whom mention is made on 5 August.[2] 303 or 304.

Martyrology of the Order of Friars Minor. — Saint Henry II, king of Germany, emperor of the Romans and confessor.[3] 1024.

Martyrology of the Discalced Carmelites. — Blessed Angelus Augustine Mazzinghi, confessor, whose birthday in heaven is celebrated on 16 August.[4] 1438.

Martyrology of the Order of the Blessed Virgin Mary of Mount Carmel. — Blessed Angelus Mazzinghi, confessor, of the Order of Carmelites, etc. 1438.

Martyrology of the Order of the Hermits of Saint Augustine. — At Milan, Saint Simplician, bishop and confessor, who exhorted our Father Saint Augustine to the monastic life; brought up in the school of the Roman Church, he took part in the struggles of Saint Ambrose against Arianism and, elected successor of that great bishop, distinguished himself by his holiness and learning; at last he fell asleep in the Lord. 4th c. Martyrology of the Canons Regular. — The octave of the Transfiguration of Our Lord Jesus Christ, principal title of the basilica of Saint John Lateran. — The same day, Saint Simplician, confessor and bishop of Milan, celebrated by the testimony of Saint Anthony and Saint Augustine. 4th c.

Martyrology of the Capuchin Friars Minor of Saint Francis. — Saint Jerome Emiliani, confessor, founder of the Congregation of the Somaschi, illustrious for his miracles during his life and after his death. Benedict XIV solemnly placed him among the Blessed, and Clement XIII among the Saints. With us his feast is celebrated on this day.[5] 1537.

Martyrology of the Premonstratensians. — At Altenburg or Altenberg in the Wetterau, Blessed Gertrude, virgin, daughter of Saint Elizabeth of Thuringia, widow; she was a nun of the Premonstratensian Order and governed the monastery of that town for many years, remarkable for her virtues, her humility and her example.[6] 1297.

Martyrology of the Cistercians. — Saint Emygdius, bishop and martyr, whose birthday in heaven is celebrated on 5 August. 303 or 304.

Martyrology of the three Orders of Saint Francis. — At Camerino in Umbria, Blessed Peter of Molleano or of Mogliano, confessor, of the Order of Friars Minor, who, celebrated for his evangelical preaching, the merits of his virtues and the splendour of his miracles, passed to heaven on 25 July. The sovereign pontiff

Clement XIII approved the immemorial cult paid to him.[7] 1490.

## ADDITIONS FAITES D'APRÈS LES BOLLANDISTES ET AUTRES HAGIOGRAPHES.

In the diocese of Naples, Saint Philomena, virgin and martyr at Rome, whose life we gave on 10 August. 3rd c. — Passing of the most holy Virgin in the presence of the Apostles, except Saint Thomas. She died, it is commonly said, like her Son, three days before rising again and ascending into heaven. — At Rome, Blessed JOHN BERCHMANS, novice of the Society of Jesus. 1621. — At Susteren, near Jülich, in the Rhine Province, Saint Zwentibold or Zwentebold, king of Lorraine (895) and confessor, and his three daughters Benedicta, Cecilia and Relinda, nuns. He was the son of Arnulf, king of Germany and of Lorraine, and is regarded as the founder of the Benedictine abbey of Susteren (*Suestra, Sustra*), where he placed his daughters under the direction of Amalberga. The pious liberality of our Saint drew enemies upon him, who took away his crown; but he received in exchange that of immortal glory. 900. — In the former Benedictine abbey of Corvey or Corbie in Westphalia (founded about 820 by Louis the Pious, who sent there to organize it several monks of Corbie in Picardy, whence its name of Little or New Corbie), Saints Ludolf and Druthmar, abbots. The monastery and school of Corvey were extremely flourishing under Saint Ludolf, who throughout his life was able to make that brotherly concord and piety which are the basis of every religious community increase more and more, so that this abbey spread far and wide the brightness of all the Christian virtues, and many persons of high birth thought themselves happy to place themselves under the direction of our Saint or to entrust him with the education of their sons. Druthmar was a monk at Lorsch when he was appointed abbot of Corvey by the emperor Henry, on the recommendation of Saint Meinwerk, with whom he was closely bound. 983 and 1046. — At Wellembourg, near Augsburg, in Bavaria, Saint Radegund or Radiana (*Radiana*), virgin and servant, famous for her compassion for the infirm and the sick. We have given some details of her life in the Additions of the Bollandists for 18 July. 13th c.

## Saint Hippolytus the Jailer, Soldier, Martyr at Rome

*258. — Pope: Saint Sixtus II. — Roman Emperors: Valerian and Gallienus.*

> *Idibus Hippolytum comitem Laurentius astris Pro Christo parili recipit certamine passum.*
>
> *You might have seen, on the Ides of August 258, heaven open, and Lawrence receive and present to his God Hippolytus his disciple, who had just died, but for Jesus Christ, by the same death as the Hippolytus of ancient Greece.*
>
> *Acta Sanctorum.*

Saint Hippolytus, of whom we have already spoken in the life of Saint Lawrence, was a Roman knight, and received from the emperor Valerian, successor of Decius, the order to guard that blessed deacon and to do his utmost to bring him to disclose the treasures of the Church, which were believed to have been entrusted to him by Pope Saint Sixtus. He therefore took him with him and put him in prison with several others, Christians as well as idolaters; but he soon became his captive himself, for, seeing the great miracles he worked in the name of the true God, and wondering above all that by the mere laying on of his hands he gave sight to the blind, he believed in Jesus Christ and, submitting to the saving yoke of the faith, wished to be baptized. His example was followed by all those of his household, nineteen in number. During his baptism he had a vision in which he was shown the innocent souls of the Christians who had been martyred for religion; they were enjoying an incomparable happiness, which confirmed him in the hope of eternal life that Saint Lawrence had promised him if he were converted.

Shortly afterwards Valerian, who was burning with desire to seize the treasures of the Church, ordered the holy deacon to be brought. Hippolytus led him before his tribunal, intending to declare himself a Christian if it should be useful for the glory of God and the honour of religion. He witnessed the strength and generosity

with which this brave soldier of Jesus Christ answered all the questions put to him; and, as the emperor gave him a further three days' delay to collect the supposed treasures, he was put back into the hands of Hippolytus and committed once again to his custody and good faith. Hippolytus received him with joy, no longer to torment him and put him to the torture, but to give him more freedom to do what he had planned. He even worked with him to gather the poor, the sick, the blind, the crippled and the paralysed, who are the true treasures of the Church, and he lodged and fed them in his house until Lawrence should lead them before that cruel and ambitious prince. He was present also at that so famous and august scene, and he had the grief of seeing his dear master in the hands of the executioners, who tore him with scorpions, beat him with sticks and applied red-hot plates to his sides. The following night, knowing that still sharper torments were being prepared for him, he began to weep bitterly and asked the martyr's leave to cry aloud that he himself was a Christian, so as to share in his sufferings and his triumph. Saint Lawrence told him that it was not yet time, but that he would soon have the satisfaction he desired. And indeed, Hippolytus, having taken the body of that illustrious martyr from the place of his execution, buried it with honour in the Ager Veranus, in the cemetery of Cyriaca. The emperor saw by this that he had become a Christian, had him arrested and chose to examine him himself.

When he was before his tribunal, he said to him: "Have you then become a magician as well as that wretch whom we had burned and to whom you gave burial?" "I am no magician," answered Hippolytus, "any more than he was; but I have become a Christian, and I glory more in that quality than in all the finest titles in the world." At this answer Valerian had his mouth bruised with stones; then he was stripped of his clothes, which were those in which he had been clothed at baptism; he was beaten with many blows of a stick, and cruelly rubbed with thistles. This torture, which left him all covered in blood, could not shake his constancy or draw any complaint from his mouth; he told the tyrant boldly that he would gain nothing over him by all these torments, and that he would give to the last drop of his blood for Jesus Christ, whom Lawrence had made known to him. Valerian then changing his methods sought to win him by gentleness. He therefore had him given the garments of a Roman knight and, seeing him splendidly dressed, said to him: "Be our friend now, continue the office you held with us, enjoy in peace the goods that fortune has given you, and trouble yourself no more with that vain superstition which has deceived you."

Hippolytus answered that he no longer recognized any other master than Jesus Christ, nor any other knighthood than to fight for the sovereign Lord of heaven and earth.

The emperor, more irritated than ever, handed him over to a provost to complete his trial and put him to death. This man first went to his house to seize all his goods by right of confiscation; but, finding all his people Christians and entirely resolved to follow his example even unto death, he began by venting all his fury upon them. He therefore had Concordia stripped, that pious woman who had been nurse and governess to Hippolytus, and had her scourged with such barbarity that she expired under the lashes in the hands of the executioners. Then he himself led the eighteen others outside the Tivoli Gate, where he had them beheaded. At last, since all these executions, at which Hippolytus was present throughout, had done nothing to change his resolution, he had him tied by the feet to the necks of several untamed horses, which dragged him furiously over roads covered with stones, brambles and thorns; this tore all his flesh and bruised his whole body with inexpressible pains. Thus this generous soldier of Jesus Christ gave up his most pure soul, still adorned with the robe of innocence it had received in the sacrament of regeneration, to go and receive in heaven the sweetness of immortality. This took place on 13 August, three days after the execution of Saint Lawrence.

His body, broken as it was, was taken away by the priest Justin, who had earlier helped him to bury that of Saint Lawrence, and it was buried quite near him in the same field, called Veranus. But more than five hundred years later Pope Leo III gave it as a rich present to Charlemagne, emperor and king of France, who placed it in the monastery of Lièvre, whence it was later transferred to the abbey of Saint-Denis in France, to

a chapel bearing his name, where God has worked several miracles through his intercession. It is said that the most pious king Robert, son of Hugh Capet, was extremely devoted to him. When he was besieging the castle of Avallon in Burgundy and saw the feast of Saint Hippolytus approaching, he slipped away secretly from his camp to come and keep it solemnly at Saint-Denis. His devotion was not without reward, for during this journey the walls of that fortress, which had been stubbornly resisting his arms, fell miraculously of themselves, and the news was brought to the king just as he was finishing hearing Mass in the Saint's chapel on the day of the feast. Several historians of the seventeenth century do not accept this miracle, and claim that the prince took Avallon by famine and entered it through a breach made by his engines. It is a fact on which the glory of Saint Hippolytus in no way depends, and which is much less than what he can do by the almighty power of God. We report it only on the word of those who wrote the acts of King Robert, who must answer for it. Du Saussay, in his Martyrology, has put the siege of Melun in place of that of Avallon. He adds in his supplement that Pope Alexander III, having entered the chapel of Saint Hippolytus at Saint-Denis, would not believe that his bones had been brought there from Rome; but that at the same hour they were heard to stir and make a noise in their shrine, as if to complain of this incredulity, which made His Holiness cry out: *Credo, Domine Hippolyte, credo; jam quiesce*: "I believe it, my lord Hippolytus, I believe it; rest in peace." The inhabitants of Cologne also claim to have his body in the church of Saint Ursula; but if it is that of our Blessed Roman knight, and not of some other martyr of the same name, they can have only parts of it. At Paris, in the faubourg Saint-Marcel, a parish was dedicated under the patronage of this glorious Martyr. Several other churches and chapels in France have been erected in his honour. In the church of Bay (diocese of Langres) there are relics of this Saint. They doubtless come from the former abbey of Auberive, which is nearby. People go there on pilgrimage to be cured of weakness of the limbs.

Saint Hippolytus is represented: 1. dragged by fiery horses that tear his flesh to shreds; 2. in the dress and armour of Roman soldiers; 3. in the company of Saint Lawrence, his spiritual father.

His life is taken from the acts of Saint Lawrence.

## Saint Radegund, Queen of France, Patroness of Poitiers

*587. — Pope: Pelagius II. — King of France: Chilperic I.*

> *Crucifying her flesh with its concupiscences, she gave, from the depths of this vale of tears, nothing but contempt to all perishable goods.*
>
> *Prose of Saint Radegund.*

Saint Radegund was born in Germany, in Thuringia (519). Her birth was wholly royal, since she had for grandfather Basin and for father Berthaire, kings of that country. Her paternal uncle Hermenfroi, unable to content himself with a small part of that State, which had been divided between him, Berthaire and Badéric, his brothers, armed powerfully against them and, having defeated them, killed them and seized their States. He had been assisted in this war by Theuderic, king of the Franks, to whom he had promised a share in his conquests; but when, after seizing the whole of Thuringia, he refused to detach any part of it to give to him, that king, indignant at his perfidy, called his brother Clotaire I to his help and, falling upon that province, cut Hermenfroi's army to pieces, forced him to shut himself up in a castle and, after making himself master of almost the whole country, took very rich booty and a great number of prisoners. The chief of these were our illustrious Saint Radegund, who was at her uncle's court, and a young prince, her brother, whose name is not given. Clotaire, who was to have for his reward only a part of the spoils, asked before anything else for Radegund, whose modesty, grace and good breeding already charmed all who saw her. Theuderic could not refuse his request, though he saw well that he was asking for an incomparable treasure; so Clotaire took possession of this lovable captive and, having brought her to France, placed her in the castle of Athies[1] in the Vermandois, to be brought up there according to her rank.

The grace of the Holy Spirit began from that time to act powerfully in her soul, and although she was still only about ten years old, she was nevertheless perfectly enlightened about the duties of the Christian life and practised its most pious exercises in an excellent way. She was seen assiduous in her oratory before a crucifix, now reciting psalms and hymns in honour of God, now meditating on the wounds and sufferings of her Saviour, now rising in contemplation of the greatness of the Divinity, now shedding tears for the spiritual and bodily miseries of her neighbour. She had such veneration for the holy altars that she cleaned their steps with her own royal hands, and, having gathered the dust in a cloth, she carried it out only with respect, as if this dust had acquired some holiness from having covered the pavement of the sanctuary. Her charity for the poor was extreme: her palace served as a refuge for the sick, whom she dressed herself and served in the baths whose use the Gallo-Romans had bequeathed to the Franks. All the money she received was spent in alms; with her royal hands she lavished on the poor a thousand attentions of cleanliness and poured them cordial drinks to restore their strength on coming out of the steam rooms. She distributed to the young children whom she loved to gather around her the dishes she took from her table; she had them take part in processions and pious ceremonies that she organized in the township. Such were the innocent and pious games of the young virgin who, a queen by birth and later by marriage, made herself the servant of the poor in the very palace where she ruled as sovereign. So extraordinary a conduct in a young princess did indeed stir up against her some domestic persecutions, which the bishop Fortunatus does not explain; but it was so admired by the most enlightened persons that at Clotaire's court and throughout the kingdom of Soissons people talked of nothing but the rare virtues of Radegund. This made the prince resolve to marry her, although he had already had three wives who had given him several children, among others Charibert, Guntram, Chilperic and Sigebert, who all reigned after him. Radegund, learning of his design, fled secretly from her palace of Athies, infinitely preferring the quality of virgin and spouse of Jesus Christ to that of queen of France and spouse of an earthly king; but Clotaire had her stopped in a village which was afterwards called Sainte-Radegonde, had her brought to him at Soissons, and there, in spite of all her remonstrances and prayers, obliged her to marry him. Bonfires were lit everywhere for so advantageous an alliance, and the people conceived great hopes that it would greatly help to temper the spirit of the prince, who was of a fierce humour and still had something of the barbarism of the first Franks. The queen alone could not console herself at seeing herself engaged in the great world and in a court where innocence and piety were hardly held in honour. The thought of her former solitude, where she had tasted in repose the sweetness of paradise, made her new dignity unbearable to her, and she would gladly have left it at any moment to shut herself up in a cloister, had not the authority of the king prevented her from breaking her chains and setting herself free.

The number of her officers and the splendour of her majesty did not prevent her from continuing the exercises of devotion and mercy she had practised from childhood. She attended the holy mysteries and the offices of the Church with a wonderful piety that edified the whole court. Part of her time morning and evening was spent in prayer; she even often rose from table and left her bed at night to apply herself to prayer, having first obtained the king's consent. When he was absent, she used the occasion to spend most of the days and nights with Jesus Christ, and she was sometimes found in the morning, in winter, in her oratory or on the floor of her room, so numb with cold that it was hard to warm her again by the fire. Her charity for the poor, far from diminishing, on the contrary increased; she received no sum of money without first giving a tithe of it for their relief. What remained to her after the indispensable expenses of her household was for the churches, the monasteries, the hermits and the beggars. She often carried her alms herself; and when she could not carry them, she sent them by trustworthy persons who served her as mouth and hands. She was not content with giving money; she also had companies of poor people whom she maintained in everything, giving them food and distributing to them the linen and clothes they needed. Her charity even led her to have a hospital built in the township of Athies, where she had been brought up, to perpetuate her benefactions there.

What is more surprising still is the rigour with which she treated her body amid the pleasures of so brilliant a court. When a garment trimmed with gold and adorned with precious stones was brought to her, if one of her chambermaids showed that she found it well made and of great price, she deprived herself of it for the love of God and sent it to the nearest church to be made into altar frontals and ecclesiastical vestments. She did the same with the fine linens, laces and cut-work of extraordinary beauty that her ladies of the wardrobe presented to her, saying that it was far better to apply them to altar cloths and corporals for the use of the holy Sacrifice than to adorn with them a body that was to be food for worms. She lived in a continual mortification of the senses and abstinence. While the king's table, at which she ate, was covered with delicate dishes, she usually had only vegetables served to her. She observed all the prescribed fasts with inexorable severity, eating only once a day and contenting herself with very light food. From the beginning of Lent a holy nun named Pia sent her, in a sealed packet, a hair shirt, which she wore until Easter without taking it off day or night; and after that time she sent it back to her, also sealed, so that this penance might be known to no one. When some man of God came to the place where the court was, she went to find him that very evening and, in spite of his resistance, washed his feet with profound humility and served him food and drink. The next day she came to find him again to converse with him on contempt of the world, the desire of heavenly things and the ways of perfection; for this was all that occupied her thoughts and could give her joy and consolation.

The devil, unable to bear so heroic a virtue, stirred up against her lords and ladies of the court, who represented to the king that he had married not a queen but a nun and a hospital servant. What annoyed them most was to see her running to the public houses where the poor were received, dressing their wounds, gathering wretched people around her, and staying more willingly with them than in the circle of the princesses of the blood and the other most considerable ladies of the kingdom. The king sometimes listened willingly to these complaints, particularly because it often happened that when he asked for her for dinner or supper he was told that she was busy with her exercises of piety; but she easily appeased him, pointing out that, the poor being the members of Jesus Christ, she could have no nobler or more salutary occupation than to procure them help. If he happened to say a harsh word to her, he at once excused himself and made amends by giving her sums of money or other presents for the relief of the poor. She acquired so much credit over his mind that she easily obtained from him the pardon of criminals condemned to death, and he himself attributed to her merits and the power of her prayers all the successes that came to him in peace and in war.

God also made known by a great miracle how pleasing her conduct was to Him and in what esteem her virtue was to be held. One day, as she was walking after dinner in her garden in the town of Péronne, the prisoners, who were not far from the castle, learning that she was there, cried out so loudly to implore her help that she heard them. She at once asked what it was; but the officers, who knew her goodness and feared she would ask for the release of these wretches, told her a lie and said it was a band of beggars waiting for alms around the palace. She believed them and, having given enough to satisfy these supposed poor, withdrew to her oratory. Meanwhile the prisoners, seeing no help come and thinking they had not been heard, implored the help of heaven through the merits of the queen; that very evening their irons broke, their prison opened, and no one could prevent them from going out. They came at once to the palace to thank Her Majesty, who exhorted them to live well and had the pardon that had been granted them in heaven ratified on earth.

Saint Radegund lived thus five or six years in the company of Clotaire, cherished by that monarch and honoured by all the good people of his whole kingdom; but this peace changed all at once. For the king, having put to death, from we know not what caprice, the prince of Thuringia, our Saint's only brother, saw that it would be too painful for her to remain with him. He therefore allowed her to withdraw into a monastery, as she had long wished. The cause of this separation could only be most distressing and painful to Radegund: the love she bore her brother made her lament his so tragic and unjust death; and the love she bore her husband caused her, on the other hand, extreme pain, knowing as she did that he was guilty of the murder

of that prince, whom so close a bond ought to have made extremely dear to him. But this sadness was somewhat softened by the thought that this event was the cause of her freedom and gave her the opportunity of leaving the court and the world, to converse no longer with anyone but Jesus Christ. She went first to Saint Medard, bishop of Noyon, to beg him to give her the habit and receive her among the spouses of her Saviour. But since that prelate hesitated to grant her request, because the

Apostle does not allow persons bound by marriage to loose themselves by their own act, and also because the lords who were at Noyon represented to him that he could not, without offending the king, deprive him of his spouse, this courageous queen, who was assured of her husband's consent, went into the sacristy, cut off her hair herself, put on a nun's habit and in that state came back into the church, where, addressing the holy bishop, she said to him: "Know, blessed prelate, that if you give way to human respect and the fear of men, and put off consecrating me, the sovereign Shepherd will ask you to account for my soul." Saint Medard, admiring her constancy and resolution, and no longer doubting that so generous an undertaking was inspired in her by God, laid his hands on her head and received her among the deaconesses. After this consecration she gave to the church of Noyon the robe she wore on days of the greatest solemnity, with precious stones and other ornaments of great price. She made similar presents to several monasteries she found on the road to Tours, thus stripping herself little by little of everything to imitate the poverty of Jesus Christ.

Devotion to the great Saint Martin, whom all France then honoured with a particular cult, made her take the road to his tomb. She enriched it too with very precious gifts and spent some days there in sentiments of extraordinary piety; for she was seen at the door of the church, now with her face pressed to the ground, now with her cheeks and eyes bathed in tears, and if she advanced toward the sanctuary, it was with such respect and humility that one could not sufficiently admire her faith and fervour. From there she went to Candes, where Saint Martin died; then to Chinon, where for some time she led a retired and religious life. Finally she went to Saix, near Loudun, in Poitou. Meanwhile the king, touched with regret at having lost a wife of such great merit, resolved to have her come back; the rumour even spread that he was coming to fetch her himself at Saix. Radegund, alarmed, withdrew into the church of Saint-Hilaire at Poitiers and wrote to her husband to leave her her freedom. According to the prophecy of Blessed John, recluse of Chinon, the fasts and prayers of our Saint obtained from God a change in Clotaire's heart. The prince even allowed her, at her request, to build at Poitiers a monastery of women and a church with a college of priests to serve it (544–559). Such was the origin of the celebrated monastery of the Holy Cross and of the church of Sainte-Radegonde.

It needed no less a pen than that of the learned and pious Venantius Fortunatus to describe the heroic acts of piety and mercy and the astonishing austerities of this solitary queen after her retirement from the court. He says himself that no one could understand where she found the abundant and endless alms she distributed. As she was never without someone asking her for something, whether to help a sick person, to clothe a poor one, to ransom a captive, to free a prisoner, or to feed a widow or an orphan, so she was never without giving. Every day she kept open table for the poor: while she lived only on vegetables, she fed them generously, giving them good soup and well-seasoned meat. Twice a week, on Thursday and Saturday, she devoted herself to the relief of infirm and sick women and girls, and it was an astonishing thing to see her comb them and dress their sores herself, and put her royal hands on their scabs and ringworm to work for their cure. When she had rendered them so repugnant an office of charity, if she saw that they had poor clothes, she had them changed and clothed them entirely anew; then, having washed her own hands first, she gave them water to wash and had them sit at her table, where she served them, standing and fasting, three kinds of dishes, relying on no one either to bring the dishes, or to cut the bread and meat, or to give them drink. If there was among her company of poor anyone crippled in the limbs, she carried the spoon or the morsel to that person's mouth. On Sundays, which are the days set apart for divine worship, when the poor were assembled, she contented herself with offering them drink once and, leaving the rest to be done by one of her daughters, withdrew to continue her prayers; after which she gave dinner to the clergy, whom she received with an

honour proportioned to their dignity. The lepers, who were very numerous at that time, did not horrify her. When they announced their coming by a signal, she sent to learn how many they were and, having had bowls, cups and knives prepared for them in the same number, she had them brought secretly into a room set aside to receive them. There, full of fervour, she washed their faces with warm water and dressed their festering, foul sores with her own hands; and if they were women, she did not hesitate to embrace them and give them the kiss of peace. Then she had them eat, serving them herself what had been prepared for their food. Finally they did not leave without having received money and clothes from her wholly royal munificence. She usually had only one of her daughters as witness of so marvellous an action; for as much as she felt inclined to do good, so much did she shrink from the esteem and honour of men, which could rob her of the merit of her good works. Yet God often showed by miracles how pleasing her charity was to Him; for when she had blessed a vine leaf, which these girls had her do on the pretext that they needed it, that was enough to cure a sick person given up by the physicians; and for an incurable wound the leaf was applied to the sore. When anyone had received a candle from her hand, nothing more was needed to drive away the most malignant fevers than to light it beside those who were tormented by them. Health followed her everywhere, and when she came to visit the sick, the fruit and preserves she brought them were so salutary that their illness was at once seen to diminish.

Her severity toward herself equalled her gentleness and mercy toward her neighbour. Venantius Fortunatus tells us that, after she had been consecrated by Saint Medard, she made it a law for herself never to eat meat, fish, fruit or any other delicate thing, but only herbs and vegetables. Nor did she drink wine, but only water, or at most perry. The bread she ate was only of barley or rye; she ate it only four times a week in Lent, and at that time she herself ground the grain from which this bread was made. Out of a spirit of religion she also applied herself to shaping the wax that was to serve the altar and to baking the hosts that were to be offered and consecrated at Mass.

When her convent was finished and she had gathered a numerous company of holy maidens who wished to imitate her example, she fixed a day to shut herself in with them. There was such eagerness to see her enter this blessed tomb, in which she wished to die while still alive, that, the streets and windows not being spacious enough to hold everyone, people were to be seen even on the roofs. She first gave an example of humility that has scarcely its like; for although every kind of reason seemed to demand that she be abbess of this new monastery, of which she was the foundress and mother, she would never take that title, but named another abbess, Agnes, a very holy nun to whom Fortunatus addresses several of his poems, whether to thank her for the eggs and milk she had sent him, or to present her in turn with flowers and fruit from his garden: the flowers for the decoration of her church, and the fruit for the comfort of her daughters. The holy Queen, having given her the rank of superior, stripped herself into her hands of all that remained to her of riches, and submitted her own person to her as well, so as to live in perpetual poverty, chastity and obedience, the virtues from which the religious life draws its lustre. In the very first year she was in this monastery she spent Lent in an incredible austerity; for, to go further still than her earlier rigours, she ate bread only on Sundays, and on the other days lived only on mallows and raw roots, without oil and without salt. She drank only water, and that in so small a quantity that she was in continual thirst, which she bore with joy in honour of the thirst Our Lord endured for us on the tree of the cross. In other Lents the only mitigation she allowed herself was to taste bread on Thursday and Sunday. For the rest of the year she relaxed something of this great rigour; but, except for the octaves of Easter and the solemn feasts, her fast was continual. The bed on which she lay was rather to torment her than to give her rest. As a nun she had no other mattress than a little ash covered with a hair cloth. Her sleep lasted hardly more than an hour. She was always the first in choir to sing the praises of God, and left it only the last, after a long prayer that continually set her afire with a new flame of divine love. The hair shirt was her ordinary garment, and when she had worn out the one that Blessed John of Chinon sent her, she always contrived to get others, which she wanted to be among the most prickly. But, not content with the pain this rough garment caused her, she further afflicted her delicate body with chains and girdles

with iron points, which she bound so tightly on her skin that they often made great wounds. It once even happened that, one of these chains having sunk in deeply and the flesh having grown over it, an incision had to be made around her body to draw it out, which made her shed much blood and endure extreme pain. Her fervour led her to a far more astonishing penance, which we do not put forward as a model to be imitated, but as a subject of astonishment and admiration. Having had a copper plate made on which the image of Our Lord and the instruments of His Passion were engraved, she put it in the fire and, when it was red-hot, pressed it into her body in two different places, thus making herself suffer what the tyrants in the first centuries made the martyrs suffer. Another time, in Lent, her ardour for suffering being satisfied neither by the severity of her abstinence and fasting, nor by the intolerable thirst that burned her tongue, nor by the pricks she received from the pig's bristles with which her flesh was bristling, nor by the wounds her pointed chains made, she undertook further to roast her body, so as not to be exempt in this life from the pain of fire. She therefore had a brazier full of glowing coals brought to her and, having thrown out the coals, applied the burning copper to her limbs: the horror of such a torture made one shudder. Great holes were made in her flesh, whose burning she endured with invincible patience, without troubling to soothe it with remedies; and had not the corruption that set into these new wounds, and made blood and pus flow from them in abundance, obliged her to uncover them, nothing would ever have been known of so terrible a mortification.

We do not doubt that the reader will be seized with astonishment at seeing so great a queen treat herself in so severe a manner, or, to put it better, so cruel and inhuman a manner; but he will be no less astonished when he considers the practices of humility to which she lowered herself in order to make herself the last of all the sisters. She swept the monastery in her turn, carried wood to the kitchen and stirred the fire there, sometimes taking pleasure in letting herself be burned; she also did her week there like the other nuns, during which, refusing to be relieved either by the sisters or by the servants, she herself washed the herbs, put the pot on the fire, made the soups, served the vegetables she had prepared under obedience, cleaned the dishes and did not shrink from still more menial offices. The great Venantius Fortunatus does not blush to say that she often cleaned and greased her sisters' shoes, and that she took as her perpetual office the keeping clean of the most unclean places of the convent. He adds that she was like the perpetual infirmarian, not content with helping the sick in her turn, but rendering them at all times the most toilsome services; this she did fasting, without ever complaining, and with a smiling face that showed the satisfaction she took in such humiliating employments.

The richer she had been in the world, the poorer she wished to be in the cloister, in imitation of her sovereign Master, who, being infinitely rich in eternity, became poor in time for love of us. The same Fortunatus and the virgin Baudonivia, who have given us her life, both remark that she had virtue so much at heart that she willingly wore only mean and worn-out clothes, and that she sometimes used old remnants to make herself the garments she needed. Her purity was admirable; she had been so detached from all the pleasures of the flesh and possessed chastity in so excellent a degree that there are few virgins whose mind and heart are as pure as hers. There was seen in her a harmony of all the other virtues, that is to say, gentleness, modesty, simplicity, patience, joy in adversity, prudence, assiduity in prayer and the other practices of devotion, and zeal for the glory of God. As she slept little, she was always occupied with divine things. After the contemplation of our mysteries, the reading of the holy Scriptures was her element and her life. The sisters loved to help her in this exercise, and they often found that if her body, worn out with watching and work, gave way to sleep, her heart remained always awake, according to the word of the Bride, "I sleep, and my heart watcheth," since, when they broke off their reading, she at once begged them to continue it. The love she bore these new plants that made up her community was admirable; she often said to them: "You are my dear daughters, you are my light, my rest, my happiness and my life. Let us work so diligently in this world that we may receive the eternal reward in the next; let us seek God in the simplicity of our heart, serve Him with faith, with confidence and with fear; let us love Him with all our strength and all the affections of our soul; in short, let us so conduct ourselves that we may say to Him on the day of His judgment: Give us, Lord,

what You have promised us, because we have done what You commanded us." Often, too, she explained to them with much light and unction the words of the psalms or gospels that had been read, which was of great profit to that whole congregation of spouses of Jesus Christ.

This charity for her nascent community made her undertake the journey to Arles with the virgin Agnes, whom she had had elected superior, to obtain there a copy of the Rule that Saint Caesarius, archbishop of that see, had composed for Saint Caesaria, his sister, and some other holy maidens who had gathered with her to serve Jesus Christ faithfully. She had no difficulty in obtaining it, and she had besides the consolation of seeing how these ancient nuns conducted themselves in the whole ordering of regular discipline. Having returned to Poitiers, she gave this same Rule to her daughters and took care to form them on the model of the observance she had seen in the monastery of Saint Caesaria. Saint Benedict was already dead, and Saint Maurus had brought his Rule to France; but it was still little known there, particularly for women. Later it was introduced into the monastery of Saint Radegund, and it is the Rule that has been very holily observed there for several centuries.

Afterwards the holy Queen, wishing to enrich her church with some holy relics, sent the priest Reovalis to Jerusalem to obtain from the patriarch a part of the remains of the blessed martyr Saint Mammes. The patriarch received her envoy with honour; but, so as to do nothing without being assured of the will of God, before dividing the holy body he ordered a public prayer in his church. At the end of three days he celebrated Mass and, attended by a large congregation, raised his voice and said to the martyr with perfect confidence: "I beseech you, blessed Confessor and Martyr of Jesus Christ, if Radegund, who has sent to us, is a true servant of Our Lord, make it known to us by some outward sign, and be pleased that a part of your relics be given her as she desires and as she has had us asked." All the people answered Amen. At the same time he had the shrine opened in which this precious treasure was enclosed and, bringing his hand near each limb, asked the Saint inwardly which he wished to give. He thus touched all the fingers of the right hand; but when he came to the little finger, hardly had he touched it when it came away without difficulty; this showed the merit of the blessed queen, and that God granted her this finger of His Martyr. It was brought to Poitiers with fitting devotion and solemnity, with the divine praises sung continually. Radegund for her part received it with a piety that cannot be expressed and, in thanksgiving, spent the following seven days with her daughters in fasting and continual prayer.

Her devotion not yet being satisfied, she desired to have a part of the wood of the true Cross. But as it was necessary to send to the emperor Justin the Younger for this, and as she did not think she ought to do so without the approval of the king, who was then, for Poitou, Sigebert I, one of the sons of Clotaire her husband, she wrote to him and begged him to allow her, for the salvation of all France and the prosperity of his kingdom, to procure from the emperor the inestimable treasure of the Saviour's cross. The king highly praised her zeal and gave her all the permissions she desired for it. So, having chosen persons of singular prudence and piety, she sent them to Constantinople to the emperor to represent her desire to him and to beg him not to refuse to France a part of that wood which had been on Calvary for the salvation of the whole world. The prince, who could not be unaware of her merit, both because of her great reputation and that of the late king Clotaire I, her husband, and because some of her relatives had taken refuge at Constantinople after the ruin of the kingdom of Thuringia, generously granted her what she asked. The empress Sophia, a very pious princess, contributed not a little to resolving him to act in this way. So he sent Radegund a piece of the true Cross enriched with gold and precious stones, with many other relics of the Saints and a book of the Gospels covered with gold and adorned with many precious stones.[2] We remarked on the day of the Finding of the holy Cross that, in the distribution of this sacred wood made at Jerusalem to save it from the power of the Barbarians, three pieces of it had been brought to Constantinople, besides one piece that was given privately to the emperor then reigning. We must believe that the one Justin sent to Saint Radegund was one of these four pieces, or, if you will, a portion of one of the four, since it may be that the four pieces had

been further cut into several particles. The joy of the blessed Queen on receiving this piece of the true Cross, the first that had been brought to France, was incredible. She did not doubt that God had a particular love for her, since He gave her a share of this wood, which was the instrument of the salvation of the whole human race. She added to it other holy remains that she had had sought throughout the East, and, when shrines had been prepared to place them with honour, she asked the bishop of Poitiers, Maroveus, to perform the ceremony of the translation. But this prelate, who for we know not what caprice did not have for her and her daughters the same affection that Saint Pientius, his predecessor, had had, refused to do it, and instead of rendering this duty to these august relics went off to his country house. Saint Radegund, unable to bear this contempt, wrote of it to the king, who instructed Saint Euphronius, archbishop of Tours, to go to Poitiers and give the holy Queen the satisfaction she desired. Saint Euphronius did so, and placed the relics in the church of her monastery, which changed the name of Saint Mary, which it bore before, for that of Holy Cross. Saint Gregory of Tours describes this whole event in his *History of the Franks*, book IX, chapter XL.

For the rest, God showed by great miracles the authenticity of the holy relic. The nun Baudonivia, who was present, assures us that by its power the blind recovered their sight, the deaf their hearing, the dumb their speech, the lame the use of their legs, and all kinds of sick people perfect health; and so everyone blessed the queen who had procured for Poitiers a source of so many benefits. As she knew how one should behave with great princes, she sent the priest Reovalis once more, with an honourable company of clerics and laymen, to the emperor to thank him for the rich presents with which he had favoured her. On the return journey their ship was tossed for forty days by so furious a storm that they thought themselves at every moment on the point of being wrecked. The sailors declared they had never seen its like, and made them lose all hope. When they expected nothing but to be swallowed up, they were inspired to commend themselves to our Saint. They cried out therefore: “O most pious queen Radegund, who have compassion on all who have recourse to you, help us in so pressing a danger, in which we find ourselves only for having obeyed you, and do not suffer us to perish in the waves of this pitiless element.” Hardly had they finished these words when a dove, appearing over their ship, flew three times all around it, as if to honour the mystery of the most holy Trinity; at that very hour the storm ceased, and calm having followed it, the ship was out of all danger. Baudonivia says that this miracle was worked by means of three feathers of this dove, which one of the passengers devoutly plunged into the sea, and which were afterwards distributed to various churches; we have been informed from Poitiers that they are not in the abbey of Sainte-Croix. Besides this zeal of Saint Radegund to enrich her church with precious relics, she took care to procure for it the goodwill and protection of the kings of France, her stepsons, and of the bishops of the neighbouring provinces. She wrote to that end to both, and always obtained favourable answers. She wrote to a council assembled at Tours, at which were the glorious bishops Euphronius of Tours, Praetextatus of Rouen, Germanus of Paris, Felix of Nantes, Domitian of Angers and Domnolus of Le Mans, who wrote in her favour a very fine letter that Gregory of Tours has given us in full in book V of his History, chapter XXXIX. Moreover, she spared nothing to maintain or restore peace among the four sons of her husband, Charibert, Chilperic, Sigebert and Guntram, who each reigned over a quarter of the Frankish empire and often had great quarrels with one another. She also applied herself to a host of good works for the glory of God, the relief of the provinces, the assistance of the poor, the help of the churches, and the ruin of impiety and every kind of vice, often employing in these negotiations of charity the great Venantius Fortunatus, one of the first men of his century. He testifies himself, indeed, that he had made many journeys to the kings of France and the holy bishops by her order, and that in her service he had travelled through the provinces watered by the Meuse, the Moselle, the Aisne and the Seine. We have many letters in verse that he wrote to her or in her honour, and even some in which he takes her name and makes her speak herself. To satisfy her devotion to the Cross he composed those admirable hymns that the Church sings in Passiontide and on the solemnities of the Finding and the Exaltation of the holy Cross, which begin with these lines: *Vexilla Regis prodeunt*. — *Pange lingua gloriosi*. — *Lustris sex qui jam peractis*.

For the rest, although it is very probable that he was at last placed on the episcopal see of Poitiers, after Plato, the successor of Maroveus, it is nevertheless certain that he was not bishop during our Saint's lifetime, since Saint Gregory of Tours tells us that Maroveus was still living when she died.

We have already related some of the miracles she worked during her life. There are many others described by the authors we have already cited several times. One day she restored sight to a blind man, and restored to health a nun who was dying and whose limbs were all corrupted; she healed another who had dropsy and whose last breath the sisters were awaiting. She delivered fishermen from a shipwreck that seemed inevitable; she drove the devil out of the bodies of several possessed persons; she made green again a laurel which, having been uprooted, had become quite dry; she so multiplied a hogshead of wine for the relief of the community that it was drawn from continually, from one vintage to the next, without any diminution being noticed. Finally, by her prayers she gave life to a little child dead for several hours. Her clothes and the candles in her name also worked supernatural cures, and we have several examples of this in the histories of her life. After so many striking deeds, Our Lord, wishing to reward the faith and labours of His servant, let her know in a visit that the time of her deliverance was near. He appeared to her in the form of a young man of incomparable beauty, who sought to show her some holy and innocent courtesies. She repulsed him without recognizing him; but he said to her: "How is it, Radegund, that you repulse me, you who have so great a desire to possess me, who seek me with so many tears and sighs, and who practise so many rigours on your body to make yourself more worthy of me? Know that you will be one of the richest precious stones of my diadem." It is said that He then had His foot on a stone, and pressed it so hard upon it that the mark has remained there. In the time of Father Giry, that is, in the eighteenth century, this stone with its sacred footprint, called *le Pas-Dieu* (God's Step), was still shown;[3] it was there that the rector of the University came every year to make an address to the abbess of Sainte-Croix. Our Saint saw clearly that her Beloved wished to call her to Himself. She prepared for that last hour with all the fervour that can be conceived in a soul that lives only for heaven. Having fallen ill, she had the sacraments administered to her, and received them in a very pious and edifying manner. Her daughters all broke into tears, and one cannot even read Baudonivia's account of their groans and laments without being moved to weep. Indeed, they were losing a lady who had protected them by her authority, a mother who had brought them up with marvellous charity and tenderness, and a Saint who had edified them by countless good examples. But she consoled them herself and encouraged them to a vigorous perseverance. At last she happily gave up her soul to God in the reign of Clotaire II, son of Chilperic and grandson of Clotaire I, her husband, on 13 August 587.

The bishop of Poitiers, Maroveus, was then away from the city, and there was no likelihood that he would return in time to render her the last duties. So they went quickly to Tours to beg Saint Gregory, who was then its archbishop, to come as soon as possible to bury her. He says himself in his book *On the Glory of the Confessors*, chapter CVI, that he found her in the coffin with a face so beautiful and radiant that it surpassed the beauty of roses and lilies; that two hundred nuns surrounded her, most of them from the first houses of the kingdom, and some even princesses of the blood and daughters of kings; that their cries and lamentations were extreme, and that they seemed to have lost everything in losing this excellent mother. He could not help mingling his tears with theirs; yet he did what he could to console them, and, as the place where the Saint had wished to be buried was not yet blessed, he presumed on the kindness of the diocesan bishop and blessed it. After which he had her holy body carried there and buried it with great solemnity amid the sighs and groans of the whole city. Several great miracles were worked at her tomb even before it was covered and closed; for Saint Gregory showed the bishop of the place the deference of leaving it open, so that he might have the honour of completing so august a ceremony. The abbot Abbo was cured there of a toothache that had brought him within two fingers of death. A blind man recovered his sight there, and two possessed women were delivered there from the power of the devil.

In the church of Missy-Sainte-Radegonde, under the archivolts of its remarkable side portal of the sixteenth century, eight principal events of her life are admirably sculptured, some of them relating to her stay at Missy. They are: her flight at eighteen from the royal castle of Athies on the Somme, where Clotaire had had her given a Christian and liberal education; the rock or grotto of Missy under which she had taken refuge, still refusing her consent to the desires of King Clotaire; her imprisonment in the castle of Missy or of Chivres, in which Saint Medard, bishop of Noyon, persuades her to marry the king; her wedding, celebrated at Soissons; her consecration as deaconess after she had left the court; she founds a monastery at Poitiers; her miracles; she delivers a man possessed by the devil; and finally Radegund is seen lying on her funeral bed, surrounded by her nuns, while two angels carry her blessed soul to heaven. — At Amiens, in the church of the abbey, a painting in the chapel of Saint Radegund represented the deliverance of the prisoners who had implored her help, the account of which we have given in the life. — Saint Radegund is ordinarily represented at the moment when Our Lord converses with her and promises that He will make her a jewel of His crown.

## CULTE ET RELIQUES.

The body of Saint Radegund, buried in the church she had had built outside the walls of the city, on the ground adjoining the monastery of Sainte-Croix, was found intact in 1412. During the invasions of the Northmen, about the middle of the 9th century, the entrance to the vault was walled up and the tomb ceased to be visited. In 1012 it was found again by the abbess of Sainte-Croix, Béliarde. At the opening of the tomb in 1412 by Simon de Cramaud, bishop of Poitiers, at the request of John, duke of Berry, count of Poitou, that prince obtained one of the Saint’s rings, her wife’s ring; as for her nun’s ring, he could not have it, the Saint’s hand having drawn back of itself. In 1562 the Calvinists burned the Saint’s body in the nave of the collegiate church of Poitiers and seized the silver-gilt crown and the gold ring. Some Catholics, mingled among the destroyers, managed with great difficulty to save a few bones, which were handed over to the Canons, who had them verified. They were enclosed in a lead casket (1565) and placed in the tomb, whose fragments were brought together and fitted as they are seen today. In 1569 a battle was fought in the plains of Moncontour and near the town of Airvault; in 1865 a peasant discovered on the same battlefield a gold ring that had belonged to Saint Radegund. On the bezel of the ring the name of the queen can be read, formed of Latin letters interlaced and run into one another (an O replaces the U: *Radegondis*). Below the inscription is a small Greek cross, such as is found on the obverse of the coins of the first and second dynasties. This ring must be the one that Saint Medard had blessed for Radegund when she received at Soissons, from the hands of the holy Pontiff, the veil and the hair shirt. It is known that this queen wore two rings at the same time, her wife’s ring and her nun’s ring, as was established in 1412 at the opening of her tomb. The ring of which we have just spoken was sold for fifty francs to a goldsmith of Airvault, from whom it unfortunately passed into the hands of M. Fillon of Fontenay, who keeps it as a mere collector, jealous of an object he knows very well to be quite authentic, and which he wishes to keep only so as not to feed, on his own account, the superstition of the good sisters.

In 1792 the monastery of Sainte-Croix was invaded by the revolutionaries, who had everything precious in it handed over to them; the nuns at last obtained that the relics of their holy foundress be left to them. In this way they kept a considerable portion of the skull and an arm bone nine and a half centimetres long, from which a length of an inch and a half has been cut off to be distributed in fragments to various parishes. The portion of the skull has since been enclosed in an oval silver box and sealed with the bishop’s seal after verification; the arm bone is kept in a very neat shrine. To this relic have been joined a small piece of the shroud, on which the trace of the fire can still be seen, and also a lock of beautiful fair hair which, according to tradition, belonged to the Saint. The nuns of Sainte-Croix, who, dispersed by the Revolution, reassembled in 1808 and were again cloistered in 1837, still possess a copper cross of Greek form: it was, it is said, an instrument of piety and mortification for Saint Radegund; today it is an instrument of miraculous healing.

The buildings of the monastery of Sainte-Croix have been sold; part serves as the bishop's residence, the church has been demolished, and the nuns live in the deanery of Saint-Pierre. As for the church in which Saint Radegund was buried, rebuilt several times, it is still standing. The Saint's tomb is a sanctuary where pilgrims pray at every hour of the day. And so the miracles continue there. The Church of Poitiers celebrates the feast of Saint Radegund on 13 August, with the rite of a double of the first class for the city of Poitiers, of which she is patroness, and with the rite of a double of the second class for the diocese, with an octave.

At Saint-Wandrille, canton of Caudebec, arrondissement of Yvetot, Saint Radegund is honoured with a quite particular cult. All the year round a pilgrimage is made to the church of Saint-Wandrille in honour of this crowned Saint. But it is above all on the Fridays of the month of May that pilgrims come in numbers; they have a gospel said in the church in honour of Saint Radegund and all the Saints, then go to bathe at the fountain of Caillouville, where the image of the Saint is still found amid several others.

Saint Radegund is honoured as second patroness of Grenois and of Perroy, in the diocese of Nevers. The latter parish possesses a particle of the Saint's relics. In the parish of Pazy there is a fountain that bears her name, to which the sick go in devotion. Saint Radegund is also the object of a very special cult in the diocese of Soissons. The church of Missy-Sainte-Radegonde (*Missiacum* or *Miciacum ad sanctam Radegundim*), also called Missy-sur-Aisne, consecrated under the title of the pious queen, possesses one of her relics, which was given to it by John, duke of Berry, count of Poitou and governor of the Île-de-France, at the request of the archbishop of Reims. This relic, with its authentications, was still preserved in 1863 in a gilded wooden hand held by two angels. The pilgrimage, opened each year on Easter Day, is closed on the fourth Sunday following by a solemn procession, which a very great number of pilgrims usually attend. Saint Radegund is invoked particularly for the cure of the itch, leprosy and ulcers. Those afflicted with such ailments have the devotion of washing in the water of the fountain of Sainte-Radegonde. Their faith has more than once been rewarded by real miracles.

The cult of Saint Radegund, which has spread from one end of Europe to the other, is fairly widespread in the Santerre, the eastern part of Picardy, because this holy queen was brought up there and spent eight years of her life there.

The hospital that has just been rebuilt at Athies, which has an income of about five thousand livres, is a transformation of the former royal house inhabited by Saint Radegund. The side portal of the church, classed among the historic monuments, dates from the 13th century and offers remarkable sculptures of that religious period. It is being restored and will be dedicated to Saint Radegund, the principal acts of whose charity will be portrayed in a medallion placed at the top of the pediment. The abbé Courtin, parish priest, has chosen the holy queen as patroness of the mutual aid society of which he is head, for the workers of the beet-sugar factories of the district.

The village of Sainte-Radegonde is one of the fifteen communes of France that bear the name of this Saint. It is two kilometres from Péronne and fifty-two from Amiens. Its population is three hundred and seventy-four inhabitants. Its church formerly stood on one of the ditches of the outworks of Péronne; but it was destroyed in 1536 during the siege that this valiant city forced the Imperials to raise. It was moved, by order of Louis XIII, into the fields at a suitable distance from the fortifications, to a spot where, according to pious traditions cited by a contemporary ecclesiastic who is an authority in archaeology and history, the young princess had fixed a goal and a halting place for her frequent walks around Péronne and had had an oratory built. It contains two fairly old and rather curious paintings whose subject has not yet been determined exactly, an old statue of the Saint in a costume half religious and half royal, and a modern painting by a local painter representing her in the exercise of works of charity. In addition, a reliquary contains one of the arms of Saint Radegund; it was withdrawn from revolutionary profanation during the dark days of the Terror by a pious family of this village, one of whose members, still living and known to us, has passed on to us some of these precious details. Before '93, people went on pilgrimage to this church to invoke the royal Saint especially

and to ask God, through her intercession and the touch of her relics, for the cure of scrofula and various skin diseases, as an inscription on a section of wall of the chapel particularly consecrated to her, in addition to the whole church, attests.

Cartigny, seven kilometres from Péronne and fifty-five from Amiens, with a population of eight hundred and sixty-three, is under the invocation of Saint Radegund; to the right of the choir is her chapel, in which there is a statue representing her clothed as abbess of Sainte-Croix of Poitiers. Saint Radegund is also the patron of Driencourt, seven kilometres from Péronne, eight from Roisel, chief town of the canton, and fifty-seven from Amiens, with a population of four hundred and thirty-nine.

At Amiens, within the enclosure of the former abbey of Saint-Jean, of the Premonstratensian Order, toward La Hautoye, a fountain, like an island in the Somme, bears the name of Sainte-Aragone, a corruption of Sainte-Radegonde. The sick drank the water of this spring in the hope of being cured of their ailments. When the abbey church was rebuilt within the city, a chapel of Saint Radegund was placed against the choir screen.

To complete this biography we have used the *Histoire de sainte Radegonde* by M. Édouard de Fleury; the *Saints de l'Église de Poitiers* by the abbé Auber; the *Vies des Saints du Poitou* by Ch. de Chergé; the *Annales du diocèse de Soissons* by the abbé Pécheur; the *Hagiologie nivernaise* by Mgr Crosnier; the *Églises de l'arrondissement d'Yvetot* by the abbé Cochet; and above all local notes supplied by MM. Congnet, of the chapter of Soissons, A. Goze, correspondent of the ministry of public instruction, fine arts, etc., and Auber, historiographer of the diocese of Poitiers.

## Saint Junian, Confessor, Founder and Abbot of Mairé, in the Diocese of Poitiers

*587. — Pope: Pelagius II. — King of France: Guntram.*

> *Vere vita boni monachi crux est et dux paradisi.*
>
> *The life of a true religious is truly a cross, but a cross that leads to paradise.*
>
> *Thom. à Kemp., De Imit. Christi, lib. III, c. 56.*

Junian was born at the beginning of the 6th century at Champagné-le-Sec, an estate that his parents, of noble and distinguished origin, owned in the territory of Brioux, which today forms one of the southern divisions of the department of Deux-Sèvres. According to certain historians he was baptized by Saint Remigius, who had been bishop of Reims since the year 460 and whom some ties of friendship probably bound to his family. If that is so, great favours of heaven upon the precious child might be attributed to this spiritual fatherhood. From his tenderest youth, indeed, there was remarked in him, besides the amiable qualities of body and mind, a marked taste for study and a singular aptitude for serious things, which gave promise of great success. And so he made rapid and remarkable progress in human letters and in the science of the Scriptures, which he no doubt studied at Poitiers; for that city had already been famous since Saint Hilary for a school whose lessons people came from very far to seek.

The young man's future, however, was arranged by Providence quite otherwise than his talents led one to foresee. With the knowledge given by Christian masters he had received the esteem of divine truths, a treasure preferable to all those that the spirit of pride makes men seek so eagerly. He only despised the more the temporal advantages whose career lay open to him, and turned to Jesus Christ alone, happy to have Him for all his gain. To convince his family and friends of his plans for the future, he withdrew for some time to Champagné, cut off his own hair there in sign of renunciation of the world, and from that moment persuaded everyone, by a truly clerical life, of the holiness of his vocation. Given to study and prayer, fleeing noisy gatherings, avoiding luxury of table and dress, he crowned these virtues further with an innocence of morals and a chastity that heightened their pure lustre. It is rare that God does not bless so generous a surrender to His guidance by adding an increase of graces. This regularity was therefore rewarded in Junian by a greater

desire for perfection, and to work at it more surely he thought of withdrawing into a solitude so as to embrace there the stricter silence of the anchorites. He therefore passed from Champagné to Chaunay, which was not very far from it, but where thick and little-frequented woods would better favour his retreat.

There he built himself a cell, in which he lived as a recluse, unknown to men and conversing only with God and with himself, in the continual exercise of psalmody and contemplation. But however secret this angelic life might be, God permitted, as for many others, that its sweet odour should be breathed abroad, and the region soon learned that a new Saint was protecting it before God. Something of this fragrance reached Saint Radegund, who was then living in her monastery at Poitiers. The noble and holy foundress wished to know the solitary and to be edified by him. He for his part was not unaware of the marvels of piety that shone in that so illustrious and so humble a life. Regular relations were therefore established between them, but they had no other aim than their mutual advancement in virtue. Such indeed are truly holy friendships; faithful souls want them only to exercise true charity in them: for them it is still the love of God.

The pious union of Junian and Radegund had that character which detaches the heart from the senses and leaves nothing in the feelings that cannot be perpetuated in heaven. By the credit that his virtue and miracles won him in the world, and later by the sacred functions of the priestly ministry, the Saint rendered the holy Queen important services. Their letters and conversations, worthy of two heavenly souls, must have been full of a sweet and inexpressible suavity; and why have we no longer what it seems time ought to have respected? But their mutual prayers above all drew them together, and if, by an act of renunciation one may suppose in so pure an affection, they had to restrict the number of visits Junian could have made to Sainte-Croix, at least pious attentions often recalled them to each other and, from the great monastery to the humble cell, served as tokens of their friendship. Thus Radegund had undertaken to supply the solitary of Chaunay with clothing. He for his part made in his solitude some of the instruments of penance she used. He had sent her a hair shirt of goat’s hair and an iron chain that she wore as a girdle, and in the 9th century these blessed pledges of charity and mortification were still kept at Poitiers as precious relics. From these relations of unctuous piety was born a mutual confidence, whose most touching result was that they promised each other that as soon as one of them died the other would be informed by a message arranged in advance, so that the survivor might pray for the departed.

What was known of our Saint awakened around him a legitimate and praiseworthy admiration. As always, his examples stirred the zeal of a certain number of the just and of sinners who, whether to advance in good or to work at their conversion, came to him and implored him to take care of their souls. Junian found himself troubled by this in his love of absolute solitude: his dear cell was no longer a dwelling of tranquil meditation for him, and he resisted these meritorious assaults which threatened to change his vocation. But he could not hold out long against repeated entreaties that grew more numerous every day. He consented therefore to receive disciples, and these, multiplying around him, where they lived in separate cells, obtained that, to be more useful to them, he should consent to receive the priesthood. The Saint indeed understood well that this august dignity, of which he had always thought himself unworthy, was becoming an indispensable resource for his zeal, and he received sacred Orders, probably from the hand of Daniel or of Saint Pientius, two bishops who succeeded each other immediately at that time in the see of Poitiers. These powers only increased his family of anchorites and changed his solitary habits into a true apostolate. Hardly had some time passed before their desert of Chaunay was no longer enough; a dwelling had to be thought of where the religious life might have more uniformity through the observance of a more consistent regularity. Nearby was a secluded spot shaded by woods and hills, to which he did not hesitate to move. But he did not know that this place belonged to King Clotaire I, and as soon as he had begun the foundation his design was thwarted by some of those adversaries whom good works always meet on their way, and above all at their beginning: his right to take possession of this land was contested, and he was accused of usurping the royal domain. Did this opposition come from the king’s people, or from certain inhabitants of the district who

forgot rather too much the counsels of charity toward him? History has not said. But the man of God did not lose heart before these obstacles, which heaven permitted to test his constancy. Clotaire, whom Saint Radegund's stay at Poitiers had then drawn into the region, was at the castle of Javarzay, a fortified place that belonged to him and where one of his mints was working. Junian went there, justified himself before the prince, who was at first ill-disposed, and won his favour so well that the king, while maintaining him in the disputed territory, also made him a present of one of his estates, on which stood another walled castle, then called *Mariacum*, which we still know today by the name of Mairé (Mairé-l'Évescault). This took place in 559. At the height of his wishes, and put in possession of an important building and almost a ready-made monastery, the Saint naturally did not think of pursuing his first undertaking on land still uncultivated, and he settled at Mairé with his brethren. From then on the Rule of Saint Benedict was followed there, which its perfection was causing to be adopted throughout the West, and it was one of the first houses in France to receive it.

Having thus provided for the salvation of his fervent cenobites, Junian, invested with the title of Abbot, worked only the more ardently at his own sanctification. What use would it be to make others advance in it if one forgot to walk in it oneself? Therefore, feeling that he needed greater recollection in order to find in union with God the light for his own direction and that of his neighbour, he wished again to shut himself up as much as possible in his hermitage of Chaunay, and at frequent intervals he spent there all the time he did not owe to the instruction and government of the monastery. There, by assiduous prayer, by a fast stricter than that of the community and by manual labour, he kept his soul at the level of his duties and sustained himself in the practice of mortification and silence; indulgent to all, he refused his own senses everything that was not strictly necessary to nature. God did not fail to show how pleasing so lofty a conduct was to Him. To the gift of miracles He added for His servant the spirit of prophecy. One day, not far from Chaunay, a poor pregnant woman asked the holy abbot for alms; in giving them to her, he assured her that she would have a son whose godfather he would be. The son, being born in fact, was brought to him; he held him at the font of baptism, where he was named Ruremond. From that moment the Saint watched over him, and when the age came to receive him into the monastery of Mairé, he had him instructed there in human learning and in the things of God. The young man became attached to the holy house, relished his master's teaching there, and, having taken the monastic habit there, sanctified himself in the exercise of the virtues that later won him the abbatial office and finally the honours the Church renders to the Blessed. Another time, walking alone in the neighbourhood of his abbey, he was set upon by a rather large number of peasants whose ill intentions seemed to him to be feared. In vain he tried to calm them by remarks full of gentleness; the madmen redoubled their insults and mingled threats with them. Forced then to see to his safety, the Saint followed a sudden inspiration and, changing his tone, forbade these frenzied men to pass certain limits that he pointed out to them. Some, having nevertheless advanced toward him, were instantly struck dead; this was the signal for the flight of the others.

This ill will, which the friends of God have had to suffer at all times from His enemies, and which the divine Master Himself had not wished to avoid, did not trouble a soul protected by so visible a grace. The Saint knew how to avenge himself only by services, which not everyone failed to recognize; and when a deadly famine desolated that region, where some seemed to appreciate so poorly the gifts of heaven, he contributed by his devotedness and that of his brethren to lessening the rigours of that cruel scourge.

Meanwhile the years had multiplied amid so many labours and macerations, and the Saint, always ready to render an account of his stewardship to the Prince of pastors, felt death approaching with the serenity of a heart that hopes for its reward. One day his strength seemed to abandon him for the last time in his cell at Chaunay. He summoned his brethren there and exhorted them to keep after him the integrity of their habitual life, the love of the rule and the charity that united them. He designated as his successor Blessed Ruremond, that faithful disciple who had shown himself so worthy to belong to him; then he desired that word of his

death be sent to Saint Radegund, according to the promise he had made her. Ruremond entered upon his office by carrying out the holy abbot's last order. Now, at that same hour Radegund, herself dying, was taking the same care and asking that Junian be informed at once; so that, by a touching disposition of Providence, these two souls who had loved each other so holily were not to be separated here below, and met again on the threshold of their eternal happiness. By another coincidence no less admirable, the two messengers met halfway, and as each explained to the other the reason for his journey, they established that on the same day and at the same moment heaven had opened for the two friends: it was 13 August of the year 587. At this spot, which is now called La Troussaie and is to be seen in the parish of Ceaux on the road from that township to Champagné-Saint-Hilaire, a church and a priory were founded shortly afterwards in honour of Saint Radegund, and attached to it the imperishable memory of these memorable events.

Saint Junian is represented: 1. making a fox bring back the hen it had stolen; 2. in a group with Saint Radegund, to recall the pious relations they had with each other.

## CULTE ET RELIQUES.

The body of Saint Junian was carried from his hermitage of Chaunay to the church of Mairé, where it was buried, not without several sudden cures being worked again on sick people whom a pious confidence had led to accompany it. He was honoured there for nearly three centuries. In this interval the priory of Nouaillé, dependent on Saint-Hilaire of Poitiers, had become in 799 an abbey protected by Charlemagne. That of Mairé, destroyed under Charles Martel during the war of which Aquitaine was the theatre, had been united to the new foundation, and the Saint's remains, which had been preserved by dint of precautions and vigilance by hiding their first burial place, were carried on 6 November 830 to the celebrated abbey church of which he later became the patron. Placed in a stone sepulchre behind the high altar, in the shelter of a walled space, they escaped also the ravages of the Northmen, who plundered the abbey in 863. A council having been held at Charroux in 990 to remedy the disorders of the lay lords, the Fathers, to make their assembly more solemn and wishing to draw inspiration from the memory of one of the finest models of the regular life, desired that the relics of Saint Junian should in some sort preside over their deliberations. They were indeed carried there, but only to return to Nouaillé immediately afterwards and remain there always, visited by the piety of great and small. Five centuries passed thus, and the monastery, respected even amid the long wars waged around it between the parties that contended for France, was not to succumb to its cruellest trials until later, under the blows of Frenchmen and Christians in revolt against the Church. In 1569, when the Huguenots were threatening the abbey with their fury, which indeed they soon exercised there with a barbarity worthy of them, the monks had time to bury the holy body with the sacred vessels and other precious objects. A few days later the new barbarians set fire to the buildings, plundered the church and massacred the religious, whose survivors were scattered in flight; and as those who had secretly taken part in removing the holy treasures were dead or unable to return, nothing could later show where they were hidden. Some smaller portions had happily been distributed to various churches: the nuns of the Trinity at Poitiers had some, which they shared with the abbey after its restoration. It is these remains which, withdrawn from the profanations of the revolutionaries of '93, were handed back by faithful hands to the competent authority; and Mgr Pie, having recognized their authenticity, permitted the cult that they had never ceased to receive from the beginning to be continued to them. Mairé, losing its title of monastery, took that of parish church, which it still bears under the name of Mairé-l'Évescault, because it belonged afterwards, and from very early times, to the bishops of Poitiers. As for Saint Junian, the titular of this parish, he has become that of several others in the neighbourhood, and by the eagerness with which he was adopted from the beginning bears witness to the filial confidence that the whole region placed in the Saint who had consoled it by his miracles and edified it by his virtues.

Taken from the *Vies des Saints de l'Église de Poitiers*, by M. l'abbé Auber.

# Saint Landulphus[1] or Lau, Canon, then Bishop of Évreux, and Confessor

*About 640. — Popes: Severinus; John IV. — Kings of France: Sigebert II; Clovis II.*

*Those who mortify themselves are dead to their own will, but they live in God by the most burning charity.*

*Saint Denis the Carthusian.*

This holy prelate lived at the end of the 6th century and the beginning of the 7th. His history tells us that he was a canon of the cathedral church of the city of Évreux, and that afterwards he was made its bishop; but in whatever capacity we consider him, it is affirmed that he always led on earth a life more angelic than human. His chief occupation was to contemplate God in Himself, taking up his mind with the greatness of Him who was the author of all things rather than with even the most excellent things He had created, imitating in this God Himself, who is the principal object of His own knowledge and love.

This holy priest was so strongly drawn to the contemplation of the divine perfections that he found satisfaction only in retirement and withdrawal from every creature. It was with this in view that, when he was a canon, he had chosen for his dwelling a cave in a solitary place a good league from the city of Évreux. The other canons, it is true, lived in places that were also somewhat distant from the cathedral church; but our Saint had chosen the most remote and least frequented spot, so as to have fewer dealings with men and more familiarity with his God. He was never even seen to leave his cave except at the times when his duty obliged him to go to the divine offices; he attended them with extraordinary attention and modesty, for he had nothing that could distract him from the thought of his God, and he kept away with extraordinary caution from all objects that might lessen the fire of divine love with which he was aflame.

His faithfulness in the service of God and the favours he received from Him never gave him vain confidence in himself; rather, he practised every kind of mortification so as to remain always master of his senses and to have a perfect conformity with Jesus Christ. He had no other place to rest at night than the bare earth of the cell in which he lived; and it was no small penance for him to be obliged to go from his cave to the cathedral church to attend the divine offices, for this required him to bear all the inclemency of the weather in winter and the excessive heat of summer. The harshest seasons were never an obstacle to keep him from going faithfully to render his duties to his God. His devotion increased at the thought that the church to which he went with such exactness was dedicated to God under the invocation of Our Lady, whom Saint Taurinus, first bishop of Évreux, had given to this diocese as its patroness and special protectress from the first centuries.

The fasts and abstinences of our Saint were extraordinary, and he took pleasure in going without even things necessary to life. The ground in which he had made his cave being then uncultivated and producing no food suited to human needs, he found himself obliged to rely only on the care of divine Providence and to content himself with a few raw herbs; the spirit of penance and mortification made him find them as good as the most exquisite dishes. His poverty was extreme: he had in his little cell only the four walls that made it up, without any comfort or ornament. He found inestimable riches in this privation of all the comforts of life. He was convinced of that great maxim of the Saints, that the treasures of grace abound where the goods of nature are lacking, and that one never enjoys God better than when deprived of all human supports. This fervent solitary was always so far removed from intercourse with creatures that no one could witness the host of fine acts of virtue he practised in his solitude; but what he hid so carefully from the eyes of men was noticed and admired by the angels. These heavenly spirits, charmed by his faithfulness and the holiness of his life, came down to earth to keep him company and to proclaim, together with him, the divine perfections of their common Lord. It was on the occasion of the praises these angelic spirits sang in honour of Saint Taurinus, former bishop of Évreux, that he formed the design of seeking where the body of that great prelate was, which had until then been hidden. To succeed better in this undertaking he told Viator, who was then governing the diocese, that he had heard the heavenly spirits singing the praises of Saint Taurinus. The prelate, who knew Saint Lau’s

merit, did not hesitate to believe what he told him, and joined with him with all his heart in searching for a treasure so dear to the whole diocese. Many prayers were ordered for this purpose, that it might please the divine Goodness to favour the piety of the people in so pious a design; but although these prayers and vows were very pleasing to God, they did not have their effect as soon as was then desired, divine Providence wishing to reserve the discovery of this precious deposit for the episcopate of Saint Lau.

And indeed, Viator having died, they proceeded to the election of a new pastor in his place. It was thought that no worthier person could be found to govern that church than the pious Saint Lau, so well known to everyone for the conduct of his life, always equally exemplary; he was elected unanimously to fill that dignity. Hardly had he acquainted himself with the affairs of his diocese when he renewed his prayers to obtain from heaven what had only been deferred, that is, to learn the place where the body of blessed Saint Taurinus rested. His prayers were at last granted; for one day, as he was praying with greater fervour, he saw a column all shining with light and bright as a sun, which appeared to be of prodigious height and stood upright over a certain spot, which was the true place of Saint Taurinus's tomb. He at once had excavations made; there was found a coffin on which were written these words: "Here rests the blessed Taurinus, first bishop of the city of Évreux."

The news of this discovery having spread, a countless multitude came to implore the help of this great Saint; many miracles took place, and so many wonders led Saint Lau to have a chapel built on the spot where this holy deposit had been found; but as the miracles multiplied from day to day, this chapel was later changed into a large church. At last Saint Lau, having holily fulfilled all the duties of the episcopate, favoured with a great abundance of blessings from heaven, having been as powerful in works as in words and having always shown a very lively faith in all his conduct, died in the peace of the Lord, to go and receive the reward due to his labours. Had he taken less care to hide himself from the eyes of men, we should not have been deprived of the knowledge of so many fine actions that his humility moved him to perform in the secrecy of solitude and silence. As throughout his life he desired only to please God alone, so he was always content to have God alone as witness of what he did for His love alone.

Cf. *Acta Sanctorum*, 13 August.

## Blessed John Berchmans, Novice of the Society of Jesus

*1621. — Pope: Gregory XV. — Emperor of Germany: Ferdinand II.*

> *If I love Mary, I am sure of my salvation and of my perseverance in the religious life; I shall obtain from the Lord all that I wish, and I shall be in some sort all-powerful.*
>
> *Saint Bernardine of Siena.*

John Berchmans came into the world on 13 March 1599 in the little town of Diest, in the diocese of Mechelen. His father was called John Charles Berchmans, and his mother Elizabeth Vanden Hove.

The Blessed one's early childhood passed gently in the shelter of a Christian family, and the lessons of his virtuous mother rapidly developed in him the seed of the happiest qualities. To a nature whose gentleness did not exclude liveliness, John early trained himself to join vigour and energy of will, to the point of bearing without shedding a tear all the pains of infancy. Full of grace and of angelic beauty, he delighted the eyes and hearts of all; but the gravity of his bearing and his modesty already inspired respect, and one could not help, merely on seeing him, thinking of the divine Child of Nazareth, whom his mother was teaching him to know and imitate. John was not yet seven when his parents decided that he should go every morning thenceforth to a small school nearby, to receive the lessons of a Christian master. But his grandmother soon noticed that he got up and went out every day long before school time; and when she asked him the reason, "My good mother," he answered, "I have got leave to serve two or three Masses very early in the morning before going to school, so that the good God may grant me the grace to learn and remember my lessons better." And so his

master, who outlived him and whose testimony was called upon for the beatification of the holy schoolboy, was equally full of admiration for his progress and his piety. After class John hurried modestly back to his father's house; and if he sometimes found the house empty and the door shut, he withdrew quietly to a chapel nearby to say his rosary there. About this time his mother was struck by a long and very painful infirmity, which lasted several years. John then repaid her, and with interest, the price of her motherly lessons. Outside his hours of class or study he had no sweeter rest than to nurse her and comfort her with thoughts of the cross or of heaven; and she happily called him the visible angel whom the Lord had sent her to soften her ills. When John had reached his tenth year, his parents, who saw with a wholly Christian joy that he was destining himself to the service of the altar, thought the time had come to entrust him to a holy priest among their friends, Peter Emmerick, a canon regular of the Order of Saint Norbert, then parish priest of Notre-Dame at Diest. This zealous religious was forming, in the practice of all the virtues as well as in the knowledge of human letters, a little community of young boys, of whom he hoped one day to make worthy ministers of the Church or generous supporters of the faith. John therefore left his father's house to live thenceforth, like Samuel, in the shadow of the sanctuary; and his heart soon fell in love with this life of retirement and obedience, a worthy prelude, though he did not suspect it, to the life and perfection of religion for which God had destined him. His venerable master seems to lack words to express that incomparable mixture of innocence, recollection, ardour for study and charming amiability which from the first days won the hearts and respect of all the Blessed one's new fellow pupils. Always ready to do a service at the cost of his most legitimate inclinations, but unshakably firm in refusing, without human respect, anything that seemed likely to wound the most delicate obedience, he sought, forgetting himself, only to please God, or his companions and masters, but for God. He had so profound a respect for the priestly character that never, unless formally ordered, even in the bitterest cold of winter, did he keep his head covered before Peter Emmerick. One of his favourite employments was to do the public reading at meals as often as possible, above all when it was a matter of reading the lives of the Saints or some work on the divine childhood and the sufferings of Jesus. He was then so penetrated with the pious subject of his reading that his soul seemed a stranger to all that was going on around him. His fervour made him ingenious in slipping away from time to time, without affectation, from some prolonged or unusual amusements, to withdraw apart and read, meditate or pray. It even happened one day that, after he had been sought for a long time without his suspecting it, he was finally found curled up under the lid of a large chest, in which he had as it were buried himself for more than two hours, so as to give himself more freely to his sweet converse with Our Lord, far from all distraction and noise.

Meanwhile the blessed child was nearing his eleventh year without yet having approached the holy Table, when all of a sudden, after a secret and fervent preparation, on the eve of a solemn feast whose exact date is unknown to us, he went and simply begged Peter Emmerick to hear his general confession and admit him the next day to the sacred banquet. Only then did Peter Emmerick see with amazement the incomparable beauty of that soul, now unveiled to his eyes; for, far from having ever lost God's friendship and the first flower of his innocence, the young penitent could offer his confessor, despite the most serious examination, only venial faults entirely involuntary, without discovering in all his past life certain matter for absolution, so faithfully had he followed the inspirations of the most filial love of God! "And so," adds the venerable disciple of Saint Norbert in his deposition, "from the divine radiance with which the face of this blessed child was all lit up when I laid the body of the Saviour on his lips, it was easy for me to glimpse to what degree Jesus delighted in taking possession of so pure a soul."

From that day, despite his youth, the angelic child sighed only for the happiness of approaching the holy Table often; and he at once obtained this grace, at least two Sundays a month, besides the feasts of the Saviour and of His most holy Mother. To prepare himself better, he let no week pass without going to confession, and no day without examining his conscience for a few minutes; and moreover, on the eve of each of his Communions, he would go with a truly delightful candour and humbly beg his dear master to

pardon him all his supposed negligences.

He had a great love for the Queen of angels. He liked to recall that a Saturday had been the day of his birth, and that he had thus entered life under the auspices of that divine Mother. To belong to her still more closely, and in his desire to resemble her feature for feature, as soon as he had been able to glimpse the excellence of virginity, he had taken a vow of it. The more he grew in age and wisdom, the more he multiplied toward her the tokens of his tenderness. Very often, but by preference on the approach of some feast or on Saturday, he went without his breakfast for love of her, although he felt the need of it keenly; and turning his mortification to the profit of charity, he gave it secretly to some poor person. One of his sweetest recreations was to visit now and then on pilgrimage the pious sanctuary of Our Lady of Montaigu, a league from Diest; and the road seemed very short to him, spent entirely in meditating or affectionately saying his rosary. But above all the holy child knew how to make his devotion to the most pure Mother of God consist in offering her each day, from morning to evening, his obedience, his recollection and his constant application to the least duties of a good schoolboy, sparing nothing so that all his words and acts might be truly worthy, by their perfection, of being accepted by the Queen of angels. For he already understood marvellously that the wholehearted fulfilment of all his duties from a supernatural motive was for him the first and most excellent of virtues.

Such happy first fruits in a child seemed to promise one of those souls predestined to the honour and defence of the faith which never let the generation of the Saints perish in the Church. But while he was growing up at the foot of the altar, God had tried his family by painful privations. The little on which it contented itself to live was almost on the point of failing it.

Despite his most ardent desire to see his son one day consecrated to the Lord by the priesthood, John’s father could no longer meet the upkeep, small as it was, of the young schoolboy. Having therefore had him come home suddenly one day, there, in the presence of his mother, after explaining to him the unavoidable necessity of the sacrifice that God Himself seemed to demand of them, he added: “Now, my dear son, since this noble and holy career is closed to you, it only remains for you to look, together with us, for one that will let you earn your living in a Christian and honourable way.”

These words were a thunderbolt for John’s heart. He saw his holiest and dearest hopes vanish in the twinkling of an eye. But recovering all his faith and courage after a first moment of stupor, “My dear father and my good mother,” he answered firmly, throwing himself at their knees, “God forbid that I should add to your privations and those of my brothers! But will you not at least allow me to try, for the love of Our Lord, whether I can finish my preparation for sacred Orders without asking any other expense for my food than a little bread and water each day?” Deeply moved by so heroic and holy a generosity, which set such a price on the happiness of becoming a priest that at that age it did not shrink even from the austerities of the Saints of the desert, John’s father did not feel he had the strength to insist; but he set about looking for a new arrangement that might at once answer the pious boy’s desires without laying such a burden on him and without creating new charges for his family. Now he soon discovered that one of the most virtuous canons of Mechelen, named John Froymont, was looking precisely for a poor young cleric willing to fill the humble functions of companion and servant to him.

At this happy discovery John could not contain his joy. To serve a priest was in his eyes far above serving a king. It was nonetheless a true domestic service, to which nothing had accustomed him until then. But far from seeing in it a cause for shame, he made it, on the contrary, from day to day a keener cause of gladness to let it be seen, and even to recall it later, as he relished better the happiness of having a share in the cross and humiliations of Jesus Christ.

John Froymont, it is true, was not slow to recognize the worth of the new treasure God had entrusted to him; and finding in the Blessed one the care and the heart of a son who joyfully renders the humblest services to his father, he in fact treated him from then on only as his son. The lovable boy was only the more docile and

devoted for it. He kept toward the good canon a constant gratitude that neither distance nor years could weaken; and we find a touching testimony of it later in some letters he addressed to him.

During this time the Blessed one, who had several hours at his disposal each day, pursued his studies with as much success as application; and when the Society of Jesus opened a new college at Mechelen the following year, he was admitted as a day pupil to the lessons of the rhetoric class, of which he soon became the most brilliant as well as the holiest pupil.

Freer in many respects in his new position than among his young companions at Diest, at least outside class and the service of John Froymond, to arrange as he pleased or to prolong his hours of study and devotion, the Blessed one began from then on, at about the age of fourteen or fifteen, often to devote several hours of the night, and sometimes even the whole night, either to work or to prayer. Often too, after his last exercises of piety, he lay down fully dressed on the bare floor, to take less softly there the little rest he could not refuse to nature; for it was also at about this period of his youth that he began more habitually to practise mortification. On Fridays in particular, to show his love the better to the suffering Jesus, he was accustomed in all seasons to make the way of the cross barefoot; but, holily jealous to hide his penance as much as possible, he then wore old shoes from which he had removed the soles, and chose besides, for this holy exercise, the first shadows of night, so as to hide his pious device more surely from the eyes of passers-by.

Hardly had the Society of Jesus in Flanders opened the new college of Mechelen to Catholic youth when, faithful to the examples and teachings of the great and venerable Father Francis Coster, it hastened to establish there the sodalities of the Blessed Virgin, for three centuries the surest refuge for the innocence and piety of children devoted to the service of the all-powerful Mother of God. John Berchmans was well worthy of being admitted without delay; and as soon as he had obtained this grace, he seemed to have nothing so much at heart, after his own faithfulness to the engagements he had just made to the Queen of angels, as to win new and faithful servants for her every day. With them he vied in tokens of love for this divine Mother; and soon the brilliant crown of children of Mary who thronged around the altars was in great part the work of the zeal of John, her beloved son. To learn to imitate her better, he would go privately at the beginning of each month to the director of the sodality and beg him to tell him which virtue he should apply himself to more energetically, and which fault he should fight in honour of the Queen of heaven, until the beginning of the following month. At the same time he had it specified what preparation he should bring to the celebration of each feast, and what practice he should take up to honour his patron saint of the month. Moreover he resolved from then on, and his resolutions were unshakable, never again to let a day pass without reciting the Psalter of Our Lady by Saint Bonaventure, nor any Saturday or eve of the feasts of Mary without fasting strictly in her honour. And if the details of his other mortifications at that time are unknown to us, we can judge of them by this single trait: being charged one day to carry some message from the good canon of Mechelen to Louvain, he made on foot that double journey of three leagues and came back very late, but still fasting, as he was obliged to admit candidly to his master, who had conceived some suspicion of it.

Meanwhile the young servant of Mary was nearly at the end of his rhetoric, still full of the same desire to consecrate himself to God by the priesthood, but without yet thinking of the religious life. To draw him to it imperceptibly, with that gentleness and strength that mark every divine vocation, Our Lord made use chiefly of the indirect lessons of two heroic sons of the Society of Jesus, whose admirable way of life on earth John was to share, if he were faithful to God’s designs, and also their reward in heaven and even their glory on the altars.

Amid ceaseless struggles for the salvation of Germany against the fury of the heresy unleashed by Luther, Blessed Peter Canisius had not forgotten the very delicate care of Christian youth. In his short moments of leisure, if one dare apply the word leisure to such a life, he had made and published a selection of the finest letters of Saint Jerome, above all for the use of the schoolboys who attended the classes of the Society of Jesus. This strengthening and wholesome reading had already won many young souls to Jesus Christ. But

had it snatched from the world only that of John Berchmans, the valiant apostle's work would have been worthily rewarded. It was indeed there, by his own admission, that together with the deepest contempt for all perishable things this holy boy drew his first love of the religious life and perfection; a divine seed that was soon made to blossom by the sweet influence of the virtues of the angelic Aloysius Gonzaga, as told by the very man who a few years later was to become the confidant and historian of John's virtues.

From this decisive impulse, the more closely he considered the life and zeal of his masters, the more he listened to the heroic accounts of the successors of Francis Xavier on the most distant shores of the East, or of those of Edmund Campion in the tortures and on the scaffolds of England, the more his heart was fired with the desire to do or suffer something similar for Jesus Christ. But so as to proceed with all desirable maturity in the very important matter of his vocation, the Blessed one wished first of all to make sure of the grace and the very light of God. Then, wishing to leave no resource to the cowardice of nature or to inconstancy, he first bound himself by vow to neglect nothing in order to be admitted as soon as possible into the Society of Jesus, and then hastened to write to his father and mother, to obtain their consent and blessing, a letter that he ended with these touching words: "The child of Jesus and yours, John."

At this news, so little expected, paternal and maternal tenderness were troubled. Very pardonable hopes, but ones that had not had God alone as their object, vanished in a moment. Brilliant dreams of the future had been founded on the talents and successes of the young schoolboy, whom everything seemed to predestine to become the support of his family. To these too natural calculations John opposed an answer more worthy of him: "O my dear father," he exclaimed, "how much better you would do to raise your thoughts to the eternal riches that God offers us so generously and for such light labour!" Yet they did not consider themselves beaten. They tried to shake his resolution, but the victory remained his. Under the auspices of Mary, on Saturday 24 September 1616, he entered the novitiate of the Society of Jesus at Mechelen. Hardly had he crossed its walls when he could not hold back his tears of joy; and they did not cease flowing gently until evening, so deep was his emotion. He thought himself in the abode of the Saints, and from that hour he lived there like the Saints. He was especially remarked for a perfect and constant fidelity to the Rule, for love of humiliations and for continual application to mortifying his senses. God tried him by great desolations and great dryness in his exercises of piety; but this in no way altered the serenity of his face, which never failed for a single instant.

Did his brethren sometimes ask him the secret of his constant fidelity to the Rule and of his attractive amiability? He was accustomed to point out to them at once the twofold inexhaustible source from which all the great Saints of recent centuries have drawn so largely: devotion to the holy Sacrament of the altar and to the most pure Mother of God.

Among all the exercises of the novitiate, one of the dearest to the new son of Saint Ignatius was to teach catechism to the poor and to little children. One may say that he truly put his whole heart into it. He spared no preparation and no trouble to bring the elements of Christian doctrine within their reach and to open their souls to the impressions of a solid and lively piety, above all by the finest episodes of the lives of the Saints. Then he joined example to precept and prayed with them himself, using in turn the different methods of Saint Ignatius. His young audience so hung on his lips that often they all went back with him and asked for yet another pious story, or a few words of explanation and encouragement, without ever wearying his patience or his kindness. And passing again one day by the same road several hours later, after having taught them to recite the holy Rosary gently and affectionately in honour of Our Lady, he found them again in groups, kneeling behind some hedge, repeating the angelic salutation with the most filial tone of voice and manner since the moment he had left them. This first flame of the apostolate, which was then growing so keenly and rapidly in his heart, led him at about the same time, with the approval of his superior, to study the French language in the few free moments the other exercises of the novitiate left him. If God destined him to work in his own country for the salvation of souls, this new instrument would be almost indispensable to him, above

all for one of the kinds of apostolate that most appealed to him, the assistance of Catholic or heretical soldiers on the battlefields and in the hospitals. Nevertheless the first object of the young novice's zeal and charity was above all the service and sanctification of the brethren whose life he shared. For them he seemed to know neither obstacle nor repugnance, and as soon as it was a question of consoling them, his own interest and comfort counted for nothing. Several whose vocation was wavering even saw him on many occasions kneel before them, without any self-regard or human respect, begging them, in the name of the Saviour and His merciful Mother, at least to put off their departure for the world for a day or two. Then, in that interval, he knew how to find them so many and such powerful intercessors, and himself offered for them so many prayers and penances, that God, unable, so to speak, to bring Himself to leave such charity unrewarded, suddenly raised up these downcast hearts by a marvellous change and made them find again with joy all the sweetness of paradise in this life that had lately seemed intolerable to them. This so active and so delicate devotedness of John Berchmans, in face of the danger or the sorrow of a single one of his brethren, let him taste no rest until he had done everything to help them. One of them having breathed his last at the moment when the novitiate bell was giving the signal for bed, he went in all haste to ask permission not to go to sleep before reciting fervently three whole rosaries for the soul of the departed, rejoicing to offer a part of his rest for the rest of so dear a soul, which perhaps owed it to him not to languish until the next day in the flames of God's justice.

Shortly after his entry into the Society, Brother John had lost his pious mother, and one can guess how many prayers and sacrifices he offered for her who had given him, with life, the first lessons of the love and filial service of God. His father, aspiring from then on only to embrace a wholly holy life himself, though without neglecting, of course, the care of a large family, had prepared himself for sacred Orders and had just received the priestly character when the time came for the holy novice to take his first vows after two years of probation. Almost on the eve of that blessed day John wished to give his father this consoling news, and on the appointed day he consummated his sacrifice with all the fervour of an angel. Then, called almost at once by a message from the Provincial, who was waiting for him at the college of Antwerp, before crossing the threshold of the novitiate he went once more to ask the advice and blessing of his superior.

John spent only a few days at the college of Antwerp, and it was enough to win there, as at Mechelen, the fine name of angel that followed him everywhere. But he soon received the news of his coming departure for the Roman College, where the studies, then very flourishing, brought together a large body of picked young men from all the provinces of the Society. Meanwhile he was to go as soon as possible from Antwerp to Diest to take leave of his father. But on his way through Mechelen he learned that death had just taken his father from him; and as everyone vied in lavishing on him the consolations of charity, "Oh!" he answered, "from now on my consolation will be to repeat, with a still more filial abandonment: Our Father, who art in heaven!"

It was a month after his vows, on 24 October 1618, that the Blessed one set out for Italy with another young religious destined for the same studies. The journey to Rome was in those days a true pilgrimage, as long as it was arduous; and for them it was to stretch into the greatest rigours of winter, beyond two whole months. But the grace of obedience and the joy of soon visiting some of the most venerable places of the Christian world made the hardship light for them. They had the happiness of arriving at Loreto on the very eve of holy Christmas Day, and all fatigue was forgotten, leaving room only for the joy of sharing, in watching and prayer during so beautiful a night, the humble dwelling of Jesus and Mary.

At last the two young pilgrims entered Rome almost in the last hours of the year 1618, to celebrate there with their brethren one of the principal feasts of the Society, that on which the Saviour, as the price of His blood, received the glorious imposition of the name of Jesus.

From the first days his holiness struck his brethren keenly, and John Paul Oliva, later general of the Society, and Father John Baptist Ceccotti, who knew all the secrets of the Blessed one's soul, have borne glorious

testimony to his zeal in sanctifying and instructing himself. Every rule, common or particular, being in John Berchmans' eyes the equally sure expression of Our Lord's good pleasure and the pledge of His blessing for a religious, he had firmly resolved never to change office or position without at once acquainting himself with all the prescriptions proper to them, so as to conform his least actions to them to the letter. He therefore began his new life by studying and meditating for several days the rules of the scholastics of the Society, and then pledged himself, at the foot of his crucifix, to work thenceforth no less energetically at the acquisition of learning than he had done until then at learning to conquer himself and become a saint. Wishing this idea to be always present to him, he even wrote it down and fixed it before him, beneath the image of Jesus on the cross.

These were not idle acts, "for so great was his ardour and application," one of his professors, Father Francis Piccolomini, tells us, "that I think it impossible to surpass him on this point; and I have not even known anyone who could, in my opinion, be compared with him. As soon as obedience set him to a new study, even if in all likelihood he was never to draw any fruit from it, he spared neither care nor fatigue. Ought not the learning of a religious of the Society, he used to say to me, to be wide enough to suffice for half a world? But at the same time I admired in him an incomparable candour and docility in giving the most faithful account of all he was doing or proposed to do in this line, ready to give up at the first sign anything that those who held for him the place of God would not have approved!"

To this application the Blessed one joined all the resources of an outstanding intelligence. In the judgment of the same Father Piccolomini, he was capable of applying himself to every branch of sacred or profane learning and of excelling in all.

Violent headaches, however, sometimes stopped him, and they tormented him until his death. But when forced to interrupt his work for a few moments, he soon came back to it after calming his pains by reciting the holy Rosary, which never tired him. Besides, it was not the fear of tiring himself and suffering, but obedience alone that made him rest.

The thought of God, always present and never leaving room for indolence and slackness, was John Berchmans' great secret for keeping intact, amid the most persistent work, that flower of devotion he had brought from the novitiate. If he was reduced to fewer exercises of piety and penance, he knew, according to Saint Ignatius's fine expression, that to work in the presence of God and for His love is to pray and suffer for Him. For everything else he relied without anxiety on his superiors, telling them of the holy desires he believed came to him from Our Lord, without insisting further or appearing grieved at their decision, but also without omitting anything that obedience prescribed or allowed him. He would rather have lost in a moment, he said, all the natural gifts with which his soul was enriched than steal from the least exercises, or spend carelessly, one minute of the time the rule assigned to them. Until then he had recited the Office of Our Lady every day. This pious practice was cut off for class days and allowed only on feast days and holidays, a decision he received as from the mouth of Mary and from which he did not once try to escape. His austerities too were limited, far short of his first desires and of all he had obtained leave to make himself suffer in the novitiate, when study did not yet claim all his strength. Very rarely, and at most on the eve of some feasts, was he allowed to put on a hair shirt. But as the discipline seemed less dangerous to his health, he obtained leave to take it three or four times a week, and still more often on some solemn occasions, as at the approach of Passiontide, when one of his companions assures us that he let no evening pass without scourging himself.

But the holy exercises of humility which, without harming the strength of the body, so effectively maintain the fervour of the soul had a far greater value in John Berchmans' eyes, and he lost no opportunity of practising them. Not content with serving as often as three or four times a week in the refectory or the kitchen, and with frequently asking for all the public humiliations in use in all religious Orders, he obtained, to his great joy, leave to clean and tend every day the lamps used for the community on the stairs and in the corridors of the Roman College. Nothing was sweeter to him than this humble office, and he candidly gave

many reasons for it, well worthy of a Saint. “First of all, is it not the employment,” he said, “that Blessed Aloysius Gonzaga used to fill, here in this very place? And what greater honour for me than to resemble him, however little!” Then he found in it also a likeness, almost equally dear to his heart, to the coadjutor brothers of the Society; for his affection for their employments and their grade was always so keen that he had asked the grace of spending his whole life in it, and obedience alone prevented him. Nothing at least delighted him more than to be taken for one of them by visitors going through the house while he was at work; and he even let slip one day this remark: “Oh! how pleasant it would be for me to clean my lamps in front of the college door, in sight of all the passers-by!” Finally, one of his favourite exercises during the holidays was to go from time to time and spend a day in some hospital; and the consolation he tasted there in serving the most repulsive patients seemed true rest for his soul. Finding himself, however, still far from the perfection of this virtue, he devoted his particular examens for a whole year to humility. But without going back here over all that we have already let the reader glimpse of his fidelity to prayer, his frequent visits to Our Lord and his angelic bearing at the foot of the altar, above all during the divine sacrifice, let us pause only on some of the holy devices he made use of during his studies to advance more and more in the ways of perfection.

First of all, the first means he adopted, as very salutary and most practical, was to devote invariably at least half a day a week and a whole day each month to the renewal of the inner man and the rigorous examination of all his affections. He therefore submitted to his superiors this twofold resolution, of which they approved the least details, and which has never since ceased to have countless imitators. It included first the morning of Communion days whenever there was to be no class; the Blessed one spent it in pious exercises until dinner, under the still vivid impression of the sacramental presence of Jesus Christ.

As for his retreat each month, he took care to fix in advance a holiday or feast day entirely free, and this is the invariable order he had prescribed for himself to keep on it. From the previous day he began to prepare for it by offering Our Lord some acts of public humiliation and penance; then he abstained from the evening recreation to recollect himself and plan in detail all the next day’s exercises. “In this way,” he said, “I shall no longer expose myself to losing precious time in uncertainty and belated deliberation.” He then went to bed wholly penetrated with the holy thoughts with which he wished to occupy himself on waking. In the morning his first act was to adore Our Lord and offer Him, with redoubled fervour, all the moments of that blessed day, whose success he entrusted to the holy protectors he had chosen, but above all to the glorious Queen of the angels and of the Society of Jesus. During the whole day he gave no less than four hours to important meditations, and in the intervals, at the foot of his crucifix, compared the month then ending with the one before it, asking himself, without cowardly complacency and in the divine light, whether he had advanced or gone back on the road of perfection; referring to God alone the glory of his efforts or progress, and attributing only to his own negligence the faults of which he believed himself guilty and for which he punished himself severely; taking finally without delay the surest means of guarding against them in future, and praying with tears to the Saviour and His holy Mother to help him effectively to correct himself. He also applied himself to recognizing the graces he had received since his previous retreat, those he asked and hoped for in the following month, and finally the new acts of virtue Our Lord desired of him; and he made a firm and detailed resolution to spare nothing to satisfy Him. Another means of perfection no less effective used by the Blessed one was his perpetual presence of God and his familiarity with the Saints, whom he called to his aid on every occasion, which made several say that he prayed all day long. Knowing too, from the institutions and teaching of Jesus Christ and His Church, how much power sensible signs have to recall the restlessness of mind and senses to God, he made perpetual use of them and warmly recommended them to his closest friends. Did he come upon the image of some servant of God? He at once saluted it and invoked him affectionately. At the mere sight of one of his brethren or of a stranger, he saw beside him with the eyes of faith his guardian angel, and uncovered his head to honour them both. On waking he stirred himself to devotion by kissing in turn his cassock, his crucifix and an image of the most holy Virgin. All his actions, in a word, were intimately penetrated with the spirit of God.

Finally, more than ever during the last three years of his life, the Blessed one believed he could find no better way to rise to the summit of holiness than a devotion growing day by day toward the glorious and all-powerful Virgin Mary. “His tenderness for her was truly inexplicable,” says one of his roommates, Peter Alfaroli. “Very often he spoke to me of her as of our beloved Mother, urging me to love and serve her. And more than once I noticed, when he prayed to her, the radiance of a divine joy in his eyes and an ineffable smile on his face.” He called her the patroness of his holiness, his health and his learning, a threefold gift he asked of her every day and asked also for his brethren, while subordinating it to the designs of divine Providence, as gifts that could be employed very usefully in the service and glory of God. “My refuge,” he also said, “in time of desolation and bitterness is patience, prayer, the wounds of Jesus, the bosom of Mary!” In his last moments a young religious, a fellow countryman, wished to know from him what had been the most effective instrument of his sanctification; and the Blessed one answered him: “My brother, as soon as I thought of becoming a saint, I laid down as the foundation of my building the love of the Queen of heaven. If I have been able to make some progress, I owe everything to her. Be you too, until death, a true son of this divine Mother!” “In short,” he repeated on every occasion, “whoever truly loves her is sure of obtaining all he wishes!” Father Bruni, one of the most assiduous at his deathbed, conveys to us in a touching way the impression this so tender devotion of the Blessed one had made on him and on all his brethren. “During the days that preceded our Brother John’s departure for heaven,” he writes, “I felt very keenly moved to contemplate him and serve him as the child of the Blessed Virgin Mary, so much so that I had to declare it to him quite simply!”

This virtue, which breathed out, without his having the least suspicion of it, from the whole person of the Blessed one, would have been more than enough, in the testimony of his companions, to perfume the Roman College. Even among outsiders and the smallest schoolboys there was a holy rivalry as to who would merely see him pass (so much had his gait and modesty something angelic about them), and above all who would see him pray at the foot of the altar. But God was pleased also to show in him what the habitual apostolate of speech can be, even on the part of the youngest and most obscure religious, by granting him the very rare gift of a most amiable, most holy and most salutary conversation. By it John was truly an apostle, and brought about the sanctification of a multitude of apostles.

A last exercise of charity, in which Blessed John seemed even to wish to rival his glorious Father Saint Ignatius, was his marvellous tenderness for the sick. “I will let no day pass without visiting and consoling them, with the permission of my superiors,” he wrote in his resolutions; and not wishing to steal a moment either from work during the hours of study or from his other brethren during recreation, he devoted to the sick, in the afternoon, the whole hour that the custom of Rome and Italy allows to be given to rest; for he had likewise resolved never to allow himself that relief. One never tires of hearing and rereading, in the acts of the holy brother’s beatification, the testimony of those poor invalids whom he had so often and so fraternally consoled. Telling one day himself, from a motive of zeal and charity, some of the blessings and joys with which he overflowed in this pious exercise, “Our Lord,” he said, “has let me find in it, among others, this reward: that I have never gone to the sick without finding at least one who wished to talk openheartedly of the things of heaven, and in particular of the Blessed Virgin Mary.”

Yet this apostolate of the Blessed one among his brethren could hardly have gone beyond the limits of his short religious life had not Our Lord inspired him, no doubt as a reward for his holy desires, with an idea very simple but of incalculable reach, which even in our day does not cease to bear fruit. The servant of Jesus Christ had very often reflected on that disposition of heart, so familiar to young religious, of willingly welcoming, at least in the first period after their novitiate, any holy and easy device fit to preserve, without harming their studies, the first flower of their devotion. So, after praying at length and consulting several times those who held for him the place of God, he resolved first to associate with himself some of his most fervent fellow students and to devote with them about an hour each week, on the free afternoon, to a wholly

familiar conference on some subject of piety. Each time they fixed together, by common agreement, the subject of the next conference. This little gathering, composed at first of four or five members, was to have a wholly spontaneous and perfectly free character, and its usefulness was by that very fact full of charm and ease. And so it was not long in growing, and soon all the young men, effortlessly drawn by the sweet influence of the Blessed one, asked the favour and pleasure of belonging to it.

One of the most lovable features of the Blessed one's gracious portrait would be missing if we did not add a few more words about his lively and candid gratitude toward all from whom he had received any good. From his tenderest childhood he showed it, as we have seen, to his parents and his first masters with the most charming amiability. Already then he saw in them only the image of God loving and instructing him, or even reproving and punishing him, through their ministry: an admirable thought of faith, far above so tender an age, which redoubled his love for them. This wholly filial sentiment only grew and blossomed in the Society of Jesus, where the Blessed one let no day pass without offering, above all at holy Mass, fervent prayers and generous sacrifices for all whom he regarded as his benefactors; and the slightest service was never forgotten by him.

But he did not stop there. Feeling wonderfully, by a secret instinct of the divine Spirit, how sensitive the heart of man is to a mark of gratitude, and how much courage and impetus it even draws from it in the things of God, the holy young man would simply go every month and offer each of his masters a list of the Communions, prayers and penances he had prescribed for himself on their behalf in return for their pains. "I have kept several of these notes and preserve them carefully as the relics of a Blessed," said Father Francis Piccolomini after John's death, the one among all his professors whom the servant of God seemed to have loved most filially, because he venerated him also as a Saint, whose lessons inspired all his pupils alike with the love of learning and virtue.

Two whole years had passed since the Blessed one's arrival at the Roman College when, toward the last days of February in the year 1621, his superiors ordered him to prepare for a solemn disputation in philosophy on the feast of Saint Joseph. For him it was the order of God Himself; he therefore resolved at once to use every natural and supernatural means to satisfy fully what obedience required of him.

The success was such that not one of his fellow students seemed as worthy to be chosen to uphold, four months later, the honour of the Roman College in a still more solemn act covering the whole of philosophy. This choice did not fail to alarm his humility for a moment; but he at once had recourse to his usual refuge, obedience, and contented himself with going to ask his confessor which he judged would be simply more pleasing to Our Lord: to accept this honour without saying anything, or to make some attempt to have it fall on another. The answer at once was that it was better to keep silent; and after a second preparation, like the first in every respect, the Blessed one again won the unanimous applause of a brilliant and learned assembly. "In truth," said the Assistant of Father General of the Society for the provinces of Spain on coming out of this new trial, "if God had just now sent us an angel in Brother John's place, we should not, I think, have had a finer spectacle!"

During this last year of his life the Blessed one had chosen as the sole subject of his particular examens the queen of all the virtues, charity. At moments the flames of divine love seemed to consume his body and soul. Everything served to fan them, and he no longer wrote even a page without writing beside the holy name of Jesus: "O love! love! love!" His health, however, did not yet inspire any serious fear; but on examining him in his agony one of the ablest physicians of Rome did not hesitate to say: "This death is wholly divine! our remedies can do nothing against it!"

In the course of the month of July, talking with Father Jerome Savignano, the Blessed one could not hide from him his desire to see death soon break his bonds. "What then, Brother John," the Father rejoined, "are you already so ready to go that you would feel no pain at it?" "Oh! I admit, Father," the holy young man

answered him, “if Our Lord left me the choice, it would be very sweet to me to have a few days first to prepare myself better by the exercises of Saint Ignatius. But if it were His good pleasure that I should give Him my soul at this moment, yes, I would give it to Him without fear, very willingly.” Indeed, the Blessed one already lived, as he put it, only “for the day, for the present hour,” intent only on making it more worthy of God. Shortly afterwards he accompanied Father Famiano Strada on a pilgrimage to Santa Maria Maggiore; and the Father, who knew John’s pious preoccupations perfectly, told him during the whole way of the truly heavenly deaths of some fervent religious of the Society, deaths he had himself witnessed. Then, letting break out the holy envy he felt of their happiness, “May Our Lord grant us too, my dear brother,” he exclaimed in conclusion, “to die one day the death of the Saints!” But the blessed brother, raising his eyes to him with a gentle gravity, answered: “Oh yes, Father, may we die a holy death! But for that desire to be fulfilled, must we not first will that our soul live the life of the Saints?” On 31 July, the feast of his Father Saint Ignatius, as he drew by lot with his brethren a new patron for the following month, he received at the same time this sentence of the holy Gospel: “Watch and pray, for you know not when your hour will come!” These words were accompanied as it were by an inner voice and light announcing to him, beyond doubt, that the hour of his deliverance was approaching; and he went at once to tell it to one of his closest confidants, Father Francis Piccolomini.

The first four days of August passed nevertheless without any sign that his desires were to be granted so soon. But on the morning of Our Lady of the Snows a sudden indisposition seized him, without yet preventing him either from accompanying his brethren that day to the college’s country house, or from disputing the next day at the Greek College with as much ease and fire as modesty. The following night was without rest for him; but, long accustomed never to listen to the complaints of nature, he rose at the usual signal and performed his exercises of piety as if he had really suffered nothing. It was only in the afternoon that, from the all too well-founded fear of failing in one of his rules if he did not at last make his illness known, he went to Father Rector’s room and explained his condition to him. At the first word Father Cepari ordered him to go, as a child of obedience, and put himself in the hands of the brother infirmarian; and the latter, who saw him every day at the bedside of the other sick, said to him on receiving him: “Well, Brother John, what shall we do with you this time?” “Whatever pleases Our Lord,” he answered at once with a smile.

It was not, however, until the evening of the tenth, after growing weaker all day, that the holy patient came to cause too serious anxiety, and that all hope of keeping him vanished in a few moments. This is how Father Louis Spinola relates the Blessed one’s last moments.

“On the evening of the feast of Saint Lawrence,” he says, “I had gone to knock at Father Rector’s door to speak to him of some personal matters. He listened to me personally, satisfied my requests, and added: I want to go now and see our Brother John Berchmans, for I greatly fear we shall lose him. Deeply moved at this news, I earnestly asked Father Rector’s leave to follow him, and he consented. On seeing us both enter his room, the holy brother greeted us with the most amiable and serene air, and then spoke to us of death and paradise with as much joy as a captain talking of battles and victories. As he was answered that perhaps, before going to enjoy God, he would still have much to work and suffer in this world in the service of His divine Majesty, he told us how the holy Father Francis Coster had said to him one day in Flanders, during his novitiate: ‘My brother, later on you will win many souls for Our Lord!’ But after a short pause, ‘I really do not know,’ he added, ‘whether he may not have meant that it would be from the height of heaven.’ The conclusion of this first visit was that, if our holy brother’s condition did not improve that night, Father Rector would bring him the holy Viaticum the next morning, and we withdrew to take our rest. But I begged Father Rector to have me called in time, if there were occasion; for I felt an extreme desire to be present at that great act.”

Father Cepari had told of his plan only in the presence of the brother infirmarian; but some time afterwards the latter, seeing the patient grow weaker, said to him: “Brother John, has Father Rector told you nothing?

For my part, I think it would be good for you to receive a visit from Our Lord tomorrow morning." Without being troubled at this word, "Would it be to receive Communion as Viaticum?" the holy young man calmly rejoined. "Yes, my dear brother, for we now have very little hope left." Then, with a face radiant with joy, as if he had at that moment received the most gracious news, the servant of God raised himself and, throwing both arms round the neck of the infirmarian bending over him, embraced him tenderly. But as the brother burst into tears and could not utter a word, "Ah, my dear brother," he cried, "rejoice with me then! for this is indeed the best news and the sweetest consolation you could possibly give me." Then at once, taking his crucifix, "O my good Jesus," he went on, "You have always been my only treasure here below. Do not abandon me in my last moments!" And as the brother infirmarian gently urged him not to weaken and tire himself further by too vehement affections, "Oh, fear nothing," he replied; "these affections are, on the contrary, all my strength and all my joy!" A few moments later he asked the brother to write at his dictation what was to be his spiritual testament, and he pronounced it in the greatest calm, always with the same serenity. In it he first asked pardon of the Reverend Father General of the Society for having been so unworthy a son of so sweet and holy a mother, from whom he had received so much good. Then, after the warmest expressions of gratitude to each of his Fathers and brethren, who had given themselves, he said, to so much fatigue on his account, and to all who had visited him during the days of his illness, he asked as a last favour to receive the holy Viaticum surrounded by all his brethren, laid on the floor, fully dressed, and to die clothed in the cassock of the Society. The infirmarian hastened to take these few lines at once to Father Cepari; and he, having read them not without deep emotion, answered: "Tell Brother John that all his requests will be granted."

Let us now return to Father Spinola's personal recollections.

"Very early in the morning," he says, "Father Rector came himself to wake me and told me that, if I wished to see the holy Brother John receive Communion as Viaticum, it was time. Urged by my desire, I got up in all haste and went to the holy brother's room; with a smiling and gracious face he said to me as soon as he saw me: 'Greetings, my dear brother; see, we are about to set out for heaven!' These words so pierced my heart that I went out at once to hide my tears, on the pretext of going to the sacristy to join Father Rector and those who were to accompany the Blessed Sacrament. When we came back to our dear brother, we found him lying on the floor on a mattress, clothed in his cassock, his hands joined; and he remained in this position until, according to the tenor of the rubrics, the blessing of the room, the Confiteor and the absolution had been completed. But when Father Rector turned toward him with the body of Our Lord to give it to him, suddenly we saw him rise like lightning and kneel, although his extreme weakness should have made him fall at once, had not two of his fellow students hastened to support him until after holy Communion. He then made his profession of faith and declared firmly that he was dying, or at least that he wished to die, as a true son of the Society of Jesus and a true son of the Blessed Virgin Mary; then he received the holy Viaticum. At this sight we were all seized with compunction no less than with regret, thinking that this incomparable treasure of all holiness was so soon to be taken from us.

"I stayed there almost all day, that is, except only for the hours of class; and many of us were there, for everyone ardently desired to see him and to render him, if possible, a last service. All that time his conversation was only of paradise, to which he aspired ceaselessly by a thousand ejaculatory prayers, each more beautiful, and a thousand sighs, each more ardent than the last. He often repeated in particular: 'O Mary, do not let my hope be vain! I am your son, you know it well; for I have sworn to you to be so for ever!' "On the evening and night of the 11th to the 12th I again stayed beside him with several others of our brethren. And as I went out from time to time for a few minutes to breathe for a moment the cool night air, for the heat had been extreme, coming back to him about three hours before the rising signal, I found him awake, his hands very cold; and supposing that this coolness must also be pleasant to him, I said nothing. But on the contrary it was a keen suffering to him, as he admitted the next day; and only the fear of tiring the

brother infirmarian, who was taking a little rest, had prevented him from speaking.

“When day came, his room filled with new visitors, who had hurried in crowds to see this death, which each of us would certainly have bought back with all his heart at the price of several of his own years. All wished to receive from his lips a last counsel, with the assurance of being remembered before the Saviour and His holy Mother as soon as he was in heaven. In spite of his fear of exhausting his strength, Father Cepari did not dare send away this multitude, which seemed to him drawn by God Himself to gather from the lips of the holy dying man the highest and most effective lessons of all virtue. He therefore decided to let each visitor come in alone, in his turn, once more and for scarcely a few minutes. To all without exception the Blessed one, always smiling, earnestly recommended three things: a filial tenderness for the most holy Virgin Mary, a great love of prayer, and the most unalterable fidelity to all the rules of the Society. Then he added in a few words some particular advice according to each one’s state of soul, showing clearly, according to the express deposition of several, that he read plainly into the depths of their souls. ‘And so, in spite of his modesty and humility,’ adds Father Golfi, ‘from the superhuman majesty and freedom of his speech we could not doubt that God was speaking to us in him.’ ‘Evening came,’ Father Spinola continues, ‘much more quickly than we should have wished; for the hours seemed to us to pass like minutes at our holy brother’s bedside. I stayed there all that night too, with several other Fathers and Brothers, who feared nothing so much, like me, as not being near him when he gave back his blessed soul to God. I only went, at about two hours after midnight, to wake one of our brethren to whom I had promised it the evening before, and who hastened to come.’” (It was during this short absence that the devil tried to wage a hard combat against the dying man, as he had foretold shortly before. All of a sudden the patient flung himself into the middle of his bed; his eyes fixed on heaven, his face distraught, his lips trembling, he cried with all his strength: “I repent with all my heart, Lord, of having offended You!… No, I will not do it….. I offend You, Lord?… Mary, I offend your Son?… No, never, never; no, I will not do it; I would rather die a thousand times, ten thousand times, a hundred thousand times, a million times, a million times, a million times”; and he repeated about forty times this cry: “Begone, Satan, I do not fear you…”) “When I came back in, he was saying: ‘Give me my arms: my crucifix, my rosary and the rules of the Society! Those are the three things I love most in the world. I shall die without pain with them!’ But as he was handed a book of rules in which those of the scholastics were missing, he asked for another, which I hastened to fetch and bring him. Then he pronounced the formula of vows very affectionately, and afterwards had several prayers and the litanies of the Saints recited to him, in which he had added the invocation of the four Blessed of the Society, our holy Father Ignatius, Francis Xavier, Aloysius Gonzaga and Stanislaus Kostka, as well as of the two Fathers Francis Borgia and Joseph Anchieta, and of Brother Alphonsus Rodriguez. Almost immediately afterwards he lost his speech and remained about three hours in that state, showing clearly, however, by the modesty of his posture and the angelic recollection of his features, that he had not lost consciousness. And so, when Father Rector, or one of his professors who was assisting him at that moment, invited him to pronounce the name of Jesus in his heart and to give, if he still could, some sign that he understood, he was seen from time to time to bow his head gently.

“I must not forget to say here that the evening before, when everyone was asking him for a counsel and a remembrance, I did the same; and he answered me: ‘May God Our Lord make you a child of prayer, a child of the Blessed Virgin Mary, and may He give you the twofold spirit of our blessed Father Ignatius toward God and toward souls!’ I then begged him to obtain some particular graces for me, which he promised me most kindly; and when I added, ‘Take good care, Brother John, for I shall let no day pass without reminding you of your promise,’ ‘I will keep it,’ he answered in a tone full of energy; ‘be sure of it!’”

At last, three and a half hours before his last breath, the Blessed one, having recovered his speech in making a new effort to invoke the holy name of Jesus, repulsed the last assaults of the devil, who was striving to trouble him further by the memory, not of his faults, for he found none to reproach himself with, but of his very acts of virtue. John, with the help of prayer and by his obedience to the Father who was assisting him,

again triumphed victoriously over his enemy, and soon recovered all his serenity. Then, invoking in turn the holy patrons he had received each month since his entry into the Society, joining for the last time in the litanies of the Queen of angels, his eyes fixed on those three things that were so dear to him, his book of Rules, his rosary and his crucifix, he gently gave back his holy soul to God. It was the morning of 13 August 1621, the anniversary, according to a pious conjecture, of the separation of the body and soul of his divine mother, the glorious Virgin Mary. Thus died in the odour of benediction, at the age of twenty-two years and five months, Blessed John Berchmans.

He is represented holding in his hands the book of the Rules of Saint Ignatius, a cross and a rosary. It was thus that he wished to die, saying: “These are my treasures, with which I shall present myself joyfully before God.”

## CULTE ET RELIQUES.

Hardly had the body of Blessed Berchmans been carried to the church and suitably laid out when popular devotion honoured him with the cult of the Saints. Several miracles were worked in the presence of an immense crowd. On 14 August the holy body was placed in a wooden coffin with a lead inscription and buried provisionally in a tomb in the chapel of Saint Aloysius Gonzaga, in which no one had yet been laid. From that moment the chapel was never empty of people, and the cult of Berchmans took on day by day vaster proportions. To check the concourse of the faithful, the body of the Blessed one was buried in the chapel of the Holy Cross, where the common burial place of the Fathers of the college was. It was placed on the very spot that the body of Saint Aloysius had occupied until his beatification. The concourse turned to this chapel as it had to that of Saint Aloysius, and nothing could slacken its fervour. Ex-votos of every kind arrived there in great numbers. In 1623 the chapel where he rested was adorned by the people with flowers and greenery. Belgium vied with Rome in honouring his memory. Germany invoked him with even more enthusiasm than Italy. The most astonishing cures did not cease to take place at his tomb and to encourage the confidence of those who came to surround it with their homage and prayers.

At that time Rome had not yet forbidden such homage paid to those whose glorious miracles seemed to proclaim so loudly the glory and power of heaven. Only a few years later, on 13 March 1625, the sovereign pontiff Urban VIII was to reserve thenceforth to the sole infallible judgment of the vicar of Jesus Christ the examination of the virtues and wonders that would give a right to the title and public honours of the Blessed. On 11 September 1745 Pope Benedict XIV signed the commission for the introduction of the cause, and from then on the servant of God could be honoured by all with the official title of Venerable. By a decree dated 5 June 1843 Pope Gregory XVI proclaimed before the whole world that the venerable servant of God John Berchmans, beloved of God and men, had practised in a heroic degree the theological and cardinal virtues, as well as the moral virtues that derive from them. Finally, on 9 May 1865, the sovereign pontiff Pius IX signed the brief of beatification of the venerable servant of God, and on 28 May its promulgation was made in the metropolitan church of Saint Peter. The wooden coffin that contained his body having been found completely decayed, the bones, the ashes, the parts of the clothing that had been preserved and even the particles of the coffin were gathered with extreme care, and the whole was placed in a lead case with the inscription of which we have spoken. In 1729 Father Francis Piccolomini, rector of the Roman College, examined the case and established that all the bones were in it, except the teeth, some fingers and toes and some small bones. Some years later his successor, Father Casotti, enclosed the bones in a wooden case with a copper casing. On 11 May 1865 the verification of this august deposit took place at the Roman College. On the occasion of the solemn beatification some bones were taken from the common treasure and brought to Belgium to be the object of the veneration of the faithful. The cardinal archbishop of Mechelen obtained a bone of the forearm, which was placed on 23 July 1865 in the metropolitan church, on an altar newly erected and consecrated to the Blessed one. The cathedral of Antwerp possesses a small bone, as well as the shirt the Blessed one wore in his last moments; the church of the Gesù at Brussels has a vertebra, as has the church of

Diest; the Jesuit house at Louvain keeps his heart. At the college of Notre-Dame at Antwerp a sleeve of the Blessed one's cassock is still preserved.

We have taken this account from a life published by a Father of the Society of Jesus, without the author's name, by Méniolle. Sometimes we have summarized it, but often too we have reproduced it word for word. — Cf. *Vie du bienheureux Jean Berchmans*, by H. P. Vanderspeeten, of the Society of Jesus.

## Saint Vitalina, Virgin at Artonne in Auvergne (390)

While Saint Martin was governing the Church of Tours, the little town of Artonne (arrondissement of Riom) in Auvergne was breathing the fragrance of the virtues of Saint Vitalina. After her death the renown of her holiness reached the ears of the illustrious archbishop, who wished to visit her tomb. "When I had saluted the Saint and addressed my prayer to God," he tells us in his book *On the Glory of the Confessors*, "I heard a voice come out of the tomb and ask me for my blessing. I hastened to give it, and then asked Vitalina whether she was enjoying the presence of her divine Spouse. Sadly she answered me that she was deprived of it for some time because of a slight fault she had committed during her life. I then turned to those of my company and said to them: If this poor Virgin, who consecrated herself to God from her tenderest years, and whose actions were so pure during her life that she has merited to work miracles after her death, is nevertheless deprived for a time of the vision of God because of a very slight fault she neglected to avoid, what will become of us, wretched sinners, who drink iniquity like water? Then I came back before the Virgin's tomb, revived her courage, and assured her that in three days she would be led before her heavenly Spouse, from whom nothing could ever separate her again.

"She appeared also to several other persons and rendered them many offices of charity: for the archpriest of Artonne, who wished to give a meal to the poor, she brought to light a sum of money that met all the expenses; for another priest, who wished to fulfil the same precept of almsgiving, she multiplied the wine in his cellar."

The feast of Saint Vitalina was formerly celebrated on 21 February; some calendars give it on 25 May.

Saint Gregory of Tours, *Book of the Glory of the Confessors*, ch. 5.

## Saint Cassian, Martyr at Imola in Italy (4th Century)

Prudentius (Aurelius Prudentius Clemens), a Latin poet who flourished in the 4th century, relates the martyrdom of Saint Cassian thus: "He was a schoolmaster at Imola when the persecution there became violent against the Christians. He was arrested and questioned by the governor of the province; as he heroically refused to sacrifice to the idols, the judge had the barbarity to order that his pupils should prick him with their styluses until he died. The less force there was in the blows of those who had been given him as executioners, the longer and crueller his torment became. He was exposed naked in the midst of a band of two hundred children. Some struck him on the face and head with their writing tablets, and often broke them on his body; others pricked him with their styluses, furrowed his flesh and tore strips from it; some made a barbarous game of writing their lesson on his skin. Covered with blood and torn all over his body, he told these unhappy children to fear nothing and to redouble their efforts. By these words his intention was not to encourage them in their crime, but to express the ardent desire he had to die for Jesus Christ."

After his death the Christians buried him at Imola, and later enclosed his relics in a rich mausoleum. Nothing could be more graceful than the Saint's tomb in the cathedral of Imola. It is a modern work, of white marble and very well sculptured. It is raised up and placed behind the high altar. On it are to be seen little angels holding styluses, the instruments of his torture. Pope Pius IX, who was bishop of Imola before ascending the Holy See, adorned this tomb with precious marble. On the same line, in side chapels to right and left, are also the tombs of Saint Peter Chrysologus, archbishop of Ravenna, who died at Imola, and of another holy

Pontiff. These three monuments in the same style produce a very fine effect.

Saint Prudentius says that on his journey to Rome he visited the tomb of the holy Martyr and that, having prostrated himself before it, he implored the divine mercy for his sins with many tears. He speaks of a painting placed above the altar, which represented the martyrdom of Saint Cassian in the way he has related it. He exhorts all the faithful to commend themselves with him to this Saint, who never fails to hear the prayers addressed to him.

Cf. *Acta Sanctorum*.

## Saint Wigbert or Wictbercht, Abbot of Fritzlar in Electoral Hesse (747)

A companion of the holy abbot Egbert, Saint Wigbert, after living for a long time as a recluse in Ireland, went to preach the word of salvation to the peoples of Frisia and to King Radbod about the year 688. But all his labours and efforts bore no fruit among his barbarous hearers. He returned to Ireland after two years and served God there again in solitude and silence, as he had done for so long. Having been unable to make himself useful to foreigners, he strove all the more to strengthen his fellow countrymen by the example of his virtues.

Mabillon distinguishes several Wigberts, and speaks first of the oldest, who, to preach the Gospel after Egbert, crossed from Ireland to Frisia, from which he was driven out by Radbod, and returned to Ireland. The second was abbot of Nietcelle and teacher of Saint Boniface. The third is the abbot of Fritzlar, who left England with some others to join Saint Boniface in Germany, and whom Boniface associated with himself, with several others, in his apostolate.

Our Saint was in the habit, when he was asked to go to someone to hear his confession, of returning to his monastery immediately afterwards. Although his body was exhausted by a serious illness, he did not allow himself the least comfort; he did not, however, blame those who in case of illness relaxed their austerity a little. In his last moments, it is said, a very beautiful bird was seen to come down three times upon the dying body, in token of the purity of his life. Saint Wigbert must have enjoyed a great reputation for holiness, since Bruno, abbot of Hersfeld, and Rabanus Maurus, abbot of Fulda, began in 831 to build him a church, which the latter finished in 850, when he was archbishop of Mainz. This church still exists at Hersfeld, which later became a town. But its revenues, which were very considerable, were seized by the landgraves of Hesse and attached to their domains.

It should be noted further that Wigbert is named in the martyrology of Rabanus, in that of Rome and in several others as priest and confessor, without his being said to have been an abbot. This is because in those times the dignity of priest, so to speak, eclipsed the title of abbot, which was much inferior to it.

There is yet another Wigbert, also a priest, and even, as is commonly believed, a secular priest, who, having returned from Germany to Britain, wrote two letters to Lull, archbishop of Mainz.

Taken from the continuators of Godescard.

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[1] The heresy of the Monothelites, so called because they admitted only one will in Jesus Christ, was a half-Eutychianism. Its chief authors were Theodore, bishop of Pharan in Arabia; Sergius, patriarch of Constantinople; and Cyrus, bishop of Phasis in Colchis, who was afterwards raised to the patriarchal see of Alexandria. These prelates secretly favoured the heresy of Eutyches. To obey the laws of the Church and the State, they accepted the council of Chalcedon and acknowledged two natures in Jesus Christ; but they denied that there were in Him two distinct wills. They claimed on the contrary that there was only one, composed of the divine will and the human will united together, and they called this compound theandric. Maximus died at eighty-two. The Greeks celebrate two feasts in his honour, one on 21 January and the other on 13 August. It is this latter day that Baronius and Baillet assign as the day of his death. But Falconius thinks that he died on 21 January, and he bases this on what is said in the synaxary of the Greeks, that on 13 August the translation was made at Constantinople of his relics, which had been brought to that city from the monastery of Saint Arsenius, situated near the country of the Lazi, where the Saint had first been buried. We have from Saint Maximus: 1. mystical or allegorical Commentaries on various books of Scripture; 2. Commentaries on the works attributed to Saint Dionysius the Areopagite; 3. polemical

Treatises against the Monothelites; 4. an excellent ascetical discourse; 5. spiritual Maxims, chiefly on charity; 6. some Letters. They were printed at Paris in 1676 through the care of the learned Father Combefis, Dominican, in two folio volumes. — Godescard.

[2] See his life on that day.

[3] We gave his life on 15 July.

[4] See the Additions of the Bollandists for 18 July, and the martyrology of the Discalced Carmelites for 16 August.

[5] We gave his life on 20 July.

[6] Her motto was: “The greater we are, the more humble we must be.” She died in her seventieth year. Pope Clement VI permitted the nuns of Altenberg to celebrate her feast solemnly. — Continuators of Godescard; cf. *Vie de sainte Élisabeth*, by the Count de Montalembert.

[7] He was buried in the convent of the Friars Minor of the Observance at Camerino. In 1502, the religious of that house having been obliged to leave it because a citadel was to be built on the site, they wished to take the body of Blessed Peter with them; they found it whole and without any mark of corruption. Under the pontificate of Pius VI, on 5 August 1780, the Congregation of Rites published the decree concerning his cult. — Continuators of Godescard.

[8] Athies is 54 kilometres from Amiens, chief town of the department of the Somme, 11 from Péronne, chief town of the arrondissement, and 15 from Ham, chief town of the canton. Its population is 1,072 inhabitants.

[9] The reliquary that contained this holy relic in 1793 fell prey to the Vandals of that time; but the sacred wood has always remained, and is still today in the possession of the daughters of Saint Radegund, as Sister de Marans, then superior of the monastery of Sainte-Croix, wrote in 1859. The sacred wood forms as it were two crosses one above the other. Its total length is fifty-five millimetres, its width about eight. The arms of the upper cross, which is the smaller, have a span of twenty-five millimetres; those of the larger, which cross the upright toward the middle, have thirty. The thickness is two lines. The book of the Gospels is at the major seminary of Poitiers. It was, it is said, on the occasion of this precious relic of the Saviour’s cross that Saint Fortunatus, Radegund’s friend, composed the hymn *Vexilla Regis*.

[10] A chapel had been built on the spot where Radegund was praying when she had this vision. In 1792 the chapel was overthrown, and the statues were carried, with the stone bearing the imprint, into the church of Sainte-Radegonde, where the piety of the faithful continues to surround them with the same veneration. The place that was occupied by this venerable cell is still shown in the present gardens of the bishop’s residence.

[11] Alias: Loul, *Landulphus*, *Laudulphus*.

# 14 August

## Martyrologies

### MARTYROLOGE ROMAIN.

The Vigil of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary. — At Rome, the birthday in heaven of Saint Eusebius, priest, who for the defence of the Catholic faith was shut up in a room of his house by Constantius, the Arian emperor, and, having persevered there seven months in prayer with invincible constancy, fell asleep there in Our Lord. His body was taken away by Gregory and Orosius, priests, and buried on the Appian Way in the cemetery of Callistus. 4th c. — In Illyria, Saint Ursicius or Ursicinus, martyr, who was beheaded for the name of Jesus Christ after various tortures, under the emperor Maximian and the governor Aristides. 303. — In Africa, Saint Demetrius, martyr. — At Apamea in Syria, Saint Marcellus, bishop and martyr, who, for having overthrown a temple dedicated to Jupiter, was massacred by the Gentiles, who flew into a fury against him.[1] 389. — At Todi, Saint Callistus, bishop and martyr. — In the island of Aegina (Aegean Sea), Saint ATHANASIA, widow, made illustrious by her fidelity to monastic observances and by the grace of miracles. About 860.

### MARTYROLOGE DE FRANCE, REVU ET AUGMENTÉ.

In the diocese of Strasbourg, Blessed EBERHARD, provost of the cathedral of that city and abbot of Einsiedeln (*Eremus Beatæ Mariæ*, *Cella Solitariorum*, *Eberhartescella*), an ancient and celebrated Benedictine monastery (Switzerland), where there is a miraculous image of the holy Virgin which draws many pilgrims and is known by the name of Our Lady of the Hermits. We spoke of it at length in the life of Saint Meinrad, the founder of that sanctuary, on 21 January. 957 or 958. — At Cambrai, in the cathedral, anniversary of the solemn inauguration of the image of Notre-Dame de Grâce, also called the image of Saint

Luke. 1450. — At Brussels, anniversary of the blessing of the new church of Sainte-Marie at Schaerbeek, a Byzantine monument worthy of the Queen of heaven. 1853. — In Belgium, discovery of the statue of Our Lady of Duffel. 1637. — Also in Belgium, Blessed Alan de la Roche, Dominican. During the long years he preached in that country, he applied himself above all to reviving the devotion of the Rosary. His sermons, like his writings, prove that Mary occupied, so to speak, all his thoughts. He wrote on the miracles of the Rosary, on the Psalter of the Virgin and on her life, and commented on the Song of Songs, applying to Mary the texts in which the privilege of the Immaculate Conception is most clearly expressed. 1474. — At Nevers, Saint Aré, bishop of that see and confessor, whose life we shall give on 16 August. 6th c. — At Dieppe, procession in thanksgiving for the victory won on this day over the English. 1443. — Formerly at Cherbourg, procession in memory of the surrender of the place by the English. 1450. — In the village of Elst, in the province of Gelderland (Holland), Saint Werenfrid or Guerfroy, confessor, apostle of Frisia. He was sent to the village of Elst to preach Jesus Christ there by Saint Willibrord, whose disciple he was. He also preached the faith at Medemblik and at Wijk bij Duurstede, died at Leydis and was buried at Elst. His relics were raised from the ground by Baldric or Baudri, fifteenth bishop of Utrecht, who founded in his honour, in his episcopal city, a Chapter of eight canons. 8th c.

## MARTYROLOGES DES ORDRES RELIGIEUX.

Martyrology of the three Orders of Saint Francis. — The Vigil of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary. — In the diocese of Pesaro, near the mountain of Birochium, Blessed SANCTES OF URBINO, confessor, of the Order of Friars Minor, famous for his miracles and virtues, whose immemorial cult was approved by Clement XIV. 1390.

Martyrology of the Order of Saint Augustine. — The Vigil of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary. — At the monastery of Santa Maria del Monte Sacro, on the Vasirio, Blessed Juliana of Pareselles (*Juliana a Busto Arsitio*), virgin of our Order, illustrious for invincible strength of soul, admirable patience and assiduous contemplation of heavenly things. 1540.

Martyrology of the Friars Preachers. — The Vigil of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary. — At Ascoli, in the March of Ancona, Saint Emygdius, bishop and martyr, who, ordained bishop by Pope Saint Marcellus and sent into that province to preach the Gospel there, confessed Jesus Christ and received the crown of martyrdom under the emperor Diocletian.[2] 303 or 304.

Martyrology of the Friars Minor. — The Vigil of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary. — Saint Emygdius, bishop and martyr, whose birthday in heaven is celebrated on 5 August. 303 or 304.

Martyrology of the Calced and Discalced Carmelites. — The Vigil of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary. — The Octave of Saint Albert, confessor.[3] 1306.

Martyrology of the Capuchin Friars Minor of Saint Francis. — The Vigil of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary. — Saint Alphonsus Mary de Liguori, of whom mention is made on 2 August.[4] 1787.

## ADDITIONS FAITES D'APRÈS LES BOLLANDISTES ET AUTRES HAGIOGRAPHES.

At Otranto (*Hydruntum*), a town of southern Italy, in the diocese of Naples, Blessed Antonio Primaldi and his companions, martyrs, eight hundred in number. They were beheaded a quarter of a league from the town, on the hill of San Giovanni della Minerva, for having refused to deny Jesus Christ and embrace the Muslim religion, at the time when Mahomet II, emperor of the Turks and conqueror of Constantinople, laid siege to Otranto. The hill that was the scene of their execution has since been called the Mount of the Martyrs. The holy bodies remained exposed at the place of their execution for the thirteen months during which the Turks were masters of Otranto; but they were preserved there without corruption, and no carnivorous animal approached them. In 1481 Alfonso, duke of Calabria, son of the king of Naples, having retaken the town

from the infidels, had the bodies of the holy Martyrs carried to a fine chapel of the metropolitan church. Two hundred and forty of them are honoured in the church of Santa Caterina at Naples; their cult has also been established at Otranto. Pope Clement XIV approved, on 14 December 1771, the cult paid to them. 1480. — In Judaea, Saint MICAH THE ELDER, prophet, who must not be confused with Saint Micah the Younger, surnamed the Morasthite, whose life we gave, together with that of Saint Habakkuk, on 15 January. Year of the world 3138, 916 B.C. — In Syria, the holy martyrs Fortunatus, Eusebius, Titulus and Conditor, cited by Saint Jerome. — The holy martyrs Eutychius, Paul, Heraclius, Possessor, Parmas, Disseus, Hermas, Prospolinus, Prosalamus, Bermias, another Heraclius and three of their companions, cited by Saint Jerome without further details. — At Rome or in Palestine, Saint EUSEBIUS, priest and martyr. Toward the end of the 3rd c. — In the territory of Gardumo, in the government of the Tyrol, in Austria (diocese of Trent), Saint Felix, bishop and martyr. — At Ferrara in Italy, Blessed Albert, bishop of that see and confessor. He had first been bishop of Piacenza, and had, it is said, been present at the first council of Lyons, assembled against the emperor of Germany Frederick II (1194–1240). On the point of death he generously distributed his whole patrimony to the poor and to religious. He was buried, as he had directed in his will, in the church of San Giorgio at Ferrara, where his marble tomb is still to be seen in our day. 1274.

## Saint Eusebius, Priest and Martyr, at Rome or in Palestine

*Toward the end of the 3rd century.*

> *Oratio justi clavis est cœli: ascendit precatio et descendit Dei miseratio.*
>
> *The prayer of the just is the key of heaven: prayer goes up, and then it brings down the divine mercy.*
>
> *S. Augustine, Sermons.*

Eusebius was a priest who possessed in an eminent degree the spirit of prayer and all the apostolic virtues. He shed his blood for the faith in the reign of Diocletian and Maximian, but before those princes had published new edicts against the Christians. Some place his martyrdom at Rome, others in Palestine.

However that may be, the emperor Maximian was in the country where the holy Martyr died. Maxentius, governor of the province, laid information against Eusebius, who stood out among all the faithful by his zeal in invoking and preaching Jesus Christ. Spurred on by the cries of the idolaters, he said to him: “Sacrifice to the gods willingly, or I shall know how to force you to it.” Eusebius: “It is written in a more sacred law: Thou shalt adore the Lord thy God, and Him only shalt thou serve.” Maxentius: “Choose either to sacrifice or to suffer the cruellest torments.” Eusebius: “It is contrary to reason to adore stones, which of all things are the vilest and most fragile.” Maxentius: “The Christians are a strange kind of men; death seems to them preferable to life.” Eusebius: “It would be impious to despise the light for darkness.” Maxentius: “Gentle means only serve to make you more obstinate. I declare to you, then, that if you do not sacrifice you will be burned alive.” Eusebius: “Your threats do not dismay me; the brightness of my crown will be measured by the cruelty of the torments I shall endure.” Then Maxentius had him stretched on the rack, where his sides were torn with iron hooks. During this torture Eusebius often repeated these words: “Save me, Lord Jesus; whether we live or whether we die, we are always Yours.” This constancy astonished the judge. He had the Saint taken down from the rack and said to him: “Do you know the decree of the senate by which all subjects of the empire are ordered to sacrifice to the gods?” “The orders of God,” answered Eusebius, “must prevail over those of men.” Maxentius, beside himself with fury, ordered the Saint to be led to the stake to be burned alive.

Eusebius followed the executioners calmly. His constancy and the joy painted on his face struck the judge and the bystanders with astonishment. Maxentius even called him back, saying to him: “Why run to a death you can avoid? I cannot understand your obstinacy; change your mind, then.” “If it is true that the emperor orders me to adore a senseless metal in contempt of the true God, let me be brought before him.” He spoke

thus because the emperors had not published new edicts against Christianity. Maxentius ordered the guards to put him back in prison until the next day. Then, going to the prince, he said to him: “Lord, a seditious man has been brought before me who will not obey the laws; he has even dared before me to deny the power of the gods; he refuses to offer them sacrifices and to adore your name.” “Let him be brought to me,” answered the emperor. “If you see him,” rejoined someone who had witnessed what had taken place before the judge’s tribunal, “you will be moved by his words.” “Is this the man,” retorted the emperor, “who will be able to make me change?” “Not only,” said Maxentius, “will he make you change, but he will produce the same effect on the minds of all the people. You will not be able to see him without feeling yourself strongly moved and drawn to imitate him.” The emperor nevertheless wished him to be brought.

When Eusebius appeared, all present were singularly struck by a certain radiance to be seen on his face; by a lovable mixture of joy, gentleness and courage that shone in his eyes; by the beauty of his hair and of his whole bearing, which, at a venerable age, seemed to breathe an air of more than human virtue. The emperor, having looked at him fixedly, seemed to notice something divine in him, and spoke to him thus: “Old man, why do you appear before me? Speak, and fear nothing.” And as Eusebius kept silent, he added: “Speak, once again, and answer the questions I put to you. I wish to save your life.” “If I hope,” answered the Saint, “to be saved by a man, I must no longer expect the salvation God has promised me. Although you surpass them in dignity and power, you are no less mortal than they. I shall not be afraid to repeat before you what I have already declared: I am a Christian, and as such I cannot adore wood and stones. I am resolved to obey the true God whom I know, and whose goodness I have so often experienced.” “What harm is there,” said the emperor to the governor, “in this man’s adoring the God he speaks of as superior to all the others?” “Invincible emperor,” rejoined Maxentius, “do not let yourself be imposed upon; what he calls God is not what you think: he means a Jesus whom I do not know and who was never known to our ancestors.” “Go,” said the emperor, “judge according to the rules of equity and in conformity with the laws. For my part, I do not wish to be judge in this matter.”

Maximian was naturally of a ferocious character; yet the courage and modest virtue of Eusebius filled him with veneration for him. He wished to save him; but, like Pilate, he did not wish to give himself any trouble, and he was afraid of displeasing those whom he despised on other occasions. Thus it is that worldly and corrupt men, who know neither curb nor restraint in vice, show the most culpable indifference to the practice of virtue.

Maxentius, having withdrawn, sat on his tribunal and ordered Eusebius to sacrifice to the gods. “I will not sacrifice,” answered the Saint, “to beings that can neither see nor hear.” Maxentius: “Sacrifice, or I will condemn you to the fire; He whom you fear will not be able to deliver you from it.” Eusebius: “Neither fire nor sword will make me change. Cut my body to pieces; treat it as you please; my soul, which belongs to God, will receive no harm from your torments. I will not abandon the holy law to which I have been attached from childhood.” The judge, despairing of overcoming him, condemned him to be beheaded. When Eusebius heard the sentence pronounced, he said: “Lord Jesus, I give thanks to Your goodness and praise Your power that, in putting my faithfulness to the test, You treat me as one of Your disciples.” At the same time he heard a voice from heaven saying to him: “If you had not been found worthy to suffer, you could not have been admitted into the court of the heavenly King, nor sit among the just.” Having arrived at the place of execution, he knelt down and had his head cut off.

It is this Saint Eusebius who is named on this day in the ancient martyrologies that bear the name of Saint Jerome. There is at Rome a church in honour of a Saint Eusebius. It was falling into ruin in the time of Zachary (741), who had it rebuilt. The body of a saint of that name is kept there.

Taken from Godescard.

# Blessed Eberhard, Provost of the Cathedral of Strasbourg and Abbot of Einsiedeln

*957 or 958. — Pope: John XII. — Emperor of Germany: Otto I.*

> *The glory of earth is vile, deceitful and full of malice; do not seek it; seek the glory of heaven, a glory full of nobility, stability and truth.*
>
> *Saint Bonaventure.*

The family of Blessed Eberhard was one of the most illustrious of Swabia, both for its antiquity and its wealth. This prince must have been, in the opinion of several historians, a cousin of Hermann, duke of Swabia and Alsace. So illustrious an origin opened the way for him to ecclesiastical dignities, and he was appointed provost of the cathedral of Strasbourg; but, dazzled by the pomp of the greatness of this world, he became indifferent to the duties of his office and let himself be ruled by ambition and vainglory. The Lord often urged him to return to Him, whether through the example and entreaties of his colleague and friend Benno, whose life we gave on 3 August, or through salutary inspirations that came from time to time to trouble him in his too worldly life; but he remained deaf to the attractions of grace and went on always in the same way of life. The virtuous Benno had just given the example of the most profound self-denial by withdrawing into a solitude. This sudden retreat, his renunciation of the world and above all his austerities had made a deep impression on the minds of the canons of the cathedral of Strasbourg. Moved by curiosity, Eberhard resolved one day to go and visit his friend, and appeared with all the apparatus of pomp and vanity in the dreadful wilderness where Benno lived in Switzerland. Benno received him as a solitary. Eberhard, at the sight of this man, whom the austerities of penance had not cast down, felt moved and troubled. This slave of the world and its follies, who had until then tasted only false and deceptive pleasures, cannot get over his astonishment. He had expected to find in Benno a man whose austere virtue had swallowed up everything that recalled their former friendship, and he found in him the same friend, whose tenderness and amiability had only increased since their separation. He had expected reproaches from Benno for having continued a life so little in harmony with the duties of his state; but Benno is an indulgent friend, who forgives the frailty of human nature its passing errors, and has nothing but a heart of mercy for a victim of human respect and of the prejudices of his birth. Finally, Eberhard had pictured the eremitical life only as a sad and painful existence, deprived of all enjoyment, and he finds in Benno a man who enjoys a kind of happiness unknown to himself and who relishes ineffable delights in the midst of earthly privations. All these considerations work powerfully in his soul; grace completes its work, and Eberhard, as if struck by a ray of light, recognizes his errors, abjures them, and devotes himself for ever to the practice of the Christian virtues and to all the rigour of penance. What then was Benno’s joy! He clasped his friend affectionately in his arms and exhorted him to break all the ties that bound him to earth and to come and share with him his happiness and his mortifications. Eberhard promises it and at once renounces his dignity; he immediately shows the sincerity of his resolution by acts of beneficence, and uses the great wealth he possessed to improve the lot of Benno’s fervent disciples. The humble chapel then gave way to a fine church built in honour of the holy Virgin, and the modest cells of the cenobites were changed into a rich abbey, which became so famous afterwards for the regularity that has always reigned there, the number and holiness of its religious, and the immense donations granted it by several monarchs. But Eberhard’s charity shone out still more in a great famine that ravaged Burgundy, Alsace and Upper Germany in 942: he had a great store of grain collected and distributed it to the stricken peoples. It appears that he was named abbot of the monastery that owed its existence to him, and Hermann Contractus tells us that he governed that house from the year 934 until 957 or 958, the time of his death. He was buried near the chapel of the holy Virgin, beside Benno, his friend and colleague. His memory has always been held in great veneration at Einsiedeln, and his name is found in several martyrologies. Some historians give him the title of saint.

Taken from the *Saints d’Alsace*, by the abbé Hunckler.

# Blessed Sanctes of Urbino, Confessor, of the Order of Friars Minor

*1390. — Pope: Boniface IX. — King of France: Charles VI, the Well-Beloved.*

*Humilitas nihil appetendo, totum quod contemnit, adipiscitur.*

*Without ambitioning anything, humility enriches itself with all that it despises.*

*Saint Ambrose.*

This blessed brother, truly holy in name and in deed (the name Sanctès is at once a derivative and a synonym of the word *sanctus*, holy), belonged to the Brancacini family, which has since taken the name of Giuliani. He was born in the township of Monte Fabbri, in the territory of Urbino. His early years passed in innocence, and, whether in his father's house or at the college of Urbino, where he finished his studies, he always appeared a model of virtue.

He had reached the flowering years of youth, and nothing yet foreshadowed that he would embrace the religious life; God made use of an unhappy accident to call him to it. One day, as Sanctes was returning home, he was attacked without warning by a relative, others say by his godfather, who, armed with a cutting weapon, threatened to kill him. Unable to flee, Sanctes first tries by some remarks full of gentleness and energy to calm his assailant; but seeing the latter persist in his guilty design, he draws his sword and deals him so violent a blow on the thigh that the unhappy man died of it a few days later.

Inconsolable at having caused, though innocently, the death of his fellow man, the holy young man gave up the military career for which his parents intended him and entered the Order of Saint Francis.

Out of humility and in a spirit of penance he obtained leave to be received as a lay brother. In this humble condition he gave himself fervently to all the practices of the religious life, always choosing the lowest and most tiring occupations. His superiors entrusted him with the direction of the lay novices; but he had no rest until this position of trust had been taken from him. His only ambition was to make himself the servant of all and to live in abjection. Having constantly before his eyes the accident that had happened to him, he shed tears over it day and night and gave himself to frightening austerities; thus his food consisted of a few badly prepared herbs, or of fruit that he ate without bread. Not content with this penance, he asked God to send him, in the same place on his body where he had struck his assailant, a pain like the one he had made him feel. His prayer was granted: there came on his thigh an extremely painful ulcer, which no remedy could relieve or cure. He kept it until his death, that is, for at least twenty years. The unmistakable traces of this miraculous wound can still be seen today on the bone of the Saint's leg.

This Blessed one had a particular devotion to the holy sacrifice of the Mass; a favour he received in this regard could only increase it. One day, being kept by his occupations from hearing Mass in spite of his desire, when he heard the bell announcing the elevation of the host he knelt down to adore Our Lord from afar. At the same instant four walls that separated him from the sanctuary opened, and he was able to see the priest at the altar and the host all radiant with light. When the august ceremony was over, the walls came together again without leaving any trace of their miraculous parting. This miracle was not the only one that adorned our Saint's life. He usually used a donkey to go and fetch wood in the forest. One day, having put the animal out to pasture, he forgot to bring it in in the evening. When he went to look for it early in the morning, he found the poor beast dead, and a wolf, its killer, in the act of devouring it. The Saint addressed bitter reproaches to the carnivorous animal, and then commanded it to make good by its labour the damage it had done to the convent and its benefactors. The wolf obeyed, and for several years this servant of a new kind, subject to Sanctes' orders, carried to the convent the wood that was needed.

The servant of God, having fallen seriously ill, was seized with an insurmountable distaste for every kind of food. He did, however, feel a desire to eat cherries, and told the infirmarian of it. It was then the month of January, and the infirmarian did not fail to reply to the sick man that his desire was altogether too

extravagant, and that one would sooner find ice than fruit on the trees. Brother Sanctes was not put off by this reason; he gently asked the infirmarian to go into the garden, assuring him that he would find there what he asked for. The good infirmarian could not help smiling; he went nevertheless, to humour the sick man, and found a cherry tree laden with cherries of fine colour and exquisite taste, while all the other trees were covered with snow and ice. To perpetuate the memory of this marvel, some of these miraculous fruits are still kept today in a glass phial.

The Blessed one had one day sown turnips in the convent garden. The next day, when he went to prepare the community's dinner, he found no provisions of any kind; he then told his companion to go and see whether the turnips they had sown the day before had come up. The companion obeyed, while making fun of what he called Brother Sanctes' simplicity; but he was well undeceived when he saw that not only had the seed germinated, but the turnips were big enough to be eaten. He picked a basketful of them, which the religious ate while admiring Brother Sanctes' holiness.

Another time he was keeping a pot of broth in reserve to serve to the community; the pot was knocked over by accident and broken, and only about half a bowlful of its contents remained. God so multiplied this remnant in the hands of His servant that there was enough to serve abundantly to eighteen religious and some strangers. The convent bell having cracked, Brother Sanctes soldered the pieces with a different metal, and that without its losing anything of its former tone. "This prodigy," says the chronicler, "caused no small astonishment to the founders, who knew well that this metal, once broken, can naturally be rejoined only by recasting."

This prodigy still exists in the convent that bears the Blessed one's name, in the territory of Pistoia.

The ulcer of which we have spoken at last led our Blessed one to death. He fell asleep peacefully in the Lord at the convent of Scotaneto, near Monte Baroccio, in the diocese of Pesaro, on the eve of the Assumption of the glorious Virgin Mary, in the year 1390; he was about forty years old and had spent twenty of them in religion.

He was first buried in the common cemetery of the religious; but the miracles worked through his intercession, and above all the sight of a beautiful lily that sprang miraculously from his tomb, obliged the brothers to move him to a more honourable place. His body is now exposed to the veneration of the faithful under a fine mausoleum, on the left side of the altar of the Nativity of the most holy Virgin. A part of his hair shirt is still kept there, a mat on which he slept, and a wooden cross made by his hands and furnished with relics. Several lamps that burn unceasingly before his precious remains, and numerous ex-votos hung all around, attest the faith of the people and the efficacy of the Saint's prayers. In his portrait, kept in the same convent, he is represented holding a cross in his left hand and with a sun on his breast. No author gives the reason for this particular feature. It must be thought, says Wadding, that it relates to some ecstasy of the servant of God, during which he appeared thus to the religious who lived with him.

Clement XIV inscribed the name of Sanctes in the catalogue of the Blessed; his feast is celebrated with great solemnity at Monte Baroccio on the second Sunday of August. The name of Blessed Sanctes is inscribed in the calendar of the Observance on the 14th of the same month, with the rite of a double.

Taken from the *Annales Franciscaines*. — See our *Palmier Séraphique*.

## Saint Micah the Elder, Prophet

*Year of the world 3138; before Jesus Christ*

Micah the Elder, son of Jemla, was the sixth of the twelve minor prophets. Jehoshaphat, king of Judah, a religious prince who feared God, having gone with his troops to the help of Ahab, king of Israel, who was making war on the king of Syria, persuaded him to consult the will of the Lord before taking the field. Ahab,

who joined idolatry to impiety, had his prophets assembled, that is, the priests of his idols, and asked their advice: they counselled him to take the field and assured him that the Lord would deliver into his hands the city of Ramoth-Gilead (a Levitical city of the tribe of Gad), which he intended to besiege. Jehoshaphat, however, little reassured by the deceitful promises of Ahab's prophets, suggested to that prince that he take the advice of the prophet Micah of Samaria, whom he knew to be instructed in the secrets of Jehovah. He was sent for; when he was in the presence of the two kings and the priests of Baal, he pronounced the oracles of the Almighty thus: "I saw the Lord sitting on His throne and surrounded by all the host of heaven, which said: Who shall entice Ahab, to persuade him to march against Ramoth, that he may perish there? Then the lying spirit came forward and told the Lord that he would undertake to entice Ahab. — How wilt thou do it? the Lord said to him. — The spirit replied: I will go and put falsehood into the mouth of all his prophets. — The Lord said: Thou shalt indeed entice him and shalt prevail over him. — The Lord has therefore put today a lying spirit into the mouth of all your prophets who are here, and He has pronounced your sentence." Micah's frankness aroused the anger of the priests of the idols and the fury of the king; the former struck him contemptuously on the face, the latter had him shut up in a close prison (978 B.C.), intending to have him put to death on his return from his expedition; but both soon expiated their crimes. The priests of Baal, convicted of falsehood, had much to suffer at the hands of the Jews, and Ahab, trusting too much in the oracles of his idols, lost his life in the battle he gave the Syrians: an arrow pierced his heart. His chariot and the reins of his horses were washed in the pool where the dogs licked his blood, according to the word of the Lord pronounced by the mouth of the prophet Elijah. Micah, meanwhile, was set free. It is believed that after his death he was buried at Samaria, in Palestine (a city destroyed under Vespasian). One must not confuse, as the Greeks have sometimes done, Saint Micah the Elder with Saint Micah of Moresheth, whose life we gave on 15 January.

Baillet: *Vies des Saints de l'Ancien Testament*; *Acta Sanctorum*, 14 August.

## Saint Athanasia, Widow, Foundress of the Monastery of Timia, in Greece

*860.*

Born of an ancient family of Greece, Athanasia came into the world at the beginning of the ninth century on the island of Aegina (Aegean Sea). Nicetas, her father, and Irene, her mother, were persons distinguished by their rank, their wealth and above all by their exemplary life and their good works. Their whole care was to give their daughter a Christian education: at the age of seven she knew by heart all the psalms and the lives of the greatest women Saints. This study gave her a marked taste for virtue, in which she was seen to make rapid and solid progress. The exercises of piety, which were the better part of her occupations, were the preludes to the eminent holiness she afterwards attained.

However, when she came of age, her family required her to take a husband, and offered her a young officer of high birth. He soon died on a field of battle. Athanasia's father obliged his daughter to marry a second time: our Saint obeyed with regret; but she almost at once had reason to rejoice: her husband, touched by grace, shut himself up in a monastery. Free once more, Athanasia no longer delayed giving herself wholly to God. She distributed part of her goods to the poor and turned her house into a monastery, where she received a great number of widows and pious girls. A holy priest gave them a rule, a form of dress and the religious veil, and took charge of directing them. Placed at the head of this community, our holy widow regarded her position as superior as an obligation to be more humble, more fervent and more mortified than all her companions.

After four years' stay on the island of Aegina, wearied by the marks of esteem, veneration and confidence lavished on her by people of distinction, and tired also of the insults and calumnies of the wicked, she inspired in her companions the desire to withdraw into a solitude. They chose a deserted place, which a holy priest procured for them, and built there a monastery, which took the name of Timia and became one of the

most flourishing. Athanasia's reputation drew from all sides into this holy enclosure a crowd of souls desirous of attaining perfection. Towards the end of her life she redoubled her austerities, and her prayer became continual; her tender devotion to the holy Virgin was more ardent than ever; nearly all her conversations with her daughters had as their subject the Virgin's life and its imitation, and her great desire was to die on the eve of one of her feasts. She obtained what she desired.

On 3 August, having fallen ill, she had a vision announcing her approaching end. She saw two men clothed in white come to her, who put into her hand these words: "Here is the recall from your exile; rejoice." Hoping to die on the eve of the Assumption, she spent the twelve following days in continual contemplation and without any food. On the twelfth day she called her sisters, who came and surrounded her, bursting into tears. "I am leaving you, my dear daughters," she said to them, "but let us hope that the God of mercy will one day reunite us all in heaven, our true homeland. Live in charity." She fell silent, closed her eyes, and gently gave back her soul to God, on the eve of the Assumption, about the year 860. Her miracles, before and after her death, made her memory very famous in the Church.

*La vie d'une Sainte pour chaque jour*, by the curé of Vitel.

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[1] The emperor Theodosius, on ascending the throne, undertook to destroy the heresy and idolatry that reigned in his empire and were tearing the Church of God with relentless fury. To this end he addressed to Cynegius, praetorian prefect of the East, a law dated 25 May 385, ordering all the temples to be closed and forbidding the sacrifice of animals and the taking of auspices, under very severe penalties. Saint Marcellus of Apamea was the first to carry out the emperor's decrees and close the temples of the idolaters. His zeal cost him his life and won him the crown of glory: he was unexpectedly attacked by hired assassins and massacred. Baillet puts his death in 385 or 386, the Bollandists in 389. — Continuators of Godescard.

[2] We gave the life of Saint Emygdius on 5 August.

[3] See his life on 7 August.

[4] See his life on that day.

# 15 August

## Martyrologies

### MARTYROLOGE ROMAIN.

THE ASSUMPTION of the most holy Virgin Mary, Mother of God. 48. — At Rome, on the Appian Way, Saint Tarcisius, acolyte and martyr. Pagans, having met him carrying the sacrament of the Body of Jesus Christ, pressed him to tell them what he was carrying; but the Saint, judging that it would be an unworthy thing to cast pearls before swine, chose rather to let himself be struck with sticks and stones until he gave up his soul than to reveal anything to them. After his death these sacrilegious men searched him carefully; but they found no host either in his hands or in his clothes. His body was taken away by the Christians and buried with great honour in the cemetery of Callistus. — At Tagaste, in Africa, Saint ALYPIUS, bishop; at first a pupil of Saint Augustine, he was afterwards his companion in his conversion, his colleague in the episcopate, his generous associate in his combats against the heretics, and finally a sharer in the same glory in the kingdom of heaven. 431. — At Soissons, Saint ARNULF, bishop and confessor. 1087. — At Székesfehérvár, the feast of Saint Stephen, king of Hungary, which is solemnized on the second day of September.[1] 1308. — At Rome, Saint Stanislaus Kostka, confessor, of the Society of Jesus, who, being made perfect in a short time, fulfilled by his angelic purity a long and glorious course; Pope Benedict XIII placed him among the Saints.[2] 1568.

### MARTYROLOGE DE FRANCE, REVU ET AUGMENTÉ.

At Paris and in Champagne, Saint BAUSSENGE or BALSÈME (*Balsemius*), deacon and apostle of Arcis-sur-Aube, martyr. About 407. — At Metz, the translation of Saint Arnoul or Arnoult, bishop of that

see, then a solitary in the wilds of the Vosges, whose life we gave on 18 July. 641. — At Avénières (Mayenne, canton and arrondissement of Laval), OUR LADY OF AVÉNIÈRES. — At Penne (Lot-et-Garonne, arrondissement of Villeneuve-sur-Lot), in the diocese of Agen, OUR LADY OF PEYRAGUDE (*de petra acuta*). — In the diocese of Annecy (Haute-Savoie), OUR LADY OF LA GORGE. — At Marseilles, OUR LADY OF LA GARDE. — A quarter of a league from Saint-Junien (Haute-Vienne, arrondissement of Rochechouart), in the diocese of Limoges, Our Lady of the Bridge, so called from the nearness of the bridge thrown across the Vienne to lead from Saint-Junien to Rochechouart. The sanctuary dates from the fourteenth century. At the feasts of the Assumption and the Nativity people come there in crowds, not only from the Limousin but from Angoumois, Périgord, Poitou and La Marche. — In the diocese of Limoges, Our Lady of Saint-Quentin (arrondissement of Aubusson, canton of Felletin). The church in its present form dates from the fifteenth century and has a crypt going back to the eleventh. — At Lubersac (Corrèze, arrondissement of Brive), in the diocese of Tulle, OUR LADY OF RUBEAUX. — In the forest of Saint-Amand (arrondissement of Valenciennes), in the diocese of Cambrai, Our Lady of the Woods, or Our Lady of Malaise, a sanctuary that dates from the twelfth century and was restored in 1850. — At Gravelines (arrondissement of Dunkirk), in the diocese of Cambrai, Our Lady of Faith. The pilgrimage dates from 1609. — At Tournehem (Pas-de-Calais, arrondissement of Saint-Omer), in the diocese of Arras, Our Lady of the Forest, which until the beginning of the eighteenth century had no other sanctuary than the trunk of an old beech, and whose present chapel dates from 1819. — In the diocese of Arras, Our Lady of Boulogne-sur-Mer (Pas-de-Calais), whose present chapel dates from 1840. In 1853 a fortnight's station, preached by the most celebrated preachers of France, opened there at the time of the Assumption, and not only all the parishes round about, but Calais, Abbeville, Amiens and even Paris came there on pilgrimage. This first attempt was so successful that since then every year sees both the same station and the same pilgrimages renewed. — At Le Havre (Seine-Inférieure), in the diocese of Rouen, Our Lady of Grace (originally Havre de Grâce). It is to this sanctuary, which dates from 1536, that the town owes its origin and its name. — At Brissac (canton of Ganges), in the diocese of Montpellier, Our Lady of the Suc, so called from a Languedoc word meaning mound or hill, because the chapel is in fact built on a rocky hill, uncultivated and difficult of access. A medal has been struck in honour of Our Lady of the Suc, and the archconfraternity of Our Lady of Victories, established in this sanctuary, counts there a considerable number of members from various parts of the diocese. — At La Livinière (canton of Olonzac), in the diocese of Montpellier, Our Lady of the Palms. The crippled come there to ask the healing of their infirmities. Almost all the mothers of the parish vow their children to Mary for three or four years, have them wear, during the time of the vow, a cord in honour of the holy Virgin, and have a Mass celebrated for them. — In the diocese of Viviers, Our Lady of Ay (near Satillieu, arrondissement of Tournus), whom pilgrims invoke especially on behalf of little children; mothers present their newborn to her, and formerly couples came, on the eve of their marriage, to ask her that none of their children should die without baptism. — At Lablachère (canton of Joyeuse), in the diocese of Viviers, Our Lady of Good Help, whose sanctuary has existed for two hundred years and was solemnly consecrated in 1855 by the bishops of Marseilles and Viviers together. Pius IX granted this pilgrimage a daily and perpetual indulgence. — At Angoulême, Our Lady of the Bézines or of the Bouzines. This modest chapel is the church of the whole town for solemn prayers, for the exercises of the month of Mary, for the day of the Assumption and that of first communion. — At Saumur (Maine-et-Loire), in the diocese of Angers, Our Lady of Nantilly, one of the oldest churches of France. It took in the eighth century the name of Our Lady of Nantilly, because a statue of the Virgin, found in a field of lentils (*B. M. de Lentilliaco*), was inaugurated there at that time. — In the parish of Landivy (diocese of Laval), on the borders of Maine towards Brittany, Our Lady of Pont-Aubray, a pilgrimage whose origin goes back beyond the time of the Norman invasion. — A kilometre from Ernée, in the diocese of Laval, Our Lady of Charné, the parish church of the town until the end of the seventeenth century, which possesses a miraculous statue of the Virgin, dear to all for its antiquity and still more for the graces obtained at its feet. — At Plougoumelen (arrondissement of Lorient), in the diocese of Vannes, Our Lady of Becquerel. Outside the east wall of the chapel there springs a very abundant fountain

whose water has the property of curing diseases of the mouth. — At Saint-Caradec-Trégomel (arrondissement of Lorient), in the diocese of Vannes, Our Lady of Kernascléden, a charming Gothic church of the fifteenth century. At the patronal feast on 15 August considerable offerings are made there of butter, grain, hemp, flax, rings, clothes and other objects, which are sold on the following Sunday for the benefit of the chapel. — At Perros-Guirec (arrondissement of Lannion), in the diocese of Saint-Brieuc, Our Lady of La Clarté, where people come to pray chiefly to obtain the cure of diseases of the eyes. — In the diocese of Saint-Brieuc, Our Lady of Rostrenen (arrondissement of Guingamp), a pilgrimage much frequented by the inhabitants of Cornouaille and of the part of the diocese of Vannes that borders on it. — At Trédaniel (canton of Moncontour), in the diocese of Saint-Brieuc, Our Lady of Haut, which takes its name from its high position and seems to date from the fifteenth century. — At Lantic (canton of Étables), in the diocese of Saint-Brieuc, Our Lady of the Court, so called probably because in feudal times the seigneurial justice held its court near the chapel. The sanctuary dates from the fifteenth century. On the day of the Assumption and the three following days the public offices are celebrated there, and on the day of first communion the children come there in procession after Vespers to place themselves under the protection of the Mother of God. — At Plouëzec (canton of Plouëc), in the diocese of Saint-Brieuc, Our Lady of the Cradle, so called because it was formerly believed that the cradle of the holy Virgin was kept there. Sailors above all go there on pilgrimage, and every week have Masses said there in honour of Mary. — Near the township of Lanmeur, in the diocese of Quimper, Our Lady of Kernistroun, who is prayed to especially for the souls in purgatory. — In the church of Le Rheu, arrondissement and diocese of Rennes, Our Lady of Paimpont, whose cult Pius IX has encouraged by indulgences, and heaven by miracles. — In the diocese of Strasbourg, Our Lady of the Green Forest (canton of Hirsingen), so called from the woods in which she was originally placed and which have since been cleared: Alsatians, Franche-Comtois and Swiss come there in great numbers. — At Pardies, south of Pau, diocese of Bayonne, Our Lady of Pitie (*de Pietat,* in the Béarnais tongue). This chapel owes its origin to the horrors of the famine that desolated Pardies after ten consecutive years of lost harvests. — In the diocese of Bayonne, Our Lady of Sarrance (Basses-Pyrénées, arrondissement of Oloron), which owes its origin to the discovery of a statue of the Virgin by a shepherd to whom an ox of his herd had pointed it out, by going every evening to the other side of the river to kneel before it. Since 1852 the missionaries of Bétharram who are established there have been restoring the glory of this pilgrimage and ensuring its success. — At the entrance of Arreau, diocese of Tarbes, Our Lady of the Good Encounter. — On the peak of Saint-Sawn, in the diocese of Tarbes (arrondissement of Argelès), Our Lady of Pity, who is also honoured on 8 September. — In the diocese of Tarbes, Our Lady of Poeylahun (Basses-Pyrénées), protectress of the valley of Azun. — In the diocese of Tarbes, between Saint-Sauveur and Barèges, Our Lady of Héas or of the Good Pasture. The present bishop of Tarbes has acquired this sanctuary and sends there every year two missionaries of Garaison to serve the numerous pilgrims who gather there. — At Figeac, diocese of Cahors, Our Lady of La Fleurie. This sanctuary has two confraternities, that of the Living Rosary and that of Our Lady of a Good Death, which counts more than three thousand associates. — At Castelnau, diocese of Cahors, Our Lady of Félines (canton of Bretenoux), dear to the people of the Limousin. — At Lacampdourcet, in the diocese of Cahors, Our Lady of Verdal (canton of Saint-Céré). The pilgrimage dates from the eleventh century and is, after Rocamadour, the most remarkable in the diocese. — At Marvejols, in the diocese of Mende, Our Lady of La Carce or of the Prison (*S. M. ex Carcere*), so called because its founder built it to thank the holy Virgin for having delivered him from captivity. — At Vabres, in the diocese of Rodez, Our Lady of Montserrat, a confraternity founded in 1676 by the bishop of the former see of Vabres. — In the diocese of Rodez, Our Lady of Coupiac (arrondissement of Saint-Affrique), where the veil of the Mother of God is venerated as a remedy against diseases that affect the eyes. — In the diocese of Rodez, Our Lady of Estables (arrondissement of Millau), whose chapel and statue go back to the eleventh century. — In the diocese of Rodez, Our Lady of Gironde (arrondissement of Villefranche), whose chapel goes back to the year 1428. — In the diocese of Aire, Our Lady of Ychoux (arrondissement of Mont-de-Marsan), whom the people of the shores of the Ocean come especially to honour, mounted

sometimes on their enormous stilts, sometimes on carts drawn by oxen. — At Le Fanga (arrondissement of Muret), in the diocese of Toulouse, Our Lady of the Aouach. On this day each family of the parish offers to the Mother of God, for the protection with which she has covered the fruits of the earth, the finest sheaf of wheat it has harvested; then these sheaves and the other offerings are auctioned after Vespers, and the proceeds go to the embellishment of the church. — In the diocese of Toulouse, Our Lady of Razecueillé (arrondissement of Saint-Gaudens), who is invoked in sicknesses or dangers. Young soldiers, before leaving for the army, go to commend themselves to her. — At Castelferrus, in the diocese of Montauban, Our Lady of the Elm, which takes its name from an elm tree in which, three and a half centuries ago, a little statue was found of the Virgin holding her divine Son in her arms. — In the diocese of Autun, Our Lady of Sancenay, whose sanctuary dates from the fifteenth century. — At Thoraise (canton of Boussières), in the diocese of Besançon, Our Lady of the Mount, one of the chief pilgrimages of Franche-Comté. The sanctuary dates from 1615. — At Haucourt (canton of Longwy), in the diocese of Metz, Our Lady of Good Help, founded in 1745. — At the entrance of the town of Bains, in the diocese of Saint-Dié, Our Lady of La Brosse, so called from the heather or brushwood in the midst of which she was formerly placed. The present chapel dates from 1804. — In the diocese of Dijon, OUR LADY OF BEAUNE.

## MARTYROLOGES DES ORDRES RELIGIEUX.

*Martyrology of the Cistercians.* — The Assumption of the most holy Virgin, principal and special Patroness of the whole Order of Cîteaux, Titular of almost all the Churches of the Order. — On the Saturday before the Sunday within the Octave of the Assumption of the blessed Virgin Mary, Saint Joachim, father of the blessed Virgin Mary, whose feast is celebrated on 30 March.[3]

*Martyrology of the Order of the Blessed Virgin Mary of Mount Carmel.* — At Székesfehérvár, Saint Stephen, king of Hungary, who is commemorated among us on 15 October. 1308.

## ADDITIONS FAITES D'APRÈS LES BOLLANDISTES ET AUTRES HAGIOGRAPHES.

At Hildesheim, in Saxony, Saint Altfrid, fourth bishop of that see and confessor. He built several churches, among others the cathedral of Hildesheim, founded the abbey of Essen and the convents of Selingestadt and Ansuède, and attended in 864 the synod of Rouen. He was buried in the church of Ansuède, where God honoured his memory by many miraculous cures. 875. — At the monastery of Ottenbeuern, in Bavaria, Blessed Rupert, abbot. He had first been prior of the convent of Saint George in the Black Forest. For forty-three years he directed his community with rare success, and under his government this house reached a remarkable state of prosperity in both spiritual and temporal respects. He was buried in the middle of the abbey church. In 1270, 1554 and 1702 translations of his relics took place. 1145. — At Alexandria, Saint Neopolis or Neopolus, commonly Napoleon, martyr, distinguished both by his birth and by the brilliance of his virtues. He had been raised to an eminent office. During the cruel persecution of the emperors Diocletian and Maximian, which surpassed all the preceding ones in violence, Napoleon made himself illustrious by his zeal and constancy in confessing the faith, and above all by his firmness in torments. Fourth century. — At Clogher, a township of Ireland in County Tyrone, Saint Maccarthenne, bishop of that ancient see (transferred to Carrickmacros) and confessor. Persecuted at first by a king of the country, he afterwards won him over and converted him by his many miracles. He worked still others after his death and became famous throughout the region. 506. — At Rimini, in Italy, in the legation of Forlì, Saint Arduin, confessor. At first attached to the secular clergy of that city, he afterwards withdrew into solitude with a holy priest of the same place. There they gave themselves to prayer and mortification. The Holy Spirit soon suggested to Saint Arduin that he shut himself up in the monastery of Saint-Gaudens: he followed the divine inspiration and edified his brethren by the spectacle of all the virtues of a perfect religious. 1009.

# The Assumption of the Most Holy Virgin

*57. — Pope: Saint Peter. — Roman Emperor: Nero.*

> *Today the Archangels celebrate Mary, the Virtues glorify her, the Principalities triumph with her; with her the Powers and the Dominations give themselves up to the demonstrations and the feeling of their joy; the Thrones solemnize her feast, the Cherubim praise her, the Seraphim proclaim her glory.*
>
> *Saint John Damascene, Sermons.*

This mystery is the consummation of all the other mysteries of the august Virgin Mary: it is the one in which she received the last ornaments of her incomparable dignity of Mother of God; her true pasch, in which, after having tasted for some time the humiliation of death, she passed, by resurrection, into the state of a glorious and immortal life, so as to be perfectly like her risen Son. Saint Bernard declares that he cannot speak of it except with joy; but he protests at the same time that he is seized with fear and dread when he reflects on the depth and loftiness of this subject, because the glory of Mary is so far above every kind of discourse and thought that nothing can be said or conceived that is not infinitely below what she really is. We should no doubt have far more reason than that holy Doctor to enter into these feelings of fear and dread, we who have only extremely feeble lights, far removed from the splendour and purity of those that enlightened his mind; but we cannot dispense ourselves from setting out here for the faithful what the Fathers of the Church teach us of our mystery, and what can be gathered of it from various passages of Scripture, at least according to their analogical sense.

After the ascension of her Son and the descent of the Holy Spirit, this august Queen of the universe remained on earth for twenty-three years and some months more, that is, until the seventy-second year of her age and the fifty-seventh year of the Saviour. It is true that this opinion is not followed by everyone, and that there are seven or eight others, reported on this day by Tamayo Salazar in his martyrology of Spain and maintained by various authors; but it is the one that Cardinal Baronius judges the most probable, and which is indeed the most in keeping with what we know for certain of the chronology of the journeys of Saint Paul and of Saint Dionysius the Areopagite, who were at Jerusalem at the time of the holy Virgin’s death. One might be surprised that Our Lord, who had so much respect and love for her and who wished her all the good that such a Son could wish such a Mother, did not take her with Him when He ascended into heaven, and that He left her so long amid the miseries and calamities of this life, separated from His visible presence and deprived of the glory that her wholly holy actions and her sorrows at the foot of the cross had so justly merited for her; but He had great reasons for not taking her up to heaven so soon. For: 1. by this delay He gave her the opportunity to increase her merits infinitely and to win a crown incomparably more beautiful and more brilliant than the one she would have had if she had died at the time of the Ascension. Indeed, in the twenty-three years that she survived, she was not a moment without acting supernaturally in the whole extent of her grace and with all the perfection with which she could act: this acquired for her treasures of glory beyond comprehension. 2. By this delay He provided for the needs of His infant Church, leaving it, in the person of His august Virgin, a Mother to raise it, a Governess to lead it, a Mistress to instruct it, a Model to form it and serve it as an example, and a Queen to encourage and strengthen it amid the persecutions of Jews and Gentiles. And so it was she who encouraged the Apostles, who revealed to the holy Evangelists the greatest secrets of the hidden life of her Son, who encouraged the first martyrs, and who from then on inspired virgins and continent widows with the love of purity; and one cannot believe how much her presence served, in those beginnings of Christianity, to sustain the gospel labourers, to edify the new converts, to regulate morals and to establish true piety. Saint Anselm adds that by this delay Our Lord prepared for His Mother a triumph far more brilliant and glorious than it would have been earlier, whether because at the end of that time she was laden with more victories, the Christian faith having already been published through her care in the principal parts of the earth, or because there were then more Saints in heaven to come and receive her and to give her the welcome due to her eminent dignity of Mother of God

and Sovereign of the world.

Taking it then as settled that it was most fitting, not only that her entry into heaven should be separated from the Ascension of her Son, but also that it should be deferred for several years so as to make it more brilliant and more magnificent, piety now obliges us to reflect seriously on the whole course and the circumstances of so glorious an event. There are eight principal things that we must consider in it: 1. the precious death of the holy Virgin, to which some Fathers of the Church, out of respect, give only the name of sleep; 2. the glorification of her soul at the moment of her death; 3. the burial of her body at the township of Gethsemane; 4. her resurrection and the reunion of her body and soul; 5. her assumption in body and soul into heaven; 6. her coronation at the hands of the most adorable Trinity; 7. the empire and absolute power that were given her, the extent of her influence, the strength of her protection, and the need we have of her help to avoid the snares of Satan and to reach the haven of salvation; 8. finally, the holy ways of honouring her and of meriting her friendship and assistance. These are also eight points that can make up her octave and serve as subjects of meditation during the eight days on which the Church celebrates her feast.

As for the death of our Queen, there is no doubt of it whatever. She was worthy not to die; but she did not fail to taste death. It is true that some Fathers of the Church once declared that they were not certain of it and did not wish to decide anything, as Saint Epiphanius on *Heresy* LXXVIII; he says that he does not wish to decide whether the Mother of God passed through death or remained immortal. But the Church says clearly that she died, in these words of the secret prayer of the Mass of this day: *Quam etsi pro conditione carnis migrasse cognoscimus*: “We acknowledge that she died according to the condition of the flesh.” All the doctors hold this proposition as certain; it cannot now be contested without rashness. The whole difficulty is to know why, and by what title, she died; for it is certain that death was the punishment of sin and entered the world only by that way. *By one man*, says Saint Paul, *sin entered into the world, and by sin death; and so death passed upon all men*. Now the holy Virgin neither contracted nor committed sin: how then was she subject to death? It is true that Jesus Christ her Son, who not only committed no sin but was also impeccable by nature, because of the substantial union of His humanity with the infinite holiness of the divine Being, did not fail to be mortal and actually to die on the cross; but there is a great difference between the Son and the Mother. For Jesus Christ died because He had taken upon Himself all the sins of the world, had accepted to bear their whole penalty, and, as Saviour and Redeemer of the human race, was to be punished for the crimes of all men; but the holy Virgin was not laden with our sins, and her death was not a means God had chosen for our redemption; and although some holy Doctors give her the name of Redemptress, it is not that she redeemed us by her sufferings and merits, but only because she contributed, by her motherhood, to the incomparable work of our redemption. Why then did she die, and for what reason was she bound to die? We answer that she did not die for sin nor through sin, since she was never guilty of any fault and sin could have no power over her; but she died because, on the one hand, she was of a mortal nature, being composed of flesh and bone and of the four first substances whose mutual conflict is the source of corruption and death; and because, on the other hand, Our Lord did not judge it fitting to exempt her from dying, as He would have exempted men in the state of original justice, but only to give her a chosen and precious death, which came neither from old age, nor from sickness, nor from outward violence, but from a nobler cause: the vehemence of pure love. Sin, nevertheless, was the occasion of her death; for if Adam had not sinned, either she would never have come into the world, according to the doctrine of Saint Thomas, who says that “without the crime of the first man the divine Word would not have become incarnate”; or, if she had come into it, she would not have passed through death, any more than other men; and it is in this sense that Saint Paul says that by sin death entered into this world: which is true not only of the death of sinful men, but also of the death of Jesus Christ and that of Mary, who did not sin. Moreover, Our Lord did not give His Mother this exemption, which He could have given her and of which she was most worthy, for several excellent reasons: 1. so that she might be more like Him by dying and rising again as He died and rose again; 2. so that she might not be deprived of the inestimable merit of the sacrifice of her own life, which was all the more exalted because her

life was the most excellent of all lives after that of God; because she had in no way deserved to lose it; because, according to some Doctors, her Son offered her not to die; and because, finally, she chose death out of conformity with His, with a love and fervour beyond comprehension; 3. so that by dying she might soften and lessen the pain we all have in dying. Indeed, why should we not willingly accept the just sentence of death passed against us, when Mary, our Princess and our Queen; Mary, the spotless Mirror of all holiness; Mary, the Mother of our God, did not wish to be exempt from this general misery of our nature, and, owing nothing to death, did not fail to be subject to it? Must we not also recognize by this that death is not so great an evil as we imagine, since if it were as bad as people conceive it, God would not have given it to the two dearest and most precious persons He ever had on earth, we mean Jesus and Mary? 4. So that, as Jesus Christ had given us the example of the most constant and heroic of all violent deaths, Mary might give us the example of the holiest of all peaceful and natural deaths; and that, having taught us to live well, she might also teach us to die well, that is, to die with submission to the will of God and with gladness, to die with a mind pure and detached from all the things of earth, and to die with a heart burning and consumed with the ardours of holy love. 5. So that by her death she might become the Refuge, the Advocate and the Patroness of all the dying; that we might have more boldness to invoke her at that last hour and more confidence in her goodness, and that she herself might be more inclined to help us then. A great soul of our time says she learned by revelation that, in reward for the choice Mary made to die when Our Lord offered to carry her living into heaven without tasting death, she received a sovereign power to assist at the hour of death those who should invoke her, and to obtain for them the grace of a holy death. Let us add to all these reasons that Our Lord did not exempt her from death so that by dying she might establish and confirm the mysteries of our faith and destroy the heresies contrary to them; for since that time heretics have arisen, the Manichaeans and the Collyridians, who denied the reality of the flesh of Jesus Christ and of the holy Virgin and attributed to them only bodies of a heavenly substance, or bodies of air. Now nothing overthrows these heresies so solidly as the death of the holy Virgin, since it shows that she was of a frail and mortal nature like us, and that, although she did not have the sin and the spiritual ills of the first man, she was nevertheless his daughter and had flesh like his.

It was therefore decreed in the counsel of God that the holy Virgin should reach the glory destined for her only by tasting death. Some time beforehand Our Lord sent her one of the foremost angels of His court to announce to her that the moment of her reward was near; it is believed that this was Saint Gabriel, the one who had announced to her the Incarnation of the divine Word in her womb, and to whom, according to Saint Ildefonsus, *tota illius causa commissa esse praedicatur*: “the charge of all that concerned her had been given.” One may also believe, with Simeon Metaphrastes, Cedrenus and Nicephorus, that he had a palm in his hand to signify the triumph of which her virtues had made her worthy, and that he was accompanied by several other heavenly spirits, whose visits and conversation were in no way new or extraordinary to her. As since the Ascension of her Son her life had been nothing but a life of longing, and she continually asked to be reunited with Him whom she had conceived and borne in her chaste womb, one cannot conceive the joy and consolation with which she received this blessed message from heaven. She was then at Jerusalem in the house of the Cenacle, where so many mysteries of our religion were accomplished, and which was afterwards turned into a church called Holy Sion; and she was praying there in her oratory for the conversion of the world and the spread of the faith. Her answer was short but admirable, since it is believed that she said the same words she had uttered at her Annunciation: “Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it done to me according to thy word.” At the same time she invited the angels to help her thank the sovereign Lord for the infinite number of graces she had received from His goodness, and, having raised herself to God by a new effort of love, she renewed the sacrifice of her life, which she had already made countless times. Then she told Saint John of what was soon to happen, and Saint John informed all the faithful of Jerusalem of it, so as to prepare them for this loss and to urge them to profit as much as they could from the remaining moments in which they could still enjoy the presence of their dear mistress. One cannot believe the grief that this holy

Apostle and the whole Church of the city and its surroundings felt at it. Not that they begrudged Mary the happiness with which she was about to be filled; but, knowing that it was a good that could not fail her, they would have wished that she had not been taken from them so soon. It is said that several creatures without reason, such as birds and other animals, and even some insensible creatures, showed in their own way a keen regret at this departure; but since the ancient authors do not speak of it, we shall say nothing of it.

Meanwhile Our Lord, to give His most holy Mother a last consolation on earth, willed to let her see before her death the Apostles, who were scattered through the world preaching the Gospel, together with the most celebrated of their disciples. Saint Dionysius the Areopagite, in his book of *Divers Names*, chapter III, says that "they assembled at Jerusalem to see that blessed body which gave birth to Life and received God in its womb: *Quod vitae principium dedit, et Deum ineffabili modo suscepit*." And he names, among those who were present, Saint James, the Lord's cousin, and Saint Peter, the sovereign head of the theologians, that is, of the preachers of the divine word, with the other princes of the ecclesiastical hierarchy; and also Saint Hierotheus, Saint Timothy and several of their holy brethren, among whom he was himself. Juvenal, patriarch of Jerusalem, Saint Andrew of Crete, Saint John Damascene and other Fathers add that the Apostles were carried there in a cloud and by the ministry of angels. Not that they could not have gone there by ordinary ways, having been warned in good time of the time of the Virgin's passing; but God sometimes does in a miraculous manner, in favour of His friends, what He could do without a miracle. Thus, although He could have sent someone from Babylon to Daniel to feed him in the lions' den, which was close by, He nevertheless brought from Judaea, through the midst of the air, a holy prophet named Habakkuk, who brought him the dinner he had prepared for his reapers; and although He could have led Saint Philip the deacon to Azotus by the road of other travellers, He nevertheless snatched him suddenly from the company of the eunuch of the queen of Ethiopia, whom he had just baptized, and carried him miraculously by an unknown route to that city. As for the holy Disciples who were present at the death of Our Lady, we cannot affirm that they were brought there in the same way, and it is more likely that they went there by an inward movement of the Holy Spirit, which urged them to make the journey without revealing to them its true purpose.

We shall not stop to describe the various feelings of these divine men when they learned that they had been assembled to be present at the death of their dear Mistress. She received them with wonderful joy and humility, and, raising her eyes and her mind to heaven, she thanked God for the grace He did her in letting her see these worthy instruments of His power and these glorious preachers of His Gospel. It is said that she made them give her their blessing and allow her to kiss their feet, so as to dispose herself by this act of humility for the immensity of the glory to which she was about to be raised. If the Apostles consented, it was only after many excuses and with a holy reluctance. The faithful of Jerusalem hastened to this sight with lighted torches, perfumes and precious scents, and mingled their groans and sighs with those of the apostolic band. Mary consoled them by an admirable discourse and, having in her turn given them her more than motherly blessing, she exhorted them to go on working courageously at the establishment of the Church, which she called her Mother, and of which she acknowledged herself the member and the daughter; she also promised to help them powerfully in heaven and to use all her influence with her Son to obtain for them the abundance of graces they needed to fulfil their functions worthily and to complete the work of their own sanctification. Nor did she forget to make her testament; but what testament could she make who had stripped herself of all things and who, though Queen of heaven and earth and Sovereign of the universe, possessed neither gold, nor silver, nor revenues, nor inheritances in this world? Nevertheless, she made one by word of mouth, to put her soul into the hands of her God, to leave her body to the earth, to seal anew the renunciation she had made of all the things of this world, to bequeath to the Christians devoted to her the price of her tears and of all the holy actions of her life, and to ask Saint John to give to two girls who had attended her the few clothes she had used, which they would find after her death: they were only two tunics.

She was not ill at all, and although she was seventy-two years old, no sign of old age appeared in her, her face having always kept its former beauty. A new radiance was even seen in it, which showed well that the soul dwelling there already felt the approach of eternity. One must not imagine, then, that she was bedridden, or that she was given the attentions usually given to the sick. She did not receive the sacrament of Penance nor that of Extreme Unction, because these sacraments have the effect of remitting sins and the holy Virgin was without any sin; but there is no doubt that she received the sacrament of the Eucharist as Viaticum, as she received it every day as the food of her soul: one may believe that she did so at Saint Peter's Mass.

At last, the moment of her passing having come, Jesus Christ, her beloved Son, according to the testimony of Saint John Damascene, Metaphrastes and Nicephorus, who learned it from ancient tradition, came down from heaven to earth with the whole heavenly court to receive the sacred deposit of her blessed spirit. The holy Virgin then gave Him the most perfect adoration He has ever received or will ever receive on earth, and humbly kissed His feet. Our Lord told her that He had come to fetch her to give her a share in His glory and to place her in heaven at His right hand, as His Father had placed Him at the right hand of His divine Majesty. "Thy will be done!" answered Mary. "For a long time, my Son and my God, I have sighed after Thee, and nothing can be more pleasing to me than to follow Thee and to be where Thou art for all eternity." Meanwhile the angels intoned a heavenly canticle with a melody that was heard by all present, though not all saw Our Lord: "which is all the more credible," says Sophronius in the sermon on the Assumption, "since we find similar graces in the histories of the other Saints." During this canticle the adorable Mary, bending modestly on her couch and having put herself in the posture in which she wished to be buried, repeated these words: *Fiat mihi secundum verbum tuum*: "Be it done to me according to thy word," and added those her Son had uttered on the cross: *In manus tuas, Domine, commendo spiritum meum*: "Into Thy hands, O Lord, I commend my spirit." Thus, with her hands joined, her eyes fixed on her Beloved, and her heart all aflame with His love, she gave Him back her soul, to be carried into His bosom, to the abode of eternal happiness.

"This death," says Saint Damascene, "was without any pain, just as her childbirth, when she brought Jesus Christ into the world, had been without sorrow. And so it had no other cause than the vehemence of her love, whose great effort her nature could bear no longer. The power of God had sustained her until then in the midst of this furnace, and this had preserved her life; but this power having ceased its operation for a moment, she ceased at the same time to live; in a word, her soul left her body like a most ardent flame that detaches itself from its matter to fly up to its own sphere." Other Saints have died in love, that is, while actually loving God; but she, besides dying in love, died of love, and it was love that took from her her natural life to give her a life of glory. The angels went on singing hymns in her praise, and the place was filled with so pleasant a fragrance that the whole house was perfumed with it.

Meanwhile this masterpiece of the hands of the Almighty, this admirable compound of the most beautiful body and the purest and holiest spirit that ever existed among creatures, having been divided into its two parts, each received the advantages proper to it and of which it was capable. As for the soul, it was at that same moment carried up into heaven to enjoy there the immensity of the glory due to it. The angels had a wonderful joy at seeing themselves possessors of this great treasure, which they had so long envied the earth; but the whole adorable Trinity showed an unspeakable satisfaction at at last giving this blessed soul the reward that her love, so pure, so generous and so constant, had so justly merited. The Church makes known to us clearly enough, by the sovereign exaltation she attributes to her, that no beatitude of the just is comparable to that with which she was filled: which Saint Damascene, Saint Ildefonsus, Saint Anselm and all the other Fathers teach us by common consent in the sermons and homilies they composed on this feast. But Blessed Peter Damian throws more light on this truth when he says that the glory then given to Mary is something more exalted and more perfect than all the glory of the other Saints together. Saint Bernardine of Siena also teaches the same doctrine, and Saint Bonaventure, who lived between the two and yielded to neither in devotion to our august Queen, cites on this subject these passages of Scripture: *Omnia flumina*

*intrant in mare, et mare non redundat*: “All the rivers run into the sea, and the sea does not overflow”; *In plenitudine Sanctorum detentio mea*: “My abode is in the fullness of the Saints”; *Multae filiae congregaverunt divitias, tu supergressa es universas*: “Many daughters have gathered riches, but thou hast surpassed them all.” One could also cite the place in the Canticle of Canticles where Our Lady is compared to the sun, which alone has more light than all the other stars together; one could recall that she is called the City of God, holy Sion and the heavenly Jerusalem, as if she alone were the whole of Paradise and no other Saint but she were needed to make it up. Indeed, according to Saint Bernard and Blessed Peter Damian, we must judge the excellence of her glory by the greatness of the dignity to which she was predestined. Now it is certain that the dignity of Mother of God is worth more than all the prerogatives together that have ever been granted to the other Saints; and the angelic doctor even assures us that it is in some sort infinite. There can be no doubt, then, that the Virgin alone received more glory, and a purer and more perfect vision of God, than all the Angels and the other Saints together. Moreover, all theology agrees that the excellence of glory corresponds to the greatness of grace, virtues and merits; as beatitude contains three things: the intuitive vision of God, beatific love, and the ineffable delight born of this vision and this love. The first corresponds to purity of faith; the second to fervour of charity; and the third to patience in afflictions and persecutions. Now the holy Virgin alone had incomparably more graces, virtues and merits than all the Angels and all the Saints together. For even if we gave her, at the moment of her Conception, when she began to merit, only a grace like that of the first of all the Angels (which is nevertheless too little for her who was destined to be the Mother of God and Queen of the whole universe), it is clear that in nearly seventy-three years, during which she never ceased to merit and received at every moment a continual increase of the gifts first conferred on her, she would have risen to a degree of grace to which all the holiness of other creatures would be in no way comparable. What then shall we say if we hold with several great doctors that her original grace alone surpassed the whole sum of the other created graces, except that of the holy soul of Jesus Christ her Son, and that in the first moment she made an act of love and of turning towards God more excellent and more perfect than all the other acts of mere creatures ever have been or ever will be, according to these words of Psalm LXXXVI: *Fundamenta ejus in montibus sanctis*: “Its foundations are laid upon the holy mountains”? To what degree will her grace and holiness have risen at the point of their consummation and at that happy moment which was the last of her merits, to be the beginning of her reward? Besides, one cannot conceive either the strength and eminence of her faith, or the immensity of her charity, or the greatness of her patience in the sharpest sorrows ever suffered on earth after those of the Saviour. We must therefore necessarily admit that her reward and her glory in heaven form an order altogether apart, which exceeds all the glory and happiness in the order of the Saints and the blessed intelligences.

Finally, it is settled that one is raised the higher in eternity the lower one has abased oneself on earth by the sentiments of sincere humility; for this word of Our Lord is true: “He that shall humble himself shall be exalted,” which also means that he who humbles himself more shall be exalted more. Now the humility of Mary is a bottomless abyss, which surpasses all the humility there has ever been in all creatures, since, being infinitely above them, she had nevertheless made herself the least of all, and abased herself so low that there was no place left where she could descend further. It is in this way that the devout doctor Saint Bernard speaks of her; and he says that it is for this reason that she is named last in chapter I of the Acts of the Apostles, where mention is made of those who withdrew into the Cenacle after the Ascension of Our Lord to await the descent of the Holy Spirit. *Non recensetur prima, sed novissima omnium, etiam in infra viduas et poenitentes, et eam de qua ejecta erant septem daemonia, quia se ultimam exhibebat.* Other holy persons add that, in this sentiment, she always prevented the Evangelists from saying anything in her honour beyond what was strictly necessary to explain the mystery of the Incarnation of the Word and that of our Redemption. We must therefore conclude that her excellence had no bounds, and that at the moment of her death she received a glory and a beatitude that surpass beyond comparison all that has been given to the other Saints.

We shall not stop here to explain the extent of her beatific vision, that is, how far her light reaches into the recesses of the divine omnipotence, and what she knows in God of all the things that have existence and of all those that can have it. It is too subtle a matter to detain us in a discourse whose only aim is to instruct the faithful on the most necessary points of our mysteries. We shall only say in passing that, according to the opinion of several learned theologians, nothing of what has been, is, or will be outside God is hidden from her, and that of the infinite number of possible creatures she alone knows more than all the rest of the Blessed together.

Let us now return to her sacred body, which we left on its couch surrounded by the Apostles and the apostolic men. Grief, groans and tears for some time prevented these holy persons from opening their mouths; but, coming to themselves, they began to sing hymns and canticles in praise of God and of their divine Mistress. Part of the Angels had remained beside this precious body to celebrate its obsequies. They too continued the melodious chant they had begun before her death, and it was no doubt a most charming music to hear, on the one side, these heavenly intelligences employing all their skill to show the gladness they felt at the glory to which Mary had just been raised, and, on the other, the choir of the Apostles, disciples and faithful lifting up their voices with all their strength to second the harmony of these singers of paradise. Saint John Damascene says that after their first duties they made bold to kiss these precious members, which had been the living sanctuary of the Word made flesh, and that, the same liberty having been given to several sick persons, they received perfect healing on the spot: the blind recovered their sight, the deaf their hearing, the dumb their speech, and the lame the use of their limbs. He adds that the holy body was, according to custom, washed, embalmed, wrapped in shrouds and laid with great reverence on its bed, which they strewed with flowers and other very pleasant scents. Simeon Metaphrastes repeats the same thing; but we cannot refrain from relating here what we find on this subject among the revelations of a great soul of the seventeenth century who died in the odour of sanctity. Saint Peter and the other Apostles, having judged it fitting that the body of our Queen should be washed and embalmed, withdrew from her room and sent into it the two virgins who had followed her during her life, to render her this duty. These two girls went in; but the holy body then became so luminous that they could not see it. They came back to the Apostles to tell them what was happening, and by this, and by a voice from heaven, the Apostles knew that this pledge of eternity was to be neither uncovered nor touched by anyone. So it was placed in its clothes in the bier to be carried to the grave.

There was never a funeral procession so holy, nor accompanied by so many wonders, as that of our adorable Princess. The Apostles themselves carried the coffin through the middle of the city to the place of burial, which was at the township of Gethsemane, in the valley of Josaphat. All the faithful accompanied them in procession, with torches in their hands. The Jews, hostile as they were to the Christians, were then struck with a feeling of fear and respect that kept them from insulting them and disturbing the ceremony. Several of them even joined them and swelled this sacred band, following the new Ark of the covenant that was being led to the place of its rest. All the holy Fathers we have already cited say unanimously that the Angels at the same time made their own procession, going before, beside and behind the body of their Sovereign, singing canticles of joy in a manner that could be perceived and was heard by those present. They add that a supernatural fragrance came forth from the Virgin’s sacred members and perfumed all the places through which they passed, and that the cortege was made illustrious by many new miracles: no sick person presented himself without being healed, and several Jews too were converted on seeing so many prodigies. Saint Damascene relates: “There was one of the priestly race who had the temerity to throw himself on the venerable bed on which this divine relic was being carried, to make it fall to the ground; but his hands were miraculously cut off and separated from the rest of his body. So visible a vengeance filled him with confusion and grief. He recognized the greatness of his fault, confessed it publicly and asked pardon for it; and Saint Peter having ordered him to bring his arms close to his severed hands, they were at once joined to them again: which caused him to embrace the faith of Jesus Christ.” Metaphrastes and Nicephorus give the

same account, which they took from Saint Damascene or from an immemorial tradition from which Saint Damascene himself had learned it. At last this inestimable treasure was laid with the most profound respect in the tomb that had been prepared for it, and it was covered with a great stone, so that she who had so perfectly imitated the virtues and actions of Jesus Christ, and had died in conformity with His death, might also resemble Him in the humility of her burial. After the ceremony the company withdrew to Jerusalem; but the Angels did not leave that place so dear to them. Juvenal, patriarch of Jerusalem, in his discourse to the emperor Marcian and the empress Pulcheria his wife, tells us that they remained there three days more, ceaselessly continuing the harmonious chant of hymns and canticles they had begun at the moment of their Queen's death. Nor did the Apostles themselves altogether leave it; but, relieving one another, they came there in turn to second the fervour and devotion of these heavenly singers. At the end of three days Saint Thomas, the only one of the Apostles still living who had not been present at this sacred ceremony, arrived from the Indies or from Ethiopia, where his zeal had led him to preach the Gospel, and, having learned all that had happened, he desired to see once more the uncovered face of his august Mistress. The other Apostles thought it most fitting to give him this consolation, not doubting that his delay was mysterious and that God had arranged it for some great reason unknown to them. They therefore gathered round the sepulchre and, after some prayers, rolled away the stone; but instead of finding the body they were seeking, they found there only the linen and the clothes in which it had been dressed, and at the same time they were perfumed by an incomparable fragrance that came from the depth of the vault. They saw well that no one on earth could have taken away this precious pledge, since the Angels and they themselves had always guarded it; that there was no mark of opening on the stone; and that the shrouds they saw there, uncut and undisturbed, showed clearly that there had been no theft or removal. They therefore thought that Our Lord, who had willed to be born of Mary's womb without breaking the seal of her virginity, had also willed to preserve her body after her death from all corruption, and to honour it with a glorious and immortal life before the general resurrection of the human race. It is in this way that Saint John Damascene too speaks of it, after the patriarch Juvenal; and the Church has deferred so much to this account that she has inserted it in her breviary on the fourth day of the octave of this feast.

Thus we know that the body of the holy Virgin was not left in the earth to serve as food for worms and return to ashes like the bodies of other men, but was reunited to her soul to share its glory and to receive from it a heavenly life exempt from all alteration. As for the first point, we find no one among the ecclesiastical writers who has ever doubted it, and we have very fine proofs of it in the book on the Assumption attributed to Saint Augustine and printed among his works in volume IX. "We know," says the author, "that it was said to Adam: Dust thou art, and unto dust thou shalt return; but we know also that it was said to Eve: Thou shalt bring forth thy children in sorrow, and thou shalt be under thy husband's power. If then Mary was exempt from this second curse, having conceived without corruption and brought forth without any pain Him who came to deliver us from the servitude of sin, why should we not believe that she was also exempt from the first, and that she tasted death in such a way that the consequences of death had no place in her person? Besides, it is certain that rotting and dissolution into dust are the last disgrace of human nature; and it is no less settled that Jesus Christ could preserve His Mother from it, as He preserved the three young Israelites from the burning flames of the furnace of Babylon, saved Daniel from the jaws of the lions, and Jonah from the belly of the whale. Who then could think that He, who so expressly commands children to honour their father and mother, would have left His own exposed to this disgrace without giving her the privilege of incorruption, which He could so easily give her?" One need only remember that she enclosed the divine Word made flesh for nine months in her womb, that she pressed Him a thousand times to her bosom, that she nourished Him at her breasts, and that she carried Him in His childhood to all the places to which divine Providence willed that He should be carried: for what balm is more precious and more able to defend from all corruption than the flesh of Jesus Christ, which gives life to the world and is the true seed of immortality! "No," concludes this Father, "I cannot say and I cannot believe that the body from which Jesus took flesh

was given over to the worms to be their food. If anyone contradicts my opinion, since he cannot take from Jesus the power to preserve the Virgin from corruption, let him show that He ought not to have done so and that it was not fitting: but that is assuredly what no one will ever be able to show." We have not reported this author's words word for word, for he dwells at great length on this subject; but we have made a summary of them that contains the whole force of his reasons. As for the glorious resurrection of our adorable Mistress, we know that some ancient writers doubted it, or at least declared that they did not wish to pronounce on the subject: such as the author of a Sermon on the Assumption, attributed first to Saint Jerome and then to Sophronius, a contemporary of that holy Doctor, but which is by neither; and Usuard, a monk of Saint-Germain-des-Prés at Paris, in his martyrology, where he says: "The body of the most holy Virgin not being found on earth, the Church, which is wise in her judgements, has preferred to remain piously ignorant of what divine Providence has done with it rather than to put forward anything apocryphal on the subject; and for that reason it has not called this feast the Assumption of the glorious Virgin Mary, Mother of God, but only her sleep, *Dormitio*." Ado, archbishop of Vienne, also followed his course in his chronicle and his martyrology. But it is certain, as Cardinal Baronius says very well in his Notes on the Roman martyrology and in the first volume of his Annals, that the Church inclines entirely, and has always inclined, towards the opinion that the holy Virgin rose again and is in heaven in body and soul. For, first, she has never used, to express today's feast, the word sleep used by Usuard and Ado, nor those of death, birth into heaven and the like, which she uses on the feasts of other Saints; but she has always used the word *Assumption*, which properly applies to the whole person and signifies her being raised up in body and soul: this can be seen in the *Ordo Romanus*, in the Sacramentary of Saint Gregory, and in the most ancient calendars, rituals, missals, martyrologies and breviaries of the Roman use. Moreover, she sets before her children, in the lessons of this octave, the sermons and treatises of the Fathers in which the mystery of Our Lady's resurrection is declared in express terms: such as the Oration of Saint John Damascene, of which we have already spoken, and a Sermon of Saint Bernard, in which he says that human nature is today raised in Mary above the immortal spirits. Finally, this truth is so deeply impressed on the souls of all the faithful, and so generally received by the whole Christian world, that there can be no doubt that the Holy Spirit, who has not yet willed to make it an article of faith nor to express it distinctly in the sacred writings, is nevertheless its author and has Himself secretly inspired it in the heart of His Church.

There are even passages of the Old Testament that seem to have foretold this great mystery, as when the Royal Prophet says to Our Lord: "Arise, O Lord, into Thy rest, Thou and the Ark which Thou hast sanctified." No doubt by this Ark may be understood the holy humanity of Jesus Christ, which was sanctified by the ineffable anointing of the Godhead; yet it is settled that one may also understand by it the glorious Virgin Mary, whom the holy Fathers continually call the new Ark, the golden Ark and the Ark of the Covenant; so that by this passage the Prophet invites Our Lord not only to ascend into heaven with His risen and glorious body, but also to carry there that living Ark in which He took birth and which was for nine months His most pleasing dwelling. What he desires and asks in this place, he marks as accomplished in Psalm XLIV, where, again speaking to Our Lord, he tells Him "that the Queen has been placed at His right hand, in gilded clothing, surrounded with variety." For who is this Queen, if not the august Mary, whom the Church calls Queen of the angels and Sovereign of the world; and what is this gilded clothing adorned with so much variety, if not her glorious body clothed with the inestimable dowries of immortality? It is thus that the author of the book *De Sanctissima Deipara*, found among the works of Saint Athanasius, explains it.

The holy Fathers and the doctors who have treated this matter are also of this opinion: among the Greeks, Saint Andrew of Crete, Saint Germanus of Constantinople, Saint John Damascene, the emperor Leo called the Wise, Michael Syncellus and Michael Glycas; and among the Latins, Saint Gregory of Tours, Saint Gregory the Great, Saint Bernard, Saint Thomas, Saint Bonaventure, Hugh and Richard of Saint-Victor, John Gerson, Saint Bernardine of Siena, Saint Antoninus and all the more recent theologians: which makes Cardinal Baronius say in his Annals that one cannot, without great rashness, teach the contrary and take from

the sacred Virgin the glory of having risen from the dead and of reigning in body and soul with her Son. Besides, if her body had not been reunited to her soul, Our Lord would doubtless not have deprived it of the honour the Church pays to the relics of the other Saints, and He would also have exposed it to the public veneration of the faithful; since from the time of her death until now no church has boasted of possessing her sacred body or any of its members, but only something of her clothing, we must necessarily conclude that it was reunited to her soul and enjoys the happiness of immortality. Moreover, several holy doctors believe that the Saints who rose at the time of the Saviour's resurrection and then appeared to various persons in Jerusalem did not die a second time, but ascended with Him into heaven in body and soul. If this is so, can this same prerogative be refused to Mary? What! The Queen and

Sovereign would be waiting for the resurrection, while those who acknowledge themselves her humble subjects already enjoy it? What! One would see glorious bodies among the Saints in heaven, while the Queen of all the Saints had as yet no other glory than that of her soul? Moreover, the soul naturally desires its body: the soul of the holy Virgin, after its separation from the body, must therefore have had a natural inclination to be reunited to it. Is it credible that Our Lord did not satisfy this inclination? He could satisfy it, since He is almighty and this miracle was no more difficult three days after her death than at the end of all ages: if then He did not do it, it is because, being able, He did not will it. But how could He not have willed to satisfy the inclination of her who had obeyed Him in all things, who had always done His will, and who had loved Him with the most excellent love with which a mere creature can love Him; of her who had clothed Him with her flesh, sustained Him with her milk, fed Him by her labour and assisted Him on earth in all His needs? He loved her too tenderly, He held Himself too much obliged to her motherly care, He had too great a desire to acknowledge her affection, not to wish her a good that cost Him so little and was so fitting to her merit. Let us say further that it was in His own interest to wish it for her; for, after all, it could be said that He was not perfectly risen until Mary was risen, since Mary's flesh was the principle of His, and they had once been but one flesh. And then, does not the honour of the Mother redound to the Son? And is it not the glory of the Son to procure for His Mother all the advantages He is able to procure for her? Finally, He says expressly in the Gospel that He wills that whoever serves Him shall be where He Himself shall be: He therefore had this good will all the more for her who bore Him and whom He does not blush to call His Mother; but as her merits are infinitely above those of His servants, while He defers until the end of the ages giving these the complete fulfilment of this happiness, He anticipated it for her, placing her beside Him to share in the fullness of His greatness.

We ought now to explain the manner in which this happy resurrection of our Queen took place; but may we not say of it what Saint Gregory the Great says of the resurrection of Jesus Christ, that only the night in which it took place knew its mystery? Men were not its witnesses, and their eyes were not strong enough to bear its splendour. It is asked whether it took place in the tomb or in heaven, that is, whether the Virgin's soul came down into the sepulchre to take up her body again there, or whether her body was carried by the angels into heaven to be reunited to her soul there. Some authors of the seventeenth century followed this second opinion. But the first is more certain; for it is in no way likely that a lifeless body, without any adornment of glory, was carried into that place which is destined only for spirits and for bodies clothed with immortality. It is therefore very probable that, when this body had been three days in the sepulchre, her blessed soul came down there in the company of Our Lord and of an infinite number of angels, archangels and other blessed ones of heaven, and that, having re-entered this body, it began again to animate it, communicating to it a wholly heavenly life and the four qualities that make up the glory and felicity of bodies, we mean subtlety, agility, brightness and *immortality*. We leave it to the piety of the faithful to imagine in what degree these qualities were given to it. For our part we can only say of it these words of Saint Bernard: that it was in the degree of which such a Mother was worthy and which befitted the excellence and liberality of such a Son: *Quo tanta Mater digna fuit, et qui tantum decuit Filium*. In a word, this bodily glory was proportioned to the glory of the soul, since it sprang from it as from its principle. Now we have

said that the glory of Mary's soul surpassed beyond comparison the glory of all the Angels and all the Saints together; we must therefore conclude that the glory, radiance, beauty and perfection given to her body were ineffable, and made of it a masterpiece more accomplished than the whole universe.

We should wish now to have the mind and the pen of the seraphim to describe worthily the triumph of her Assumption, which is the principal subject of today's feast and the fairest object of our contemplation and our reverence. We have a fine figure of it in the triumph with which the ark of the covenant was carried by David into the city of Jerusalem, when the priests, the Levites and the people made all kinds of musical instruments resound, and the air rang with the singing of psalms and hymns and a thousand acclamations of joy. We have yet another figure of it in the magnificence with which the queen of Sheba entered the same city to enjoy for a time the conversation of the wise Solomon. It is said of that queen that she entered it with a numerous train and with infinite riches of gold, precious stones and perfumes to present to Solomon; that never afterwards were so many perfumes seen as she had brought; and that that prince, in gratitude, gave her all she wished and asked, and much more than she herself had given him.

There is an image of what takes place in the triumph of the Assumption of our adorable Princess. She ascended with a numerous train, because she was accompanied by the whole heavenly court; she ascended with infinite riches, because she was laden with an inestimable treasure of virtues and merits; she presented them to the true Solomon, who is her Son, because she offered them to Him in homage as to Him from whom she had received all these graces. Never since have such excellent perfumes, nor so many, been seen in paradise, because Mary's merits are so pleasing to Jesus Christ that no action of the Saints has ever given Him so much satisfaction. Finally, she received much more than she gave, because, as Saint Ildefonsus says: *Sicut est incomparabile quod gessit, ita est incomprehensibile praemium gloriae quod promeruit*: "just as what she did for the glory of her God is incomparable, so the weight of glory that she merited and that was given her as a reward is incomprehensible."

But to explain distinctly the wonderful glory of this pageant, we must note that there are three things that make a triumph august and magnificent: 1. the high deeds and perfections of the one who triumphs; 2. the splendour of the persons who accompany him; 3. the honours paid to him on his way and throughout the whole course of the triumph. Now all these things concur admirably to make the Assumption of the Virgin of inestimable price and value. For, in the first place, if we consider the merits of her who triumphs and the actions that won her this honour, there is nothing greater, nobler or more brilliant. The friends of the Bridegroom in the Canticle of Canticles represent them to us by three different acclamations, which include all the perfections of which a creature is capable. They say in the first: *Who is she that goeth up by the desert as a slender pillar of smoke, rising from the perfumes of myrrh and frankincense and of all sweet scents?* They say in the second: *Who is she that cometh forth as the morning rising, fair as the moon, bright as the sun, terrible as an army set in array?* They say finally in the third: *Who is she that cometh up from the desert, flowing with delights, leaning upon her Beloved?* By the first they represent to us her humility, her modesty, her devotion, her fervour, her perseverance in piety, her mercy, her liberality and all her other edifying virtues. By the second they signify to us the radiance of her purity, the eminence of her knowledge and wisdom, the greatness of her love for God, and the ardour of her zeal, which makes her formidable to all the powers of the world and of hell. By the third they express to us her perfect likeness to her Son, the union she had with His divinity, and the ineffable sweetness she tasted in the enjoyment of this union. And so we have in these words a rich picture of the beauties and perfections of our illustrious Triumphant One. But who could express the good she has done in the world, the victories she has won, the favours with which she has filled the whole human race, and the services she has rendered to God, her sovereign Lord? Is it not she who crushed the head of the old serpent, who repaired the evil the first woman had caused, who gave us a Saviour and a Deliverer, and who opened the gates of heaven to let in those who had been banished from it? Is it not she who merited to be the refuge of sinners, the Advocate of the unhappy, the Dispenser of the treasures of

God, the Mediatrix of our salvation, and the Channel by which all graces flow upon our souls? Oh, how perfect she is, how accomplished, how lovable, how worthy to triumph and to receive all the honours that can be paid, short of divine honours!

If the triumph of the Assumption is so exalted by the excellence of her who triumphs, it is still more so by the splendour of the persons who accompany her. For we must believe that Our Lord was the head of this company and that He Himself led His Mother to the throne of glory prepared for her, according to these words of the Canticle: *Quae est ista quae ascendit innixa super dilectum suum?* "Who is she that goeth up leaning upon her Beloved?" And this is what in some manner raises the pageant of the Assumption above that of the Ascension; for in the Ascension Our Lord was escorted and accompanied only by servants, but in the Assumption the glorious Virgin is accompanied by the sovereign Monarch of the world, who raises her by His might and sustains her by His power. We must not believe, then, that she ascended into heaven by the ministry of the angels, although the angels, as a mark of honour, surrounded her and served her as a throne; but she ascended by the force of her agility, which is one of the dowries of beatitude, and by the power of her Son, who had given her this agility in sovereign perfection. Moreover, we must picture to ourselves that the whole heavenly court made up this illustrious train: that is, on the one hand, all the choirs of angels, not excepting those who do not ordinarily leave the presence of the throne of God; and, on the other, all the orders of Saints, that is, the Patriarchs, the Prophets, the apostolic Men, the Martyrs, the Virgins and the whole company of the other Blessed. Finally, several doctors think that at that moment the whole of purgatory received a universal indulgence, and that there was not one of the souls then suffering there that was not delivered by the Virgin of Virgins, to make her triumph more glorious. This being so, who could conceive the magnificence of this pageant, and has anything ever been seen in this world that deserves to be called its shadow and image? For if the glory of a single angel surpasses all the beauties that the skill of men can produce on earth, what shall we say of that which springs from the assembly of all these spirits and from the pleasing harmony of all the Saints? What shall we say of the splendour and majesty of these two army corps, one of which includes all the blessed intelligences, ordered by their hierarchies and their choirs, and the other all glorified men, ranked according to the order of their merit and the excellence of their aureole and their beatitude? Must we not cry out on this occasion with Blessed Peter Damian: "O sublime day, a thousand times brighter than the sun, on which this royal Virgin was raised to the throne of God the Father and placed in the seat of the most holy Trinity, where she is the continual object of the admiration and desires of Paradise!" Finally, what completes the splendour of this triumph is the honours our adorable Princess received throughout her progress until she was seated, like the true Bathsheba, beside her Son. The Christian reader may here meditate on the praises, blessings, thanksgivings and applause given her every day by the choir of Angels and by each order of Saints in particular when, rising above all the works of God, she passed in turn through the midst of these holy companies: what was said to her by the Patriarchs, who had asked for her so insistently; by the Prophets, who had foretold her with such light; by the Apostles already dead and the apostolic Men, who had preached the divine motherhood with such zeal; by the Martyrs, who had already shed their blood for the honour of her Son; by the Virgins, who had so constantly imitated her innocence and virginal purity; in a word, by all the blessed souls who knew that she was the Mother of their Deliverer, the Source of their salvation and happiness, the Repairer of their falls, and the gate by which they had entered the kingdom of heaven: what was said to her also by the Seraphim, seeing her so penetrated with the flames of divine love; by the Cherubim, perceiving in her a light infinitely higher and more penetrating than their own; by the Thrones, recognizing her as the living Ark in which the most holy Trinity rested in a manner far more august and excellent than in themselves; what more? by all the rest of the heavenly spirits, knowing that she came to add a new radiance to Paradise, and that through her the breaches that Lucifer's revolt had made in their ranks would be happily repaired. Doubtless all these blessed ones prostrated themselves before her, acknowledged her as their Queen and Sovereign, offered her their persons and their services, and devoted themselves entirely to her, to sing her praises eternally and to obey all her wishes.

It is thus that the holy Fathers we have already cited speak of it in their sermons on the mystery of the Assumption. “The glorious Virgin,” says Saint Bernard, “in ascending today into heaven, gave a wonderful increase to the joy with which the Blessed were already filled; for if the soul of little Saint John, still enclosed in his mother’s womb, as it were melted with gladness at a single word of Mary, what must have been the joy and exultation of all those blessed spirits when they had the happiness not only of hearing her voice, but also of contemplating her face and enjoying her lovable presence? But who could think with how much glory this Queen of the world rose to the seat of her empire; with what tenderness of devotion the whole multitude of the blessed legions came forth to meet and receive her, and with what canticle of honour they led her to the throne that the justice of God had prepared for her?” He then describes, which is the principal thing in this feast, how she was received by Him who was the object of her desires and whose possession was to make up her whole happiness. “Who will tell further,” he adds, “with what serenity of countenance, with what sweetness, what love, what looks, what embraces she was received by her Son and raised above all creatures? It was doubtless with all the honour of which a Mother of such great merit was worthy, and with all the glory befitting the magnificence and the filial piety of such a Son. Happy assuredly were the kisses this divine Mother gave Him when He hung at her breasts and she fondled Him on her virginal bosom; but shall we not count happier the kisses she received from His mouth at the right hand of the eternal Father at the moment of her blessed exaltation, when, ascending the throne of glory on which she was to sit, she sang that sacred nuptial song: *Osculetur me osculo oris sui*: ‘Let him kiss me with the kiss of his mouth’? Who will ever be able to declare the wonders of the generation of Jesus Christ and of the Assumption of Mary? For as much grace as she received on earth above all the world, so much singular glory has she received in heaven, raising her above all that is created.”

We ought further to describe here the welcome given her by each of the divine Persons and by the whole most holy Trinity: by the Father, who regarded her as the most perfect of all daughters and as the one who had been on earth, towards His only Son, the vicar of His love and His adorable fatherhood; by the Son, who regarded her as His mother and as the one who had given Him a second nature and a second birth by making Him Son of Man; by the Holy Spirit, who regarded her as the most faithful of His spouses and as the one who had made Him divinely fruitful outside the bosom of the Godhead. But these great mysteries call for our adoration and reverence rather than our words, which can only be most imperfect. Books of meditation speak of them at greater length, and what we have said is enough to make it understood how brilliant and magnificent the triumph of the Assumption was. One may only ask in what place the holy Virgin was set. Saint Bernard answers: “As there was no worthier place on earth than the virginal womb in which Mary had received and lodged the Son of God, so there is no worthier place in heaven than the royal throne to which the Son of God has raised and on which He has set His most holy Mother.” Other holy doctors, explaining these words of Psalm XLIV, “The queen stands at thy right hand,” and these others of the third book of Kings, “Solomon sat upon his throne, and his mother sat at his right hand,” say that Our Lord in His Ascension ascended to the right hand of His Father, and that Mary in her Assumption ascended to the right hand of Jesus Christ. But there is this difference, that Our Lord ascended to the right hand of the Father as being equal to Him and having the same power and the same dominion as He, whereas Mary ascended to the right hand of Jesus Christ in subordination to His divine authority: which makes Cardinal Bellarmine say, in his Commentary on the Psalm we have just cited, that she was placed *in loco summi honoris infra regalem Thronum*: “in the first place of honour below the royal Throne of the Godhead.” The abbot Guerric, treating this matter more spiritually, says: “She has herself become the Throne of God, according to these words the Church uses in her office: *Veni, electa mea, et ponam in te Thronum meum*: Come, my chosen one, I will make thee my Throne. She had been on earth His tent for battle and His chair for teaching; but she has become in heaven His house for rest and His throne for judgement.” He means that, as the throne is the place where the prince appears with the greatest splendour and majesty, so Mary is the person in whom the Son of God has displayed with the greatest magnificence all the treasures of His power and all the riches of His

glory. Finally, we have already remarked that, according to the opinion of several holy doctors, she forms an Order apart between God and all the other blessed: which the learned chancellor of Paris declares excellently in these words taken from his Commentary on the Magnificat: “The Virgin by herself alone makes up the second hierarchy below God, who is the first and sovereign Hierarch: for the humanity of Our Lord, being hypostatically united to the Godhead, belongs to that first hierarchy.” The apostle Saint Paul seems to have wished to express this mystery in his first epistle to the Corinthians, chapter XV, when he says: *Alia claritas solis, alia claritas lunae, et alia claritas stellarum*: Other is the brightness of the sun, that is, of Jesus Christ; other the brightness of the moon, that is, of the Virgin; and other the brightness of the stars, that is, of the Angels and the Saints.

But let us now speak of the mystery of her coronation, which is the sixth point we set out at the beginning of this discourse. The Bridegroom in the Canticle of Canticles, after declaring to his beloved that she is all fair and that there is no spot in her, says to her: “Come from Libanus, my spouse, come; thou shalt be crowned from the top of Amana, from the top of Sanir and Hermon, from the dens of the lions, from the mountains of the leopards.” He invites her three times to her coronation, whether because of the divine Persons who set the diadem on her head; or to mark her three callings: the first, to the essential beatitude conferred on her at the moment of the separation of her soul from her body; the second, to her resurrection by the reunion of these two excellent parts; the third, to the consummated beatitude into which she entered by this resurrection and by her Assumption in body and soul into heaven; or finally to signify the three titles that made her worthy to be crowned, and the three crowns due to her, of which we shall speak presently. One may further add that He repeats *Come* three times to represent His eagerness to glorify this Spouse and to fill her with the greatest honour of which a mere creature is capable. He says to her twice: *Come from Libanus*, which means whiteness, because her mortal life, which is the starting point from which He calls her, had been supremely pure and immaculate, as much in spirit as in flesh, and no stain, either bodily or spiritual, had been found in her. He assures her that she shall be crowned from the top of Amana and from the top of Sanir and Hermon, three mountains that represent the three heavenly hierarchies and the three Orders of Saints among men, that is, Virgins, the Married and the Continent, because she was to be crowned as containing in herself the perfections of all the Saints. He declares to her finally that she shall be crowned also from the dens of the lions and the mountains of the leopards, whether because of the victories she has won over the demons and the ungodly figured by these animals, or because of the great sinners she has won for God and whose conversion she has merited.

Saint John in his Apocalypse, chapter XII, describes this coronation thus: “A great sign,” he says, “was shown me in heaven: it was a woman clothed with the sun, who had the moon under her feet and wore on her head a crown of twelve stars.” This woman is doubtless Mary, as Saint Bernard and the other Fathers and Doctors of the Church explain. She is clothed with the sun because, having clothed with her own flesh the sun of justice, which is the eternal wisdom of God, this sun in reward has clothed her with its spirit and its glory; or rather He has Himself become her glory, according to what is written: “A son commendable for his wisdom is the glory of his parents.” She has the moon, that is, inconstancy, under her feet, because she is in a state of blessed immutability, having already the full height of honour due to her and waiting for nothing more for her consummation and entire perfection. She wears on her head a crown of twelve stars because, having possessed on earth all the virtues in the most heroic degree, she now has their reward, and she is adorned with all the dowries with which a blessed one can be adorned, which are signified by this number twelve, a number of perfection.

There can be no doubt, then, of the coronation of our Queen at the moment of her exaltation in heaven. But to understand it better, one must know that the crown is a round ornament set on a person’s head to mark his excellence and his merits. Its shape and the place where it is set contribute to this end, because the circle and the round make the most accomplished of all figures, and the head or the brow is the true seat of greatness

and majesty. Now there are chiefly three kinds of persons to whom crowns are given: 1. they are given to sovereigns and great lords to mark the fullness of their authority and power; thus there are imperial crowns, royal crowns, and the crowns of a duke, a marquis and a count; 2. they are given to victors to mark the excellence of their talent or their work; thus the Greeks crowned the poets and orators who had prevailed in some contest of wit; and among the Romans there were six kinds of crowns for victors: one called *triumphalis*, for generals who had won a great battle; another called *ovalis*, for those who had won a lesser victory; and others for those who had been first to force the enemy's camp, or to leap into their ships, or to mount the breach, or who had raised the siege of a city; 3. finally, crowns are given to bride and bridegroom on their wedding day to mark the perfection of their joy and the fulfilment of their desires; thus Saint Agnes said that "Jesus Christ had adorned her with a crown because she had the honour of being His spouse." Mary, our august Princess, merited by these three titles to be crowned. She was crowned as sovereign, because she is the Queen and Empress of the world: *Imperatrix angelorum et hominum universalis*, says Geoffrey of Vendôme; and this quality belongs to her: 1. because she is the Daughter par excellence and the first heiress of the Most High; 2. because she is the Mother of the Word, who has associated her with all His greatness; 3. because she is the Spouse of the Holy Spirit and even, in the manner of speaking of Saint Epiphanius, the Spouse of the most holy Trinity: *Sponsa Trinitatis*. She was crowned as victor, because she is by herself alone a whole army set in battle array, and she has won countless victories over the devil and the world: which makes Saint Lawrence Justinian call her *Terror diaboli*, "the Terror of the devil"; Sophronius, or the author of the sermon on the Assumption, *Interemptrix universae haereticae pravitatis*, "She who has exterminated all the malice of the heretics"; and Saint Andrew of Crete *Propugnaculum fidei Christianorum*, "the Rampart of the faith of Christians." Finally, she was crowned as Spouse, because the day of the Assumption was properly her wedding day. She already had the quality of Spouse of the Holy Spirit, as we have just said, and it was by the Holy Spirit that she had conceived the incarnate Word and had become mother of an infinity of adopted children; but the solemnity of her espousals had not yet taken place; it had to take place in heaven, so that all the Blessed might share in so great a feast, and consequently she had first to be received there in triumph. It was therefore after this reception that the eternal Father made a solemn marriage feast for His Daughter: *Fecit nuptias Filiae suae*; and it was then that she was crowned as Spouse. So if you ask us what are the three crowns of Mary, we shall tell you that these three crowns are the *Imperial*, the Triumphal and the Nuptial: the Imperial, to honour her power and her universal sovereignty; the Triumphal, to acknowledge her victories and the conquests she has made over sin and the devil; the Nuptial, to solemnize her espousals and the eternal union she has with the whole most holy Trinity.

The Reverend Father Poiré, in his learned book of the *Triple Crown of the Mother of God*, explains these three crowns otherwise, but in a manner that nevertheless comes back to what we have just said. "The first is a crown of excellence, which includes twelve perfections with which this adorable Virgin was endowed; the second, a crown of power, which contains twelve prerogatives of the great power given her; the third, a crown of goodness, which contains twelve ways in which she helps her own and procures their salvation and eternal happiness: so that she is three times crowned with twelve stars. She is so, first, for her sovereign dignity and for an infinity of gifts, graces and virtues that accompany it. She is so, secondly, for her absolute and universal power, and for a great number of rights and privileges that spring from that power. She is so, thirdly, for her incomparable goodness, and for the loving touches and operations of that goodness." Others again understand by these three crowns to which her Bridegroom invites her in the Canticle of Canticles the three aureoles: of Martyrdom, of the Doctorate and of Virginity. Indeed, there can be no doubt that she received them all in a most eminent manner: that of Martyrdom, since she suffered more at the foot of the Cross than all the other Martyrs; that of the Doctorate, since she is rightly called by the abbot Rupert the Mistress of masters, and by Saint Augustine the Mistress of all nations; that of Virginity, since the whole Church acknowledges her as the Virgin of virgins, who has never had and never will have an equal. It may be asked of what nature these crowns are. We answer in a word that they are both bodily and spiritual. They are

bodily, because there can be no doubt that the venerable brow of the Virgin was surrounded with rays of inestimable splendour, which by themselves alone give more radiance to heaven than all the bodies of the other Saints together will give after the resurrection; which makes Saint Anselm say that the day of the Assumption filled heaven and all that is in heaven with a new and ineffable glory: *Nova et ineffabilis gloria decoravit*. They are also spiritual, because God gave to the soul of this most pure Virgin, besides the essential glory of which we have spoken, a fullness of accidental glory, that is, of light, joy and delights, surpassing all conception, which we may justly call crowns. At the same time He had her acknowledged by all the angels and blessed men as their Lady and Sovereign after Him, as the Governess of the world, the Treasurer and Dispenser of His graces, the great Instrument of His wonders and even, in the manner of speaking of Saint Ephrem, as their own crown. It is easy to conclude from all that has been said how much power the holy Virgin has to help us, and how much we depend on her assistance and protection to overcome the difficulties of our pilgrimage and to reach safely the haven of salvation to which we aspire. The holy Fathers tell us wonders on this subject. Besides the fine epithets contained in the Litanies, Saint Epiphanius calls her the confidence of Christians; Saint Bernard, the whole ground of our hope; Richard of Saint-Laurent, the neck of the Church, through which all the favours of Jesus Christ must pass to flow into its members; the Hymn of the Greeks, our wall, our support and our invincible defence; Saint Germanus of Constantinople, the torch that lights our darkness, the dew that quenches our concupiscence, the counsel that dispels our doubts, the medicine that heals our wounds, the balm that soothes our sorrows, the consolation that dries our tears, and the treasure that effectively remedies our poverty; finally, Saint Peter Damian and other Fathers, the heavenly ladder by which God came down from heaven, and Saint Ephrem, the safe haven of those who were in danger of shipwreck. It is again in this same sentiment that the same Saint Bernard addresses to us these words full of piety and unction: “If the winds of temptation rise against you, if you find yourself among the reefs and rocks of tribulation, look at this Star, call on Mary for help. If you are tossed by the waves of pride, ambition, envy and detraction, turn towards this Star, invoke the name of Mary. If anger, avarice and incontinence shake the vessel of your soul, cast your eyes on this Star and cry: Mary! If, troubled by the greatness of your crimes, dismayed by the wretched state of your conscience, terrified by the severity of the judgements of God, you begin to sink into black melancholy and the abyss of despair, think at once of Mary. In dangers, in troubles, in distress, in the greatest extremities, remember Mary, ask the protection of Mary. Let her name not leave your mouth, let her memory not leave your heart; and to obtain the help of her prayers, never cease also to imitate her example. Following her, you will not go astray; praying to her, you will be out of danger of despair; thinking of her, you will not fall into error; if she is so good as to uphold you, you will take no false step; if she honours you with her protection, you will have no cause for fear; if she takes the trouble to guide you, you will walk without anxiety; and if she is pleased to be propitious to you, you will arrive happily at the goal of salvation and will experience how rightly she has been given the name of Mary.” It is by virtue of this prerogative that Saint Germanus, patriarch of Constantinople, whom we have just cited, speaks to her thus: “No one is saved except through thee, O most holy Virgin; no one is free from evil except through thee, O most pure Virgin; no one receives heavenly gifts except from thy hands, O most chaste Virgin; God shows mercy to no one except through thy means, O Virgin, Mother of eternal blessing!”

It is Mary, then, who is our Advocate and our Mediatrix with her Son; but an advocate who has all the qualities one could wish for to acquit herself well of this office, we mean Credit, Skill and Goodness: credit, since she is the Mother of our Judge and, to move Him, can show Him the womb that bore Him, the breasts that nursed Him, the arms and hands that held Him, and above all the heart that always loved Him with infinite tenderness; skill, since Scripture, as the Church applies it, gives her the name of Wisdom and assures us that counsel and prudence are always with her; goodness, since she is also our Mother and has for us a heart of mercy whose sweetness cannot be comprehended. “You have,” Saint Bernard tells us again, “a great advocate with the eternal Father, who is Jesus Christ, His only Son; He will surely hear you, and He will be heard; but if the brightness of His divine majesty dazzles you and keeps you from casting yourself at His feet,

you also have a powerful Advocate with Him, who is Mary: address yourself to her, she will hear you and will doubtless be heard. This," he adds, "is the ladder of sinners, this is the whole ground of our hope. Jesus with His Father, Mary with Jesus; for Jesus cannot be rebuffed by His Father, and Mary cannot be rebuffed by Jesus." But if Mary is so good and so powerful an Advocate of the faithful, it is particularly at the moment of their death that she shows them her mercy and her help; and indeed Our Lord, in reward for her acceptance of death, which she had in no way deserved, gave her a singular power to help Christians at that last hour. This is why the Church, at the end of the Angelic Salutation, says to her these words: "Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners, now and at the hour of our death." And in the hymn

*Memento*: "Mary, full of grace, Mother of mercy, defend us from the enemy and receive us at the hour of death." We must now indicate how we ought to honour her merits and her incomparable excellence, and acknowledge the inestimable favours we have received and receive every day through her. The Reverend Father Poiré, in the fourth treatise of his *Triple Crown*, gives twelve different ways of showing our gratitude. The first is to have a high esteem for this divine Mother, to regard her as the first of all creatures and as the great masterpiece of the hands of the Almighty, and always to keep a profound respect for her gifts, her prerogatives and her virtues. The second, to have a firm confidence in her help, to have recourse to her in every kind of difficulty, to rest on her protection without anxiety in the thorniest affairs, and to undertake nothing except under her guidance and in the hope of her protection. The third, to love her with a heartfelt and constant love, to delight in conversing and dealing with her, to rejoice in her perfections and her happiness, and to extend this love to all that belongs to her. The fourth, to perform the actions believed to be most pleasing to her, with a view to pleasing her: such as helping the poor, visiting the sick, consoling the afflicted, correcting sinners and working for the winning of souls. The fifth, to thank her for her benefits and to invite others to thank her for them, to attribute to her the good success one has had in one's affairs and to make others attribute it to her. The sixth, to publish her merits and praises everywhere, to make them known to the poor and the ignorant, to engage as many people as one can in her service, and to turn aside with all one's strength whatever may be contrary to her glory. The seventh, to honour her inwardly and outwardly, to give her the cult we call *hyperdulia*, to venerate her relics and images, to celebrate her feasts devoutly, to build churches and oratories for her or contribute to their adornment, and to visit the places particularly dedicated to her. The eighth, to be singularly devout to her, whether by communicating often to thank God for the graces He has given her, or by assiduously reciting the Angelic Salutation, or the Little Office, the Rosary, the Chaplet and other prayers composed in her honour. The ninth, to perform various mortifications on the days the Church has particularly appointed for solemnizing her memory, such as fasting, wearing the hair shirt, sleeping on the hard ground, abstaining from games and walks, and living in greater retirement. The tenth, to imitate her admirable virtues, above all her faith, her confidence in God, her humility, her patience, her gentleness, her angelic purity and her wholly divine charity. The eleventh, to enter the associations and confraternities established under her name, such as those of the Rosary, the Scapular and Purity. The twelfth, to work continually to enlarge her cult and to extend the reverence and homage paid to her. Another discourse would be needed to relate the graces obtained by these practices and the miracles the glorious Virgin has worked on all sides in favour of those who have been faithful to them. They may be seen in the books that have dealt expressly with this matter, besides the fact that a great part of them will be found in the Lives of the Saints that we give in this work. And so, having dealt with the eight points we set ourselves at the beginning of this discourse, it remains for us to say a word about the institution of today's feast, which is the most solemn of all the feasts of Our Lady.

It is very likely that it had not yet been instituted in the time of the emperor Marcian and the empress Pulcheria, since, having built a church at Constantinople in honour of Our Lady, they asked the patriarch of Jerusalem to obtain her body for them to enrich and ennoble that basilica. But from that time it began to be established and to spread in various places, in the Latin Church as well as in the Greek. We have already remarked that it is mentioned in the *Ordo Romanus*, which some authors hold to be older than the second

race of our kings, as well as in the Benedictional and the Sacramentary of Saint Gregory, who lived at the end of the sixth century. It is believed, it is true, that in the latter the office of the Assumption was added; but it is certain that this addition is older than Louis the Debonair, son of Charlemagne, since the abbot Grimold, who lived at that time, was the first to make this remark. We also find this feast in the Rules of Saint Chrodegang, bishop of Metz, under Pepin the Short, in the Capitularies of the king and emperor Charlemagne, and in the ordinances of the council of Mainz, held in 813. It had a vigil and an octave from the time of Pope Nicholas I, in 858; and Sigebert, in his Chronicle, remarks that this octave had been ordained at Rome by Pope Leo IV, although perhaps before that time it was already celebrated in other places. Saint Bernard, in his Epistle CLXXIV to the canons of Lyons, says that he had received this solemnity from the ancient institution of the Church; and Saint Peter of Cluny, his contemporary, relates that the torches the Romans offered on the eve of this day, though they burned all night and until the solemn Mass of the next day, nevertheless did not diminish or lose anything of their weight.

It appears from what we have just said that the feast of the Assumption has long been very famous throughout France; but King Louis XIII made it more famous still in 1638 by the solemn offering he made of his person and his kingdom to the glorious Virgin, Mother of God, to thank her for all the favours he had received from her goodness and to obtain, through her intercession, a dauphin for France, who was his son Louis XIV. Very august processions were held for this in all the churches of the kingdom; and because His Majesty was then at Abbeville, he made his communion and attended the procession, Vespers and the sermon in the church of the Minims of that town. These processions still continue every year in many places, as from all antiquity; according to the remark of the *Ordo Romanus*, one was held at Rome which stopped at Saint Adrian's and then went on to Saint Mary Major.

The sepulchre of the Virgin was at the township of Gethsemane, in the valley of Josaphat. But under the emperors Vespasian and Titus that place was so devastated by the armies of those princes, who took Jerusalem, that the faithful could no longer recognize where it was. This is why Saint Jerome, who mentions the tombs of the patriarchs and prophets visited by Saint Paula and Saint Eustochium, says nothing at all of that of the Virgin. Since then, however, it has been discovered by divine permission. Burchard assures us that he had seen it, but so covered by the ruins of other buildings that one had to go down sixty steps to reach it. Bede writes that it was shown empty in his time. Now it is shown to pilgrims to the Holy Land, cut into a rock.

Two excellent apologies for the Assumption of the Holy Virgin in body and soul into heaven were printed at Paris in 1670: one by Lavocat, doctor of the Sorbonne, then canon of the cathedral church of that city and later bishop of Boulogne-sur-Mer; the other by Gaudin, also doctor of the Sorbonne, canon and official of the same church. All the proofs of this truth are found there, a truth founded above all on the common consent of the Church and the faithful.

## Saint Alypius, Bishop of Tagaste in Africa and Confessor

*431. — Pope: Saint Celestine I. — Emperor of the East: Theodosius II.*

> *Gratia Dei non convertimur nisi et nostra voluntate convertamur.*
>
> *The grace of God does not convert us unless we also convert ourselves by our own will.*
>
> *Glossa super Jeremiam.*

Alypius, of an illustrious family, was from Tagaste in Africa. He studied grammar and rhetoric, first in his native town, then at Carthage under Saint Augustine, his fellow countryman; and if he stopped attending his lessons, it was only because of the ill feeling that arose between his father and his master. He nevertheless always kept great respect and affection for Saint Augustine; and Augustine too loved his disciple tenderly, because he noticed in him a singular inclination to virtue. Alypius, however, let himself be carried away by

the love of the entertainments of the circus, for which the inhabitants of Tagaste were passionate. Saint Augustine was keenly grieved by it; no longer having him among his disciples, he was not in a position to give him wise warnings. One day, however, he saw him come into his school to listen to his lessons, as he had already done without his father's knowledge. Wishing then to make a passage he was explaining clearer, he borrowed a comparison from the games of the circus and launched biting gibes at those who let themselves be carried away by such a mania. He was not thinking of Alypius at that moment. But Alypius believed that he had been aimed at, and, as he was of a very good disposition, he was not angry with Augustine but on the contrary loved him the more for it. Condemning himself, therefore, he drew back from the gulf in which he took pleasure in sinking, and went no more to the circus.

Alypius afterwards obtained his father's permission to return to Saint Augustine's school. He later embraced, with his master, the superstitions of the Manichaeans. He had let himself be taken in by the pretended love these heretics affected for continence. Such are the charms of this virtue that its mere shadow makes itself loved and respected.

While our Saint was at Carthage, a thief set about cutting with an axe some leaden bars that projected over the street: people ran up at the noise he was making. Fearing arrest, he left his axe there and fled. Alypius, who happened to pass and did not know the cause of the commotion, saw the axe on the ground and picked it up. He was seized at once, treated as the real thief, and they set about taking him before the judge. While he was being led to prison, the architect who had charge of the public buildings passed by. He undertook to prove Alypius' innocence and for this purpose led him, followed by all the people, to the thief's house; a young child was seen at the door. The architect showed him the axe; he recognized it and said: "It is ours." He was asked various other questions, which he answered with the same artlessness. Thus the truth appeared in full daylight. The people were confounded and Alypius fully cleared. God, as Saint Augustine remarks, permitted this event so that Alypius might learn with what circumspection one must judge others, lest an indiscreet curiosity lead to condemning an innocent man on mere appearances.

To fall in with his parents' plans, our Saint went to study law at Rome. During his stay in that city he became passionately fond of gladiatorial combats. In spite of this detestable inclination, he was regular in his morals and showed great feelings of probity. He was made assessor of justice in the court of the treasurer of Italy, and in the exercise of this office gave striking proofs of his love of justice and his disinterestedness. He had the courage to oppose the unjust claims of a powerful senator whom no one dared resist because of the greatness of his influence.

Saint Augustine having come to Rome, Alypius bound himself to him in the most intimate friendship and followed him to Milan. They were both converted in that city and were baptized there by Saint Ambrose on the eve of Easter in the year 387. Some time later they returned to Rome, where they spent a year in retirement. They then set out for Africa. Having arrived at Tagaste, they formed there a community of pious persons, in which they lived in the practice of all kinds of good works. Such a retreat seemed to them necessary to make their conversion secure; by it they were also preparing for the apostolic life for which God destined them. Three years passed in this way at Tagaste. Saint Augustine having been made bishop of Hippo, the whole community followed him there and settled in the monastery he had built.

Alypius went out of devotion to visit Palestine, and there saw Saint Jerome, with whom he formed a close friendship. On his return to Africa he was made bishop of Tagaste, about the year 393. He greatly helped Saint Augustine in all that he did or wrote against the Donatists and the Pelagians, attended several councils, undertook various journeys, and laboured with tireless zeal for the glory of God and of the Church. We see that he was old in 429 from a letter Saint Augustine wrote to him in that year, in which he calls him an old man. It is believed that he died shortly afterwards. Alypius is named today in the Roman martyrology, and his feast is kept at Algiers on 19 August.

Taken from Godescard.

## Saint Arnulf, Bishop of Soissons

*1087. — Pope: Victor III. — King of France: Philip I.*

> *If you close the bowels of your mercy to the poor, the door of Christ will be completely closed to you.*
>
> *Saint Augustine.*

Saint Arnulf came into the world in the time of Henry I, king of France, and of Baldwin V, called the Debonair, count of Flanders. His father was a rich lord of Brabant named Fulbert of Pamele, who lived at Tiedeghem on the Scheldt, and his mother, Méinsinde or Mélisende, had the dukes of Louvain and the counts of Namur, Loo, Douai and Mons as kinsmen. Their eldest son died very young, which so afflicted them that they could receive no consolation. But a very grave man, all shining with light, appeared in a dream to Méinsinde, who was the more desolate, and reproved her very severely for her lack of conformity to the will of God. You are, he told her, all the more to blame because your son, had he lived, would have been a man full of the most shameful vices. Then he assured her that she was carrying in her womb another son, who would be a great light in the Church and would gloriously uphold the honour of Jesus Christ, as much by the force of his words as by the innocence and holiness of his actions. He therefore ordered her to call him Christopher, that is, Christ-bearer, and, as a pledge of this prediction, told her that if she had the ground dug at the spot in the church where she usually said her prayers, she would find a stone on which this name was engraved: which actually happened.

The godfather of this child promised by heaven was Arnulf of Oudenaarde, who absolutely insisted on giving him his name; so that he was called Arnulf at the baptismal font; but his mother, who had other orders from heaven, always called him Christopher. He was brought up with great care, and, his good nature responding to this good education, he passed his childhood in all the restraint and piety compatible with that age. He became so strong that four or five of his companions could not have withstood him; the gentlemen of his kindred begged his father, who wanted to apply him to study, to have him take up the profession of arms instead. He made several campaigns in the service of the emperor and of the king of France, in which he gave proofs of extraordinary skill and generosity: which won him the reputation of the gravest gentleman in all the Low Countries. His military exercises did not prevent him from being truly pious. He often went to church, attended the divine offices with reverence, and said his prayers regularly morning and evening and several times during the day; the poor had in him a father full of mercy and liberality; his subjects, who were not few after his father’s death because of the fine lordships that belonged to him, continually received from him marks of love and goodwill. Far from quarrelling with his neighbours, he was the arbiter of all the disputes of the country, and he settled them with such equity and prudence that only the wicked refused to put their interests in his hands. His modesty, his sobriety and his love of chastity made him no less admired by everyone; in a word, his life was so exemplary that courtiers could not cast their eyes on him without seeing in it the condemnation of their disorders and a perfect model on which they ought to form their conduct.

Meanwhile this great man felt well within himself that he was not yet in the state for which God destined him. Therefore, having taken leave of his mother on the pretext of going to the court of France with a retinue worthy of his rank, he went to Saint-Médard of Soissons, where he asked for the habit of Saint Benedict. His vocation was too evident not to be recognized by the abbot and the religious of that monastery. They received him with joy, gave him the monastic tonsure and the habit, and, after a year of probation, which he spent in a fervour that surprised the oldest, they admitted him to profession. This ceremony, in making him a religious, detached him from all the greatness and all the vanities of the world, so that he had no other treasure but Jesus Christ.

The first office given him was the almonry, or the charge of distributing to the poor the common alms of the monastery: he acquitted himself of it with wonderful diligence and charity. But while he did all he could to relieve the miseries of others, he undertook an implacable war against himself and became his own executioner. The abstinences and vigils of the Rule not being enough to satisfy his spirit of penance, he undertook more rigorous ones. He scarcely ate or slept; and, having by this means much time for prayer, he spent many hours of the day and night in that exercise. He put on his body a most extraordinary girdle: it was a great branch of brambles, full of knots and thorny points that continually tore his flesh and covered it with blood; yet his face was always serene, and a seemly gaiety shone in his eyes and on his brow. All the other virtues were admired in him; he was very obedient. One day he was giving a spiritual conference to the Brothers in our language; his abbot ordered him to stop, because he spoke French only with difficulty; he took this command in the same spirit in which Saint Paul the hermit had once taken that of Saint Antony, and so remained several months without opening his mouth. At last the abbot learned of this long silence and, knowing that his command had been its cause, ordered him on the contrary to converse freely with the community, to edify it by his spiritual discourses.

There was then in the monastery of Saint-Médard a religious of eminent holiness named Erembold. Following the permission of his Rule and a custom fairly frequent in the first centuries of the Order of Saint Benedict, this religious had shut himself up in a cell apart, where he lived very austerely and applied himself continually to the contemplation of eternal truths. Saint Arnulf went to see him as often as he could and rendered him all the services his solitude might require, so as to learn in his conversation the true paths of religious perfection and to stir himself up by his example to the hardest practices of the solitary and penitential life. This holy man having fallen ill, he attended him to his last breath; and after his death he had the consolation of seeing him all radiant with glory and in a charming beauty, which showed clearly the greatness of the reward with which Our Lord had crowned his labours. He learned from him, however, that he had been detained a little in purgatory for a very slight fault, of which even the most spiritual would scarcely have been aware: so true is it that nothing but what is most pure can enter the kingdom of heaven. After this vision our Saint wished to become heir to Erembold’s cell, and he at last obtained it by dint of prayers and tears. It was there that, freed from all kinds of outward employment, he applied himself with such zeal to the conquest of his passions, the exercise of the virtues, the knowledge of God and union with Him, that in a short time he became an entirely new man, or rather an entirely heavenly one. As this grotto of the deceased did not yet seem austere enough to him, he dug himself a pit under the gutter of one of the churches, where he made his usual dwelling. It is beyond belief how many hardships he suffered there, whether in winter from the rigour of the snow and icicles that the roof of that church dropped there in abundance, or in summer from the heat of the sun’s rays, which burned his whole body. His food consisted only of a little barley bread and a mouthful of water; he spent three and a half years there in perpetual silence; having had the holy Bible and other books of piety brought to him, he thus became very learned in the law of God and in the knowledge of the mysteries of our holy religion.

Meanwhile, Abbot Renault, who had received him, having died, a false monk named Pons took possession of that abbey on a nomination from the king that he had obtained by simony. So criminal an entry was followed by a wholly scandalous life. He used the goods of the monastery, not for repairing the buildings, adorning the altars, relieving the poor and maintaining his religious, but for games, feasts and the pay of a troop of smart, well-mounted horsemen who always accompanied him. Not content with consuming in this way the annual revenues of his benefice, which were immense, he even alienated the capital, and had no scruple either about taking and selling the most precious furnishings of the church to meet the mad expenses of his vanity and ambition. Moreover, he did not even provide the religious with necessities: divine worship was abandoned, regular observance neglected, and the whole monastic Order overturned. The oldest members of the house, who were almost all persons of noble birth, keenly affected by these disorders, complained of them to the bishop of Soissons, who was Thibauld of Pierrefonds; he decided with them that there was no other means of

remedying them than to drive out this false abbot and put Saint Arnulf in his place. For this they obtained the consent of the king, who was much grieved at having given Saint-Médard a tyrant instead of an abbot; but the difficulty was to bring our Saint to accept this charge, which he judged too heavy for his shoulders. He excused himself as much as he could. He joined tears and groans to his prayers, that they might let him do penance in his retreat; he even fled secretly during the short time he had been given to make up his mind; but all his efforts were in vain. A wolf, which he followed by night in the moonlight, thinking it would lead him into the depths of a forest, brought him back to the gates of Soissons; there he was discovered and carried, in spite of himself, to the abbatial chair.

As his life was the very opposite of his predecessor's, he soon restored everything to its first state. He gently brought the religious back to observance, provided the church with new ornaments in place of those that had been sold, and recovered the alienated goods of the monastery; in a word, he gave back to Saint-Médard the splendour and glory that Pons's licentiousness had taken from it. The whole city of Soissons and all the nobility round about felt an extraordinary joy at so happy a change. Under Pons no one would any longer take the habit in that abbey, which was supposed to consist of five hundred choir religious; as soon as Arnulf had taken over its government, young lords came there from all sides, earnestly asking to be received so as to have the happiness of serving God there under such wise direction.

The bread and wine the Saint had blessed, and the apples of a tree that stood before his cell, often worked altogether miraculous cures. The water in which he had washed his hands gave sight to a woman who had been blind for ten years. Ermegarde, wife of Guy, a lord of high rank, being in labour, sent to commend to the Saint's prayers herself and Guy her husband, who was sick unto death. The blessed abbot sent her word that she would give birth to a son the following night and that her husband would soon recover; but that the next day André, her brother, would be betrayed by his wife and delivered with his castle into the hands of his enemies unless he took care to surround himself with a good garrison. All these things happened exactly according to his prediction; and the child having been born blind, he gave him sight too at the end of six days, at the prayer of the midwives, who dared not reveal this misfortune to the mother. He foretold several other things as well; the event showed that he possessed the gift of prophecy in an eminent degree. Meanwhile Odo, a religious of his monastery, who thought himself worthier than Arnulf of the rank and title of abbot, was secretly seeking every occasion to harm him and dispossess him of his office. To achieve this he wrote to King Philip I that, as he was about to go to war, he ought, according to custom, to oblige the abbot of Saint-Médard to accompany him with a regiment of his vassals, well mounted and maintained at his own expense. This proposal was to the king's taste: he sent word to our Saint to come and join him in his camp at the head of a sufficient number of good soldiers to reinforce his army. Arnulf answered that he had not embraced the religious life to take up secular soldiering again, and that if it was a necessity for abbots to follow the king to war, he preferred to renounce his abbey rather than submit to a law so contrary to the liberties of the Church. The king, ill advised, had him told that other abbots of Saint-Médard, his predecessors, had rendered this service to their king in return for the privileges granted to the abbey of Saint-Médard by royal munificence. He therefore ordered him, if he would not obey, to give up his place as abbot to another. Arnulf did not refuse to furnish soldiers to the king, although the abbey of Saint-Médard had great privileges exempting it from this servitude; but he in no way believed himself obliged to lead them in person: as indeed this function was altogether opposed to the duties of the religious life, if some of his predecessors had submitted to it, that was an abuse that ought not to serve as an example. Standing firm, therefore, in his opinion, he gladly seized this occasion to strip himself of his dignity, whose honour and burden were unbearable to him; and, after having Saint Gerard or Gérauld elected in his place, a religious of Corbie, then abbot of Saint-Vincent of Laon, and afterwards founder of the celebrated monastery of Grand-Selve in Aquitaine, he withdrew to his former cell, to take up again with new fervour his old exercises of penance, contemplation and tears.

The rigour he exercised against himself was greater than ever; but it is not comparable to the pain he felt when Queen Bertha, having come to Soissons, had Saint Gerard driven from the abbey and the wretched Pons reinstated, who had formerly been deposed for his dissipation and licentiousness. One may also judge what Saint Arnulf suffered under this false abbot, full of indignation and fury because our Saint had been put in his place at the time of his deposition. However, as divine Providence has wonderful secrets for raising up those who humble themselves for love of it, Saint Arnulf was never more esteemed or more honoured than in this state of humiliation and silence. The reputation of his virtue spread throughout France, and great prelates and lords of the highest rank were continually seen arriving at Saint-Médard to have the happiness of seeing him, conversing with him and taking his counsel. The grace of miracles and the gift of prophecy shone forth in his actions and his words. He learned by revelation of the tragic death of a lord named Israel, a great plunderer of widows and orphans, who died wretchedly by night in the midst of his guilty pleasures. He knew also that a roast fish brought to him for his dinner on a feast day was poisoned, and, like Saint Benedict, he commanded a raven to carry it to a deserted place where it could never harm anyone. On a feast of Saint Lawrence he gave speech to a child of thirteen who had come into the world dumb. Another day he delivered a possessed man of whom the devil had made himself master in punishment for having lent a strong hand to one of his kinsmen in the attack on a village he wished to sack and put to fire and sword.

The bishopric of Soissons having become vacant by the death of Thibauld of Pierrefonds and the deposition of Ursion, who had been intruded into it against the rules of ecclesiastical discipline, the clergy and people earnestly begged Hugh, bishop of Die and legate of the Holy See, to give them Saint Arnulf as their pastor. The legate, who was at Meaux, where he had assembled a council, at once summoned the Saint and, in spite of all his resistance, confirmed him as bishop of Soissons. He then ordered him to come to him some time later in Dauphiné to receive episcopal consecration there, which he did; and on the way he sent one of his religious to Queen Bertha to announce to her that she was carrying in her womb a son who would be named Louis and would reign after his father. The inhabitants of Vienne in Dauphiné also asked for him as archbishop; but he withdrew promptly from that province so as not to be forced to ascend so eminent a see. Saint Hugh, abbot of Cluny, paid him great honours when he passed through his monastery and, recognizing in him a great store of learning and piety, respected him as the true sanctuary of the Holy Spirit.

When he arrived at Soissons to make his entry, Gervais, seneschal of King Philip I and brother of the deposed bishop, refused him the gates; but Arnulf, without being troubled, set up his see at Oulchy-le-Château, a small town of his diocese. As the people flocked there from all sides, he conferred the sacrament of Confirmation, reconciled penitents, distributed the bread of the word of God to the faithful, and even healed, by the sign of the cross and the laying on of his hands, many cripples and sick persons. Then he undertook the visitation of his parishes to consecrate the new churches, correct the disorders of the clergy, reform the abuses that had crept in among the people, root out superstitions and restore everywhere the fair order of

Christian discipline. His spirit of prophecy appeared everywhere in an admirable manner; for he saw absent things as if present, and things that did not yet exist as if they had happened before his eyes. By the laying on of his hands he healed a holy priest and religious named Everolfe, who, being dangerously ill, asked him for Extreme Unction; and he promised him that Everolfe himself would confer that Sacrament on him and lay him in the earth: which afterwards happened, as we shall soon tell. At Chaumont in Champagne he gave sight to a woman of Chauny who came there expressly to beg him to put his fingers on her eyes. He also gave health to five brothers who, being ill all together, were putting their mother to great expense and reducing her to extreme want.

At that time the provinces of Flanders were full of hatreds, vengeances and murders, each man doing justice for himself and taking the liberty of attacking his neighbour in his house or castle to get satisfaction for the injuries he believed he had received from him. The count of Flanders had stripped of their goods and

banished from his States some of the lords and rich clergy of the country for an alleged conspiracy against him, which obliged them to wander here and there in very great misery. Pope Saint Gregory VII ordered Saint Arnulf to go there to remedy such great evils. He was everywhere an angel of peace. He ended disputes whose settlement seemed impossible; he reconciled enemies who had sworn never to forgive one another; he obliged the count to receive back into his favour those by whom he believed himself outraged and to restore them to their goods, honours and dignities. Those who dared resist his exhortations were visibly punished by God: for either they were seized by the devil, or they died a sudden death, or they were chastised in some other public and exemplary manner that filled the whole country with fear. This is what led the inhabitants of Oudenburg to give him the church of Saint Peter with its dependencies, to build a monastery there. He gathered religious there and established monastic discipline, not according to the relaxations of many communities of that time, but according to the spirit of Saint Benedict, with which he himself was filled.

The time when the gates of his cathedral city were opened to him is not known; but his Acts attest that it was at Soissons that he converted one of his former comrades in arms, named Géric, who had abandoned himself to all kinds of extortion, pillage and violence, sparing neither widows nor orphans. Arnulf prayed to God for a long time for his salvation: his prayers were heard. This violent man, who enjoyed all the advantages that fortune can give her favourites, first lost all his children; then he fell into a terrible illness from which there was no likelihood that he could recover. Moreover, his relatives, seeing him childless and as if half dead, began to lay hands on his goods with the intention of making themselves entirely masters of them, without his wife Judith being able to keep anything. These misfortunes opened his eyes; on the advice of this same Judith, he had himself put on a litter and carried to Soissons, where through the intercession of the Saint he received perfect healing of body and soul. He therefore repaired all the damage he had done, restored his ill-gotten goods, gave large alms to the poor whom he had formerly tormented so inhumanly, and at the end of the year, according to the prediction of the servant of God, he had a son named Lambert, who was heir to all his goods and imitated not the actions of his former life, but the good example he gave after his conversion.

After so many great deeds, Saint Arnulf was struck with grief at the disorders he saw in France, which the prelates had not the boldness to remedy effectively, because many of them, being men of the court, dared not oppose the criminal relations of King Philip I with Bertrade de Montfort, wife of the count of Anjou, nor remonstrate with him about the evils his idleness and dissolute life were causing in the kingdom. He resigned his bishopric and withdrew for the third time to his dear hermitage, to weep there over the evils for which he could find no other remedy. But some time later, the quarrels between towns, villages, castles and families having broken out again in Flanders, the inhabitants of Oudenburg came to beg him very earnestly to return to them to appease these divisions. He knew that he was to die there and that it was there that God had fixed his burial place; so he went gladly, and after working successfully for seven days at the reconciliation of enemies, he fell gravely ill. His room shook three times, to the great astonishment of all who were present. At the first, Saint Peter showed himself to him accompanied by a great company of other Saints and assured him that all his sins were forgiven him. At the second, Saint Michael appeared to him with a company of blessed spirits and promised to carry his soul to heaven. At the third, Our Lady, surrounded by a holy company of virgins, honoured him with her visit and told him that on the day of her Assumption he would be present at that great feast in the very abode of glory. After confessing again, receiving Extreme Unction and the sacrament of the Eucharist, and also foretelling many things that were to happen in the government and that afterwards actually happened, he gave back to God his precious soul, laden with merits and good works, to go and enjoy the happiness of eternity. It was on Sunday, 15 August of the year 1087. The neighbouring bishops and abbots were invited to his burial, but none could come, in spite of the desire they all had to render him this duty. Thus Blessed Everolfe, who had administered the Sacraments to him, also laid him in the earth, so that all his words were exactly fulfilled. His body was placed in the church of Saint Peter of Oudenburg, and his tomb was at once honoured by several great miracles, which made the pilgrimage to that

place very famous; and the people even carried away dust from his sepulchre, which served to heal the sick. The remains of this great servant of God were afterwards raised from the ground and placed more honourably by Lambert, bishop of Noyon and Tournai, who was consecrated in the year 1115, when those two bishoprics were still united. This Saint is represented, like Saint Arnulf of Metz, with a cloak covering a coat of mail, because he had been a warrior before becoming a monk at the abbey of Saint-Médard. The brewers having moreover chosen him as their patron, a forked mash-rake has since been put in his hand.

Taken from the Life of the Saint by the monk Hariulf and by Lysiard, bishop of Soissons. — Cf. *Annales du diocèse de Soissons*, by the abbé Pécheur.

## Our Lady of Avénières, in the Diocese of Laval

Our Lady of Avénières covers the country of Laval with a protection eight centuries old; her altar is the most powerful rampart of faith and piety in the whole region; the people flock there in all their needs; they surround it with a constant and traditional homage, and they bless God for having given them so helpful and so gentle a protectress.

It was by a signal miracle of her tenderness that the Queen who wears the triple crown designated the field where the sanctuary of Avénières stands as destined to be consecrated to her. Guy II, lord of Laval, crossing the Mayenne on a bridge below his castle, fell into the river with the horse he was riding. Swept away by a swift current, he sees himself in evident danger of death; but at once he lifts up his heart, full of faith, to her whom the Church calls the Star of the sea; he implores her help with the confidence of a son, and the Mother of mercy turns a kindly eye on him: he is carried gently by the current towards a neighbouring field full of oats, and lands there safe and sound. As he reaches the bank a new prodigy appears before his eyes and confirms the first: he sees close by a statue of the Mother of God holding her divine Son in her arms, all surrounded by lighted lamps. The bright glow they shed was only a faint image of the supernatural light that then flooded the mind and heart of the pious knight. To prostrate himself with his brow to the ground and swear eternal gratitude to Her who had just snatched him from the abyss and was showing herself to him again with such goodness must have been the first impulse of one who could proclaim himself a child of Mary. The second impulse that sprang spontaneously from Guy’s heart was to promise solemnly to his august Protectress to raise an altar to her on the very spot that her feet had sanctified.

Soon a sanctuary rose on the very spot where the image of the holy Virgin had appeared to Guy. So that the homage paid to Mary might be more complete, the pious founder resolved to establish at the same time a choir of virgins destined to sing day and night the praises of God and of His holy Mother. Guy II had two daughters, Agnès and Odeline, also called Hildeburge, who had consecrated themselves to God in the abbey of Sainte-Marie de la Charité, or of the Ronceray, at Angers. It was to this great monastery that he went to ask for the colony of nuns he needed to people the new cloister he wished to found. His wishes were granted, and the pious knight had the happiness of seeing his two daughters charged, with their companions, with paying the tribute of gratitude he owed to the Queen of heaven.

The nuns of Avénières showed themselves worthy of the privileges granted them, and the Queen of heaven looked with favour on this swarm of fervent virgins who surrounded her altar at every hour with homage so pure and so ardent. With such powerful help the community prospered rapidly.

The pilgrimage of Our Lady of Avénières had been frequented for about a century when it was decided to raise a new church there. The number of pilgrims had grown, and the nuns’ monastery had acquired considerable importance. The priory of Avénières raised to the glory of its august patroness one of the most remarkable monuments of the province of Maine, and assuredly the finest of which the banks of the Mayenne can boast.

The church of Our Lady of Avénières is in the form of a Latin cross. According to the prescriptions of the apostolic age, the choir faces east, the arms extend to north and south, and the nave ends to the west. The miraculous image of the holy Virgin is placed below the high altar. It is a statue about two feet high, all of stone except the head, which is of wood. It represents Mary carrying the divine Child in her arms. Although it is painted, the custom has long been established of clothing it in more or less precious vestments according to the solemnities of the liturgical cycle.

The inhabitants of Laval were doubtless the first to feel the benefits bestowed by Our Lady of Avénières. From the beginning they showed a praiseworthy eagerness to visit the new sanctuary; they went there to pray in all their undertakings, all their difficulties and all their sorrows. Mary, always helpful, was pleased to pour out her favours on them; the faith of the people welcomed them and made them known far and wide. Soon pilgrims were seen hastening from distant provinces; Anjou, Brittany and Normandy, vying in fervour with Maine, sent their children to implore Our Lady of Avénières and to present her with ex-votos, which remained hung on every wall of the sanctuary. Often the throng was so great that the pious travellers had to bivouac in the streets, under the awnings of the shops, under the market halls, under the porticoes of the priory, and even in the cemeteries.

Although the eighteenth century was for our country an era of moral and religious ruin, devotion to Our Lady of Avénières lost nothing of its fervour or its brilliance. But that guilty and unhappy century opened for Mary's sanctuary with a serious accident. On 2 February 1701 a gust of wind unroofed the nave and carried away sixteen feet of the stone spire. This misfortune was promptly repaired. In 1708, at the request of the inhabitants, a new altar to the holy Virgin was raised against the first pillar of the nave, on the Gospel side.

In 1724 the parishes of La Trinité, Saint-Vénérand, Louverné, L'Huisserie and Argentré, with the community of the Dominicans of Laval, gave striking proof of the confidence the people placed in Our Lady of Avénières: they came in solemn processions to implore of her protection deliverance from the continual rains that were ruining the harvests and casting despair into the hearts of rich and poor alike. Mary, who is never implored in vain, heard the groans of her pious clients, and the prompt cessation of the scourge rewarded their faith and gave new nourishment to their piety towards Our Lady of Avénières, who covers the whole region of Laval with her shield. And so, in 1735 or 1736, the parish of Saint-Vénérand, having new graces to implore from heaven, remembered that our requests are always well received when they are presented by the hands of the immaculate Virgin, and made a new solemn pilgrimage, in which the clergy carried on their shoulders the venerated head of the patron of the parish.

During the Terror there was a moment, after 9 Thermidor, when revolutionary passions seemed to calm down, and Mary's sanctuary found a few days of peace. On the petition of several inhabitants of the parish, the directory of the department of Mayenne authorized the reopening of the church of Avénières by two decrees, one of 28 April and the other of 1 May 1795. But the calm lasted only a short time, and the disturbances that agitated the country gave a pretext for a renewed persecution. Nevertheless Catholic worship reappeared at Avénières even before the Concordat. The church of the Mother of God was opened and reconciled on 4 May 1800, the second Sunday after Easter. Even men who had had a hand in the horrors of the persecution were seen coming to seek at the foot of Mary's altar the peace and security their conscience no longer knew. How many tasted, beside Her who is called by the name of Refuge of sinners, the sweet first-fruits of reconciliation! How many embittered hearts left the holy sanctuary healed and renewed! In 1805 Michel-Joseph de Pidoll, bishop of Le Mans, visited the church of Avénières and gave confirmation there to a great crowd. Three years later (6 August 1808) the confraternity of the Rosary was established, and a great number of the faithful hastened to join it.

The sanctuary of Our Lady of Avénières was among the first to feel the fruits of grace that the erection of an episcopal see at Laval was to produce throughout Lower Maine. One of the first cares of the vigilant prelate to whom the new church had been entrusted was to prepare the solemn publication of the dogma of the

Immaculate Conception, so dear to piety. It was moreover under the patronage of the Immaculate Conception that the Holy Father had placed the diocese of Laval, and one could expect the feast to be solemn. It was indeed; the whole population, in an outburst of joy, faith and gratitude, took part in this fine manifestation. The town and the whole diocese bore witness to the religious sentiments that animate them. But the central place and as it were the heart of this feast was the sanctuary of Our Lady of Avénières. There the whole episcopal city pressed on the steps of its pastor. The ancient church heard the promulgation of the dogma of the Immaculate Conception of the Virgin to whom it is dedicated; and the pious Pontiff there consecrated his person and his diocese to Mary.

Soon the sovereign pontiff Pius IX added new spiritual graces to those the church of Our Lady of Avénières already enjoyed. In a brief dated 22 August 1857, the sovereign pontiff Pius IX, moved by the desire to increase the devotion of the faithful and to procure the salvation of souls, declares that he opens the heavenly treasures of the Church in favour of all who shall visit the sanctuary of Our Lady of Avénières. The Holy Father makes known that to enjoy these favours one must have confessed one's sins and be truly repentant, have received holy communion, visit the sanctuary devoutly, and pray there for the maintenance of peace among Christian princes, the extirpation of heresy and the exaltation of our Mother the holy Church. The indulgences thus granted are:

> *A plenary indulgence on the day of the Assumption or one of the days of the octave; 2. a plenary indulgence on the six other principal feasts of the most holy Virgin (the Immaculate Conception, the Purification, the Annunciation, the Visitation, the Nativity and the Presentation); 3. an indulgence of seven years and seven quarantines every Friday of the year for those who visit the church of Avénières with a contrite heart and pray there for the intentions of the sovereign Pontiff.*

At the beginning of 1859 the bishop of Laval, having made the journey *ad limina Apostolorum*, obtained still greater favours for the pilgrimage. The Holy Father was pleased to affiliate the sanctuary of Avénières to that of Loreto, to the holy house in which the mystery of the Incarnation was accomplished, and which the angels, at the end of the thirteenth century, carried from Nazareth into Dalmatia and then into the States of the Church, to Loreto, where it has become the goal of a pilgrimage that the Catholic world knows and venerates. The Holy Father's concession is dated 15 March 1859. This affiliation gives the pilgrim of Avénières the right to the same graces and spiritual favours he could gain by visiting, with piety and in the proper dispositions, the very sanctuary in which the Word was made flesh. To share in these graces one must in addition fulfil the ordinary conditions we have set out above. Here now are the particular favours that the brief of 15 March 1859 secures to the church of Avénières:

> *A plenary indulgence, applicable to the souls in purgatory, for the feasts of Christmas, the Immaculate Conception, the Nativity, the Annunciation and the Translation of the holy House of Loreto; 2. an indulgence of seven years and seven quarantines on the other feasts of Our Lord and Our Lady, on that of Saint Joseph and on that of Saint Anne.*

Three days later, on 18 March 1859, Pius IX issued a decree authorizing the bishop of Laval to crown in his name the statue of Our Lady of Avénières. This new favour of the sovereign Pontiff was welcomed with enthusiasm by all classes of society in the diocese of Laval. The solemnity of the Coronation took place on 9 May 1860. What was most touching in this great manifestation of faith was the recollection, the piety and the sincerity of feeling stamped on every face. The crowd, which had arrived from all sides the day before, filled all the streets of the town in an attitude of respect and prayer.

The octave continued, with less pomp no doubt, but with the same energy of faith. Each day saw whole parishes coming from three and four leagues away, and even farther, whose pious inhabitants tore themselves from the work of the fields to go and pay their tribute to the Queen who protects both their lives and their harvests. Most carried ex-votos; all sang the praises of Mary as they filed through the streets of the city. The whole country was stirred. This great solemnity has left in Lower Maine memories that will not soon fade.

The parish of Bonchamp, ever faithful to the excellent spirit that animates it, makes the pilgrimage to Our Lady of Avénières every year with particular pomp: it goes in procession to the sanctuary of the Mother of God, singing her praises and invoking her help, and they do not separate until they have assisted at the holy mysteries.

The number of other pilgrims who visit this blessed sanctuary every year, or even several times a year, is very considerable; there are always more of them on the Friday of each week, and many inhabitants of Laval have the praiseworthy custom of making this journey every Friday of the year.

Taken from the *Pèlerinage de Notre-Dame d'Avénières*, by the Rev. Fr. Dom Piolin.

## Our Lady of Peyragude, in the Diocese of Agen

In the ancient town of Penne, no less curious for the situation of its houses, which carpet the side of the mountain, than for its ruins, stamped with so many memories of war, of success and of reverses, stands the church of Our Lady of Peyragude (*de petra acuta*), which is set on the summit of the rock. Where does the statue venerated there come from? Popular tradition tells us that in the valley of Sainte-Foi de Penne, on the banks of the Oldus, the holy Virgin appeared to a shepherd girl who was about to die of cold and hunger in the snow; that she promised her, and let her find at home, the bread the family had lacked for several days; and that her parents and the child, having come to the place of the apparition to thank the lady, found in her place, at the back of a grotto, the statue, which was carried from that moment to the church of the Mercadiel and has ever since been venerated. The place, the persons and the purpose bear the usual seal of the works of the holy Virgin. Be that as it may, "there has existed from time immemorial, two hundred paces from the town of Penne, in the territory of Notre-Dame du Mercadiel, a chapel consecrated to the most holy Virgin under the title of her Assumption." The fury of the heretics against this holy place was such that the bishops who came to visit it after that time of sacrilege found only ruins. In 1632 a few stones scattered on the ground alone marked the site of the old oratory. What several of these prelates undertook in turn to rebuild it, public piety completed. This was the occasion: "At a time when the plague was desolating the town of Penne and its surroundings (1653), many prayers were offered; but the scourge still continued its ravages. At last the Confraternity of Penitents, which was then composed of the most respected men of the town and its surroundings, vowed to rebuild the church of Our Lady of Peyragude and to go there in procession, barefoot, on the days of Christmas, Easter, Corpus Christi, Saint John and All Saints, and that in perpetuity. The procession set out in this manner. Scarcely had it arrived at the site of Our Lady, where the *Sancta Maria* was intoned, than the plague-stricken felt themselves cured. This procession took place until the Revolution, with the sole difference that only the one who carried the cross was barefoot."

The penitents ratified and exceeded the conditions of this vow with such zeal that a new church was promptly built. In 1796 the church was sold at auction and demolished. Tabernacle doors, altar woodwork, pictures and ribbons of Our Lady, saved from the rubble, are still kept as relics in some families. The altar stone of the high altar was also removed by a pious person, and another gave the statue shelter in her house. This holy image, after remaining there unknown, guarded by a pious jealousy that shared its trust with no one, was at last restored to public veneration in the church of Notre-Dame du Mercadiel. As long as it lived in this temporary refuge, pilgrimages and homage of every kind were not lacking to it. But could one forget that from the top of its rock it had long dominated and blessed the region? This memory, suddenly reawakened in people's hearts, stirred the diocese. Alms poured in; a new building rose, not from the old foundations, but from Our Lady's own property and the ground covered by the funeral chapel of Our Lady of Pity. On 31 May 1843 Mgr de Vézins solemnly carried the ancient statue back into the sanctuary that had been begun, amid the enthusiasm of the people. At the feet of this Mother of sorrows, holding on her knees the lifeless body of her divine Son, graces abound: plenary indulgences granted by His Holiness Gregory XVI are gained there on the five principal feasts of the holy Virgin, and others are attached to a simple visit. Prodigies continue

and make up a wonderful inheritance that warrants every confidence; and so pilgrims of every condition flock to Our Lady of Peyragude.

Taken from a *Notice sur Penne et sur Notre-Dame de Peyragude*, Agen, 1844, and from *Notre-Dame de France*, by the curé of Saint-Sulpice.

## Our Lady of La Gorge, in the Diocese of Annecy

At the end of the valley of Saint-Gervais, or of Montjoie, in upper Faucigny, there is a solitary gorge, known to the many pilgrims who go there to invoke the Mother of God and to the travellers who cross the Col du Bonhomme. The mountains that rise to right and left until they are lost in the clouds, the azure vault of the heavens that seems to rest upon them, and the narrow gorge they leave at their foot, are rather like a Gothic basilica. At this sight the soul is seized with reverence and believes itself under the almighty hand of God. The torrent that comes down noisily from the mountain adds still more to this religious feeling. It is with happiness that one turns one's eyes to the church of Our Lady, which rises in the midst of this majestic valley, and whose memories, all stamped with grace and mercy, come to charm this harsh nature. The origin of Our Lady of La Gorge is linked with that of our oldest religious foundations.

About the year 1090 Aimon, count of Genevois, gave Chamonix to the Benedictines of Saint-Michel de la Clusaz, who came to found a priory at the foot of the giant of the Alps.

The rigour of the frosts and the roughness of the ground were the least of the obstacles the sons of Saint Benedict met beneath Mont Blanc; they also had to defend themselves against the fury of the wild beasts, which were numerous in that savage country. To put themselves under the best protection, they dedicated the church of Chamonix to Saint Michael, that of Les Houches to Saint John the Baptist and that of Argentière to Saint Peter; and at the two opposite ends of their valley, where the wild beasts seemed to have chosen their favourite haunts, they raised in honour of Our Lady the churches of Vallorcine and Servoz.

Everything suggests that it was the Benedictines of Chamonix who founded the first religious establishments of the valley of Montjoie, and that the honour of the first foundation of Our Lady of La Gorge must go to one of those religious.

It often happened in those remote times that monks, to give themselves more easily to the contemplation of divine things, sought solitudes deeper than that of their monastery and asked to withdraw to wild mountains or uninhabited valleys. Tradition says that one of them came to the end of the gorge that closes the valley of Montjoie, and there raised a chapel in honour of Saint Antony, patron of hermits. This chapel was afterwards dedicated to the most holy Virgin, on what occasion is not known.

On 5 August 1706, the feast of Our Lady of the Snows, a great solemnity took place at La Gorge and was the sign of Mary's predilection for her sanctuary. Our Lady had no doubt had her pilgrims there for a long time, and a magnificent church had just been built with the offerings of the faithful; but the little parish could no longer support its pastor. The venerable Rossillon de Bernex, bishop of Geneva, dedicated the new church of Our Lady under the title of the Assumption. "He saw with sorrow the state of this parish, where he foresaw that it would be impossible to maintain good order if the pastor did not find there the means to live. He had recourse to the intercession of the holy Virgin. The fruit of this prayer was a sure presentiment, which he shared with the curé, assuring him that Providence would soon provide for his needs and that his church would one day be rich enough to support several ministers." The holy bishop's prediction was not long in coming true. At once the parishioners showed themselves more generous, pious souls made foundations, and "the church of Our Lady of La Gorge was served by three priests, who administered the sacraments to the neighbouring peoples, who were seen flocking there in crowds on the great solemnities."

The pomp with which all the Christian feasts were thenceforth celebrated at Our Lady of La Gorge was extraordinary; and those of the Virgin, such as the Purification, the Annunciation, the Visitation, the Assumption, the Nativity and the Conception, were privileged. There was not only a solemn Mass and Vespers on each of these feasts; the *Te Deum* and Lauds were sung as well, with organ accompaniment and great splendour of worship.

On Shrove Tuesday a solemn Mass was also celebrated at Our Lady's for the conversion of sinners.

Every day, at the hour when Mary was given to us as mother on Calvary, six candles were lit on the high altar and two on each of the side altars, and then the litanies of the Virgin were sung. The organ was to join its melodies to the voices of the priests and clerics.

The majesty of the sacred ceremonies, joined to the graces Mary was pleased to pour out on those who came to invoke her in the solitude, soon drew an immense multitude of the faithful. All the parishes of the valley of Montjoie, those of Megève, Sallanches, Chamonix and others besides, came in procession to Our Lady of La Gorge. Pilgrims came from so far that it was necessary to found a hospice to receive them. Two pious women, servants of Mary, had charge of this house and did its honours. It is said that on the great feasts, and above all on the day of the Assumption, as the church could not hold the faithful and the vast open space at its entrance was filled by the crowd, Benediction of the most holy Sacrament was given in the open air. At the French Revolution the three priests who served the sanctuary of Our Lady had to flee and seek refuge in the mountains. The church was devastated and its revenues squandered. But scarcely had better days dawned than the altars of the Mother of God were set up again, her beloved image was restored to the veneration of the faithful, and the old pilgrims came again to implore Her whose power and goodness they knew. The church of Our Lady of La Gorge was united to the church of Les Contamines and served at first by the curé of that parish. In 1833 Mgr Rey, bishop of Annecy, came on pilgrimage to Our Lady of La Gorge and completed its restoration. "On the day of the Assumption, the patronal feast of the place, he arrived at the head of the parish of Les Contamines at Our Lady of La Gorge, amid a prodigious crowd that included strangers from every part of Europe, who had come, some from Saint-Gervais, others from Chamonix, to enjoy this religious solemnity. The prelate had wished to be assisted by numerous clergy and to display for the occasion, in his pontifical functions, all the pomp of religion. From that day the pilgrimage of Our Lady of La Gorge was restored to honour. The faithful present at the ceremony carried away the assurance from the bishop's own mouth that henceforth they would find in that place the benefits of religion. Indeed, that very day he had formed the plan of acquiring the old presbytery with the land round it, to place and maintain some priests there. The difficulties this acquisition met were smoothed away by the zeal of M. Mermoud, syndic of Les Contamines, and of M. Millet, curé of that parish; and before the end of that year Mgr Rey was in possession of this gorge and of the places sanctified by the blessings of the Mother of God."

At Mgr Rey's request the sovereign pontiff Gregory XVI granted in perpetuity a plenary indulgence, to be gained on any one day of the year by those who visit the church of Our Lady of La Gorge.

Not a day passes in the fine season without bringing some pilgrim into this Alpine gorge, consecrated to Mary for so many centuries. They come from all the provinces of Savoy and even from abroad: from Faucigny, Tarentaise, Upper Savoy, Savoy Proper, Maurienne, Aosta and the Valais. They are especially numerous on all the Sundays of the month of May, on the feasts of Mary, and above all on the day of the Assumption and the day of the Nativity, when they are counted by thousands. Sometimes towards evening fifteen persons are seen coming slowly and saying the rosary, honouring by their number the principal mysteries of the life of Mary. They are usually from the valley of Montjoie, and go thus to ask together for the relief of a sick person or the conversion of a sinner.

We should leave out one of the most interesting episodes in the history of Our Lady of La Gorge if we said nothing of the Holy Chapel, which, though separate from the church of Our Lady, is united to it by its

memories and merges with it in the same devotion.

We know nothing at once so rustic and so striking as the Holy Chapel of La Gorge. It is five minutes from the church. One reaches it by a picturesque path through the fir trees and green shade. It is a little building, or rather a little hut, at the foot of a rock into which it sinks. A torrent coming down from the mountain breaks at its base, and only by means of a plank can one get inside. Before entering one feels I know not what religious awe. Once inside, one is in a narrow, dark grotto, with a stone altar before one, surmounted by the image of Mary holding the child Jesus in her arms. Daylight enters this holy refuge only through a narrow window like that of a poor cottage.

Near the altar a limpid water flows drop by drop into a little basin; it is blessed by its very source. The pilgrim wets his finger in it to sign himself, and several drink it out of devotion, for beneficial powers are attributed to it.

At the roar of the torrent breaking against this humble sanctuary, at the tumult of the foaming waters that one hears bellowing, it seems that one will be swept away; but one remembers that one is under the eye of Mary, and one greets with happiness the star of the sea.

This oratory was, it is said, an ex-voto for a miraculous protection granted to a traveller. He had taken the road that leads to the Col du Bonhomme and had reached the point of that road that is now above the Holy Chapel, when he made a false step and fell into the precipice. He vowed that if he could be delivered he would place a statue of the Mother of God at the very spot of his fall. Having happily escaped the danger, he hastened to raise this monument of his gratitude. It is only since 1850 that Mass can be celebrated in the Holy Chapel, and Mgr Rendu, bishop of Annecy, has granted forty days' indulgence to all who attend it. Much is said in upper Faucigny of the miraculous graces the Virgin lavishes in the solitudes of La Gorge.

Numerous ex-votos adorn the sanctuary of Our Lady of La Gorge. There is one that dates from the deliverance of Vienna by the great Sobieski. It was on the occasion of that deliverance that Pope Innocent XI ordered in 1683 that the feast of the holy name of Mary should be kept throughout the Church on the Sunday within the octave of the Nativity, to thank the Mother of God for the help she had given the Christian armies.

Taken from *Notre-Dame de Savoie*, by the abbé Grobel.

## Our Lady of La Garde, at Marseilles

The dearest of all the works undertaken under the episcopate of Bishop Rainier, and the only one, moreover, that survived the disasters of the French Revolution, was the foundation of the venerated sanctuary of Our Lady of La Garde, on the summit of a hill to the north-west of Marseilles.

It was about the year 1214 that the chapel of Our Lady of La Garde was founded, and in the following circumstances.

The mountain of La Garde belonged to the abbey of Saint-Victor. A man named Pierre, one of those who were called masters, had the devotion to have a church built there, and he wished to add a house to it and to cultivate a piece of land on the mountain, apparently to endow the church. He negotiated with Guillaume, abbot of Saint-Victor, and they came to the following agreement.

The abbot, with the consent of the community, allowed Pierre to build a church and houses on the mountain and to make there a garden, a vineyard and such other cultivation as he pleased. The enjoyment of all this was granted to Pierre only so long as he remained faithful to the abbot and his successors and obeyed them. He could alienate nothing of it without their consent; he bound himself, for as long as he remained in possession of what was ceded to him, to pay each year, on the feast of Saint Victor, twelve Roman deniers to the cellarer of the abbey; and after his death all the land he had occupied and all the additions and improvements he had made were to revert to the abbot and the monastery. Pierre, having accepted these

conditions, gave himself to the abbey of Saint-Victor, into the hands of the abbot, to be a brother and faithful son of the Order.

After Pierre's death the claustral prior of Saint-Victor, performing the functions of the abbot, granted the administration of this chapel to Ripert de Uzenobre, deacon, on 29 March in the year 1256.

A new tower was raised by order of the municipality of Marseilles, and in the deeds of the year 1385 this tower is called *Turris beatae Mariae de Gardia*. The chapel, too small to hold the considerable number of the faithful who came there from all sides, was entirely rebuilt and enlarged in 1478.

It was Francis I who had the fort of Notre-Dame de la Garde built; it was raised as we still see it today, from 1515 to 1525, with great blocks of stone taken from the ruins of the convent of the Cordeliers, demolished in 1514; from then on the chapel of Our Lady of La Garde was enclosed within the fortress. The bishop of Troyes came to consecrate it in 1544, at the request of the priors of the confraternity.

The chapel was repaired again in 1732.

On Saturday 4 April 1807 the chapel of Our Lady of La Garde, which had been closed during the Revolution, was restored to worship. But the need was soon felt for a building more in keeping with the throng and the devotion of the pilgrims. Begun in 1852 under Mgr Eugène de Mazenod, the new sanctuary was inaugurated under Mgr Cruice in 1864. No one has forgotten the splendour of the festivities held on that occasion on the 4th and 5th of June of that year.

The building is preceded by an immense flight of steps, whose staircase has for some years been broken by beds of greenery placed at intervals, as if to rest the eye of the pilgrim wearied by this painful ascent.

It was built to the plans of M. Espérandieu in the Romano-Byzantine style, characterized by the alliance of tower and dome, and measures forty-seven metres in length by sixteen in width. The exterior is built of Calissanne stone. Bases break the whiteness of the tone of these stones, which is also set off by bands of pale blue Colfaline (Florentine stone). The dome is about fifteen metres high and nine metres fifty in diameter. The bell tower, already raised to a considerable height, will be crowned by a statue of the Good Mother made by the galvanoplastic process. The great bell, which has already been put in place, weighs ten thousand kilograms. The building is oriented according to the prescriptions of the archaeological rule to which people were once so faithful, that is, with the apse to the east and the porch to the west.

Inside, one is struck first of all by the height of the round-arched vaults, which makes a deep impression on the souls of the devout pilgrims.

The chapel consists of three naves, the transept and the apse. The apse ends in a semicircle with the chapel of the Good Mother. At the far end rises the pedestal bearing the venerated statue. This statue, of repoussé silver, is a true masterpiece.

The great nave is flanked by six side chapels, dedicated, on the Gospel side, to Saint Joseph, Saint Lazarus and Saint Charles; on the Epistle side, to Saint Peter, Saint Mary Magdalen and Saint Roch. Each of these chapels contains an oriented altar executed after fine models of Romanesque art. Two small columns of lapis lazuli support the pediment of the tabernacle of these altars, above which one sees, in openings made in the nave, shrines containing the relics of the Saints of the diocese. A mosaic pavement covers the floor of these chapels. Four great marble plaques, placed in the chapels of Saint Charles, Saint Mary Magdalen, Saint Lazarus and Saint Roch, recall to visitors the history of the new sanctuary and the names of the bishops who attended its consecration.

The transept is supported by columns of Alpine marble of a fine green colour. In its upper part it has two great twin windows surmounted by a radiating rose.

The materials used for the facings, the columns and the pilasters are of the greatest luxury and make up the chief richness of the interior decoration. The white marble of Carrara, the red marble of Brignoles, the porphyry of Fréjus and red granite blend their rich colours there. The walls of the sanctuary, entirely covered with marble or painting, bear, in the space left free below the windows, the ex-votos of devotion to the Good Mother. The little ships, the silver lamps, the anchors, the flags, the chains and the hearts hung from the vaults or placed against the walls bear witness to the same filial piety.

The confessionals have been executed in the Romano-Byzantine style. Their carvings are remarkably finished. The gallery above the monumental screen at the entrance of the church rightly attracts the attention of connoisseurs. Two marble roses open out beside it; the arms of Mgr de Mazenod and those of Mgr Cruice occupy their centres. Grisaille windows let a soft light into the building. They bear the names of the pious donors who offered them to the sanctuary.

From the upper chapel one goes down into a crypt of about the same extent as the main church. Its vault is supported by strong columns and thick pilasters. A band of scrolls and interlaced foliage runs beneath the springing of the arches. On the walls are small marble plaques giving in red letters the names of the generous benefactors whose offerings made it possible to complete the sanctuary. The floor is covered with an inlaid pavement. The altar, whose table of Colfaline is supported by small marble columns, is in the style of the seventeenth century. Such, in its whole and its principal details, is the building that the piety of Marseilles has set on a height from which the eye takes in the city, its harbours, its territory and its vast girdle of high hills. To the west the sea unrolls majestically, which Our Lady of La Garde seems to have the special mission of protecting.

The number of pilgrims who each year climb the steep slopes of the holy hill has been estimated at nearly a million. Marseilles is rightly proud of its pilgrimage, and counts among its best glories that of being the city of the Good Mother of La Garde.

This notice, kindly furnished by the abbé Ricard, is taken from his *Histoire des Évêques de Marseille* and his *Semaine liturgique de Marseille*.

## Saint Baussenge or Balsème, Deacon of Arcis-sur-Aube, Martyr

*About 407.*

Baussenge was born towards the end of the fourth century at Limoges according to some, at Bourges according to others. He received a very Christian upbringing, to which he responded wonderfully, and was early admitted to the clergy, where he fulfilled his duties with edification. When he had received the diaconate he left his native land, driven by the desire for greater perfection, and came into the diocese of Troyes under the episcopate of Aurelian. He exercised his ministry at Arcis-sur-Aube, of which he was regarded, because of his preaching, as the apostle. He visited the sick, consoled the afflicted, administered the Eucharist to the faithful, and God poured out the most abundant blessings on his labours. When the Barbarians, Vandals, Alans and others, had crossed the Rhine at the beginning of the fifth century to ravage Gaul, they came from the country of Reims to Arcis-sur-Aube. Baussenge had the courage to reproach them for their cruelties and to exhort them to humanity. Angered by his boldness, the Barbarians overwhelmed him with blows at some distance from Arcis, in a place called La Dorée; after various tortures they cut off his head. It was 16 August 407. Then was renewed the miracle God had already worked for Saint Parre and Saint Savinian. Baussenge, animated by a new life, rose and began to walk, carrying his head in his hands as in triumph. At this sight the Barbarians become furious; they rush upon the Saint and throw him into the depths of a well, which they take care to wall up and cover with turf so as to efface even the trace of their abominable crime. Some years later a lady of Limoges, having lost her sight, was inspired by God to go to the place of Saint Baussenge’s martyrdom; she had the well cleared, found the body of the Saint, rubbed her

eyes with the water of the well, and recovered her sight. Then the relics were placed in a neighbouring church dedicated to Saint Peter. On 16 August 960 they were placed by the countess Hersendis, mother of Blessed Manasses, bishop of Troyes, in the chapel of Sainte-Marie de Ramerupt (Aube, arrondissement of Arcis). This chapel became a priory. After the suppression of the monastic Orders the precious remains were carried to the parish church of Ramerupt and mixed with other bones, so that they are no longer authentic.

Cf. *Les Saints de Troyes*, by the abbé Defer.

## Our Lady of Rubeaux, in the Diocese of Tulle

Our Lady of Rubeaux, in the parish of Lubersac, in the diocese of Tulle, is a sanctuary so ancient that its origin cannot be fixed. What is known is that it is the work of a Christian mother who, seeing her child near death, vowed to raise a chapel in honour of the holy Virgin if her child were given back to her. The child recovered its health, and the grateful mother raised the promised chapel in a wood favourable to recollection in prayer, on the bank of a stream that ran through it; whence the chapel took the name of *ri dou bos* in the patois of the time, that is, stream of the wood, and by abbreviation

Rubeaux. The chief purpose of this pilgrimage was to consecrate little girls to the holy Virgin and place them under her protection. People came to consecrate them to her at the time of their weaning; they came back to offer them to her and commend them anew to her keeping on her feast days and at certain times of the year. The girls presented themselves there in white dresses and took part in the processions instituted in honour of the Queen of Virgins. Even today, on the Sunday after the Assumption, which is the patronal feast of the chapel, and on every day of the following week up to and including the Sunday, mothers bring their children to the chapel and have the gospel of the Mass of the holy Virgin recited over them, in which are read, as a consoling omen for their future, these words: “Blessed is the womb that bore thee and the breasts that gave thee suck.” One day a sailor was even seen who, after the death of his wife, on the eve of leaving for a distant expedition, came to bring his little orphan girl to Our Lady of Rubeaux and, lifting her up towards her in his arms, said: “Holy Virgin, be the Mother of this dear child whom a father entrusts to you and who has lost her mother on earth.”

The highest ranks of society share this devotion of the people to Our Lady of Rubeaux; and the veils, trimmings or albs they offer to the chapel always bear in embroidery some words relating to children, such as these: “Mother without stain, pray for us and for our children.” In ’93 revolutionary vandalism demolished the sanctuary, scattered all the documents that would have preserved its origin and history for posterity, tore the statue from its pedestal, broke it in pieces, and sold the very site of the chapel as national property. But while, by a visible punishment from heaven, the chief author of these sacrilegious acts lost his sight, as did a young child who was all his hope, the faithful gathered up with religious care the fragments of the broken statue; and when better days dawned they put it together again from these fragments, bought back the site of the chapel, and raised a sanctuary there to restore the ancient image of Mary to worship. The wood that surrounded it has given way to a pleasant and lively spot, enlivened by the dwellings of many of the faithful, who have been pleased to settle in the neighbourhood, like children who love to live near their beloved mother.

Taken from *Notre-Dame de France*, by the curé of Saint-Sulpice.

## Our Lady of Beaune, in the Diocese of Dijon

The church of Notre-Dame of Beaune, daughter and heir of Saint-Baudèle, the original parish, built but not finished in 976, was honoured by Pope Sixtus IV with the title and prerogatives of an *Insigne Collegiate Church*. At its east end opens the largest of the many chapels that radiate around its naves. It was formerly the most venerable: beneath its austere vault rested the image of the Mother of God, patroness and glory of

the city. This image, of black wood, carved by an unskilled hand, represents the holy Virgin seated with the Child God on her knees. There, every day, the faithful thronged to implore the protection of the Queen of heaven, and the Queen of heaven poured out her graces and favours there in abundance. A legendary of the thirteenth century, written by Pierre de Marcilly, dean of the Chapter of the collegiate church, doctor of theology and censor, contains the account of twenty-four miracles worked in the single year 1290. Most of them are cures of paralysis or of incurable contractions, and almost all took place on a Saturday. It was not only from Beaune and its surroundings that the sick flocked to the feet of Our Lady: one of the miracles of the legendary is in favour of a poor woman who had come from the depths of Lorraine.

Stillborn children too were brought to the altar of the Black Virgin, so that they might return to life and receive holy Baptism; the sick who were confined to their beds asked for the ornaments that surrounded the holy image, so as to touch them and be healed; and in gratitude for graces obtained, many made rich offerings: precious fabrics, golden crowns, rings set with jewels.

Time has not weakened the piety of the people of Beaune. The image, saved during the Revolution by a pious schoolmistress, is now placed in the transept, to the right of the high altar, and there, as of old, the cry of love and hope is repeated to her: *Maria, mater gratiae*. In 1832 Beaune, threatened by cholera, had recourse to its august patroness and was delivered from the scourge. In gratitude the faithful raised a new altar to Mary and had the testimony of this signal favour engraved on the marble in letters of gold. Likewise in 1854 the city thronged to the feet of its "safeguard," carried her venerated image in procession, and escaped the danger. "Honour of the city and of the world, *orbis et urbis honor*," she is represented on the arms of the town standing, her brow haloed with gold, carrying her son on her left arm and holding in her right hand a vine branch with a bunch of grapes.

Taken from the *Vie des Saints du diocèse de Dijon*, by the abbé Duplus.

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[1] See his life on that day.

[2] See his life on 13 November.

[3] We gave his life on 26 July with that of Saint Anne, mother of the most holy Virgin.

# 16 August

## Martyrologies

### MARTYROLOGE ROMAIN.

At Cracow, in Poland, Saint HYACINTH, confessor, of the Order of Friars Preachers. Pope Clement VIII placed him among the Saints and ordered his feast to be celebrated on this day. 1257. — At Rome, Saint Titus, deacon, who, when the city was taken by the Goths, was killed by order of a barbarian tribune as he was distributing money to the poor. 410. — At Nicaea, in Bithynia, Saint Diomedes, physician, who was beheaded for the faith of Jesus Christ during the persecution of Diocletian, and thus consummated his martyrdom. About 304. — On the same day, the memory of thirty-three holy Martyrs. — At Ferentino, in Campania, Saint Ambrose, centurion, who, during the persecution of Diocletian, having been tormented with various kinds of tortures, then passed through fire without being harmed by it, and was finally thrown into water, from which he passed happily to eternal refreshment. 303. — At Milan, Saint Simplician, bishop, famous for the testimony Saint Ambrose and Saint Augustine bore to his holiness.[1] About 400. — At Auxerre, Saint Eleutherius, bishop.[2] 561. — At Nicomedia, Saint Arsacius or Ursacius, confessor, who left the army during the persecution of Licinius to embrace the solitary life, in which he became so illustrious by his prodigies that it is related that he drove out demons and by his prayers killed a monstrous dragon. Finally he foretold the ruin of that city, and gave up his spirit to God in the fervour of his prayer. 358. — At

Montpellier, in Languedoc, the death of Saint ROCH, confessor, who delivered several cities of Italy from the plague by the power of the sign of the cross. His body was translated to Venice and laid with great honour in a church that bears his name. 1327. — At Rome, Saint Serena, who had been the wife of Diocletian. Third or fourth century.

## MARTYROLOGE DE FRANCE, REVU ET AUGMENTÉ.

In the diocese of Rennes, Saint ARMEL or ERMEL (*Armagilus*), abbot and confessor. 552. — At Decize (Nièvre), in the diocese of Nevers, Saint ARE or AREY, bishop of that see and confessor. 558. — In the diocese of Gap, Saint ARIGE or AREY, bishop of that see and confessor, already named in the martyrology of France on 1 May. 604. — At the village of Ivry-lès-Paris, in Auvergne and at Senlis, Saint FRAIMBAUD, abbot, famous for his miracles. 532. — At Arles, Saint Rusticula or Rusticle, virgin, abbess of Saint-Césaire of Arles, whose life we gave on 10 August. 632. — At Poitiers, Saint TRIAISE, virgin, recluse near the walls of that city. About 375. — At Rieux (*Rivi*), chief town of a canton of Haute-Garonne, in the diocese of Toulouse, Saint CIZY (*Cizius*), soldier and martyr. Ninth century. — At Metz, Saint Arnoult or Arnoul, bishop of that see, then a solitary in the wilds of the Vosges, whose life we gave on 18 July. 641. — At Rennes, Blessed Raoul de la Fustaye, also called Raoul de Fragrey (*Radulphus*), monk of Saint-Jouin de Marnes in Poitou. He died in the monastery of Saint-Sulpice, which he had founded. He was also the founder of the monasteries of Locmaria (*Locus Mariae, Aquilonis monasterium*), of Fougereuse (*Fulgerosia*) and of several others. 1129. — In the dioceses of Albi and Mainz, Saint Roch, confessor, cited in the Roman martyrology of this day. — In the neighbourhood of Lille, Our Lady of La Barrière, a pilgrimage whose origin is due to Mary's visible protection against two incursions of the Calvinists of Flanders on the abbey of Marquette, in 1566 (16 August) and in 1578. The sanctuary dates from 1622. — In the diocese of Troyes, Saint Baussenge or Balsème, deacon, martyr at Arcis-sur-Aube, whose life we gave on the preceding day. 407. — At Mons, in Belgian Hainaut, the erection by Margaret of Constantinople of Our Lady of the Val des Écoliers, a priory of Augustinian Canons Regular. In the church there were no fewer than five altars dedicated to the most holy Virgin: the high altar under the title of the Assumption; another under that of Our Lady of the Seven Sorrows; a third under that of Our Lady of the Sepulchre; a fourth under that of Our Lady of Loreto; the fifth under the title of Our Lady of the Silver Feet. 1251.

## MARTYROLOGES DES ORDRES RELIGIEUX.

*Martyrology of the Canons Regular.* — Among the Canons of the Lateran: At Tagaste, in Africa, Saint Alypius, bishop of that city. First a disciple of blessed Augustine, then his companion in his conversion and his colleague in the pastoral ministry, he fought courageously with him against the heretics and finally joined him in his heavenly glory, flying up to heaven on 15 August.[3] 431.

*Martyrology of the Benedictines.* — At Cracow, in Poland, Saint Hyacinth, confessor, of the Order of Friars Preachers, whom Pope Clement VII placed among the Saints, ordering that his feast should be kept on this day. 1257. — At Subiaco or Sublac (*Sublaqueum*), in the States of the Church, the birth into heaven of Blessed Lawrence of Fanello, hermit, surnamed Loricatus, or the Mailed, whose body was carried from Mount Morebotti, where he was a hermit, to the church of Saint Benedict near the grotto of our Father. Mention is made of him on 16 March.[4] 1243.

*Martyrology of the Order of Camaldoli.* — In Narbonese Gaul, at Montpellier, the death of Blessed Roch, confessor, who by the sign of the cross delivered several cities of Italy from the epidemic. His body was afterwards translated to Venice and buried there with great honour in the church consecrated in his name. 1327.

*Martyrology of the Congregation of Vallombrosa.* — At Montpellier, in Narbonese Gaul, Blessed Roch, confessor, etc.

*Martyrology of the three Orders of Saint Francis.* — In Narbonese Gaul, at Montpellier, Blessed Roch, confessor, who, of illustrious birth, made himself poor and humble for Christ and wore the insignia of the Third Order; finally, famous for his patience, his chastity and his miracles, he departed for the heavenly homeland. His power shines especially against epidemic diseases. 1327.

*Martyrology of the Friars Preachers.* — At Cracow, in Poland, Saint Hyacinth, confessor, of the Order of Friars Preachers, who, receiving the religious habit from the hands of our Father Saint Dominic, excelled by the admirable innocence of his life and of his doctrine. He crossed great rivers dry-shod and was renowned for the glory of his miracles. He was found worthy of sweet converse with the holy Mother of God, was remarkable for his virginity and full of the Holy Spirit. Finally, having put off his earthly covering, he was called to the eternal rewards on the very day of the Assumption of blessed Mary, and was placed among the Saints by Clement VIII. 1257.

*Martyrology of the Calced and Discalced Carmelites.* — At Florence, Blessed Angelo Agostino Mazzinghi, confessor, Carmelite, whose immemorial cult was approved by Clement XIII, who ordered his feast to be celebrated throughout the Order of Carmelites and granted it also to the city of Florence. This feast is now celebrated on 13 August. 1438.

## ADDITIONS FAITES D'APRÈS LES BOLLANDISTES ET AUTRES HAGIOGRAPHES.

On this day, according to a pious tradition, the sepulchre of the most holy Virgin was opened; and as she had ascended to heaven on the preceding day, only her shroud was found, which gave forth a delightful fragrance. — At Sion, a town of Switzerland in the Valais, Saint Theodulus, bishop of that see and confessor. He is believed to have been born in the diocese of Besançon, of the noble family of Grammont, one of the most illustrious of Franche-Comté. His merit and virtues having raised him to the episcopate, he was called to govern the Church of Sion. Charlemagne gave him the sovereignty of the Valais and established him and his successors as prefect and count of the whole country: and so he is represented holding in his hand the crown and the two-edged sword, symbols of the double jurisdiction, civil and ecclesiastical, with which he was invested. Various portions of his relics were carried into the dioceses of Besançon and Lyons. At the monastery of Ainay, near the latter city, a silver arm was kept in which, among other precious relics, the arm of Saint Theodulus was enclosed. The priory of Jouhe, near Dole, kept religiously a shrine containing some bones of this holy Bishop. The church of Saint-Étienne of Besançon also possessed some relics of Saint Theodulus: they had been given it by Otto, count of Chalon and of Burgundy.[5] 806. — In Persia, Saint Vamnès, martyr. Varanes V, king of Persia (420–440), had ordered all his subjects to worship the sun, fire and water; he had also forbidden them to free slaves who said they were Christians. Now Vamnès bought a slave and set him free. Varanes, furious, handed him over to the judge Daudrasbade, who threatened him with the worst tortures if he did not deny the religion of Jesus Christ. Vamnès remained constant in his faith, in spite of the entreaties of his wife, and was beheaded after enduring the torture of scourging. 423. — At Alexandria, the holy martyrs Orion, Aemilius and Agnatus, cited by Saint Jerome. — Among the Greeks, Saint Chaeremon, anchorite. Fourth or fifth century. — At Naples, Saint Nostrianus, bishop of that see, which he held for seventeen years, and confessor. He was, with Saint Prosper of Aquitaine, one of those who rose up with the most success, both by word and by writing, against the Arian heresy. His body was laid in the church of San Gioioso outside the walls of Naples. His relics were discovered in 1612 and translated to the church of San Gennaro. About 450. — In Persia, Saint Thyrsus and his companions, martyrs.

## Saint Fraimbaud of Auvergne, Recluse, Patron of Ivry, in the Diocese of Paris[6]

*532. — Pope: Boniface II. — King of France: Theuderic I.*

*Spiritual joy cannot spread through a soul that does not know how to rise by contemplation above the trials of earthly life.*

*Saint Gregory the Great.*

Fraimbaud was born of rich and noble parents in the province of the Arverni towards the end of the fifth century. His name indicates a Frankish origin. Early commended by his father to King Childebert, he spent some time at the palace of that prince, where a brilliant youth received the lessons of holy and learned persons. Fraimbaud profited by this education, so Christian and so illustrious. None of these young lords had finer prospects at court than he: a brilliant future awaited him. But such fine appearances could not dazzle him; he became more and more convinced of the truth of these words of Saint Augustine: “All that appears firmest and most secure at court is extremely fragile; one rises to the first places through great dangers, and these places themselves are full of troubles, perils and inevitable evils.” He also very often turned over in his mind what the apostle Saint James says: “The love of this world is incompatible with the friendship of God, and one cannot love the world or make oneself loved by it without at the same time incurring the enmity of God.” Yielding to these considerations and to the voice of God that called him, he left the court and withdrew to live as a recluse near Paris, in a solitude where the village of Ivry now stands. Nature had prepared for him a cistern of good water, with a cave in the form of a room beside it. It was there that he laid the first foundations of the penitential and contemplative life he always practised afterwards. Pure water was all his drink. The herbs and roots that the earth produces of itself were all his food, and, except for a few hours that necessity obliged him to give to sleep, he spent the rest of his time in reciting the psalms and meditating on eternal truths. His father was soon informed of his retreat and came looking for him as far as Ivry; but the water of the cistern having risen miraculously above the Saint’s cave, without however entering it or doing him any harm, his father could not persuade himself that he was inside, and so retraced his steps without having been able to find him. Saint Fraimbaud knew by this prodigy that Our Lord approved his design; and, fearing to be surprised another time so near Paris, he went to the abbey of Micy near Orléans, which Saint Mesmin and Saint Auspicius, his uncle, had founded some years before, and which was a happy nursery of saints and excellent religious. His life in this earthly paradise was so pure and so innocent, and he showed in all his conduct so fine a harmony of all the virtues, that he was soon obliged to receive the priesthood, which in those days was granted only to the most perfect religious. His holiness shone even outside, and often drew to Micy persons of every condition, who came to receive his advice and to implore in their troubles the help of his prayers. He obtained children for a barren woman; he cured with a little blessed oil a young man long afflicted with a malignant fever; by making the sign of the cross he restored the movement of her hands to a woman who had lost the use of them; and by means of a piece of blessed bread that he made a paralysed old man eat, he restored him to perfect health and gave him the free use of his limbs.

These prodigies brought him too many visits and too much veneration: he escaped them by withdrawing into Maine. He settled in the wilds of the Passais. There, on the banks of the Mayenne, he built himself a hut of stakes and branches, and covered his modest building with thatch and broom. He lived there in vigils, prayers, fasts and continual mortifications; but God sent him disciples, so that his modest cell was soon changed into a monastery. Saint Innocent, bishop of Le Mans, after examining Fraimbaud and recognizing his holiness and learning, not only allowed him to establish this community but even helped him with his alms. He made use of him to restore monastic discipline, which was beginning to grow slack, and ordered him to gather from the lives and writings of the holy Fathers, in which he was very well versed, all that could be practised by the religious of his time and to make of it a new Rule, which the bishop confirmed by his authority and afterwards had exactly kept. He also made use of him for the reform of his clergy and for the establishment of several communities of clergy, whom our Saint taught to live in common according to the order observed from the time of the Apostles. Finally, to make him useful to the whole of France, he took him with him to the fourth Council of Orléans, at which fifty bishops were present in person or by their

deputies, and where several Canons were made for the good of Christian discipline. Our Saint was one of its brightest lights, although, being only a priest, he had no deciding vote there.

Fraimbaud's reputation grew from day to day, and the more he fled honour, the more honour pursued him. His new miracles also contributed much to making him the object of everyone's admiration: for he healed the sick, gave light to the blind, raised the dead, drove evil spirits out of the bodies of the possessed, stilled tempests, calmed storms, stopped plague and other contagious diseases, and obtained children, goods and other prosperity for those who implored his help with humility and confidence: one would have said that God had resolved to refuse nothing to his prayers. His particular grace, however, was for ills of the head and of all its parts. One Sunday he was preaching the word of God: a blind man cried out that he would give him back his sight if he would pray for him. The Saint did so during the night together with the blind man himself, and the next morning, having moistened with his spittle a little of the dust of the church, he rubbed his eyes with it and healed him perfectly. Having once blessed some bread and given it to a man afflicted with a toothache so violent that it could be called a madness, he delivered him from this suffering and restored him to perfect health. He also healed one of his religious who had fractured his skull in falling from a great height. Every day the birds of the forest near his monastery came to entertain him with their songs, until he dismissed them with his blessing. One day he noticed that they were sad when he had dismissed them; he followed them to see the cause of their sadness, and saw that they were gathering round the little lifeless body of one of their number. Moved with pity, Fraimbaud stretched out his hand, made the sign of the cross, and the bird came back to life. Fraimbaud often went out of his monastery to evangelize the people; during one of these apostolic journeys he fell ill in a village called Saint-Fraimbault-sur-Pisse (a parish now in the diocese of Séez), and died there on 15 August, about the middle of the sixth century, under the episcopate of Scenfroy, successor of Saint Innocent. He was buried in his monastery, and his tomb afterwards became the object of the veneration of the whole of France.

He may be represented leaving his father's palace to withdraw into solitude, or else instructing the poor and the country people.

## CULTE ET RELIQUES.

The supernatural help Saint Fraimbaud gave to those who implored his assistance caused various churches to be built in his honour, such as Saint-Fraimbault-de-Lassay and Saint-Fraimbault-de-Prières, where his tomb was. Nearly five hundred years after his death, Queen Adelaide, wife of Hugh Capet, had his body raised and, when it had been enclosed in a most magnificent shrine, had it carried to Senlis, to a collegiate church she had built there expressly in his honour, which she founded and endowed for a dean, a treasurer, a cantor, eleven canons and other beneficiaries, who were to sing day and night the praises of God and of their blessed patron. She also presented them with an alb, a chasuble and other ecclesiastical vestments that the Saint had used at the altar, in which the bishop of Senlis celebrated the solemn Mass every year on this day dedicated to Saint Fraimbaud. In the year 1177 the members of this collegiate church, taking occasion of the necessary repair of their church, opened their reliquaries in the presence of the bishops of Senlis and Meaux and the abbots of Chaalis, Longpont and Foigny, and found the body of Saint Fraimbaud, abbot and confessor, with those of Saint Gerbault, bishop, Saint Beaumire, abbot, Saint Lodovène, queen of France, and Saint Bertha, and the arm of Saint Evulfe. All were carried in procession in the presence of Louis VII and of the cardinal of Saint-Chrysogone, legate of the Holy See, who preached at this solemnity. This can be seen from an ancient charter that Father Labbe published in volume II of his Library. The inhabitants of Ivry near Paris have also shown their devotion to this holy Abbot; for, besides choosing him as one of the patrons of their parish, they built over his cave a chapel where he was honoured by a great concourse of pilgrims, and where they kept even the stones on which he used to rest. The water of the neighbouring cistern, which swelled miraculously to hide him from his father's eyes, has since become a healing water for the sick. This same chapel was rebuilt with more ornament in the seventeenth century, and in 1670 the bishop of Paris erected there a

Confraternity of Saint Fraimbaud, which Pope Clement IX favoured with several indulgences. Five years later its members obtained from the bishop of Senlis and the Chapter of Saint-Fraimbaud a considerable portion of his relics, which were honoured there every year, principally on 1 May, the day on which the ceremony of the translation took place. No relics of Saint Fraimbaud are any longer kept at Ivry: the Revolution destroyed everything. The chapel was no more respected than the relics; this chapel, built on the site of Saint Fraimbaud's hermitage, survived until after the Revolution; for a long time now no trace of it has been seen. Saint Fraimbaud's well is now filled in. The memory of Saint Fraimbaud is thus almost destroyed; nevertheless his feast is still kept on the first Sunday of May. As for the Confraternity of Saint Fraimbaud, it no longer exists. At Senlis there remains only a ruined church under the title of Saint Fraimbaud and a relic of little material importance. The church of Saint-Fraimbault-de-Lassay now possesses a reliquary of silvered bronze containing seven pieces of the Saint's skull. These relics were again recognized as authentic on 17 July 1840 by Mgr Bouvier, bishop of Le Mans.

We have completed Father Giry with the *Histoire de l'Église du Mans* by the Rev. Fr. Dom Paul Piolin, with local notes furnished by M. Boidard, curé of Ivry, and M. Lemaire, curé of Senlis, and with the *Vies des Saints du diocèse de Séez* by the abbé Blin.

## Saint Armel or Ermel, Abbot and Confessor, in the Former Diocese of Léon

*552. — Pope: Vigilius. — King of France: Childebert I.*

> *To strive to follow Jesus our head by true humility: that is the sum of all Christian philosophy.*
>
> *Louis de Blois.*

Armorican Brittany in the sixth century of the Church was the land of Saints. All its solitudes were peopled, like the ancient Thebaid, with most perfect anchorites, and a great number of communities established in various districts lived there in a manner so pure and so austere, according to the laws Saint Patrick had given to the religious of Great Britain and Hibernia, that it may be believed Armorica counted scarcely fewer saints than men consecrated to God, most of whom came there from overseas. Hence it is that the calendars mention a great number of Saints of whom only the name is known; that there are so many chapels and even parish churches bearing those names; and that the ecclesiastical history of the province, for the first centuries, consists almost entirely of legends that do not always offer a complete guarantee. One of the chief and most renowned of those who flourished at that time in Armorica was Saint Armel. He was born in 482, of noble parents, in Great Britain; but the names of his father and mother are unknown, as is that of the province of the island in which he was born. His early years were spent in study; and as most of the masters who taught the British youth were holy religious who took incomparably more care to bring them up in piety than in human letters (which they did not, however, neglect), the young Armel, who had a clear and penetrating mind and an excellent disposition, soon surpassed his companions in learning and piety. He applied himself so carefully to both, and made such admirable progress in them from day to day, that it is said that while still a young schoolboy he was already revered by the others as a master and a saint; and he became still more venerable to them when one of them, who had a very violent fever and was actually shaking with the fit, having imagined that Armel's cloak would cure him, had no sooner put it on his shoulders than he was delivered from his illness.

Armel, meditating one day on the place in the Gospel where Our Lord says that no one can be His true disciple unless he renounces all earthly things, took this command literally; and, without going into the fact that it concerns the heart more than outward things, he believed that a purely inward detachment was not enough for whoever wished to be a perfect disciple, and that one must actually leave all things to cleave to Jesus Christ alone. He therefore resolved on the spot to leave his country, his parents, his goods and his prospects, and to cross into Armorica; which might give ground for inferring that he was from Cambria or

Cornwall, since it was not the Saxons who forced him to leave his country and come to seek another home. His zeal inspired the same sentiments in those of his companions who imitated him most closely, and in a man of high rank named Carencinal, a kinsman of Saint Paul, bishop of Léon, who possessed great wealth.

Having embarked with this chosen band, he landed in the country of Ack, in the diocese of Léon, where, having advanced inland, he built an oratory and little cells. He lived with his companions in great austerity and continual application to the service of God. Time has changed the state of the place, and this first monastery is now a parish called Plou-Arzel, from the name of the Saint. (Which is, as to the name, the same thing as Plou-Armel, for m easily changes into z in the Breton language.) We must believe that the life Saint Armel and his companions, who had chosen him as abbot, led in this wilderness was very edifying, and that the miracles of the servant of God were very frequent, since Childebert, king of France, was informed of the extraordinary merit of the holy religious of this community and of the prodigies God worked through their abbot, although they were hidden at the farthest extremities of his States, on the seashore. This great reputation caused the monarch, whom the original legendary praises on this occasion for his great piety and his munificence towards churches, to command these pious solitaries to come to him. Persuaded that to obey kings is to obey God Himself, they all went to court with Armel. They remained there for some months, as penitent as in their solitude itself; but at last, as the court was no place for persons of their character and way of life, they soon asked the king's permission to withdraw. He had recognized, from the conversations he had often had with them, that they breathed only solitude, and was so good, in dismissing them, as to grant each of them land on which to build a hermitage, with the consent of their abbot; so that they returned to Plou-Arzel.

Saint Armel was the only one who could not obtain from the king permission to return to solitude; for Childebert, who had recognized his great prudence and profited so much from his counsel, found it very hard to part from him; and whatever aversion the Saint had for life at court, he was obliged to grant so many repeated delays to the affectionate entreaties of the prince that he remained six whole years with him without being able to recover his liberty. The court, far from corrupting him by its examples and maxims, profited by the long stay he made there; but at last Childebert, fearing to offend God by keeping Armel longer against his inclination, no longer dared oppose such repeated requests and consented to the holy abbot's desire. But as he lost him only with regret, he made him a present at his departure of a fairly large tract of uncultivated and deserted land, in a district half as far from Paris as the Léonnais, so that he might have news of him more often and more easily. This land was in the country of Rennes, on the river Seiche, in a place now called Saint-Armel-des-Boschaux. Armel built a monastery there, which caused the place long to bear the name of Moustier. When Saint Armel arrived in the country of Rennes he made, it is said, a spring gush forth in a village that lacked water. As soon as he had established his dwelling in this district he lived there in a still more perfect manner, in continual application to God. His frequent miracles soon made him known to everyone, which gave him many occasions to exercise his charity and patience. Fearing and fleeing praise and applause, however, he went to visit his former disciples in the various solitudes over which they had spread, and, finding with sorrow that there were still idolaters in several places in the countryside, he carried there by his preaching the light of the Gospel with such success that he had the consolation of converting an infinity of persons to the faith. It was thus that he triumphed over the infernal serpent, and to figure this kind of victory he has been painted with a dragon that he holds bound with his stole: for as to that great serpent which, it is said, laid waste the country, and which he dragged to the top of Mont Saint-Armel, whence he commanded it to throw itself into the river Seiche, that is doubtless a pure fiction in the usual style of most writers of legends.[1]

The lessons of the proper office of Saint Armel in the old breviary of Léon say that he worked an infinity of other miracles, some of which are related there. At last this faithful servant of God died in his monastery on 16 August, after celebrating holy Mass there and having foretold long before the day and hour of his death.

His body was buried in that very place, and his tomb is still shown there today. His relics are kept in the parish church of Ploërmel. Exposed to profanation during the Revolution, they were gathered up by a woman who kept them with care and gave them back when the Revolution had ended. His memory is very famous in the province. Besides an infinity of chapels of his name and the churches, now parish churches, of his two monasteries, the town of Ploërmel, in the former diocese of Saint-Malo and now in that of Vannes, called in the deeds of Redon of more than eight hundred years ago *Plebs Armel*, acknowledges and honours him as its special patron, and its principal church is dedicated to him. The old breviaries of Rennes, Léon and Saint-Brieuc mark the feast of Saint Armel on 16 August, with nine lessons. The Proper of Vannes, printed in 1660, joins Saint Armel with Saint Roch. The old breviary of the abbey of Saint-Méen, giving first place to Saint Arnulf, bishop, on 16 August, makes only a commemoration of Saint Armel. The old breviary of the abbey of Saint-Melaine likewise marks the same rite for this Saint. The church of Nantes also gives the feast of this Saint on 16 August.

Taken from the *Vies des Saints de Bretagne* by Dom Lobineau, Benedictine of the Congregation of Saint-Maur; new edition, revised, corrected and enlarged by the abbé Tresvaux, canon, vicar general and official of Paris, volume I.

## Saint Are or Arey, Bishop of Nevers

*558. — Pope: Pelagius I. — King of France: Clotaire I.*

> *Hope, amid the ills of life, is a pledge of consolation.*
>
> *Saint Innocent III.*

Saint Are succeeded Rusticus in the episcopal see of Nevers; Rusticus had been one of the Fathers of the third and fourth councils of Orléans. If tradition is to be believed, Are was a stranger whom Providence had led to Nevers. He was elected bishop of that city about 548.

Idolatry still reigned in many parts of the diocese, which was moreover infected with several heresies and given over to much disorder and vice, after having been laid waste by several wars. Are applied himself with tireless care and courage to destroying all the remains of paganism, to banishing every kind of error from his diocese, to reforming the corrupt morals of the faithful and to renewing the ancient fervour of Christianity.[1] For this he used prayers and constant tears at the foot of the sanctuary, and the sword of the word of God, which he wielded every day with great success. The innocence and purity of his life matched the holiness of his doctrine; for he was chaste, sober, patient, modest, penitent, just in all his judgments and fervent in all his actions. He took only one meal a day, drank no wine and slept little, and the time he took from his sleep he faithfully gave to prayer. Our Lord also confirmed his words and his example by great miracles: his Acts state that he gave sight to the blind and hearing to the deaf, that he made the lame walk upright, restored the sick to health and even raised the dead.

Bound by close friendship to the popes Vigilius and Pelagius, he went to Rome several times in the course of his episcopate to visit them both. On returning from one of these journeys he sent ahead one of his servants, named Ours, to let the inhabitants of Nevers know of his arrival. This man found the Nièvre in flood and the bridge he was to cross swept away by the waters. Nevertheless he decided to try to cross the river on horseback; but, carried off by the force of the water, he was drowned. Saint Are, arriving at the place where the misfortune had happened and seeing his servant bereft of life, prostrated himself and prayed God fervently to give back to him the man who had just perished so wretchedly for having tried to carry out his orders too scrupulously. His prayer was heard; Ours was able to serve his master for many more years. In memory of this miracle, when the bridge had been rebuilt it was named Pont-Saint-Ours, the name it still bears today. Saint Are attended and signed the fifth council of Orléans in 549 and the second council of Paris in 551.

At last, the time of his reward having come, he learned its day by a heavenly revelation. The news was so welcome to him that he wished to share it with his dear faithful. He therefore assembled them in the cathedral and, going up into the pulpit, told them that he must soon leave them, because God was calling him to enjoy the sovereign happiness for which he had sighed for so many years. At the same time he begged them always to remember the salutary instructions he had given them; carefully to avoid the poison of heresies; to keep the fear of God's judgments continually before their eyes; to make piety and divine worship their chief business; to esteem nothing so highly as their eternal salvation, and to prefer it to riches, pleasures, honours, health, life and all temporal things. After this address he gave them his blessing. For his burial he ordered that after his death his body should be placed in a small boat on the Loire, and that he should be buried at the place where the boat stopped of its own accord. And so, having received with great fervour the Sacraments with which the Church arms her children against the difficulties of death, he fell peacefully asleep in Our Lord in 558. The venerable clergy of his church carried out exactly what he had commanded. His body was placed in a small boat on the Loire, with a quantity of lighted torches, and at once the boat, instead of going down with the current, went up the river by a supernatural force as far as Decize, ten leagues from Nevers by water. It was there that Saint Are had chosen his place of rest. Going through his diocese, he had one day visited two holy anchorites, Euphrastus and Auxilius, who had built at Decize a chapel in honour of the Blessed Virgin. Having recognized something extraordinary in this sanctuary, he had taken it into special affection, and had even said these words of David: "This is my rest for ever and ever; here will I dwell, for I have chosen it." But let us return to the boat that carried the body of the holy departed. It stopped, then, at Decize. This prodigy filled with wonder those who saw it. But what astonished them still more was this: the wind, however violent it was, did not blow out the candles around so august a relic. The holy bishop was buried in the chapel of Our Lady, which he had adorned.

## CULTE ET RELIQUES.

On the very spot where Saint Are was buried a large church was built, which is the parish church of the whole town and has Saint Are as its patron and titular. The chapel of Our Lady was enclosed within it, and the whole body of this blessed prelate was kept there, with his head, which was shown in a separate reliquary. Several miraculous cures were worked at that same place through his intercession.

In the seventeenth century there could be seen in the record office of Decize the criminal trial of two thieves who, having carried off his venerable head to get the silver of the reliquary, were stopped in a field two leagues from the town by the divine power, unable to move. This led to their being recognized, to the recovery of that rich treasure, and to their being made to pay the penalty for the sacrilege.

Nothing is better known at Nevers than the Pont Saint-Ours, which is built over the Nièvre five kilometres from the town, on the road leading to Prémery, Varzy, Clamecy, Corbigny, Lormes and Avallon. The chapel no longer exists: it was dedicated not to Saint Are, nor to Saint Ours, but to Saint Agatha of Catania. The raising of Saint Ours from the dead is known, but little known among the people.

Saint Are is held in greater veneration at Decize than at Nevers, and this for two reasons: first, the body of Saint Are remained at Decize until the Revolution and was regarded as the safeguard of that town; secondly, Nevers possessed the body of Saint Arègle, another of its bishops, whose powerful protection the inhabitants have often experienced, and in whose intercession they have boundless confidence. Saint Are is the patron of the parish of Decize. Under the apse of the church there is a very old crypt, and although it shows no distinctive features it is regarded as original. In this crypt is the ancient stone sarcophagus that held the body of Saint Are before 1793. At that time the revolutionaries profaned it and threw the venerated remains of the holy Bishop among the books and priestly vestments to which they set fire in the very choir of the church of Decize. It was believed that the diocese of Nevers was deprived for ever of the relics of this holy Bishop, when Mgr Crosnier, being at Decize, learned that a sick woman possessed the tibia of one of Saint Are's

legs. He went to this woman, accompanied by the parish priest, and learned from her that her mother-in-law, a very pious woman, had had the courage, at the time of the profanation of 1793, to throw herself into the midst of the flames to snatch some portion of the holy relics; everyone, or at least many people at Decize, knew of this. This woman, before her death, had given M. Boutoute, a former parish priest of Decize, a fragment of the tibia to be placed in the tomb before which the faithful went to pray, and she kept the larger part, which she gave to her daughter-in-law. It was the latter who gave it to Mgr Crosnier, assuring him on oath of what she had just told him; her husband, who had been a witness when his mother took this bone from the midst of the flames, swore the same oath. Mgr Crosnier took care to send for other persons who had been friends of the pious woman, all of whom certified the fact to him; and of the whole he drew up an official report signed by the witnesses and by a physician whom he had called in. “It seems to me,” adds Mgr Crosnier, “that we have for this relic all the certainty that can be desired. I have taken part of it for the cathedral and have given the rest, with the certificate of authenticity, to the parish priest of Decize for his church.”

Du Saussay and Philippe de Ferrare in their martyrologies, and MM. de Sainte-Marthe in the *Gallia christiana*, speak of Saint Are. What we have said has been taken chiefly from the proper Breviary of the diocese of Nevers and from the *Hagiologie Nivernaise* by Mgr Crosnier.

## Saint Arey or Arige,[2] Bishop of Gap

*604. — Pope: John III. — King of France: Theuderic II.*

> *The goodness of a pastor is revealed in his solicitude and vigilance in guarding his flock.*
>
> *Saint Bonaventure.*

Saint Arey was born about the year 535 at Chalon-sur-Saône, of a noble family. Apocrasius his father and Simpronia his mother consecrated him to God at the age of two before the altar of the cathedral of Chalon. His parents having withdrawn to Auvergne, according to the conjecture of the learned Bollandists, Saint Didier, bishop of Clermont (and not Didier of Chalon, as other authors have said), received him with joy and afterwards brought him up with the greatest care. Chorier, on the contrary, in his book on the *État politique de la province du Dauphiné*, says that he was the pupil of Saint Didier, archbishop of Vienne.

Everything in this child of blessing was a happy omen of his high destiny. His success in profane and ecclesiastical learning astonished those who taught him. God Himself was pleased to adorn his soul with the virtues that make holy priests. Arey was promoted to the priesthood and was soon placed at the head of the Church of Morges. The Bollandists place this town on the river of that name, five leagues from Clermont in Auvergne. But Juvénis, a historian of merit, and other weighty writers, in agreement with Chorier, maintain that it is Morges in Trièves, at the junction of the Bonne and the Drac, where the dukes of Burgundy held immense estates. This last opinion seems the more probable.

The young parish priest, given wholly to his people, thought of nothing for fourteen years but reforming abuses, preaching the truths of the faith and reconciling souls to God. But the Lord tore him from the love of his parishioners to raise him to a still holier and more difficult ministry. The Churches of Gap and Embrun had been widowed by the deposition of Salonius and Sagittarius, two brothers and two unworthy pastors. They chose as bishops: the Church of Embrun, Emeritus; and that of Gap, Arey, parish priest of Morges. This double election was submitted for the approval of the Fathers of the council of Chalon, who hastened to confirm it. Arey received the most enthusiastic welcome at Gap. But alas, what a sad sight this desolate diocese offered to the eyes of the new bishop! The towns and villages were for the most part overthrown and half destroyed since the frequent incursions of the Lombards. Everywhere the churches and holy places were profaned, the inhabitants reduced to misery, the families in mourning. Amid these ruins reigned the deepest ignorance; impiety had made rapid progress. Arey groaned, but he did not lose heart. Hardly had he arrived

when he set to work. Above all he wished to provide the Churches with good pastors. For this reason, anticipating by ten centuries the wise prescriptions of the council of Trent on the establishment of seminaries, he built in his episcopal city, near his own dwelling, a clerical house in which, far from the dangers of a corrupting world, he received and kept the young Levites in the shadow of the tabernacles.

Tradition tells us that every morning he went to this devout refuge, and that there, surrounded by his clerics, he formed them himself by his lessons and his example in prayer, initiated them into ecclesiastical discipline, and led them in the ways of learning and holiness. Saint Arey had given such lustre to the school of Gap that young clerics flocked to it in preference from Italy and from all the provinces of the kingdom of Burgundy. His tender solicitude was not confined to his episcopal city: it extended over his whole diocese. He went from hamlet to hamlet, from village to village; he made his way along the narrowest and roughest paths of the Alps to the most wretched and the poorest village. He consoled and encouraged the pastors, and brought to the sheep words of peace and pledges of his fatherly affection. He tore himself from these episcopal cares only to attend the second council of Valence (584) and that of Mâcon (585). He did not on that account neglect his own salvation. By his austerities and continual prayers he made satisfaction for the sins of his people.

Probus, his contemporary and his lector, tells us that to satisfy this immense need for prayer Arey had a second key secretly made to open his church; and when everyone was at rest he would go to the house of his God and spend long hours prostrate on the pavement of the church. Several times during his holy vigils he was rapt in spirit before the throne of God, or lifted into the air by the ministry of angels. In these moments of ecstasy the church was flooded with a brilliant light.

Often, too, he would leave the town and go to the hillock lying to the east of Gap, so bleak and so bare of greenery, which in the season of flowers contrasts so sharply with the slopes on the right bank of the Luye. There stood at that time a church dedicated to the martyr Saint Mamertus, whose name we have contracted into Saint Main. Arey loved to withdraw to that solitary place to enjoy the intimate communications with which God favoured him.

Miracles abound in his life. Here it is the doors of a church closed by order of an impious queen, which he opened by the sole power of his prayer; there it is demons that fled at his voice. Now it is a wild boar, the terror of the Gapençais, which he tamed by laying his pastoral staff on its head; now a poor mower whom he cured with a sign of the cross of the venomous bite of a serpent. One day he received from God the assurance that travellers who asked his blessing before setting out would have nothing to fear from the devil. Another time, as he was crossing the Durance, the boat was dashed to pieces on a rock in the midst of the waves; but an angel held out his hand to him and saved him.

In the sixth century leprosy, until then unknown in those parts, wrought horrible ravages there. Three lepers having come to ask Arey for alms and prayers, he received them in his house, put them in his own rooms, nursed them with his own hands, washed their sores, prepared their food, made their beds, and in short rendered them all the most repugnant and the lowliest services. God rewarded his charity by healing these three unfortunate men. Our holy prelate had long desired to visit the glorious tombs of the Apostles and to go and render an account of his episcopal administration to the supreme head of Christendom. He made this devout pilgrimage, which made livelier the esteem and affection that he and the pope Saint Gregory the Great already had for each other. Afterwards they exchanged the most friendly letters.

On his return Arey was pursued by evildoers, from whom God delivered him by a prodigy. From the midst of the mountains of Lautaret[1] and Corbaret, where he was about to be attacked, he was suddenly carried by divine power to a large stone that lies halfway between the church of Saint-Étienne of Théniers and that of Auron. The place was hallowed by the memory of the people of the district.

While he was crossing the Apennines, a bear devoured one of the oxen yoked to his cart. At once the holy traveller commanded it to take the place of the ox it had just killed and to put itself under the yoke. The bear hastened to bow its head, let itself be docilely harnessed to the shaft, and drew the cart all the way to Gap. This animal, whose nature had been remarkably softened, afterwards withdrew into the mountains of Orcières, and remained there until the death of Saint Arey. Then it left its retreat, came to Gap, went to the church where the holy bishop had just died, placed itself near his body, and afterwards walked in front of the coffin in the funeral ceremony. Every year, on 1 May, the anniversary of Saint Arey's death, the faithful animal never failed to come to Gap and attend the feast; and it went on doing so all its life, says Probus, which caused inexpressible joy to the inhabitants of the town, who hastened to give it food. But let us take up again the thread of the history of our Saint.

On his return to Gap his heart was deeply grieved: the members of his household, whose illness, unknown to us, had called him back from Rome, died. Saint Gregory wrote to console him. At the same time he sent him a dalmatic, a signal honour paid to his merits, since he was the first bishop of the Gauls to wear this sacred vestment. The Pope also gave him two commissions no less honourable. He charged him to give the pallium to Syagrius, bishop of Autun, and to report to him on what took place in a council that was to be held by the very orders of Saint Gregory. In another letter the Pope commended to him the monk Augustine and the other missionaries he was sending to convert Great Britain. Later he again had recourse to his charity, sending him the priest Candidus, general administrator of the patrimony of Saint Peter in the Gauls. By these words must be understood various lands in the Gauls owned by the Roman Church. There were such patrimonies in Africa, in Sicily, in the Gauls and in Provence. They were worked either by peasants subject to the Church, though not slaves, or by tenant farmers who enjoyed favourable terms; for, says Saint Gregory in his letters, the coffers of the Church were not allowed to be sullied by sordid gain. As for the revenues of the estates in the Gauls and in Provence, they were spent, at least in part, on the spot in works of charity. We read that Saint Gregory directed the priest Candidus to devote these revenues to clothing the poor and to ransoming young English boys of seventeen or eighteen. This support, which the Pope asked of Saint Arey, was assured to all his brethren in the episcopate.

On one of his journeys to Chalon he had the courage to defend Saint Didier, archbishop of Vienne, accused through the hatred of Brunhild; and, being unable to prevent his unjust deposition (603) or his exile, he made his way into his prison, offered him the consoling words of friendship, and revived his hope and his faith by telling him that Jesus Christ had deigned to appear to him and show him the place that he, Didier, would soon occupy in heaven. This prediction was not slow to be fulfilled.

Saint Gregory, who died on 10 March 604, had foretold to his friend the bishop of Gap that he would soon follow him to heaven. A long and painful illness prepared him for this last passage. Feeling his end approach, he wished to tear himself, while still alive, from everything of earth. He had himself carried into his church before the altar of Saint Eusebius; there, clothed in a hair shirt and lying on ashes, he received his God. It was Saint Esychius, bishop of Grenoble, who gave him the body of the Saviour, and the priest Diconcius the precious blood. Strengthened by this viaticum against the terrors of death, he cried: "I give Thee thanks, Lord Jesus, that my time to go and see Thee has come. Poor I came into this world, poor I return to Thee, O my God." Then, leaning on the heart of this God who had become his companion on the way, he fell asleep there in peace on 1 May 604, the day on which the Church first honoured his memory. He was sixty-nine years old.

In 1834 Mgr Antoine Arbaud, bishop of Gap, succeeded in gathering some particles of the precious relics of our Saint; he had them placed at the foot of a bust made to receive them. This bust is enclosed in a niche made in the third pillar on the left of the cathedral church of Saint-Arnoux, on the face turned toward the great door. These relics are exposed to the veneration of the faithful during the octave of the feast of Saint Arey, which is celebrated at Gap on 5 May, although the Bollandists place it under the first day of that month.

Thus, after twelve hundred years, the cult of Arey has not fallen into oblivion, and a whole quarter of his episcopal city glories in bearing the name of the holy confessor.

Taken from the *Histoire hagiologique du diocèse de Gap*.

## Saint Hyacinth of Poland, Religious of the Order of Saint Dominic

*1257. — Pope: Alexander IV. — Emperor of Germany: William of Holland.*

> *O fairest flower of the Order of Preachers, Hyacinth, we sing your merits; perfume us with the fragrance of your virtues.*
>
> *Dominican Liturgy.*

Hyacinth was a Pole, of the ancient house of the counts of Odrowatz, which has given many great dignitaries to that kingdom. He was born at the castle of Saxe, in the diocese of Breslau. His great-grandfather was Saul of Odrowatz, who often cut the Tartars to pieces and forced them to leave Poland in peace. His grandfather bore the same name, and was no less distinguished by his courage and his great feats of arms against other enemies of the State. The county of Konski having fallen to him, he was thenceforth called Saul of Konski. Of the two children God gave him, Eustace and Ivo of Konski, the younger became bishop of Cracow, and the elder was the father of our Saint, who has become the glory of his family and has raised it higher by his holiness and his miracles than his ancestors, and the many palatines and generals who have sprung from it since his time, were able to ennoble it by all their fine deeds.

He spent his youth in great innocence. As he had a very good disposition, and grace went before him in all his actions, he practised virtue from his earliest years. He also had great liveliness of mind, so that he learned the human sciences in a short time, first under private tutors and then at the colleges of Cracow in Poland, Prague in Bohemia and Bologna in Italy; in the university of this last city he took the degree of doctor of law and of theology. On his return to Poland he attached himself to Vincent, bishop of Cracow, who gave him a prebend in his cathedral and associated him in the government of his diocese. In these posts Hyacinth gave signs of uncommon piety; and since he loved the poor, visited the hospitals, spent his revenues in alms, assisted at the divine offices with angelic modesty, and joined to these practices of charity and religion a very great severity toward himself, he won the admiration and affection of all.

Ivo of Konski, our Saint’s uncle and chancellor of Poland, having succeeded Vincent in the episcopal see of Cracow, had occasion in 1218 to make the journey to Rome. He took with him his two nephews, Hyacinth and Ceslas. Saint Dominic was then in that capital of the Christian world. Our travellers witnessed his preaching and his miracles. The bishop of Cracow asked him for missionaries of his new Order for Poland. Dominic answered that he regretted being unable to grant this request: he had sent so many of his disciples on mission that he had scarcely any left. Strongly pressed by the entreaties of Ivo, who promised to be the protector and father of the Friars Preachers in the diocese of Cracow, the holy founder, by divine inspiration, found a way. He asked the bishop for three or four of the persons who were with him: he said that he would clothe them in the habit of his Order, form them in a short time in all the exercises of the religious life and in the apostolic functions, and then give them back to him to go and begin in Poland what his other sons were doing with such success in France, Italy and Spain. Ivo accepted this proposal and passed it on to the persons of his suite, several of whom, touched by divine grace, embraced the new Institute. Among them were Hyacinth and Ceslas, and two German gentlemen, Hermann the Teuton and Henry the Moravian. They all received the habit from the hands of Saint Dominic in the convent of Santa Sabina in the month of March of the same year, 1218. They became perfect imitators of their holy patriarch, and by dispensation made their vows after six months of novitiate. Hyacinth was then thirty-three years old. None took the spirit of the Institute better than he. Saint Dominic impressed on his soul above all an extreme horror of himself and a pitiless rigour against his own body; a generous contempt for all the things of earth, and even for his health

and his life; an ardent love for Jesus Christ; an insatiable desire to please Him and to make Him known, honoured and served by all; a great devotion and a loving confidence toward the Blessed Virgin; a burning zeal for the salvation of souls; a resolve to spare nothing to procure it; a constant and inviolable fidelity in the observance of regular discipline, without ever claiming that apostolic labours should dispense him from it; and lastly a perfect disinterestedness and a sovereign purity of heart in all his employments and all his actions. He also trained him in preaching, not according to the rules of profane eloquence but according to the spirit of the Gospel, whose simplicity is stronger than all the subtlety of the philosophers and all the skill of the orators.

As soon as Saint Dominic had received Hyacinth's vows, he made him superior of the mission he was sending to Poland. These holy missionaries did not accompany the bishop of Cracow, who left Rome at the same time as they did. They took another road, so as to conform to their rule, which ordered them to go on foot and without provisions.

Having passed through the lands of the lordship of Venice, they entered Upper Carinthia, where they stayed six months at Friesach. Hyacinth gave the habit there to several persons and founded a convent, of which he made Hermann superior. The archbishop of Salzburg, who had witnessed in Rome the eminent virtues of Saint Dominic, received his sons with great marks of veneration and helped them with all his power. Passing through Styria, Austria, Moravia and Silesia, Hyacinth left everywhere tokens of his piety and fervour. When he arrived at Cracow he was received by the clergy, the nobility and the whole people with universal acclaim. The bishop, his uncle, helped him to found in the city a convent of his Order under the invocation of the Holy Trinity. Hyacinth gave the habit of Saint Dominic to a great number of persons of standing whom the Spirit of God powerfully touched and who became worthy labourers of the Gospel. Among them was the doctor James, whom Cardinal Crescentius had brought with him from Rome to be his counsellor and secretary in the great affairs he had to treat in Poland. Our Saint's preaching brought about very great conversions among the nobles and the people: luxury, debauchery and impurity were banished; on all sides there were restitutions and reconciliations. Devotion to the Blessed Sacrament and to the Blessed Virgin, which had grown extremely cold, took on new vigour; there were even seen again in Cracow the austerities of the first centuries of the Church, the use of the hair shirt, fasting on bread and water, vigils in the churches and other like mortifications. Our Saint's miracles did much toward so prodigious a change. He restored to life a young lord who had been drowned the day before while trying to cross the Vistula; this prodigy had as witnesses a great number of clerics, gentlemen and common people, as is related in the Bull of his canonization. He restored the use of her voice to a lady who had not spoken for six weeks because of a paralysis of the tongue. He restored to health another lady who was in her agony and from whom nothing more was expected but death. Several times he drove the devils out of the bodies of the possessed, and worked a host of other wonders. The more God exalted his merit, the more severe he was with himself and the more he increased his penances. In imitation of his father Saint Dominic, he had no other room than the church and no other bed than the ground he trod underfoot. Every night he tore his shoulders with knotted cords or iron chains. He fasted on bread and water every Friday and on the vigils of Our Lady and of the Apostles. He was continually occupied in prayer, in preaching, in hearing confessions, in visiting the sick, or in giving some other help to his neighbour. In short, his life was a perpetual exercise of charity toward the wretched or of holy cruelty toward himself. He was, moreover, consoled by frequent visits from heaven; and the Blessed Virgin, whose Rosary he preached and recited with wonderful fervour, often appeared to him to encourage him in his labours and to show him how pleased she was with his zeal and with the eagerness with which he strove always to win her new servants.

When the convent of Cracow was well established, which was done in a very short time, Saint Hyacinth, animated by the spirit of his father Saint Dominic, conceived the design of conquering the great kingdoms of the North for Jesus Christ. Feeling strong enough to do without the two holy helpers whom Providence had

given him in the persons of Ceslas and Henry the Moravian, he sent them into the kingdom of Bohemia. They preached with wonderful power in Prague, the capital of that kingdom, and brought about great changes in morals. King P■emysl founded for them, under the name of Saint Clement, martyr, a magnificent convent which became the head of all the other convents of Bohemia. Hyacinth then set out himself with some of his new labourers to go through all the provinces of the North, whose inhabitants were idolaters, heretics, schismatics or without religion. The first scenes of his labours were the neighbourhood of Cracow, the duchy of Moravia, Royal Prussia and Pomerania. The two convents of Sandomierz on the Vistula, in Little Poland, and that of Ploko in Moravia, which were given to him with eagerness, are witnesses to the great success of his preaching. In this country he walked dry-shod on the waters for the first time, so as not to deprive the inhabitants of Wisgrade of the doctrine of salvation he was to proclaim to them. This is how Pope Clement VIII speaks of it in the Bull of his canonization: “While Hyacinth was going here and there to preach the truths of the Gospel, he came to the banks of the Vistula, which washes the walls of Wisgrade. As this river prevented him from crossing, he looked all around to see whether he could find a boatman to carry him and his companions to the other bank; but, seeing none, he implored the help of heaven and, having armed himself with the sign of the cross, courageously exhorted his companions to continue their way through the midst of the waves. ‘Courage, my beloved children,’ he said to them; ‘follow me in the name of Jesus Christ.’ Saying this, he began to walk on the waves as on dry land; but seeing that his companions had not the boldness to do the same, he came back to them and, spreading his cloak on the water, said to them: ‘Fear nothing, my dear children; in the name of Jesus Christ this cloak will serve us as a bridge.’ And so they all crossed this river, which is so deep and so swift, without being wet or suffering any other inconvenience.” This prodigy took place in sight of a great crowd that was waiting for Hyacinth on the bank on the town side. One can easily imagine how much weight it gave to the word of our admirable preacher, and how much it served to bring the inhabitants of that town to a perfect conversion. In Royal Prussia he won a thousand pagans to the faith. To strengthen these good beginnings he asked the duke of Pomerania for the little island of Gedanum in the Baltic Sea, to build a monastery on it. It was represented to him that, since the place was deserted and hard of access for the people round about, his religious could not be of much use there. He replied that in a few years there would be in that place one of the greatest cities of the country; and indeed some time afterwards, the sea having withdrawn of its own accord, it came up to this island and formed a very convenient harbour there, and since then the city of Danzig has been built there, so famous for its maritime trade. We say nothing of the convent of Culm, which our Saint also accepted in Prussia; but we must not omit those of Cammin, of Prémislau or Ferzemysla, of the island of Rügen, of Elbing and of Montréal in Pomerania, shining proofs of the great fruit that the word of life he preached bore in that duchy.

From Prussia and Pomerania, Saint Hyacinth, continuing his long journeys, went through Denmark, Sweden, Gothland, Norway, Scotland and Livonia. Then he went down into Little Russia or Red Russia, where he reunited to the Roman Church Prince Daniel, who followed the errors and schism of the Greeks. From Russia he went to the borders of the Black Sea, and from there came to Constantinople and the island of Chios, proclaiming the truths of the Gospel everywhere. Having gone back toward the North, he entered Black Russia or Great Russia, which is the grand duchy of Muscovy, to work at bringing Duke Vlodimir or Vladimir and his whole country back into the bosom of the Church. He found there a profane mixture of heathens and Greek Christians, of whom the former by their stupidity and the latter by their pride and obstinacy were little disposed to receive the light of the faith. As for Catholics, he found very few there, and even their bishop, created by the Pope, had no church there, neither cathedral nor parish church. These difficulties did not stop his zeal, which was crowned with complete success: many infidels acknowledged the truth of Christianity, many schismatics embraced the belief of the Roman Church, and some even gave up their Greek usage to conform to the usages and customs of the Latins. Hyacinth built a magnificent convent of Friars Preachers in the city of Kiev, which was then the capital of the whole duchy. The religious he gathered there helped him to make new journeys through the whole country. One day, being on the bank of

the Borysthenes, which we also call the Dnieper, he saw on an island in the river a crowd of people kneeling bareheaded before an oak. He understood at once that they were idolaters and resolved to convert them; but finding no boat, he crossed that arm of the river dry-shod. This prodigy made a deep impression on the pagans: they received him as an extraordinary man, as one sent from heaven; they listened to him attentively, let themselves be moved and persuaded by his reasons, and, renouncing their superstitious worship, embraced the Catholic faith. The devil, to prevent this happy success, appeared visibly in the form of a black man, complaining of the wrong Hyacinth was doing him in banishing him from his domain and taking away his worshippers; but the Saint drove him off with blows of his staff, and as the monster fled across the river he pursued him the same way, again walking dry-shod as on firm ground.

The unbending hardness of most of the inhabitants of Kiev drew on them a terrible chastisement from divine justice. The Tartars came to besiege the city with a formidable army and, after much resistance, at last took it by storm, sacked it, filled it with blood and slaughter, and, having set it on fire, made of it nothing but a heap of ashes that no longer deserved the name of city. When they entered it, Saint Hyacinth was at the altar saying Mass. His religious warned him that there was not a moment to lose, and that if he wished to save himself with his whole community he must leave at once, so as not to fall into the hands of that nation, enemy of Christianity. He submitted to this advice; but, not wishing to leave the Blessed Sacrament exposed to the outrages of the barbarians, he opened the tabernacle, took the holy ciborium, and with this pledge of paradise and this great God of hosts left the choir accompanied by all his brethren. As he was passing an image of Our Lady that was in the church, this alabaster statue miraculously opened its mouth and begged him to carry it off as well. He replied that he would very gladly take charge of it, but that it was so heavy that he would not have strength enough to hold it up. Indeed, it is said to have weighed eight or nine hundred pounds. But the image replied that he should fear nothing, and that the Saviour he held in his hands would make it so light that he would have no trouble carrying it. The Saint hesitated no longer: he approached the image with a faith as miraculous as the voice that had come from that lifeless mouth, and, taking it in one hand, found it as light as a reed. So, holding in his right hand the holy ciborium filled with consecrated hosts and in his left the statue of the Blessed Virgin, he reached the gate of the city and the road to Poland. Arriving at the bank of the Borysthenes, he found no boat to cross it. His faith served him as boat and boatman; he did not stop any more than if he had always had a road of firm ground before him: he set his feet on the waters, and the waters did not give way. As for his religious, he gave them his cope to serve them as boat or bridge; and so they all crossed that great river dry-shod, and found themselves out of danger of pursuit by the Tartars. As an everlasting mark of so astonishing a miracle, God imprinted on the waves the traces of the Saint’s feet from one bank to the other; and in the course of time these traces could not be effaced, either by the flow of the waters, or by the passage of boats, or by the storms and tempests that came upon them. This was examined so rigorously by the Holy See, in proceeding to the canonization of this great preacher of the Gospel, that as many as four hundred and eight witnesses were examined for the purpose, all of whom deposed on oath before the apostolic commissioners that they had seen these traces with their own eyes and had learned from the people of the country that they were there, and that they were commonly called the Way of Saint Hyacinth. This man of God went in this state the whole way from Kiev to Cracow, which is several hundred leagues. It is not said how he lived with his sons during so long a journey; but the Chronicles of the Order of Saint Dominic state that he carried the image the whole way and at last placed it in his convent at Cracow, where, no longer needing to be carried, it at once took back its natural weight.

Hardly had our great Wonder-worker arrived when a lady named Clemence sent to beg him to come to her village on the feast of Saint Margaret, to give her and all her vassals the consolation of hearing one of his exhortations. He went there on the eve, but found general desolation: a storm of wind and hail had so cut up all the corn that not a single ear was left whole. The tears of this lady and of all the inhabitants, who saw themselves unable to sow their land and feed their families for the whole year, deeply touched his heart. He told them to have recourse to God by going to confession and spending the night in prayer, and said that he

for his part would not fail to implore His infinite mercy to obtain a saving remedy for this evil. Indeed he groaned and wept all night, and his tears were so effective that the very next day, at the first rays of the sun, the beaten-down ears rose up again and were as fine and as laden with grain as if the storm and the hail had never touched them. So the bull of his canonization relates it. This miracle was followed by several others. Félice de Grus Zousca had been unable to have children in the twenty years she had been married; the Saint obtained one for her from heaven, and assured her that he would be illustrious in the world and would have a distinguished posterity that would give Poland lords and prelates of great merit, which has since come to pass as he foretold. He also gave sight to two children of a lady named Vitoslauska, who had been born blind.

His return to Cracow was not the end of his evangelical labours; he stayed there at most two years, that is, from 1241 to 1243. He then went to visit the principal provinces of Prussia, where he had already spread the light of his preaching. From there he passed into Cumania, a province for which Saint Dominic had had a particular attraction and affection, which all his brethren had inherited. He found there already religious of his Order whom the General Chapter had sent, and he had the consolation of working with them at the evangelization of that infidel nation. Zeal for the salvation of souls carried him still farther. The Tartars had driven him out of Kiev and all Great Russia: he went to seek them out in their own country, to enlighten them with the torch of faith, and God gave him so many graces in this mission that he won several thousand of these barbarians to Jesus Christ. The historians of France bear witness to this truth when they say that, Saint Louis having arrived in the island of Cyprus in the year 1247, several Tartars came to greet him on behalf of a king of their country who, having been converted three years before with many of his vassals, offered him powerful help in his enterprise against the Saracens. Great Tartary was not even the end of his journeys: he reached as far as the kingdom of Tibet, which borders on that of Tangut and the East Indies, and as far as Cathay, which is the northern part of China. Those who have gone through these countries in the modern missions have still found there remains and traces of the Christian religion he had planted. We should never have done if we tried to follow this Apostle on all his other journeys: for it is said that he also went through Little Russia, where he so fired with the love of God Prince Coloman and Princess Salomea, his wife, that they renounced the schism in which ignorance had involved them, to enter into the union of the Church, and both made a vow of chastity. He also evangelized Volhynia, Podolia and Lithuania, where he founded several famous convents, above all that of Vilna in Lithuania, which is the head of a great province whose religious work continually, with tireless zeal, to maintain the faith throughout the country.

For the rest, we must not close this chapter of Saint Hyacinth’s missions without making an important reflection. Humanly speaking, it was impossible for him to go through those regions, which are almost always covered with ice and where the cold is unbearable, without being provided with good furs against the rigour of the seasons; without being accompanied by learned interpreters and faithful guides to explain the languages to him and show him the roads; without being well supplied with money to buy the necessities of life; without being well mounted so as to make long day’s journeys and always reach some shelter; and above all without being well armed to defend himself against brigands, nomad tribes and wild beasts. And yet this heavenly man had none of these aids. He was without arms, without a mount, without money, without interpreters, without furs, and often even without a guide, abandoning himself to divine Providence for everything he needed on such difficult roads. How was it that he was not lost a hundred times in the forests or the snows? How was he not a hundred times frozen with cold, or devoured by beasts, or massacred by the Barbarians? How did hunger, thirst, weariness, rain, wind, storms and broken roads full of precipices not reduce him a hundred times to the last extremity? What was he doing among these unknown nations, without knowing their languages and without anything brilliant or magnificent about him to impress them? God helped him in all his encounters: He protected him on the roads, He made him understood by the most barbarous peoples, and at last, after journeys so glorious and so useful to his neighbour, He gave him the grace of returning in good health to Cracow, aged more than seventy-two, to end his life there. A year before his death the Blessed Virgin appeared to him. She had once assured him that he would obtain whatever he

asked through her intercession, and he asked insistently to be delivered from his mortal body so as to enter into the possession of his sovereign good. Mary told him that this would happen very soon; that meanwhile he must still adorn and perfect his crown, and that she would take care to have him warned when the hour of his departure was near. The consolation this visit gave our Saint is beyond conceiving, both because of the happy assurance that his bliss was approaching and because the Queen of angels showed herself to him in a grace and beauty capable of ravishing all hearts. She was in the state Saint John has described in his Apocalypse: she had the moon under her feet, the splendour of the sun served her as a royal mantle, and she wore a crown of twelve stars on her head. If this man of God had always taken care to prepare himself for death, he now renewed all his dispositions; and, as a stone falls faster as it nears its centre, so he redoubled his fervour and gave himself more than ever to the exercises of mortification, recollection and union with his God.

In the year 1257, on the eve of the Assumption, it was revealed to him that the very next day he would go to celebrate in heaven the feast of that glorious Virgin whom he had loved so perfectly on earth. And indeed a continual fever, which had been consuming him for some days, grew noticeably worse and made his life despaired of. He called his sons to him and gave them an exhortation full of force and unction, which the authors of his life have reported in these terms: “The time has come at last, my dear children,” he said to them, “for me to leave you and go to God. It is He who calls me and takes me from you. What I leave you in my testament is the same that our blessed Father left us. Love one another; live in strict poverty; carefully preserve your purity; be jealous for your observances and be convinced that everything in them is great; work without ceasing for the salvation of souls and the spreading of our Order for the glory of God. Do not grieve at my death. Jesus Christ being my life, I gain infinitely by dying, and you will suffer no loss from it; for if I have helped you on earth, I shall help you, God aiding, far more effectively in heaven.” He then wished to attend Matins in the choir; afterwards he had Mass said and received Communion at it as Viaticum, with transports of love that cannot be described. When he had made his thanksgiving he had Extreme Unction given to him on the altar steps, and he would have stayed there until death if the religious had not obliged him to let himself be taken to a poor cell, which his great age and weakness had forced him to accept. There, saying these words of the thirtieth Psalm, “Into Thy hands, Lord, I commend my spirit,” he gave up his blessed soul, to enter into the enjoyment of eternal glory.

Pandrotta, bishop of Cracow, who had succeeded Ivo of Konski, himself performed the ceremony of his funeral. When he had finished it, having gone into the cathedral, he set himself to pray, to console himself with God for the death of so holy a man, who was moreover his intimate friend. During his prayer, falling into an ecstatic sleep, he saw two old men all radiant with glory: one was dressed in pontifical vestments, the other as a religious of Saint Dominic, and had on his head two crowns of inestimable price. They were preceded by a procession of angels dressed in white, holding lighted torches in their hands. In his astonishment at this sight he addressed the one who seemed to be a bishop and asked him who they were. He replied that he himself was Stanislaus, one of his predecessors, who had received the crown of martyrdom; but that the one with him was Hyacinth, whose body he had just buried, and who enjoyed the crowns of the doctorate and of virginity. A Premonstratensian nun had at the same time a quite similar vision, except that Saint Hyacinth was not led by Saint Stanislaus but by the Blessed Virgin, who held him by the hand. The bishop and the nun received marvellous consolation from these apparitions; they told the religious of Saint Dominic of them, and, as the report spread through the city, they dried a little the tears of the people, who could not sufficiently lament the loss they had suffered. The next day a young lord named Zegotta fell so heavily from his horse that he broke his neck and shattered all his limbs. His dead and mangled body was carried to the Saint’s tomb; an hour later he rose up full of life, without any mark of his injuries, and declared that it was Hyacinth, already glorious in heaven, who had raised him to life.

A host of other most remarkable miracles have since been worked through his intercession, not only at his tomb and in Poland but also in France, Italy, Spain, Hungary, the island of Chios, the East and West Indies and everywhere else. So on all sides are seen chapels dedicated in his honour, where many ex-votos hang in witness of the miraculous help received through him. It is therefore needless to say that, when his canonization came under consideration, proofs were given, for the miracles worked at Cracow alone, of fifty dead raised to life, seventy-two persons in their agony restored to health, and an infinity of other sick persons of every kind delivered from their ills and pains. He has everywhere deserved the name of Wonder-worker; he is one of the saints invoked universally and with great success. He was canonized by Clement VIII in 1594. Urban VIII, by a decree of 1 February 1625, declared his feast a double office and moved it to 16 August. His relics are kept at Cracow, in a magnificent chapel that bears his name. Anne of Austria, mother of Louis XIV, obtained a portion of them from Ladislaus, king of Poland, and presented it to the Dominicans of the rue Saint-Honoré in Paris. These relics are now lost, and the house that possessed them has been entirely destroyed. The church of this convent was, at the beginning of the Revolution, turned into a club hall under the name of the Jacobins, and held the most frenzied of the revolutionaries. It was very fitting that these great honours should be paid to one who had fled them so carefully throughout his life. On this point we must note that, except for the three years he spent at Cracow founding his first monastery, he always declined every office of superior. Bishoprics were often offered him; and although, having himself worked at the conversion of all the provinces of the North, he had Blessed Father Gerard given as bishop to the Russians, Blessed Father Maynard to the Livonians, Blessed Father Vital to the Lithuanians and Blessed Father Henry to the Prussians, he would never be raised to that dignity himself. We do not even read that he was provincial of Poland; his whole desire was to be free, so as to carry without hindrance the light of the faith and devotion to the Blessed Virgin into an infinity of countries. The places he went through cover fully four thousand leagues, counting from Scotland to Cathay and from Finland, which approaches the Arctic pole, to the islands of the Archipelago.

He is represented: (1) kneeling before a statue of the Blessed Virgin, with a scroll coming down over him on which are read these words: “Rejoice, Hyacinth, my son; your prayers are pleasing to my Son, and whatever you ask of Him in my name He will grant you”; (2) carrying a ciborium and a statue of the Blessed Virgin; (3) crossing the Dnieper and the Vistula dry-shod; (4) holding a lily in his hand, to recall that he kept his virginity until death; (5) restoring to life a drowned man who has just been laid at his feet and whom he takes by the hand. A Polish lady had sent her son to beg the Saint to come and preach on her lands; on the way back the messenger was drowned, and the mother had the body carried to the Saint, who called him back to life. Hence he has been invoked against the danger of drowning, and he is sometimes seen in his images drawing a drowned man out of the water.

His life has been written in particular by Leandro Alberti (it is given in Surius), by Thomas Bzovius, the celebrated continuator of Baronius, and by Severinus of Cracow, who also gave the journal of his canonization. The bull was published by Fontanini in 1729. All the Annals of his Order mention him, especially Malvenda, who carefully examined his chronology.

## Saint Roch of Montpellier, Confessor

*1327. — Pope: John XXII. — King of France: Charles IV, the Fair.*

> *Afflavit tibi triste lues funesta venenum Immeritumque ferae te dedit illa neci; Scilicet illa furens totas modo sterneret urbes, Ni te hostem supero sciret in orbe suum.*
>
> *The poisoned breath of the sick whom you nursed for love doomed you to an early death; and the destroying scourge would go on depopulating our cities, had it not an invisible enemy in heaven.*
>
> *Fasti Sacri.*

Saint Roch was born at Montpellier, one of the principal towns of Languedoc, toward the end of the thirteenth century. His father, named John, was one of the leading men of the town; and since he joined justice and piety to nobility and the profession of arms, he was loved and respected by all the inhabitants. At that time the kings of Majorca held the lordship of Montpellier, under the crown of France, and it is believed that our Saint's father was its governor. His mother was called Liberia; like her husband she was devout, a benefactress of the poor and very devoted to the Blessed Virgin. Yet they were long without children, and Liberia was no longer even of an age to have any without a special and miraculous help from God's goodness. John, inspired by heaven, told his wife to make prayers and vows to Our Lord for this, and to call on the all-powerful help of His most holy Mother. She obeyed this command and, turning to the Son and the Mother, prayed to them in this way: "Creator of the universe, and you, blessed Virgin, Queen of the world, who take pleasure in hearing those who implore your help, we humbly ask you for a child, if he can be of use in your service; for we do not wish for one to increase our wealth and add lustre to our house, but so that he may do good to the poor and expose himself to every kind of adversity, and even, if need be, to death for the glory of your name."

This prayer, so fervent and so disinterested, did not fail of its effect. God made Liberia the mother of a son, who brought with him at birth a red cross on his breast; and this filled her with such joy that, old as she was, she resolved to nurse him with her own milk. As he had been conceived by a miracle, God brought it about by another miracle, which foreshadowed his holiness, that from the breast he began to practise abstinence, sucking only once a day on Wednesdays and Fridays. At the age of five he was seen, to the astonishment of all, keeping the Apostle's precept of chastising his body and bringing it into subjection, for from that time he took as little food as he could. When he was twelve he wholly renounced all that is most pleasant and most brilliant in the world: his only pleasure was to do good to the poor and to strangers, and he helped them with the same charity as he would have shown his own brothers. All his actions had no other aim than the service and glory of God; and they were accompanied by so much gentleness in his looks, so much courtesy in his speech and so much dignity in his whole bearing, that no one could sufficiently admire the gifts of nature and grace with which the divine goodness had filled him.

His father, seeing himself near death, called him to his bedside and said: "The time has come, my son, when I must leave this life full of troubles and miseries, to go and render my account to God and, if He shows me mercy, to enjoy the eternal kingdom with Him. I did not think I ought to go without giving you some advice that will be very useful to you in spending your days in innocence and piety. Strive above all things to serve God. Picture to yourself very often the labours and torments Jesus Christ suffered for our salvation. Flee avarice, which is a source of every kind of sin. Help with all your power widows, orphans and others deprived of all assistance. Be the eye of the blind, the foot of the lame and the father of the poor; and be sure that in applying the great wealth I leave you to these works of mercy you will draw on yourself the grace of God and the blessing of all men."

Roch promised to carry out faithfully what his father enjoined, and after closing his eyes he had him buried with all the honour his rank and merit required. His mother was so grieved by her husband's death that she survived him only a very short time. And so our Saint, their only son, not yet twenty years old, found himself the owner and master of a great fortune. He did not then forget the promise he had made; but, having before his eyes the words of Our Lord, "Sell what you possess and give alms," he distributed to the poor, as secretly as he could, all that he could raise from his property, and left the management of the rest in the hands of his paternal uncle. Then he set out alone, on foot and in pilgrim's dress, directing his steps toward Rome.

When he arrived at a town of the patrimony of the Church named Acquapendente, he learned that the plague was raging there very violently. He went at once to the hospital and offered himself to the administrator, named Vincent, to help him in this office of mercy. This charitable man, seeing him so young and so well made, answered that he could not praise his zeal enough, but that he thought him too delicate to bear so great

a labour and endure such infection. “Does not God assure us,” replied the Saint, “that nothing is impossible to us with His help, and that this help does not fail us when we have no other design than to please Him?” Vincent admired his fervour; but, fearing to be guilty of his death if he let him go among the plague-stricken, he still resisted him for some time. At last he yielded to his repeated entreaties and allowed him to visit the sick. Roch touched them on the right hand and made the sign of the cross over them, and by this saving sign he restored them all to health, not one being deprived of this grace. He then went through the whole town and cured in the same way all who had been struck by this cruel disease; he was looked on as an angel sent by God to help so many unfortunate people. Immediately afterwards, having learned that the plague was causing similar ravages in the town of Cesena, in Lombardy, he went there and delivered it in the same way. As his first design on leaving Montpellier had been to go to Rome, this desire grew much stronger when he learned that the plague was causing great ravages there. He hastened there and found the city and the people in extreme desolation.

The noise and bustle of a great city had given way to silence, to something motionless like death. Here and there one could scarcely hear the laments, the groans and the sobs of mourning, or the ominous cries of despair. Carts went round the streets. A bell with a mournful sound announced their passing and warned the inhabitants that the moment had come to bring down their dead. The corpses were then heaped on other corpses; the carts could hardly hold them all! And when the contagion came to rage more cruelly still, people no longer even waited for the funeral cart to pass; they laid the corpses out before the doors, or threw them from the windows into the streets. Everywhere the city offered these scenes of horror!

The mortality had reached such frightening proportions, and the disease that brought death was so violent, that in the morning the living did not expect to see the end of the day, and in the evening, as they went to bed, they despaired of seeing the next.

Amid this mourning and this universal terror, very different scenes of greatness or of baseness took place on this stage of so much suffering! As it was often impossible to obtain food, people found themselves reduced to the last necessity, to the cruellest famine, or else had to expose themselves to the danger of an almost certain death. When the moment came to part from those beings who are like the half of ourselves, so dear are they to us, weeping mothers could be seen bringing down their children themselves, placing them with their own hands on the foul cart as if to give them a worthier and more honourable place, then kissing them on the forehead, and paying a great price for a separate grave for them and for themselves, for when on the morrow their own sad remains would be taken, not wishing to be parted from them even in death!

Scarcely a few generous citizens, a few intrepid magistrates, had the courage to devote themselves to remedying so many evils; fear and selfishness had hardened every heart. Scarcely a few courageous physicians dared to face the danger. Most of them, seeing the powerlessness of their art, went away from the abode of contagion and death.

Saint Roch, at the sight of this people of Rome, desolate, decimated by the contagion, lying in mourning and in death, drew inspiration from the very greatness and enormity of its misfortunes, and resolved to save it or to die for it. He set to work at once, visited the hospitals, and made his way into the foulest corners of the lazar-houses where so many unfortunates were struggling in vain against death. His heroic charity shrank from no obstacle and stopped before no danger.

Wherever Saint Roch went, the disease abated and the contagion disappeared. The most hopeless of the sick were seen coming back to life as soon as the powerful hand of our Saint had marked them with the sacred sign of our salvation.

Confidence soon revived in people’s minds; the streets and public squares ceased to be deserted. Nothing was spoken of but the miraculous physician raised up by heaven to remedy so many misfortunes. Everywhere people told and retold the prodigious cures he was working on all sides.

In this expression of public joy, which already shone on every face as it sounded in every mouth, sick people could be seen dragging themselves here and there, or having themselves carried where our Saint was to pass, seeking to see him, to touch him, to feel on their flesh the impress of that powerful hand which gave health and life.

And when unfortunates too badly stricken by the venom and malignity of the plague could not be carried from their bed of suffering, the holy wonder-worker went to them and cured them.

Saint Roch's zeal was tireless; his hand never wearied of touching the plague-stricken and restoring them to life by the power of the sign of the cross. He multiplied himself; he wished to be wherever the disease was with its victims. "His charity was at last stronger than death": the contagion was conquered, and Rome was saved.

Meanwhile the plague was still infecting the Roman countryside. Abandoned flocks grazed here and there in the fields; in the evening they came back sadly, without a shepherd, to deserted or abandoned houses. The fruit hung on the trees, the harvests were ripe, and no one gathered these treasures of the earth.

Saint Roch hastened to the help of these unfortunate people. Hardly had he brought healing and life to one place when he disappeared at once and flew to another place stricken by the contagion; and there, as everywhere, he worked the same wonders. In this way he saved from the epidemic many towns of Italy, particularly of Piedmont, the Milanese, Montferrat and the duchies of Mantua, Modena and Parma.

Having learned that the town of Piacenza was grievously afflicted by this contagious disease, he went there, shut himself up in the hospital, dressed the sick as was his custom, and, overcome by sleep, fell asleep. Then he heard a voice that said to him in a gentle and pleasant tone: "Roch, you have so far borne very great labours for love of Me; now you must also suffer extreme pains in view of those I have endured for you." He awoke at this voice and, seized with a burning fever, felt as though his left thigh were pierced through, with a pain so violent that it was almost unbearable. In this state he raised his eyes to heaven and showed Our Lord much gratitude and satisfaction for this hard visitation. His illness then grew so much worse that he could not help crying out; and because this disturbed the other patients, he left the hospital and lay on the ground near the door. They wanted to bring him back in; but as he refused, for fear of being a nuisance, they took him for a madman and drove him out of the town. So he dragged himself as best he could, leaning on a staff, to the neighbouring forest; and after resting a little under a dogwood tree, he withdrew into a small hut, where, acknowledging himself deserving of all the pains and humiliations he was enduring, he nevertheless prayed Our Lord not to abandon him and to stretch out His helping hand to him. His prayer was followed by a great miracle: at that same moment a cloud came down from heaven and formed beside his hut a spring of water, which is still seen there today; he drank from it and washed in it, and this somewhat eased the burning pains that tormented him.

When divine Providence had in this way quenched the thirst of its servant, it used another means, no less miraculous, to feed him, so that no one may lose heart in his troubles and all may be convinced that God takes care of those who endure something for love of Him. Near this forest there was a large village full of fine country houses, to which the chief men of the town had withdrawn because of the plague; among them was a man named Gothard, who was very rich, had a great many servants and even a pack of hounds that he kept for hunting. One day, as he was at table, one of his dogs came up to him and took in its mouth a loaf he held in his hand. The gentleman smiled, thinking it did so out of familiarity or hunger, and let it be; the dog carried the loaf to Saint Roch. The next day it did the same thing at dinner and at supper. The master then thought his servants were letting it starve; he grew angry with them and reprimanded them. But, having found that it lacked nothing, and that it was not stealing the bread to eat it but to carry it somewhere, he resolved to see where it went and to follow it. And indeed, when the dog came back again to snatch a loaf from his table, he ran after it and, following it into the forest, saw that it carried the bread into Saint Roch's

hut, that it offered it to him with lowered head, and that the man of God blessed it as he took it. Gothard, astonished at this prodigy, hastened at once to the poor hut and, finding the Saint lying on the ground in great weakness, begged him to say who he was and what disease was tormenting him. He answered that it was the plague, and begged him to withdraw for fear of catching it himself. This gentleman, having returned to his house, reflected seriously on what he had just seen; and, reproaching himself that his dog seemed to have more compassion and mercy for the afflicted than he, he resolved to go back to Roch to offer him all his services. So he begged him to allow him to look after him, and declared that he would not leave him until he saw him entirely cured. The Saint, not doubting that this resolve came from God, allowed him to stay.

Meanwhile, as the dog brought no more bread, this man began to worry how he would live and how he would feed his patient. Roch advised him to put on his pilgrim's habit and go in that dress to beg in the places round about. He found it hard to agree to this advice, because he was known everywhere; but, encouraged by the Servant of God, who made this act appear to him as a great means of perfection, he made up his mind, and even went to beg in Piacenza. Some merely turned him away; others mocked him and heaped insults on him; others reproached him severely as a bad manager who, having squandered his own goods, was trying to fatten on other people's. In the end, in the whole town, he could find only two loaves. On his return Saint Roch consoled him and, wishing to return good for evil to the people of Piacenza, went there and cured with the sign of the cross not only the plague-stricken in the hospital but also those in the houses. As he was returning in the evening to his hut, he was followed by several people who could not admire enough the wonders God was working through him. On the way a voice came from heaven saying: "Roch, Roch, I have heard your prayer and have restored your health; return now to your own country and practise there the exercises of penance, so that you may have a place in the company of the Saints." This voice greatly astonished them all; one of them, a man of great piety, came and threw himself at Roch's feet and, calling him by his name, which he had not yet revealed to anyone, begged him to favour the town and the whole country with his protection. Roch promised this, on condition that he would not reveal during his lifetime what he had seen and heard; to which he agreed.

Gothard, for his part, seeing that the Servant of God had passed all at once from the pitiful state he had been in to perfect health, held him in still greater esteem than before, and let himself be easily persuaded by his fiery words to renounce all the goods and honours of the world and to end his life in that wilderness. Roch stayed some time longer with him to train him in the exercises of penance and prayer and to make a holy solitary of him. Then, wishing to obey the voice from heaven, he took leave of him and came back to France. The Spirit of God who guided him inspired him to return to Montpellier, the place of his birth, to lead there a hidden and suffering life, in the very town where he should have received the greatest honours. The whole country was then laid waste by great wars, and everyone lived in great fear of being surprised by his enemy. So when the Saint entered in pilgrim's dress a village of his former domain and began to pray in the church, he was taken for a spy. He was arrested and brought to Montpellier before his uncle, who, not recognizing him, had him put in a dungeon as a secret enemy. The Saint, instead of being grieved by this, praised God for the grace He was giving him of being able to suffer reproaches and pains for love of Him, and prayed Him, through the intercession of the Blessed Virgin, not to abandon him but to sustain him with His help.

This dungeon was not only dark but also filthy, stinking, damp and full of scorpions, which made it an extremely dreadful place to live. Yet, not content with the torment he received from it, he added extraordinary austerities: he ate nothing cooked, he beat his breast black and blue, tore his body with scourges, and spent days and nights in almost continual watching and prayer. He remained five years in this state of suffering and humiliation, without anyone taking pity on him or thinking of his release. At the end of that time, God having made known to him that the end of his life was approaching, he asked the jailer to send him a priest. One was brought who, on entering the dungeon, where there was no opening through which daylight could pass, found it all lit up with a heavenly light, and saw rays of glory coming from the eyes of

this blessed prisoner; this astonished him so much that he could hardly ask him what he wanted of him. The Saint threw himself at his feet, made his confession and begged him to give him holy communion. The priest, on coming out, went to the governor and told him, with tears in his eyes, that God had been greatly offended by keeping in a dark prison a man who was not only innocent but very just and very holy. He then told him of his austerities and his patience, and how he had found the dungeon filled with a divine splendour. The governor took time to think about it; and meanwhile, the report of this marvel having spread through the whole town, the inhabitants came in crowds to the prison to have the honour of seeing this good man.

He fell ill immediately afterwards and, while he slept, heard a voice saying to him: “The time has come, My beloved Roch, when I am to bear your soul into the bosom of My Father; if, then, you have anything to ask for yourself or for others, ask it at once, and it will be granted you.” He thanked Our Lord for so generous an offer, and begged Him of His grace to forgive his sins, to let him enter into the enjoyment of His bliss, and to preserve from the plague, or deliver from it, those who should implore his help. Our Lord let him know that He had heard his prayer. And so, having lain down on the ground in a very modest posture, he raised his eyes to heaven and peacefully gave up his spirit to God on 16 August 1327, at the age of thirty-two. At once a great light was seen through the cracks of the place, which filled the jailer with wonder and fear. He opened the door and found the body of the blessed Confessor stretched on the ground, with lighted lamps at his head and feet, and beside him a small board on which these words were written: “Those who, being struck with the plague, have recourse to the intercession of Roch shall be delivered from this cruel disease.” The matter being reported to the governor, he was extremely surprised. His mother, who was our Saint’s grandmother, told him that this prisoner he had treated so harshly was his nephew, who had left him so much property on setting out for Italy, and that it would be easy to recognize him by a red cross he must have on his breast. They looked, and found the cross, which left no doubt that he was truly the son of John, governor of Montpellier, and of Liberia. His uncle, covered with confusion and grieved at the cruelty he had shown to his benefactor and his own flesh and blood, tried to make amends for it by a most magnificent funeral. All the inhabitants came to see the venerable body, kissed its feet and bathed it with their tears. He was buried first in the principal church, which was not yet a cathedral, since the see of Maguelonne had not yet been transferred to Montpellier. Later his uncle built a church in his honour, to which his precious relics were transferred.

In the sanctuary of the church of San Rocco at Venice are seen the four great scenes of the Saint’s life. He is represented: (1) healing the plague-stricken in a hospital; (2) strengthened in his prison by an angel; (3) healing animals; (4) taken for a spy and led to prison. He is also seen presenting the confraternity, under the emblem of a woman dressed in white, to Charity lit by the torch of religion. The dog is the usual attribute of Saint Roch, with the pilgrim’s staff. An angel is sometimes shown as his companion. These signs do in fact sum up the wonders and glories of his life: the dog was the faithful minister God used to relieve the extreme misery of His servant; the heavenly messenger strengthens our Saint in his lonely sufferings; and the staff, lastly, recalls the long journeys of this heroic apostle of charity. In images of Saint Roch an angel is seen touching the sore on his thigh; at other times an angel brings him from heaven the sure promise that at his invocation the plague will cease. In a painting by Rubens representing this event, the angel holds a tablet on which is read: *Eris in peste patronus*.

## CULTE ET RELIQUES.

Devotion to this great Saint has continually increased since his death. In the year 1414, a general Council having assembled at Constance, in Germany, to put an end to a great schism that had long afflicted the Church, the plague broke out in the whole surrounding country and ravaged the city. The prelates had resolved to withdraw, to the great harm of the public good of all Christendom; but a young German, inspired by God, told them to turn to Saint Roch, whose name was invoked in France in time of plague with wonderful success, and they would be preserved. They followed this advice and, after a general fast which

they ordered for the whole city, they carried the image of Saint Roch with great pomp in a general procession and implored his help with fervent prayers. It is beyond conceiving how quickly these vows and groans were heard. The contagion disappeared instantly, and in this way Saint Roch was canonized more solemnly than if all the ordinary forms of that holy ceremony had been observed for him. The bishops present at the Council afterwards carried esteem and devotion for Saint Roch into their dioceses; and since then an infinity of churches, chapels and oratories have been built in his honour, and there is scarcely a church in which his image is not seen. Toward the end of the fifteenth century Pope Alexander VI approved a Confraternity of Saint Roch already established in Rome under his patronage, and allowed it to build a church in honour of this Saint and under his name. In 1560 Pius IV renewed the privileges and exemptions granted to this same

Confraternity by Alexander VI and Leo X. Pope Urban VIII proclaimed him a Saint before the whole Church and ordered that his feast be celebrated on the day of his death.

As for his relics, the Roman Martyrology and the authors who have written his life say that in the course of time they were transferred to Venice, which happened in the year 1485 through a theft by some pilgrims from Tortona. But this must be understood of a part only; for it is certain that as early as the year 1399 Marshal Boucicaut, who had a tender affection for the Trinitarian Fathers of the Redemption of Captives, called Mathurins in France, procured for their convent at Arles the principal members of this glorious Confessor. It was from there that Pope Alexander VI, in 1501, had a bone taken to be carried to the kingdom of Granada in Spain, to serve it as defence and protection against the incursions of the Saracens and Moors. This was the bone called *nuca dorsi*. It was from there that Guillaume le Vasseur, surgeon to Francis I, obtained in 1533 another bone, called the spondyle (a vertebra), which he afterwards gave to the church of the town of Villejuif, two leagues from Paris, where it is honoured every year by a great concourse of pilgrims on the first Sunday of May. In 1557 a part of the head was transferred to Marseilles and placed with honour in the church of the Trinitarians, which was dedicated to him. In 1617 another fragment of the head was transferred to Douai and placed in a silver-gilt shrine. Frequent miracles took place there. A solemn procession was held every year in that town on 16 August. A bone was taken to Rome in 1575, and another to Turin in 1620; various churches in Paris, such as that of the Grands-Carmes and the parish church that bears his name, have received some portions of this treasure. It is well known that there are confraternities of Saint Roch in many places, and that many towns have taken him as one of their patrons and protectors, such as Venice, Arles, Montargis, Salon, Vermanton and other places. In Rome a finger of Saint Roch is venerated at Santa Maria Nuova. The city of Antwerp in Belgium possesses a fragment of the Saint's spine, enclosed in a silver shrine. Particles of the relics of Saint Roch are found at Brussels, in the church of Saint-Gangéric; at Prague in Bohemia; at Dure, a town of the duchy of Jülich in Germany; at Dendermonde in Flanders; in several regions of Germany and Austria; at Cologne; at San Lorenzo del Escorial in Spain; and at the port of Cesena in Italy, where a molar tooth of the Saint is kept. The Trinitarians of Montpellier also had the holy pilgrim's staff and a particle of a rib-bone. This relic was saved from revolutionary fury and handed over in 1809 to the bishop of Montpellier, who placed it in the pedestal of a silver statue of Saint Roch.

The treasure of the relics of Saint Roch was kept at Arles before the Revolution. The religious who had charge of it were bound by the threat of excommunication, which forbade them to part with the smallest particle. By a special providence the relics escaped the profanations of 1793, with their seals of authenticity. But the silver-gilt shrine that held them fell prey to the revolutionaries; it was surmounted by a silver-gilt statue of Saint Roch. At present these relics are in the keeping and possession of both the ecclesiastical and the civil authorities, each of which has a key to the reliquary, so that the agreement of both is strictly necessary to obtain any. The shrine was opened on 23 May 1838; eight particles were taken from it and handed to the parish priest of Saint-Roch at Montpellier. On 30 May they were received by the bishop of Montpellier, who carried them to the cathedral church and afterwards placed them in the church of Saint-Roch.

Venice was less lavish with its treasure than the town of Arles. In 1640, Urban VIII having affiliated the Confraternity of Saint Roch at Venice to that of Rome, the members of this body sent a considerable part of the Saint's arm to their brethren in Rome. In 1663 Cardinal de Bonzi, bishop of Béziers and ambassador of the King of France at Venice, obtained a fragment of the Saint's head and a particle of a rib. In 1856 the abbé Recluz, parish priest of Saint-Roch at Montpellier, obtained from the Patriarch of Venice an outstanding relic of the Saint, a tibia of the left leg. On 14 August the bishop of Montpellier received this outstanding relic at the door of the cathedral and placed it on the altar of Saint Roch, and the next day it was carried, amid an immense concourse of people, to the parish church of Saint-Roch.

We have taken what we have said from Pierre Maldure, as given by Surius, and from the *Histoire de saint Roch* by the abbé Recluz.

## Saint Triaise, Virgin, Recluse near Poitiers

*About 375.*

It is believed that our Saint's homeland was the Troad, a small region of Asia Minor. While Saint Hilary of Poitiers was in exile in those parts, she heard of him. Triaise, still young, then left her family, which was rich and noble, and, following the example of Saint Florence, came to Poitiers to find Saint Hilary, a short time before the great bishop's death, and begged him to consecrate her to God so that she might lead the austere life of a recluse. The Saint consented, after putting her to a trial.

There was at that time, outside the walls of Poitiers and to the south of the city, a church that Saint Hilary had just built in honour of the new martyrs Saint John and Saint Paul, beheaded at Rome in 363, and which he had enriched with their relics. It was near this venerated place, later replaced by the basilica of Saint-Hilaire, that the great bishop had a humble dwelling prepared for Triaise: a small hut and a very small garden became the voluntary exile of the young virgin. She shut herself up there with joy and lived there in the practice of rigorous penance until her death. To this voluntary obligation she had added the formal vow never to let herself be seen by men, and never to seek to see a single one. This rule never allowed an exception, even for her spiritual father; and when Saint Hilary went to her to speak with her of the things of God, he talked to her through the narrow window of the cell, without either of them seeing the other. These visits, for that matter, were as frequent as charity prompted Saint Hilary to make them. Triaise, for her part, was full of gratitude for his fatherly care, and strove to show it by making for him the hosts for the holy Sacrifice and corporals for the Body of the Lord.

Saint Triaise fell asleep in the Lord on 16 August, about the year 375, scarcely twenty-five years old. Her body was buried by Bishop Pascentius, the second of that name, the immediate successor of Saint Hilary. It was laid first, with great honours justified by striking miracles, in the church of Saint John and Saint Paul; but it was taken out of it a short time afterwards and transferred to a new church built under her name on the very spot where the cell had stood. This church, stripped of its title by the Revolution of '93 and now abandoned, existed as a parish from the tenth century; it appears to have been rebuilt in the eleventh. It was a parochial benefice dependent on the Chapter of Saint-Hilaire, which conferred its powers.

The abbé Auber, *Vies des Saints de l'Église de Poitiers.*

## Saint Cizy of Besançon, Soldier, Martyr near Rieux, in the Diocese of Toulouse

### Ninth century.

In the eighth century the Saracens, having become masters of Spain, crossed the Pyrenees forty thousand strong and hurled themselves on Gaul. After overrunning the greater part of Septimania, they occupied the country round Toulouse and built a great number of mosques along the Garonne, on the borders of the county

of Comminges. Among the warriors full of faith who gathered to drive these enemies of Christ out of Gascony, in the first rank shines Cizy of Besançon, sprung from the ancient dukes of Burgundy and no less distinguished by his valour in war. Under the soldier's habit he had kept austere morals; he was grave and modest and gave the example of every virtue. He relieved the poor from his wealth, which had been increased by the gifts of Charlemagne; and, fulfilling all the duties that a solid piety imposes, he had converted several unbelievers to the Christian faith.

Charged by Charlemagne with commanding a third of the knights, he entered the plains of the Garonne with them and hurled himself on the infidels. Carried away by his ardour, he made his way alone into the midst of the dense columns of the Saracens; but, surrounded on all sides, he was taken prisoner. He was at once offered his life if he would embrace the religion of Mahomet; but he rejected this proposal with contempt and, adoring Jesus crucified in his heart, called for martyrdom. His wishes were granted, and the infidels glutted their rage on this devout soldier by beating him to death with their war hammers.

The Christian army, made more terrible by the death of its leader, was not slow to avenge him. The Saracens were cut to pieces and covered the plain with their bodies. Charlemagne and his paladins raised, on the very place of the battle, which still keeps the name of Cizy, a marble tomb in which the body of the holy Martyr was laid. With the debris of the enemy's entrenchments a chapel was built for him, where the grace of the Lord has worked a great number of miracles. All these facts having been made known and authentically proved, the bishops of Toulouse entered the name of Cizy in the Catalogue of the holy Martyrs of their Church and established a proper office for the day of his feast. When the bishopric of Rieux (Haute-Garonne) was erected, his relics were transferred to the cathedral of that town, where they still are and where his memory is honoured by a double feast: on 16 August, his birthday into heaven, and on 19 June, the day of the translation of his relics. Around the chapel built by Charlemagne in honour of Cizy there gradually grew up a village, which is under the patronage of the holy Martyr and bears the name of Saint-Cizy (Haute-Garonne, arrondissement of Muret, canton of Cazères). The diocese of Rieux was also placed under the protection of the same Saint by Pope John XXII in 1318. But later it was consecrated to the Blessed Virgin.

Taken from the *Vie des Saints de Franche-Comté*.

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[1] Saint Simplician is already named in the martyrology of the Order of Saint Augustine, on 13 August.

[2] Saint Eleutherius succeeded in 532 Saint Droctuald, commonly Saint Drouant or Saint Drouet. He attended the councils of Orléans, where wise regulations were made for the restoration of discipline, and had a great share in them. He was bishop of Auxerre for twenty-eight years, and his death, according to the common opinion, took place on 16 August 561. He is named in the martyrology of France on 26 August.

[3] We gave his life on the preceding day.

[4] See his notice on 16 March.

[5] It appears that Saint Theodulus made the journey to Rome, where he was received with favour by the sovereign Pontiff. This at least is what might perhaps be concluded from a fabulous story inserted in some copies of his acts. It is related there that the Pope having made Saint Theodulus a present of a bell, Theodulus forced the devil to carry it to his episcopal city. This fable at least serves to explain to us what was seen on old coins of the Valais. On one side of the medal Saint Theodulus was represented holding the crozier in one hand and the sword in the other, and at his feet the devil, in a humbled posture, struggled to load a bell on his shoulders. The reverse of the coin bore the arms of Nicholas Schiner, who was bishop of Sion in 1496. Tradition added that the bells blessed by Saint Theodulus had the power to drive out demons and to ward off evil spells. What is certain is that the people have honoured this holy pontiff as having great power over unclean spirits. — *Saints de Franche-Comté*; cf. the dissertation of the Bollandists, volume III of August.

[6] Otherwise called Fraimbault, Frambard, Frambaud, Fraimbour, Frambourg.

[7] It is not altogether certain, however, that, the country being much less inhabited at that time than it is today, there were not then in Brittany great serpents, such as are still found in some countries. If such serpents existed, God may well have given His servant the power to command this dangerous reptile and to make it perish.

[8] It was he, it is said, who ordained as priest Saint Patrick, apostle of the country between the Loire and the Allier which was then called the Country of the Gentiles (*Pagus gentilicus*).

[9] We give here the life of Saint Arey or Arige of Gap, whose feast is kept on 1 May, so that it may be compared more easily with that of Saint Are or Arey of Nevers and the two may be better distinguished. They have often been confused, because they belong to the same century and have the same Latin name, *Aregius*.

[10] This Lautaret is not to be confused with that of La Grave.

# 17 August

## Martyrologies

### MARTYROLOGE ROMAIN.

The Octave of Saint Lawrence, martyr. — At Carthage, in Africa, the holy martyrs Liberatus, abbot, Boniface, deacon, Servus and Rusticus, subdeacons, Rogatus and Septimus, monks, and Maximus, a child, who, during the persecution of the Vandals under King Huneric, after enduring unheard-of torments for the Catholic faith and for the defence of the oneness of Baptism, were at last fastened with nails to the pyre on which they were to be burned; but the fire, though lit several times, went out miraculously each time, and the tyrant had them beaten with oars until their skulls were crushed. They expired under this torture, and so finished the course of their glorious combat and received the crown from the hand of Our Lord.[1] 483. — At Caesarea, in Cappadocia, the birth into heaven of Saint MAMMÈS, martyr, who from childhood to old age endured a long martyrdom, which he happily consummated under the emperor Aurelian and the governor Alexander. Saint Basil and Saint Gregory of Nazianzus have praised him highly. About 273. — In Achaia, Saint MYRON, priest and martyr, who, after enduring many torments under the emperor Decius and the governor Antipater, was beheaded at Cyzicus, in Mysia. About 253. — At Nicomedia, in Bithynia, the holy martyrs Strato, Philip and Eutychian, who were condemned to the beasts, received no wound from them, and consummated their martyrdom by fire. 303. — At Terni, in the province of Spoleto, Saint Anastasius, bishop and confessor. 553. — At Ptolemais, in Palestine, Saint PAUL and Saint JULIANA, his sister, martyred under Valerian. About 260.

### MARTYROLOGE DE FRANCE, REVU ET AUGMENTÉ.

In the diocese of Langres, Saint MAMMÈS, martyr at Caesarea in Cappadocia, patron of the cathedral and of the whole diocese. — In the dioceses of Autun, Carcassonne and Lyons, the memory of the same Saint Mammès, martyr. — In the diocese of Saint-Flour, Saint MAMMET or MAMMERCE, deacon, apostle of that country and confessor. Third century. — At Egmond, a village of North Holland, in the diocese of Haarlem, Saint Jeron (*Hiero*), priest, massacred by the Northmen near Norvick. 886. — At Vienne, in Dauphiné, Blessed CARLOMAN, eldest son of Charles Martel, brother of Pepin the Short, sovereign of Austrasia, Swabia and Thuringia, and monk of Monte Cassino. 756. — At Gournay-sur-Marne (Seine-et-Oise, arrondissement of Pontoise, canton of Gonesse), in the diocese of Versailles, Blessed Thomas, prior of the abbey of Saint-Victor in Paris (Canons Regular of Saint Augustine). Feeling that the abbey of Chelles (*Calensis abbatia*), in the present diocese of Meaux, was in great need of reform, he urged Stephen, bishop of Paris, to undertake the task, offering his help. The bishop of Paris having accepted his proposal, they set out for Chelles. On reaching Gournay-sur-Marne, Stephen was attacked by the nephews of Thibaut Nothier, archdeacon of Paris, a violent and ambitious man, jealous of the confidence Stephen placed in Thomas. The murderers told the bishop of Paris that they had no quarrel except with the prior of Saint-Victor, and they killed him in the bishop’s arms. The Martyr’s body was placed in the sanctuary of the abbey church of Saint-Victor. 1133. — At Huy, a town of Belgium in the province of Liège, the Venerable Theodore of Celles, founder (1211) of the Order of the Holy Cross (Cross-bearers or Crosiers). He owed his conversion to a miraculous apparition of Mary, and all his life bore her boundless respect and affection.[2] 1246. — In the diocese of Le Mans, Saint Fraimbaud, confessor, whose life we gave on the preceding day. 532. — In the former Benedictine abbey of Saint-Bertin, near Saint-Omer, in the diocese of Arras, Blessed

Agilo, abbot. When Saint Gerard of Brogne had established in the monastery the reform made necessary by the violence of the lay lords and the Norman invasions, he called from Toul a holy religious to take charge of this important community. This was Blessed Agilo, a man of God adorned with every virtue; his wise, prudent and firm government answered the expectation of Saint Gerard and the wishes of the religious, who followed him in the ways of perfection. He died piously in his abbey. 1150. — At Crozant (Creuse, arrondissement of Guéret), in the diocese of Limoges, Our Lady of Les Places, whose statue, showing Mary seated on a tomb and holding on her knees the Body of the Saviour, was found on 17 August 1664 in the castle of Les Places. There is a great concourse at this sanctuary on the feasts of the Immaculate Conception, the Nativity and the Annunciation of the Blessed Virgin, but above all on the day of the Purification, on the Assumption, and on the Sunday before the feast of Saint John the Baptist. Near the chapel is a spring whose water the pilgrims drink to preserve themselves from fever or to be cured of it.

## MARTYROLOGES DES ORDRES RELIGIEUX.

*Martyrology of the Basilians.* — At Constantinople, Saint Maximus, monk of the Order of Saint Basil, illustrious for his learning and his zeal for Catholic truth. As he fought courageously against the Monothelites, Constans, a heretical emperor, had his hands and tongue cut off and banished him to the Chersonese, where he gave up his spirit. At the same time two of his disciples, both named Anastasius, and several others suffered various torments and harsh exile; all were of the Order of Saint Basil. 484. — At Enna (today Castrogiovanni), a town of Sicily, Saint Elias, monk of the Order of Saint Basil.[3] 903.

*Martyrology of the Dominicans.* — At Vercelli, a fortified town of Upper Italy in the intendancy of Novara, Blessed Emilia, virgin of our Order, who, well versed in prayer, burned with an ardent desire to feel the sufferings of Our Lord Jesus Christ.[4] 1514. — The Octave of Saint Lawrence, martyr.

## ADDITIONS FAITES D'APRÈS LES BOLLANDISTES ET AUTRES HAGIOGRAPHES.

In the former abbey of Amorbach (Order of Saint Benedict), in Bavaria, Saint Amor or Amator, believed to be the founder and first abbot of that monastery. He was born in Scotland according to some, in Aquitaine according to others, and preached the word of God with Saint Firmin and Saint Burchard in the dark forests of Bavaria. During his life God confirmed his holiness by many miracles. The famous convent of Amorbach is now the residence of the prince of Leiningen. 767 or 777. — At Alexandria, the holy martyrs Mammes (different from the one in today's Roman Martyrology), Diseus or Discus, and their companions, mentioned by Saint Jerome. — At Ptolemais, in Egypt, with Saints Paul and Juliana, mentioned in today's Roman Martyrology, the holy martyrs Stratonicus, Acacius and Quadratus, victims of the persecution of Aurelian. Third century. — In Calabria, Saint Elias the Younger, monk, already named today in the martyrology of the Basilians. — At Susteren, in the country of Jülich, in the Rhine Province, Saints Benedicta, Cecilia and Relindis, virgins, daughters of Saint Zwentibold, king of Lorraine and confessor, of whom we said a word on 13 August. The three sisters were entrusted to the direction of Saint Amalberga, superior of the abbey of Susteren. The two elder, Benedicta and Cecilia, made their vows in that house and were each in turn named abbess by their sisters at the death of Amalberga. Relindis, the youngest of the princesses, soon preferred solitude to the convent and settled near Liège, where she ended her days as a recluse in continual contemplation of eternal truths. Tenth century. — At Montemarano, eighteen miles from Benevento, in Italy, Blessed John, bishop of that see and confessor. He long refused the episcopate, of which he thought himself unworthy; but Pope Gregory VII imposed it on him, and he was consecrated by the bishop of Benevento. Eleventh century. — In Sicily, Blessed Nicholas, hermit. He was born of noble parents at Aderno (*Adranum*), a town of Sicily (Catania), near Mount Etna. Early in life he left his father's house and went deep into a solitude, where he spent thirty years in the exercise of the most austere mortification. A church was built over his tomb. Basilian monks afterwards transferred his body to one of their monasteries, where it remained three

hundred and thirty-six years without any mark of corruption. In 1503 the cause of his beatification was pursued at Rome, and Pope Julius II authorized his cult. 1167.

## Saint Myron, Priest and Martyr at Cyzicus

*250. — Pope: Saint Fabian. — Roman Emperor: Decius.*

> *Persecutions are needed to make the faithful shine, to bring his virtue to light and to reveal to all the inner beauty of his soul.*
>
> *Saint Ambrose.*

Antipater, having received from the emperor Decius the government of Achaia, entered the church of the Christians at the head of a crowd of soldiers, scattered the flock of the faithful and arrested a great number of them. At once the priest of that church, Myron, whose birth, kindness to all and gravity of life won him love and respect, put aside all fear for love of Christ and, boldly coming forward to meet the proconsul, reproached him with the folly of his sacrilege and the barbarity of his designs, which made him like a wild beast. Then, turning to the faithful, he said to them: “Brethren, you friends of Christ, stand generously firm in the purity of your faith. Let none of you give way either to the threats of the tyrant or to his promises. God is with us to defend us, and at the same time He promises us an immortal reward that nothing can wither.” So by this address he strengthened the courage of the multitude. But the cruel Antipater ordered him to be arrested, although he had once been his friend and the two had lived on terms of great familiarity. He had his tribunal set up in the Forum, near the temple of Bacchus, and ordered the holy priest to be brought before him. There, after reproaching him with the bold rashness of his words, he said to him: “Myron, sacrifice to the immortal gods, if you do not wish to perish miserably by the death of criminals.”

Myron replied: “I will sacrifice, but to my God, a sacrifice of praise; as for the demons and your dumb statues made by the hand of men, Myron will never offer them victims.” At once he was hung on a post, and a sharp instrument was drawn along his body over all his limbs, pressed so violently that the ground beneath him was flooded with blood. Incapable of any feeling of pity, the cruel governor had a great fire lit in a furnace with pitch, oil and vine-cuttings, to make it more dreadful. Then, having the priest taken down from his post before these blazing flames, he said to him: “That is where I will have you thrown to be burned, Myron, if you do not honour the gods.” “No, unjust tyrant,” replied the martyr; “a Christian from my childhood, then servant and priest of Christ, I will not sacrifice to your gods.”

Then Antipater ordered him to be thrown into the fire; but Myron went forward of his own accord, repeating this prayer: “Lord, look down on Thy servants who pray, and deliver us for the glory of Thy name, lest the enemy say: Victory, victory, my eyes have seen it!” While he was speaking thus he was thrown into the fire; but then a great prodigy was seen. The Saint walked about in the furnace as he might have done on grass wet with dew, and sang a hymn of triumph, while the spectators nearest the scene were caught by the flames, which killed a great number of them. Witnessing the miracle, the proconsul himself was struck with amazement; he went away trembling, after ordering the Saint to be taken away and kept in prison. Nevertheless, the next day he had him brought before him again and once more ordered him to sacrifice; and when the priest did not obey, he had him flayed alive. Executioners seized him and with the knife cut his skin pitilessly all over his limbs, then tore off long strips of it from the shoulders to the feet. But, O courage of a great soul! the martyr sang: “With expectation I have waited for the Lord, and He was attentive to me, and He heard my prayer.”

And as he sang thus, not only did his courage not weaken, but he himself tore off a strip of his own flesh and threw it at the proconsul, saying: “Cruel dog, greedy for blood, take this food; you are hungry for human flesh: eat.” At these words the tyrant’s anger blazed up, and he ordered what was left of the martyr to be torn with iron claws. Soon the last shreds of his flesh fell to the ground, and nothing was seen but a skeleton with

its bones and joints laid bare; the entrails themselves and the inner organs of life were likewise uncovered, a horrible sight, able to move the hardest hearts. Even inanimate nature did not see it without horror. As for the martyr, he prayed: “O Thou who reignest for ever,” he said, “hear me. All the angelic powers glorify Thee, O Christ, King of the universe. Come and help Thy servant, and make me share in Thy infinite treasures.” At once a voice came from heaven, saying: “A place of peace and happiness is reserved for you, because you have finished your course and kept your faith.”

This voice was heard by the barbarous governor, who saw in it only the work of enchantment. “Accursed head,” he cried, “sacrifice to the gods; otherwise you will be thrown to the beasts, and all the workings of your magic will not be able to save you.” “No, I will not sacrifice,” answered the martyr; “I am a Christian.” At these words he was taken back to prison, and the beasts were made ready. The next day the martyr was brought into the stadium. The cruel Antipater, seeing him with a vigorous and whole body, without any trace of wounds, his face joyful and shining with wonderful beauty, said for the second time: “Your enchantments, Myron, are powerful and many; so, to avoid becoming food for the beasts, sacrifice to Bacchus and give up your art.” But as the martyr would not be persuaded by the words of a persecutor crueller than the monsters with which he was threatened, a lioness was let loose against him. She ran at once to the Saint’s feet and caressed him with her tongue, as if she wished to kiss him; then, O wonder! she cut the martyr’s bonds with her teeth.

The crowd of spectators, understanding at this sight the power of Christ, cried out: “Great is the God whom Myron preaches to us! Proconsul, release an innocent man whom the beasts themselves have respected; they set you the example.” The proconsul, frightened and fearing a rising against him, sent the Saint to Cyzicus, with orders to the governor of the city to finish with him by the sword. This governor, receiving him with the records of his examinations, first tried to win him over; then, seeing his efforts were useless, he pronounced sentence on him. The sword struck off his venerable and sacred head, and the Christians buried him with honour.

Taken from the *Actes des Martyrs* by the Benedictine Fathers of the Congregation of France.

## Saint Paul and Saint Juliana, Martyrs at Ptolemais

*274. — Pope: Saint Felix I. — Roman Emperor: Aurelian.*

> *Perseverance alone wins glory for our labours and the crown for our virtues.*
>
> *Saint Bernard.*

The emperor Aurelian, having published an edict against the Christians ordering them to sacrifice to the gods, threatened to make them suffer a cruel death if they refused to obey. This prince, then, having come into Isauria, went to the city of Ptolemais to force all the Christians to offer sacrifices to the idols. Blessed Paul, a man well versed in the holy Scriptures, was with his sister Juliana when the emperor made his entry into the city. As soon as he saw him, he made the sign of the cross on his forehead; then, turning to his sister, he said to her: “Take courage, my sister, fear nothing; but be sure that a great trial threatens the Christians.” His sister was bound to him even more closely by faith than by the ties of blood.

Aurelian, having noticed the sign of Christ that Paul had traced on his forehead, at once sent guards to seize him; then he had him brought into the midst of the crowd and said to him: “Wretch, what did you mean by making a sign on your forehead the moment I entered the city? Do you not know the edict issued against the Christians?” Paul answered: “I have indeed heard of your edict; but no one will ever frighten us so far as to make us deny Christ. Who would be so senseless as to forsake the living God and honour your deaf and dumb idols, since the author of our salvation, Jesus Christ, has said Himself: Whoever denies Me before men, I in turn will deny before My Father who is in heaven?” “You see,” said Aurelian, “how patiently I have listened to your nonsense. Come now and sacrifice to the gods, lest you perish by a very cruel kind of

death." But Paul answered him: "I know no other God than the Lord Jesus Christ, whom I have always adored from my childhood with a pure heart and a sincere mind." Aurelian said: "Hang this man up and torture him hard, until his Lord comes to deliver him." So the executioners hung him up and began to overwhelm him with torments. During his torture he called on God aloud, and God at once made his torments so light that blessed Paul no longer felt anything.

The holy spouse of Christ, Juliana, seeing her brother so cruelly tortured, ran to the tribunal and, crying aloud, said: "Aurelian, cruel tyrant, why do you torture my brother so horribly, who is innocent?" Aurelian said at once: "Uncover this woman's head and strike her hard on the cheeks for having spoken so rashly; as for this perverse man, go on torturing him severely, since he says he receives help and protection from the one he calls Christ." Juliana laughed and said to him: "I am astonished that you, emperor as you are, should lose your reason so far as not to know the power of Christ, who knows how to make torments light for those who call on Him." Aurelian, turning to his people, said to them: "This woman strangely abuses my clemency to put on so haughty an air!" Then, looking at her angrily, he said to her: "Come forward and sacrifice to the gods; otherwise you may be sure you will not escape from my hands." Juliana answered: "I am not afraid of your torments; I do not even think your threats are addressed to me, for there is a God in heaven who can snatch us from your wicked hands. So make me feel all the instruments of torture you have, so that by this very means you may know that I have in me the help of God and of the Saviour Jesus Christ." Aurelian, stung to the quick, said: "Hang this woman up and torture her without ceasing, to make her understand that she is before the emperor's tribunal."

The executioners had begun to torture her when her brother, looking at her, said to her: "Do not fear, my sister, the tortures of the tyrant, and do not be afraid of his threats. Let us suffer for a little while, so that afterwards we may enjoy eternal rest." Aurelian said to the executioners: "Do not tire of inflicting torments on her, and see that she is no longer heard pouring out speeches as senseless as they are proud." At these words Juliana laughed again and said: "Aurelian, wicked tyrant, the Lord Jesus Christ makes me feel neither torments nor weariness." Aurelian said: "It is no use your making us listen to your nonsense and telling us falsely that you do not feel the torments; I will see to it that you are tortured for a long time and in the end give way to the violence of the pain." Juliana answered: "Christ will never allow me to be overcome by you. It is He who helps me now and will protect me to the end; by this you will be able to know His power and the patience of Christians. As for you, my God will Himself punish you with eternal fire, for He will call you to account for the souls you have lost."

Aurelian, more and more enraged at hearing these words, ordered a cauldron to be brought, filled with pitch, and a fire lit under it so fierce that no one could come near it; then he had Paul and Juliana thrown into it. But the boiling pitch was changed into icy water, which made all who were present admire the power of God.

In spite of this Aurelian, choked by his own fury, did not give glory to God, and thought that all this was to be put down to magic. He ordered them to be taken out of the cauldron; and the martyrs gave off no smell of pitch; more than that, no trace of it was found in the cauldron, but only cold water. Aurelian then said to them: "Perhaps you think that those present will be taken in by you, and that you will bring them to acknowledge that your God has helped you, whereas all this is to be put down only to your magic art? It shall not be so, I swear it by the gods themselves; for I will see to it that, if you do not offer victims to these gods, I will have you tortured again and then burned up by fire." Paul answered: "We cannot by any means forsake the Lord, the living God, Creator of heaven and earth, who has brought us out of darkness and delivered us from your hands. Never, then, emperor Aurelian, never will you succeed in persuading us to worship your stone statues, which are without sight, hearing or soul. So you may inflict on us all the torments you wish; you will then know the strength of our God."

Aurelian ordered two iron seats to be brought to the tribunal, and a great quantity of coals taken from the public baths to be heaped up; and when the seats had been made red-hot, he had the martyrs smeared with fat

and gave the order for them to be seated on them. When they had been placed there, he said to them: “Now that your magic arts are brought to nothing, you can learn what the emperor Aurelian is. Let your Christ come now and, if He can, help you in your anguish.” Juliana answered: “Yes, Christ is with us here; He helps us and does not allow the fire to touch us. You do not see Him, for you are unworthy of it. I warn you, Aurelian, to give up this folly and draw near to Christ; for if you will believe in Him He will receive you with love, because He is good and merciful and loves to forgive the sins of men. But if you do not believe, you will be given over to eternal fire.”

Aurelian, carried away by still greater anger, ordered the executioners to be beheaded, thinking they had received money from the Christians to spare the martyrs. As the executioners were being led to death, Paul exhorted them in these words: “Fear nothing; you will not die eternally, but you will be fellow citizens of the Saints and heirs of the heavenly kingdom.” The executioners, hearing these words, stopped and prayed to the Lord thus: “Lord Jesus Christ, whom Paul and Juliana preach, help us and make us persevere in the confession of Thy name; for we die without having done wrong.” When they had prayed, their heads were cut off. One was called Quadratus and the other Acacius.

After their martyrdom was consummated, Aurelian charged other executioners to bring fire and to throw salt on the coals, to make the blaze fiercer. Then Juliana said to him: “Aurelian, detestable tyrant, what good does it do you to torment yourself like this? For I see that you are very agitated and that fury carries you away in every way; indeed, one would take you for a serpent that, amid its hissing, spits its venom at us. But you will gain nothing by it; for God Himself strengthens us so that we can withstand the assaults of your pernicious designs. In the end, seeing that you can do nothing against us, you will be covered with confusion and will stop tormenting us.”

Aurelian ordered them to be untied and thrown into prison, very heavy pieces of wood to be fastened round their necks, their feet put in the stocks, their hands chained, and the floor strewn with iron nails to wound them; and he forbade any Christian to be allowed to visit them, lest food be brought to them. The executioners led them to prison and carried out everything Aurelian had commanded.

About the middle of the night, when the martyrs had begun to pray, a great light lit up the prison, and an angel stood before them and said to them: “Paul and Juliana, servants of the most high God, rise and pray to God.” And the angel, coming near them, touched the pieces of wood that gripped their necks, and at once these fell to the ground, together with the chains with which they were loaded. At the same moment they saw two seats covered with rugs and a table laden with dishes of every kind, and the angel said to them: “Come, rest and take this food that Jesus Christ sends you.” Paul and Juliana, overjoyed, sat down at table: they took the bread in their hands, raised their eyes to heaven to give thanks to God, and began their meal. The prison guards saw this bright light; they came to them at once, and the martyrs, whom they found joyfully seated at table, told them what had happened. The guards sat down and ate with them; then they gave honour and glory to God, who had loaded them with so great a favour. Most of them believed in God and became Christians.

Three days later, Aurelian, having taken his seat on his tribunal, had the holy martyrs Paul and Juliana brought before him and said to them: “Well! Have the torments not yet taught you to give up this folly that possesses you, and to go to the gods and offer them victims?” Paul answered: “May this folly always be my portion, as it is the portion of all who love God! For the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the wisdom of men is foolishness with God. I should therefore be senseless and mad if I forsook God Himself to honour your demons.” Aurelian, beside himself with anger, gave the order to hang them on a post and torture them. The executioners tortured them for a long time; but Christ relieved them in their torments, and they did not feel them at all.

One of the executioners, named Stratonicus, who stood on Juliana's left side to torture her, was smitten by her beauty and did not dare lay his hands on her. Blessed Juliana, noticing this, stretched out her left foot and, striking him with her heel, said to him: "Stratonicus, do what the tyrant Aurelian has ordered you, and do not be afraid to lay your hands on me out of a wish to spare me; for I have beside me my King, the Lord Jesus Christ, eternal God, who cares for my soul and relieves the pains of my body." Stratonicus, hearing these words, threw down the sword he held in his hand and ran to the emperor's tribunal. The emperor ordered them to be taken down from the post and shut up in the inner part of the prison, and all the magicians to be summoned, with orders to bring with them all the venomous beasts they had, vipers, asps, serpents and dragons, to keep Paul and Juliana company. When these beasts had been brought, as the tyrant had ordered, they were shut up with Paul and Juliana. Once in that place, they crawled about freely and came to the martyrs' feet, looking at them fixedly but doing them no harm. Paul and Juliana, sitting there, praised God and sang psalms. These serpents remained shut up with the two Saints for three days and three nights. On the third day, at nightfall, Aurelian sent to find out whether they had been devoured by the serpents. Those who had been sent, coming near the door of the prison, heard the martyrs praising God and singing psalms. To find out more fully what had happened, they climbed to a higher place, from which they saw through the window Paul sitting with his sister Juliana, and an angel of God standing in the midst of the beasts and preventing them from doing harm. The messengers, filled with wonder, ran to report to the emperor all they had seen. Aurelian rose very early, went to his tribunal, and ordered the magicians to take away their beasts and the martyrs to be brought to him. So the enchanters went to the door of the prison and began to call out the beasts. But as the beasts did not obey their words, they opened the door, and suddenly all these animals rushed out; all the unbelieving men they found they killed, and then they fled into the desert places.

The prison guards led Paul and Juliana to the emperor's tribunal. The tyrant, seeing them, began to laugh and said to them: "I count myself very fortunate today to enjoy your company, for no doubt you bring me good fortune; and, I call the gods to witness, if you tell me the truth you will receive from me many precious gifts and will share in my sovereign power. Tell me, did you not see, as several eyewitnesses have reported to me, the god Apollo present in person and coming to your help?" "As for us," said Paul, "we do not know Apollo, for we are among those to whom God has given salvation. But your soul is doomed to death, for you have no wisdom and will not come to repentance. More than that, the excessive fury of your tyranny makes you blaspheme: the angel the Lord sent to close the serpents' mouths you claim is Apollo, so great are your arrogance and your rashness!" Aurelian, angered by these words, ordered Paul's jaw to be struck with lead balls and him to be told: "Do not speak so arrogantly; you must know that you are before the emperor." He then gave the order for Paul to be taken away and his sister Juliana brought in, to whom he spoke in these words: "I beg you, Juliana, do not imitate your brother's folly. I see in you a girl full of prudence and gifted with much wisdom. Follow my advice, and throughout the world I will raise columns on which your name will be engraved." Juliana answered him: "You waste your time trying to deceive me, Aurelian, impious tyrant; you are trying to get round a servant of the most high God. Propose no more to me what would bring me eternal death. Would you then deprive me of the glory of God and of His heavenly kingdom, to which you are a stranger and of which you are unworthy?" The emperor ordered Juliana to be taken away and Paul brought back; then he said to him: "Paul, your sister has promised me to sacrifice to the gods; she is to become my wife and the sovereign of my whole empire. So you too do what I tell you, and let yourself be persuaded to sacrifice to the gods." Paul answered: "You have lied, and to your own ruin. Besides, in doing this you have not departed from the school of your father the devil; for you only do what he habitually does, and neither of you can win anyone except by inventing lies. But you waste your pains; for you will never deceive us, even if you promised us the empire of the world. Believe me, then, I tell you, you cannot dupe us." Aurelian cried: "How long will you heap insults on us? Do you not know how to blush, you insipid teller of fables? I swear by the gods themselves, I will inflict every kind of torment on you." And he ordered fire to be brought with fourteen iron rods, which were made red-hot in it; then Paul's feet and hands were tied, an

iron bar was passed through them, and when he had been fastened to the ground in this way, the emperor gave the order for him to be beaten with two of these burning bars at once. As for Juliana, he had her taken to a house of prostitution.

But scarcely had she entered the place assigned by the emperor when an angel came down from heaven and said to her: “Fear not, Juliana; for the Lord Jesus Christ, whom you adore, has sent me to protect you and to make His holy name known to all who fear Him.”

As for Paul, while he was being tortured with the red-hot iron rods, he cried out: “Aurelian, detestable tyrant, what wrong have I done that you torture me with as much cruelty as impiety? But my Lord Jesus Christ relieves me in my torments; you will have for your inheritance the eternal fire reserved for you and for the devil, who inspires all you do against us.” Aurelian said to him: “Well, Paul, where is your sister Juliana, whom you say is so chaste a virgin?” Paul answered: “I know that the same God who has rescued me from your wicked designs has been my sister’s defender, and that He has kept her pure and free from all stain; for He sent His angel from heaven to guard her, and here she comes back spotless and adorned with her crown of virginity, to look upon my bonds.” Indeed, Aurelian had sent for Juliana. When she arrived at the tribunal and Paul saw her, he was filled with great joy and smiled at her.

Aurelian then ordered Paul to be untied, a pit to be dug as long as the height of three men, and wood to be lit in it. The executioners did exactly what they had been commanded, and lit a very fierce fire in it. The emperor ordered Paul and Juliana to be thrown into this blaze. But the holy martyrs praised God together, and prayed the Saviour and Lord Jesus Christ to help them. When they reached the place of their torture, they made the sign of the cross of Christ on their limbs and threw themselves into the fire of their own accord. They were seen there praising God and celebrating His glory; but at once the angel of the Lord came down from heaven, scattered the flame and the smoke, and did not allow the holy martyrs to be harmed by the flames in any way. So they stood upright in the pit, singing the divine praises. While the martyrs prayed, many heathens, considering the power of God, were moved to compunction, renounced the superstitions of idolatry and embraced the faith of Christ; there were even several of the executioners who had tortured them who, seeing the wonders of God toward His Saints, then changed their minds and also received the Christian faith.

These events were soon brought to the ears of Aurelian, who ordered the Saints to be stoned to death as they were still in the pit. But behold, suddenly fearful claps of thunder were heard, accompanied by dreadful flashes of lightning; clouds all on fire, which they poured out on the earth, rolled roaring through the air and came near the emperor; then a voice was heard from heaven saying to him: “Aurelian, go down into the abyss of eternal fire, which has been kindled for you and for your father the devil.” When the storm had abated, Aurelian gave the order to take the athletes and martyrs of Christ out of the pit and lead them back to prison. And the holy martyrs celebrated the glory of God for all the wonders He had just worked on their account. Seven days later Aurelian took his seat on his tribunal at daybreak and ordered the priests to bring all the idols they had of gold and silver or adorned with precious stones. The priests brought them at once before the emperor and spread out the royal purple before his eyes. The emperor then said: “Call Paul and Juliana.” When he saw them standing before the tribunal, his anger awoke again, and in an angry and threatening tone he said to them: “Go now and sacrifice to the gods.” Paul said to him with a smile: “Never, tyrant, will we forsake our God, who made heaven and earth; so give up at last the belief that we will consent to worship your idols.”

Aurelian had a great beam brought, to which Paul was fastened, and the executioners tied his hands. At the same time the emperor gave the order to bring lighted torches and burn his face with them, while a herald cried: “Do not be insolent toward the masters of the world, and do not speak ill of the gods.” The emperor ordered Juliana also to be fastened to the post, and burning torches to be put into her mouth and applied all over her body. When they had done so, the whole city, which was present at the spectacle, cried out with one

voice: “Emperor Aurelian, your judgments are unjust; you torture them against all justice. If they will not sacrifice to the gods, pass sentence on them.” Aurelian, fearing that the people would stir up a sedition against him, pronounced a sentence by which he condemned them to be beheaded and ordered their bodies to be left as prey for the dogs, the wild beasts and the birds.

On the seventeenth day of the month of August, Paul and Juliana went out together full of joy, singing this verse of the psalm: “Thou hast saved us, Lord, from them that afflict us, and hast put them to shame that hate us.” When they reached the place of their martyrdom outside the city, Paul begged the executioner to strike Juliana before him. She at once made the sign of Christ on her face and, leaping for joy, stretched out her neck, and the executioner struck her with his axe. Paul, seeing his sister crowned with martyrdom, raised his eyes to heaven, gave thanks to God, armed himself in his turn with the sign of the cross, and stretched out his neck; and at the same instant the executioner beheaded him.

Their bodies remained lying on the ground outside the city, for the Christians had been forbidden to take them from that place, and the soldiers, by Aurelian’s order, kept watch so that no one should come and steal these holy relics. But wolves, dogs and birds were seen arriving at the same place and standing sentinel round the bodies; and when flies and other such insects came to settle on them, the birds drove them away with their wings and did not allow them to stay there. For seven days and seven nights these beasts and birds remained thus round the relics of the martyrs. Aurelian, having learned all these things from the soldiers, sent word to them to leave the place, but during the night, not wishing to withdraw them in broad daylight lest they become a laughing-stock to the Christians. As soon as day broke, the Christians went to the bodies of the martyrs and buried them.

Extracted from the *Actes des Martyrs* by the Benedictine Fathers of the Congregation of France.

## Saint Mammès,[1] Martyr at Caesarea in Cappadocia, Patron of the City and Diocese of Langres

*About 275. — Pope: Saint Felix I. — Roman Emperor: Aurelian.*

> *Rejoice, innocence, and leap for joy: in trial you grow; in humiliation you are exalted; in combat you triumph; in death you are crowned.*
>
> *Saint John Chrysostom.*

We have seen, in the life of Saint Radegund, the deep respect this virtuous Queen had for Saint Mammès, and how she sent a special envoy to Jerusalem to obtain some of his relics from the Patriarch of that church. We must now uncover the reasons for this great respect, and at the same time the fine praises that Saint Basil, Saint Gregory of Nazianzus, Nicetas and almost all the Greeks have given this glorious Martyr. We learn from Simeon Metaphrastes, as given by Surius, that he was born of noble and virtuous parents, filled with the fear and love of God. His father was called Theodotus and his mother Rufina. As they worked with great zeal to extend the kingdom of Jesus Christ by the conversion of unbelievers, they were soon denounced to Alexander, whom the Roman emperor had sent to Gangra (today Kienkari, a town of Galatia) to persecute the Christians there. Alexander had Theodotus brought before him and ordered him to sacrifice to the gods of the empire. Theodotus refused to do so and did not even deign to answer him. Alexander threatened him with scourges, wheels and gibbets. Theodotus laughed at his threats and was no more moved by them than if he had been speaking to someone else.

Alexander, astonished at this constancy, wished to try the most rigorous tortures on him; but as he was of a patrician family and descended from the first senatorial houses, he did not dare to attempt anything against him without first informing the emperor. So he sent him as a prisoner to Caesarea in Cappadocia (today Kaisarieh) to await the prince’s answer. Theodotus went there joyfully, and Rufina his wife followed him there and even shut herself up voluntarily in the prison with him. When they were there, Theodotus,

considering on the one hand his own delicacy and on the other the pitiless cruelty of Faustus, governor of Caesarea, who was to be his judge, feared he would not have strength enough to bear the rigour of the torments; so he turned to God and asked Him for the grace of dying in his dungeon. His prayer was heard: he died in chains, to go and enjoy the happiness of eternity. Rufina, who was with child, was so shaken by the death of her husband that she gave birth to a son before her time. And so to her grief as a wife were added her anxieties as a mother. She saw herself alone, without help, in a prison, with her husband's dead body on one side and her newborn child on the other. Weeping, distrustful of her strength in the presence of the executioners but full of confidence in God, she begged Him to reunite her with her husband, to be a father to her child and to send someone to take care of him. Her request was granted in every point: she died in peace and was reunited with her husband. God sent to a noble widow named Ammia an angel, who ordered her to ask the governor for the bodies of the two dead, to give them honourable burial, and to take charge of their son's upbringing as though he were her own child.

Ammia obeyed this order and, having obtained from the governor the bodies of Theodotus and Rufina, buried them in her garden with a pomp worthy of their merit. She adopted their child as her son and took the same care of him as if she had been his mother. He was called Mamas, because in his first babblings he often said to Ammia, his guardian, *mamma*, the name that little children usually give their mothers among us. Sent to school, he made wonderful progress and in a short time surpassed all his companions; but it was his piety that made him most worthy of admiration, for an ardent love for Jesus Christ was seen in him, and it seemed that, having been born in martyrdom, he had drawn from his birth an inclination for martyrdom. He encouraged everyone, and especially his schoolfellows, to stand firm in the faith and not to fear the torments the judges used to shake the constancy of Christians. Ammia died; as she had adopted him as her son, she left him heir and master of all her property. No doubt he also had that of his parents, for it is not said that it had been confiscated.

The emperor Aurelian, who was then reigning, was not content with persecuting the men and women faithful to Jesus Christ; he also, and above all, applied himself to detaching children from the Christian religion. This was one of the instructions he gave Democritus when he sent him as governor to Caesarea; and this barbarous and cruel man did not fail to follow it and carry it out. Having learned that the young Mammès was not only a fervent Christian but strengthened those of his schoolfellows who were Christians too, and often converted those who were not, he had him arrested and brought before his tribunal. There was no artifice he did not use to lead him astray: he used promises and threats and tried to persuade him by arguments, but all in vain. Mammès always answered like the son of martyrs, and declared courageously that neither tortures nor death itself, and still less the favour and good graces of the emperor, would ever tear the faith and love of Jesus Christ from his heart. "We shall see," said the governor, "whether you will be as steadfast when your body is torn or roasted." "But you are not permitted," replied Mammès, "to torture me, who am of a patrician family and was afterwards adopted by Ammia, the noblest lady of this country." He did not say this to avoid torture, but to have occasion to carry the glory of the name of Jesus Christ before the very tribunal of the emperor. The governor, having found that what he said was true, would not go further, but sent him to the emperor at Aegae, an ancient town of Cilicia that has since been destroyed. This prince, unable to shake him by his great promises, had him cruelly scourged, and during this torture he was asked only for a promise to sacrifice; nothing more was required to set him free. "I shall take good care," answered the martyr, "not to say anything against my duty; I will not promise what I do not mean to do. Besides, this torment I am enduring is no torment: far from suffering harm from it, I feel only pleasure." The emperor, angered by this refusal, had him stripped entirely so that he might be burned all over with blazing torches; all his limbs were also bruised with stones; but he did not suffer at all, and the stones as well as the flames seemed to him only roses.

The emperor, unable to bear being defeated by a child, ordered him to be thrown into the sea at once with a lump of lead hung round his neck. The executioners set about doing it. But, O glorious Mammès! Jesus Christ did not forget you on this occasion: He sent His angel, who drove away all those who were leading you and took you to the mountain of Caesarea called Argaeus, to receive there the apostolic Spirit. Our Saint remained forty days on this mountain without eating or drinking, like Moses on Sinai. After this he saw a rod fall from heaven and heard a voice that ordered him to strike the ground with it. He did so, and at that very moment there came out of it a book of the holy Gospels, by which he was more wonderfully instructed than the prophet Ezekiel by the scroll he was commanded to eat. With this new law he often came down from the mountain and went to preach the faith in Caesarea and the places round about, to win servants for Jesus Christ. What fed him on this mountain was the milk of hinds, goats and other animals that came of their own accord into his hands. He made cheeses of it, part of which served for his own sustenance, while the rest he brought to the town and gave as alms to the poor. The wildest beasts also grew tame with him, and he was seen among bears, tigers and lions as in the midst of a herd of roe-deer and lambs.

Meanwhile the governor of Cappadocia, named Alexander (who must not be confused with the man of the same name of whom we have spoken), could not tolerate the virtues and the reputation of Mammès, and sent archers to seize the servant of God. Mammès came out to meet them himself, brought them into his hut and served them his country fare, begging them to restore their strength. Meanwhile the wild beasts came as usual to pay court to our new Adam, and soon formed round him an impassable barrier. The archers, terrified, begged his help and put themselves under his protection. Mammès reassured them and, having told them that he was the man they were looking for, begged them to go back to Caesarea, assuring them that he would be there as soon as they. Then, moved by an extraordinary impulse of the divine Spirit, Mammès nodded to one of the lions that were on the mountain, called it, and commanded it in the name of God to be ready to come down into the amphitheatre when he was exposed there, and to come and avenge the insult that would then be done to the only Son of the eternal Father on the infidels and impious men who would be bold enough to blaspheme His name. The animal ran up in all haste; it seemed to anticipate his command and to offer itself of its own accord for this execution. At the same time it gave a fearful roar that filled the forest and was taken up by all the echoes round about, an unmistakable sign of the fury that already drove it to slaughter and vengeance.

Having given these orders, he went back into his oratory and called on the help of heaven; and, making of his heart an altar all aflame with the fire of his charity, he offered himself voluntarily in sacrifice and immolated himself beforehand, to be consumed as a holocaust and to suffer every kind of torment in the cause of Jesus Christ. The son of Martyrs, strengthened by prayer, went straight to Caesarea and boldly presented himself before Alexander's tribunal. "Are you," the governor asked him, "that magician, that enchanter who has the skill to tame the wildest beasts and make them gentle as sheep?" "I do not know the enchanter's trade, my lord," Mammès told him; "but I serve a God, sovereign Lord of heaven and earth, whom the fiercest animals obey without resistance." "You must," Alexander went on, "give up this superstition and submit to the will of our emperor." "The emperor I obey in matters of religion," said Mammès, "is God alone; and whatever command you give me, I will not leave His service to adore lifeless gods."

On this answer the judge ordered him to be hung up in the air and scourged until his whole body was torn. During this torture a voice from heaven strengthened him and so eased his pain that he hardly felt it. Then the judge sent him to prison while a blazing furnace was being prepared to throw him into. His arrival at the prison brought salvation to forty Christians who were being held there; for scarcely had he been shut in when he broke their chains, opened the doors miraculously and set them free. As for himself, he remained there steadfastly with an angel who strengthened him for new tortures.

Yet before issuing a decree of death against the Confessor of the faith and finishing with him by fire, Alexander wished once more to try gentleness and win Mammès by promises. So he began by remonstrating

with him again, and said to him: “Fortunately for you, public affairs have kept me busy and have put off your condemnation. I am delighted at it, for it gives you time to come to yourself and put your life in safety. For you can still save it, and keep your fortune, by obeying the emperor’s edicts and sacrificing to the gods.” “To what gods?” said Mammès. Alexander named several, among them Apollo. “Well said,” replied the Saint; “your gods are well named. Apollo means perdition, and those who offer him sacrifice lose their souls for ever.” The judge, stung to the quick by this answer, replied angrily: “It is magic that makes you so resolute and so insolent; but it will not keep you from perishing by fire if you do not sacrifice at once. Look at this furnace, and see how deep and how burning it is: you are going to be consumed in it if you do not change your mind.”

But the generous Martyr answered: “You know my sentiments, for I have declared them forcefully enough for you to have no further doubt on the subject. I beg you, delay no longer in making me feel the effects of your anger.”

Seeing that the servant of God was inflexible on every point, the governor pronounced the sentence of his condemnation. It ran that Mammès should be cast into the furnace to be burned alive, and that his ashes should be scattered to the wind.

He had gathered round his tribunal the priests of his false gods, so that by their rites and ceremonies they might forestall the enchantments of the young wonder-worker. As soon as the sentence had been given, they set to work and came and stood round the victim to subject him to their superstitious practices and then throw him into the flames. Mammès, for his part, had received the death sentence passed on him with such lively joy that he blessed God for it aloud. Then, seeing the minions of the devil coming forward to seize him, he slipped out of their hands, either because he would not bear their impure touch or because he found them too slow in carrying out the governor’s order; and then, falling on his knees, he addressed this prayer to the Lord: “God of our fathers, hear the voice of the sinner Mammès, who suffers for love of Thee, and stay, if such is Thy good pleasure, the fury of these flames, so that those who do not know Thee may learn that Thou art the only true God and that there is no other God but Thee.”

After these words he rose, made the sign of the cross and sprang boldly into the midst of that blaze, which filled all the spectators with horror but seemed to him like a refreshing bath. He remained there three days without the fire causing him any discomfort or even singeing a single hair of his head. The pagans thought they would find nothing more of him than a few bones or ashes; but they were greatly surprised to see him come out full of life and health. The governor told those present that it was quite clear this man was a great enchanter, since fire obeyed him as well as animals. So Alexander ordered him to be exposed in the amphitheatre to be devoured by wild beasts. He had given orders for hunts through all the deserts and forests of the province, so as to have a greater number of wild beasts at his disposal, as if he had wished to arm against a child all that is most furious in the world; but the impatience that consumed him did not allow him to wait for the hunters to return. Hardly had he reached the amphitheatre when he had a bear and a leopard that were in the cages of the circus let loose on the Martyr. But instead of harming him, the bear lay down at his feet as if it wished to embrace them; and the leopard, rising on its hind legs, gently rested its forepaws on the Saint’s shoulders, and never stopped licking them and caressing him in its own way most affectionately.

The great Martyr was using once again the rights of innocence: all creatures submitted to him because he had himself submitted all the powers of his heart to his divine Master. The rays of original justice and the first lustre of that divine image which appeared in Adam shone on his brow, and gave him back over nature the dominion that sin had made man lose.

The governor thus suffered a new defeat; to go on with the spectacle was to prolong his shame; so he had the young Martyr shut up in his prison and waited for fiercer animals to be brought to him. Mammès was kept in his prison awaiting new torments. Alexander’s hunters meanwhile were scouring the mountains and forests

to satisfy their master's wishes. After long efforts they brought in a lion of enormous size. The governor rejoiced greatly at this capture; for this animal was to avenge him for the affronts he claimed to have received from the invincible Mammès, and he counted as so many defeats the tortures that had not succeeded. So he at once had the young combatant brought back into the amphitheatre, onto the same battlefield where three days before victory had remained with his rival. He fully hoped this time to conquer where he had been conquered and to wipe out the shame of his failure.

The news spread rapidly through the whole city. The people, furious at seeing their idols despised, gathered in crowds to witness the barbarous immolation of an innocent victim; but God, overturning the designs of men, made them themselves the victims of His fury, and "so the lamb destined for sacrifice became the spectator of the divine vengeance exercised on their heads."

A great multitude crowded the tiers of the circus, eager for violent emotions; bloodthirsty cries rang out round the victim; the roars of the lion, shut in its cage and starved by a long fast, mingled with the clamour of the crowd and made the enemies of Jesus Christ quiver with pleasure. Seated on a platform and wearing the insignia of his office, the governor seemed to be tasting beforehand the pleasure of revenge, and was waiting to give the signal for the games only for the answer of the haruspex charged with consulting the gods in the entrails of a victim. Standing in the middle of the arena, his eyes raised to heaven, Mammès awaited the hour of his triumph in prayer and recollection.

The signal is given… Suddenly a great tumult arises near the gate of the circus; the spectators stir and are thrown into confusion; cries of "Help! Help!" ring out on all sides. It is a lion that has come down from the mountain and has just made its way into the amphitheatre and mingled with the onlookers gathered for the games. Everywhere it spreads terror and death: those who escape its murderous teeth are crushed under the feet of those who flee. Men, women, children, all fall around it. Where can they flee? The gates are shut and guarded by the angel of the Lord. Blood flows on all sides, and the arena is covered with a smoking crimson. But the avenger of the innocent spares those who call on the God of Mammès and glorify the divine power that is in him.

All at once the lion stops; and, its eyes fixed on him whose cause it defends, it greets him with admiration and respect. The justice of God was satisfied, and the glory of His name shone in the amphitheatre with a wonderful brightness. Mammès commanded the lion to stop, and it, obedient to its master's voice, put an end to the slaughter; then, taking its way back toward the mountain, it went off to resume the wandering life of the wilderness.

The moment had come for Mammès to receive his reward. Made perfect in a short time, he had run a long course, and he was going to claim the crown his great labours had earned him. The governor of Caesarea has seen wonders multiply at the young Confessor's every step: the prison doors opening before him, the wild beasts prostrating themselves at his feet, the flames of the pyre respecting his sacred body, the avenging lion slaughtering his enemies; and yet he will not admit himself beaten. Rage and shame devour him, and his hardened heart thirsts for revenge. We are sometimes astonished to see sinners remain unmoved at the sight of such evident proofs of the divine omnipotence; but the mysteries of grace are impenetrable to our weak sight, and man's pride is often a deep abyss in which the best inspirations are swallowed up and wrecked.

So Alexander has remained on his tribunal; around him the people of Caesarea are swimming in blood or glorifying the God of the Christians. Death has struck many victims; but the tyrant's heart remains unshaken, with no other emotion than anger and fury. Mammès has saved him from the lion's claws and has forbidden the Minister of the divine vengeance to make an attempt on his life; but a kindness only angers the heart of the ungrateful, and this wicked judge is going to condemn innocence once more.

As soon as the avenging lion has withdrawn at the great Martyr's command, the governor takes up again his work of iniquity and threatens Mammès with that other lion which his hunters have brought him and which

he has had kept in the cages of the amphitheatre.

The order is given, and the angry animal bursts roaring out of the den in which it is shut. But He who had kept the prophet Daniel in the lions' den at Babylon protects His servant once more in the amphitheatre. Scarcely has the wild beast caught sight of the Saint when it comes and throws itself at his feet and shows him the greatest respect by its caresses; one would have said it had been sent to console him rather than to destroy him. "So the fiercest animals showed that humanity had passed into the hearts of the beasts, and the ferocity of the beasts into the soul of the tyrant."

After this scene a great number of unbelievers glorified the God of Mammès. Alexander, no longer knowing what to do, commanded one of his executioners to drive into the Martyr's belly an iron trident with which he happened to be armed, and the order was carried out. A Christian woman, seeing the Martyr's blood gushing from his wound, came near and caught a few drops of it in a vessel, which she kept with honour. Mammès held in with his own hands his entrails, which were falling from his opened body, and in this state went out of the amphitheatre of the city. At a distance of two stadia he entered a cave; there a crown was shown him in heaven and a voice invited him to leave the earth; at once that holy soul, freed from the bonds of the body, was carried off amid the choirs of Angels, there to praise the Christ it had nobly served. Saint Mammès is adorned with the three crowns of virginity, of the doctorate and of martyrdom. His martyrdom took place on 2 September according to the menology of the Greeks, but according to the Roman Martyrology and all the Latins on 17 August, toward the end of the reign of Aurelian. He was buried near the city of Caesarea, at Horia, in the cave where he had breathed his last.

Saint Mammès is represented: (1) standing beside a lion, or holding his entrails in his hands; (2) placed on burning coals, his hands tied behind his back, while a soldier thrusts at him with his three-pronged fork.

## CULTE ET RELIQUES.

There has been no more famous Martyr in the whole East. The Greeks call him the Great Martyr par excellence. It was in his honour that Gallus, and Julian, later the apostate emperor, undertook to build churches; but while Gallus succeeded in his undertaking, Julian could not carry out his, Saint Mammès not suffering so wicked a man to have the glory of having made him a gift. Nicephorus speaks of a famous basilica of Saint Mammès at Constantinople, and Suidas of a bridge at Saint-Mammès. There was also a church of his name at Rome, where Saint Gregory the Great, on his feast day, preached his thirty-fifth Homily on the Gospels. His relics, at least in part, were taken to Jerusalem; and it was from there that Saint Radegund obtained the little finger of his right hand, by a miracle we have described in the life of that Saint. The city of Constantinople was also enriched, in the course of time, with so precious a treasure. We have in Surius the history of the translation, first of the nape bone, then of the arm, and lastly of the venerable head of our Saint, to the cathedral of Langres, which has taken him as its patron and principal titular in place of Saint John the

Evangelist, who had been so before. During the revolutionary storm the nape bone disappeared. Today the cathedral of Langres possesses only the Saint's head and a small part of the arm. The head is exposed in a silver-gilt reliquary, a gift of His Eminence Cardinal Mathieu, archbishop of Besançon, formerly bishop of Langres. Saint Mammès is honoured in a great number of parishes in France, where altars and churches have been dedicated to him. The church dedicated to Saint Mammès in the parish of Sceaux, in the diocese of Paris, possesses a fragment of the arm bone. From time immemorial the parish of Saint-Mammès, in the diocese of Meaux, was a place of pilgrimage, where people went to invoke the great Martyr against disorders of the bowels and against rabies. The parish of Saint-Manvieu, in the diocese of Bayeux, still possesses a fairly large relic of the holy Martyr, a bone seventeen centimetres long. A confraternity was established in this parish in the last century in honour of Saint Mammès and enriched by Pope Clement XII with (1) a plenary indulgence on the day of entry into the confraternity, at the hour of death, and on the day the Saint's

solemnity is celebrated; (2) an indulgence of seven years and seven quarantines on the days of the Circumcision, of the Blessed Sacrament, of Saint Peter, of the patron of the place, and of Saint Michael; (3) an indulgence of sixty days each time the members attend the Masses and other divine offices customarily celebrated or recited in the said church, or perform the other good works detailed in the papal letter. The confraternity was re-established after the Revolution, on 19 August 1803. We have his history in verse by Walafrid Strabo, in volume VI of the *Antiquae lectiones* of Canisius. It will also be found in the library of Fleury, in the translation of Raynard, bishop of Langres, who was the one who brought his arm from Constantinople. See in the Bollandists the acts of the Saint, and above all the *Vie de saint Mammès* by the abbé Tincelin, which we have used to correct and complete Father Giry.

## Saint Mammet or Mammerce, Deacon, Apostle of the Diocese of Saint-Flour

### Third century.

Mammet, also called Mammerce, a deacon, was given by the Prince of the Apostles as companion and helper to the bishop Saint Austremonius, and came with that prelate into Gaul. He evangelized with great success the districts of Murat and Aurillac (Cantal), in Upper Auvergne, with the cooperation of Antoninus, a man of great holiness and a disciple of Saint Austremonius. He was held back neither by the difficult approach of the mountains nor by the ignorance and roughness of the inhabitants, and he lit up that whole region with the light of the faith and the splendours of holiness and miracles.

Saint Austremonius also sent these two heroes of the Gospel to carry the good news into some parts of Lower Arvernia. While Antoninus was drawing out of their errors barbarians who lived in the forests and worshipped the idol of Mercury, and was laying the foundations of the town of Gannat on the Andelot (Allier), Mammet, going through another part of the Limagne (a small region of France in the north of Lower Auvergne, along the Allier, now included in the northern part of the department of Puy-de-Dôme), brought a great number of pagans under the saving yoke of the Gospel. When Saint Austremonius set out for the mountains of Arvernia to be present at the last moments of Saint Marius, Saint Mammet went with him. He followed him again when, at the call of Antoninus, Austremonius went to consecrate the church of Compains (Puy-de-Dôme, arrondissement of Issoire, canton of Besse). At last, after great labours accomplished, Mammet rested in the Lord and was buried, it is believed, in the little town that bears his name. There was formerly a collegiate church in that place; Jean Aycelin de Montaigu, bishop of Clermont, gave it in the thirteenth century to the Chapter of the cathedral.

*Proper of Saint-Flour.*

## Blessed Carloman, Prince of France, Monk of Monte Cassino, in Italy

*756.*

Carloman was the eldest son of Charles Martel and his wife Chrotrude or Rotrude, and brother of the mighty Pepin, king of the Franks. His father, who died in 741, left him by will the government of the provinces of Austrasia, Swabia and Thuringia. Having reached the summit of glory and growing suddenly weary of the world, Carloman in 747 handed over the government of his States to his brother Pepin, commended to him the upbringing of his eldest son Drogo, and set out on pilgrimage to Rome, where Pope Zachary received him with the greatest distinction.

After satisfying his devotion in the capital of Christendom, he went to Mount Soracte, a few miles from Rome. There he had a monastery built in honour of Saint Sylvester, where he stayed hidden for some time. But when the place of his retreat became better known, all the Franks of rank who went on pilgrimage to Rome came to see him and often disturbed him in his contemplation and his intimate converse with God. This decided him to leave the place, and he went with a single companion to the Benedictine abbey of Monte

Cassino, governed at that time by Petronax.

Soon it was known throughout almost the whole of Europe that Carloman had embraced the monastic life at Monte Cassino and that he was a model of the most sublime Christian virtues. All good people praised God and admired the power of His grace, which works such astonishing transformations in the hearts of men and makes them come down willingly from the summit of honours to the humblest condition.

After edifying the whole community for some years, he was obliged by an order of his abbot to make a journey to his brother Pepin, to concert with him the means of putting a stop to the ravages the Lombards were beginning to commit in Italy. We have no certain information on the success of this mission. We know only that, having discharged it, he set out to return, and that he died in a monastery at Vienne in Dauphiné, rich in merit and like his Redeemer in his voluntary humility. The day of his death cannot be fixed, but it occurred in the month of August or of December. Pepin sent his mortal remains in a golden shrine to Monte Cassino, where they were buried with honour under the high altar. The name of Carloman is found in the martyrology of the Benedictines.

*Baillet and the continuators of Godescard.*

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[1] These generous martyrs were giving the example of every virtue near Capsa, in Byzacena (the present State of Tunis), in a monastery of which Saint Liberatus was the abbot. It was at the time when Huneric (477–488), son of Genseric and second king of the Vandals, wished to infect the whole world with the heresy of the Arians. After their execution their bodies were thrown into the sea, and the waves drove them to the shore. The Catholics buried them honourably in the monastery of Bigne, near the church of Saint Celerinus. — Godescard.

[2] There were houses of the Order of the Holy Cross in France, the Low Countries, Germany, Italy and Bohemia. Their arms were: azure, a cross patée gules and argent, the shield surmounted by a crown of thorns, a mitre and a crosier. Liège, Cologne, Aix-la-Chapelle, Namur, Tournai, Bruges, Maastricht, Bois-le-Duc, Paris, Toulouse, Caen and other places had monasteries of this Order. — Cf. Hélyot, *Dictionnaire des Ordres monastiques*.

[3] He is commonly called Saint Elias the Younger. Born in Sicily, he was carried off to Africa by the Saracens, whom he edified above all by his unshakeable chastity. He died at Thessalonica (today Salonika, in Macedonia), and his body was afterwards brought back to Calabria. — *Acta Sanctorum*.

[4] See her life on 3 May, which is the day of her birth into heaven as well as of her birth into the world.

[5] Alias: Mamas, Mammant, Mamet.