Mgr Paul Guérin

LES PETITS BOLLANDISTES: LIVES OF THE SAINTS, VOLUME XI

10 September – 2 October

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English translation

Contributed to Mind of the Church by a friend of the library who wishes to remain anonymous

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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 XI, which covers 10 September – 2 October.

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.

10 September

MARTYROLOGE ROMAIN.

Roman Martyrology.

At Tolentino, in the March of Ancona, the death of Saint NICHOLAS, confessor, of the Order of Hermits of Saint Augustine. About 1310. — In Africa, the heavenly birthday of the holy bishops Nemesian, Felix, Lucius, another Felix, Litteus, Polyanus, Victor, Jader, Dativus and several others, who, at the beginning of the persecution of Valerian and Gallienus, at the very first confession they made of Jesus Christ, were cruelly beaten with clubs, then put in irons and condemned to the mines, where they finished the course of their martyrdom.[1] About 260. — At Chalcedon, the holy martyrs Sosthenes and Victor, who, during the persecution of Diocletian and under Priscus, proconsul of Asia, having overcome irons and wild beasts, were condemned to be burned; having then given each other the kiss of peace, they gave up the ghost praying to God. About 302. — In Bithynia, the holy virgins Menodora, Metrodora and Nymphodora, sisters, who came to glory through the martyrdom with which they were crowned under the emperor Maximian and the governor Fronto. About 303. — Also the holy martyrs Apelles, Luke or Lucius, and Clement.[2] 1st c. — At Liège, Saint Theodard, bishop and martyr, who gave his life for his flock and shone after his death by the power of miracles.[3] 668. — At Rome, Saint HILARY, pope and confessor. 467. — At Compostela, Saint Peter, bishop, famous for his virtues and his miracles.[4] — At Albi, Saint SALVIUS or SAUVE, bishop and confessor. 586. — At Novara, Saint Agapitus or Agabius, bishop. 6th c. — At Constantinople, Saint PULCHERIA, empress and virgin, illustrious for her piety and religion. 453.

MARTYROLOGE DE FRANCE, REVU ET AUGMENTÉ.

Martyrology of France, revised and enlarged.

At Nevers, the anniversary of the reception of a thorn of the holy crown of our Lord. This precious treasure was given to the cathedral by Philippe de Moulins, bishop of Évreux, who had himself received it from the duke of Berry, who held it in great esteem. This relic disappeared at the beginning of this century, no one knows how. 1404. — In the former diocese of Vence (Alpes-Maritimes), now the diocese of Nice, Saint Veranus, bishop of Vence after having been a monk of Lérins; he is named, with more detail, in the martyrology of France of the preceding day. About 480. — In the former diocese of Noyon, now the diocese

of Beauvais, Saint EUNUCIUS, bishop of Noyon and Tournai. About the middle of the 8th c. — In the original diocese of Mâcon, now the diocese of Autun, Saint Salvinus, bishop of that former see and confessor. About 560. — At the village of Mont-Saint-Odile, in the original diocese of Roermond (Dutch Limburg), now the diocese of Liège, Saint Otger or Oger (*Othgerus*), deacon, who is thought to have been English by birth. In preaching the Gospel and in the work of converting souls he was the companion and helper of the holy bishops Wiro or Guiron (8 May) and Plechelm (15 July). Some hagiographers have wrongly given Saint Otger the title of bishop. About 713. — In the diocese of Maurienne (Savoy), Blessed THOMAS, abbot of Farfa (Order of Saint Benedict), in the Sabina, in the diocese of Spoleto. 715. — At Avranches (Manche), Saint Aubert, also called Ausbert and Autbert, bishop of that former see, transferred to Coutances. He has already been mentioned on 16 and 18 June. About 720. — In the diocese of Saint-Dié, Saint Adelphus, abbot of Remiremont and confessor, whose life we shall give on the following day. About 670. — On this day the Grey Sisters of the Order of Saint Francis at Ghent took the title of Conceptionists and bound themselves to enclosure. 1644. — The same day Gertrude, châtelaine of Bruges, founded in that city the béguinage called the Vineyard of Our Lady. 1185.

MARTYROLOGES DES ORDRES RELIGIEUX.

Martyrologies of the religious Orders.

Martyrology of the Order of Saint Basil. — At Rome, Saint Hilary, pope and confessor, of the Order of Saint Basil. 467.

Martyrology of the Order of Canons Regular. — At Tolentino, in the March of Ancona, the death of Saint Nicholas, confessor, first a canon regular, then a religious of the Order of Hermits of Saint Augustine. About 1310.

Martyrology of the Order of Hermits of Saint Augustine. — At Tolentino, in the March of Ancona, Saint Nicholas, confessor of our Order, famous for his virginity, his abstinence, the glory of his miracles and his many virtues. About 1310.

ADDITIONS FAITES D'APRÈS LES BOLLANDISTES ET AUTRES HAGIOGRAPHES.

Additions made from the Bollandists and other hagiographers.

In Ulster or Ultonia, a region of Ireland, Saint Finnian or Winnen, regionary bishop, founder of the monastery of Magbile and principal patron of Ulster. 6th c. — At Caesarea in Cappadocia (*Caesarea Eusebia*), today Kaisarieh, on the Halys, the holy martyrs Euplus or Euplius, Alexander, Cupsicus or Cerosicus, Hysicus, Alopo, Silvanus and five of their companions, named in the copies of Saint Jerome's martyrology. — In Africa, the holy martyrs Doletatulus or Catulus, Tuscus, Valentine and Magarus, named in the same. — In Japan, the martyrdom of Blessed CHARLES SPINOLA and his companions, the Blessed Francis Morales, Angelo Orsucci, Alphonsus de Mena, Joseph of Saint Hyacinth and Hyacinth Orfanel, all five priests of the Order of Friars Preachers; — Alexis, Thomas of the Rosary and Dominic of the Rosary, professed choir religious of the Order of Friars Preachers; — Richard of Saint Anne and Peter of Avila, priests of the Order of Friars Minor; — Vincent of Saint Joseph, professed lay brother of the Order of Friars Minor; — Sebastian Kimura, Gonzalo Fusai, Antony Kiouni, Peter Sampô, Michael Xumpo, John Kiongocù, John Acafoci and Louis Cavara, all seven scholastics of the Society of Jesus and Japanese; — Leo of Satzuma and Lucy de Freitez, of the Third Order of Saint Francis; — Antony Sanga and Antony, catechists of the Fathers of the Society of Jesus; — Magdalen and Mary, their wives; John and Peter, their sons; Paul Nangaci, Thecla his wife, and Peter their son; Paul Tanaco and Mary his wife; Isabel Fernandez, wife of the martyr Dominic Georgi, and Ignatius their son; Apollonia, widow; Dominic Xamada and Clare his wife; Mary and Agnes, widows; Dominic Nacano; Bartholomew Xikiemon; Damian Samihi and Michael his son;

Thomas Xiquiro; Rufus Iscimola; Mary; Clement Vom and Antony his son; Dominic Ongatid; Catherine, widow; and Mary Tanaura, all members of the Confraternity of the Holy Rosary. 1622. — In Africa, Saint Paulinus the Younger, famous for his constancy in bearing torments and an abject slavery. His wit and beauty had struck the Vandal king Genseric (428–477), who seemed to turn into hatred all the affection this glorious child had inspired in him when he saw that nothing could tear the Catholic faith from his heart. About 437. — In the East, Saint Barypsabas, anchorite and martyr. He is said to have worked a number of miraculous cures by virtue of a little phial he had inherited from the hermits his predecessors, which held blood of our Lord collected on Calvary at the crucifixion. Impious men murdered him to seize his treasure, which, however, they could not find, and which went to enrich the city of Constantinople. Date uncertain. — At Palermo in Sicily, the translation of the relics of Saint Cosmas, archbishop in Africa and confessor. 1160. — At Florence, Blessed John of Salerno, of the Order of Friars Preachers, of whom we spoke on 9 August (note 1 to the martyrology of the Friars Preachers). 1242.

Saint Pulcheria, Virgin, Empress of the East

453. — Pope: Saint Leo I, the Great. — Emperor of the East: Marcian.

Honorem gloriosum boni operis fama conservat.

A high dignity finds its safeguard in the reputation of blameless conduct.

St Jerome, Epistles.

Saint Pulcheria offers to our admiration an illustrious model of all the virtues amid the splendour of greatness and in the cruellest trials of adversity. Her grandfather was Theodosius the Great, her father the emperor Arcadius, and her mother Eudoxia. She came into the world in 399. Flaccilla, her elder sister, died in infancy. Her two other sisters, Arcadia and Marina, were younger than she.

Arcadius, a weak prince, always ruled by his wife and his eunuchs, died on 1 May 408 after a reign of thirty years and some months. He left a son eight years old, for whom he named as guardian Anthemius, one of the wisest men in the empire, who had always been attached to Saint Aphraates and Saint Chrysostom. Pulcheria, who was almost as young as her brother, already showed a great fund of wisdom and piety. At last, on 14 July 414, she was declared Augusta, to share the imperial dignity with her brother; and she took charge herself of his education, though she was only two years older than he. The happy dispositions she had received from nature made up in her for want of experience. She placed about her brother the ablest and most virtuous masters, and applied herself above all to inspiring him with great sentiments of piety, persuaded as she was that the finest qualities are useless, and often dangerous, without religion. She taught him to pray fervently, to love all that concerned divine worship, and to defend zealously the doctrine of the Catholic Church. In a word, one may say that the young prince owed his sister all the good there was in him, and that it was his own fault, or that of his character, if he did not appear adorned with a greater number of fine qualities.

Pulcheria also took care of the education of the two sisters who remained to her, and she had the consolation of seeing them constantly follow the path of virtue. It was only the desire of perfection that led her to make a vow of virginity. Her sisters imitated her and shared in all her good works. The three ate together and performed their exercises of piety in common. The time that remained to them they spent in serious and useful studies or in work suited to their sex. Pulcheria left them only when affairs of State obliged her to, and she found means everywhere to make herself a solitude in her heart. She practised mortifications and austerities unknown in the courts of princes. Entry to her apartments and to those of her sisters was forbidden to persons of the other sex, so much did the pious princess fear even the shadow of danger. She saw men and spoke with them only in public. Under her direction the imperial palace showed the regularity of a cloister. Like Moses, she consulted God in all the affairs that arose, and moreover decided only after taking the advice

of the wise and virtuous persons who made up her council. Her resolutions were always the result of the most mature deliberation; she gave her orders accordingly and had them carried out promptly, taking care to act only in her brother's name, so that he might have the honour of all the undertakings, which never failed to turn to the glory of the empire. People admired in her an uncommon knowledge of the Greek and Latin tongues; she knew history perfectly and was versed in the various branches of literature. She declared herself the protectress of the sciences and arts, as princes have always done who had great souls and a just idea of the excellence of the human mind.

Far from making religion serve policy, she referred all her views and all her plans to prayer; and so nothing was lacking to the happiness of the State. She knew how to forestall all the revolts that the various passions might have stirred up; she kept peace with the neighbouring powers and worked to spread the knowledge of the true God in the parts of the State where He was not yet worshipped. In short, virtue never shone in the East with a brighter lustre, the peoples were never happier, and the Roman name was never more respected, even by the Barbarians, than when Pulcheria held the reins of government.

When Theodosius her brother had reached his twentieth year, she thought of finding him a wife worthy of him, and cast her eyes on Athenais. She was the daughter of an Athenian philosopher and had received an excellent education. Having come to court to have her father's will set aside, for he had disinherited her, she was universally admired there for her beauty, her wit and her fine qualities. At last this admiration went so far that she was judged worthy to become the emperor's wife. As she had been brought up in paganism, she first received baptism and gave up her name to take that of Eudocia. The marriage ceremony took place on 7 June 421. Two years later Theodosius declared her Augusta. Until then there had been no change in the administration of affairs; Pulcheria was still its chief mover. But that princess's power soon gave umbrage to Eudocia, who conceived violent jealousy of her sister-in-law and was kept in it by the intrigues of the eunuch Chrysaphius, the emperor's favourite.

After the condemnation of Nestorius at the council held at Ephesus in 431, Eudocia and Chrysaphius set a thousand springs in motion to ruin Pulcheria. The emperor, naturally weak and indolent, did not at first enter into their views, but in the end he let himself be won over and ordered Saint Flavian, patriarch of Constantinople, to make Pulcheria a deaconess of his Church. The holy bishop brought forward the most solid reasons for excusing himself from obeying; they would not listen to them. Seeing, then, that the prince was firmly attached to his first resolution, he withdrew, promising to return to court at a set time; but he secretly warned Pulcheria of what her enemies were plotting against her. The princess withdrew to the country, intending to spend the rest of her days there in silence and obscurity. Her retirement, which took place in 447, was a source of misfortunes for the State and the Church. Eudocia and Chrysaphius, to satisfy their resentment, became the persecutors of Saint Flavian; they declared themselves in favour of Eutyches, whose errors had been condemned; they took the side of Dioscorus and the other Eutychians and protected them in all the acts of violence and fury they committed in 449 at the Robber Synod of Ephesus. At their instigation Theodosius published an edict approving all that the heretics had done.

Pulcheria thanked God for the peace she enjoyed in her retirement and occupied herself there only with the exercises of religion. She was never heard to complain either of her brother's ingratitude, or of the violence of the empress, who owed her elevation to her, or of the injustice of the ministers. She wished to forget the world and be forgotten by it, thinking herself happy to be able to converse freely with God and meditate on His law. If anything troubled her, it was the thought of the dangers that threatened the Church and the State; she was also moved with compassion for her brother, who through excessive credulity lent himself to the designs of the wicked.

Meanwhile the evil kept growing, and it soon reached its height. Pulcheria was filled with grief at it, and Pope Saint Leo urged her in his letters to work to bring a prompt remedy. At last she resolved to leave her retirement and make a last effort to save the State and the Church. She went to court and asked for an

audience with the emperor. Having obtained it, she spoke to him with such force that he opened his eyes on the spot. As indignant as he was frightened at the sight of the precipice into which he had been thrown, he disgraced Chrysaphius and banished him to an island, where he was put to death in punishment for his crimes. Theodosius having died on 29 July 450, Eudocia withdrew to Palestine, where she ended her days. By her brother's death Pulcheria became mistress of the Eastern empire. To strengthen her authority she thought she should share it with Marcian, born in Illyria. He was a man well versed in the profession of arms, who joined to a deep knowledge of affairs an ardent zeal for the Catholic faith, a rare virtue and an extraordinary love for the poor. He was a widower and had by his first marriage a daughter named Euphemia, who married Anthemius, later emperor of the West. Pulcheria, in offering him her hand, told him of the vow she had made to live in virginity, and it was agreed between them that the marriage should do it no harm. These two great souls, working towards the same end, thought only of the means of making their subjects happy and of making religion and piety flourish.

Saint Leo having sent four legates to Constantinople, the emperor and empress received them with as much joy as affection. Their zeal for orthodoxy earned them great praise from the holy Pope and from the general council of Chalcedon, which condemned Eutychianism in 451. They used all their authority to have the decrees of that council carried out throughout the East; but they met great difficulties in Egypt and Palestine because of the obstinacy of the Eutychians in those countries. Pulcheria wrote two letters, one addressed to some monks and the other to an abbess of Palestine, to dispel the false ideas they had been given of the Fathers of Chalcedon; she showed in them that the council, far from reviving Nestorianism, condemned it together with Eutychianism, which was its opposite.

This pious princess made a great number of useful foundations and founded several hospitals, to which she assigned considerable funds. Among the churches she built, three are distinguished that were dedicated under the invocation of the Mother of God: that of Blachernae, that of Chalcoprateia and that of the Hodegoi. In the last she placed the famous image of the holy Virgin that the empress Eudocia had sent her from Jerusalem, which was regarded as the work of Saint Luke. The affairs of State did not prevent her from keeping her fervour; every moment she could steal from the duties of government she spent in praying, reading, and visiting and serving the poor with her own hands. According to Sozomen, she was favoured with several extraordinary graces; and it was in consequence of a vision that she had a solemn translation made of the relics of the forty martyrs, which were enclosed in a magnificent shrine. The same historian, who was an eyewitness of the ceremony, adds that the people attended it with the greatest devotion and pressed forward to touch the holy relics with cloths and other such things.

Pulcheria, having been during her life the protectress of the Church and the mother of the poor, left to both by her will all the goods she could freely dispose of. In short, if one considers her actions and her virtues, one will agree that there is no exaggeration in the praises she received from Saint Proclus, Saint Leo and the Fathers of the council of Chalcedon. She died on 10 September 453, in the sixty-ninth year of her age.

Marcian carried out the will of his august wife exactly. He continued the good works she had begun and showed himself the faithful imitator of all her virtues. He was reunited with her in heaven on 26 January 457, in the sixty-fifth year of his age and the seventh of his reign.

Saint Pulcheria is represented: 1. leaning on a tablet bearing the Greek word Θεοτόκος (*Deigenitrix*), which recalls the condemnation of Nestorianism at the council of Ephesus; 2. in a group with her three sisters Flaccilla, Arcadia and Marina; 3. holding a lily in her hand, as a symbol of the inviolable chastity she kept until her death.

Taken from Sozomen, book ix; from Theodore the Lector; from the Chronicle of Alexandria. — Cf. Tillemont; Cardinal Orsi; and Fr. Stilting in the Acta Sanctorum, *vol. iii of September.*

Saint Salvius or Sauve, Bishop of Albi and Confessor

586. — Pope: Pelagius II. — Kings of France: Childebert II; Clotaire II; Charibert II.

> *Redditus terris, Domino jubente, Salvius sedi datur Albiensi Praesul; urbs tanto sibi laeta plaudit Munere caeli.*
>
> *Given back to earth by heaven's leave, Salvius is given as pastor to the city of Albi, which thrills with gladness at the sight of the signal gift the Lord sends it.*
>
> *Hymn of Saint Salvius.*

Saint Salvius was a native of the city of Albi itself; after studying the humanities and law there, he spent some time, quite innocently, in the practice of the bar; but at last, growing weary of the world, he withdrew into a monastery of the same city, which was governed according to the precepts given by the holy Fathers. He at once shone there with every kind of virtue. His abstinence was so great that for want of food he became very emaciated, and he said himself afterwards, according to Saint Gregory, who testifies that he heard it from his own mouth, that his skin, parched and dried up, had changed as many as nine times.

The abbot of the place having died, he was elected in his stead and could not avoid holding the office for some time; but as the business of this charge, all of whose duties he fulfilled admirably, prevented him from giving himself to prayer and contemplation as much as he wished, he resigned it and shut himself up in a remote cell, to be perfectly solitary there. It was like a tomb in which he buried himself alive, to die to the world and be forgotten by it. He redoubled his fasts and other austerities in this hermitage, where for the rest he enjoyed those ineffable delights that the divine Goodness shares with those who are dead to the world and to themselves and seek God alone. Yet he received kindly those who visited him, instructed them in their duties, stirred them to virtue, and cured their diseases by his prayers and his touch.

Amid these pious exercises he fell ill of a burning fever; his room shook and was filled with a heavenly light. He raised his hands and eyes to heaven, and it was thought that he was thus giving up his most pure spirit to appear before the majesty of his sovereign. The brethren gather; they take his body from his bed, wash it, clothe it, put it in the coffin and spend the whole night beside it singing psalms. During this time his soul was carried by the angels into paradise. There it saw the King of glory seated on His throne, the blessed company of the angels and Saints, and the beauties of that place of delights, which infinitely surpass all the beauties here below. Salvius even recognized there the Saints whom we honour on earth, and he enjoyed that ineffable light before which the light of the sun is only darkness. Then he heard a voice saying: "Lord, send him back into the world, for this good servant is still needed by the Church." At this voice he pleaded earnestly not to be sent back and deprived of the great happiness he was enjoying, and he said: "Ah, Lord, do not send me back into the world, that place of sin and misery, lest I offend You again and make myself unworthy to possess You eternally." But our Lord bade him take courage, assured him that He would be his protector, and that after the services He expected of him He would bring him back in greater glory. So his soul was sent back into his body; and when they were preparing to bury him, colour began to appear in his cheeks, his eyes opened, he felt himself in perfect health, and he rose from the coffin in which he lay. They eagerly asked him what had happened to him, but he went to his cell without giving any answer, constantly giving off an incomparable fragrance, which was like a remnant of the happiness he had enjoyed in heaven. At the end of three days, his mother and brothers having gathered round him to make him speak, he cried out: "O folly, O vanity of all the things of earth! Happy, infinitely happy are those who do not set their hearts on them, so that they may come to the good things of blessed eternity." He thought he had said enough; but they pressed him so much to explain himself more fully that at last he told all that had happened to him, as we have just related it. At that very hour he no longer perceived the ravishing fragrance with which he had been embalmed before, and his tongue was covered with sores. Tears then ran from his eyes, and he added: "Woe is me for having revealed this secret of heaven! No doubt, my God, You wished it to remain hidden; but I did it in the simplicity of my heart and not out of vanity or presumption. Forgive me, my divine Master, and do

not fail to fulfil Your promises in me." I fear, says Saint Gregory, his historian, that this whole account, which seems extraordinary, will not be believed, because imperfect souls will not believe what passes their reach; but I call God to witness that I learned all these things from the very mouth of Saint Salvius, who was good enough to tell them to me.

After this event he made continual new progress in virtue, and when the bishopric of Albi became vacant he was torn from his cell against his will to govern that Church (about the year 574). For ten years he fulfilled there all the duties of a good pastor, kindling in all his children the desire to possess the infinite happiness of which he himself had had some enjoyment. At the end of that time the plague infected the city of Albi and carried off the greater part of the inhabitants. The holy Prelate, far from fleeing, stayed in the midst of his flock, assisting the plague-stricken with intrepid zeal and courage. Few of his diocesans were left to him; but he lessened nothing of his vigilance and charity in helping them. He deprived himself of the things most necessary to life in order to assist them and give them alms. The patrician Mummolus having carried off a number of captives from the city of Albi, this good pastor ran after him and set them free. He boldly rebuked King Chilperic, who held heretical opinions on the adorable mystery of the Trinity and clung to them obstinately.

Saint Salvius attended the council of Braine, in the diocese of Soissons, in 580. Following the example of the bishops of the first centuries, he carried the light of the Gospel into regions from which paganism had not yet been entirely banished. His words, supported by his example, bore wonderful fruit; he converted and baptized many unbelievers and set them on the way of eternal salvation. Having been warned of the day of his death, he had his tomb prepared and the garments in which he was to be clothed after his death; thus laden with countless merits that he had not had at the time of his first death, he went back gloriously into heaven to enjoy the divine presence of Him whom he had served so faithfully on earth. It was on 10 September in the year 586. Saint Gregory ends his life with these words: *Multa de hoc viro bona audivi*, "Besides what I have just said, I have heard many very favourable things about this holy man."

In 1194, on the eighth before the ides of October, in the presence of the bishop and a numerous clergy, the body of Saint Salvius was discovered, resting in a tomb behind the altar of Saint Saturninus. As soon as the stone covering it was removed, a heavenly fragrance came from it. His precious relics were buried again with honour, and from then on the devotion of the people towards the Saint only increased. The Church of Albi celebrates the feast of the finding and translation of his body on 11 October. In an old stained-glass window he is represented in the posture and dress of a hermit praying on his knees with outstretched hands.

Saint Gregory of Tours, and the Proper of Albi.

Blessed Thomas of Maurienne, Abbot of Farfa, in the Diocese of Spoleto

715. — Pope: Gregory II. — King of France: Dagobert III.

> *Une foi vive, une piété fervente, une confiance entière en la Providence, une charité ardente, ont fait du bienheureux Thomas de Farfe une des gloires de l'Ordre de Saint-Benoît et un instrument de salut pour un grand nombre d'âmes.*
>
> *A lively faith, a fervent piety, an entire trust in Providence and an ardent charity made Blessed Thomas of Farfa one of the glories of the Order of Saint Benedict and an instrument of salvation for a great number of souls.*
>
> *Taken from the Office of the Saint.*

Blessed Thomas was a holy priest of the town of Maurienne, his native place. He was a gentle, simple man, full of faith and charity, whose delight was prayer and meditation. Though he was still young, his fellow-countrymen venerated him as a saint. God, who had His designs, inspired him with the thought of going to visit Jerusalem and the other places hallowed by the mysteries of the life of the Saviour and His holy Mother. Thomas, having won over to his plan some disciples who lived under his direction, set out with them

for the capital of the Christian world.

In his devout visits to the monuments of the Eternal City, so eloquent to the Catholic heart, our Blessed made the acquaintance of two holy priests: one was named Marcian and later became bishop of Fermo; the other, called Martyrius, was abbot of a monastery near the church of Saint Peter. These two religious conceived the highest esteem and the tenderest affection for him and, having learned of his plan, begged him to take them as his travelling companions. Thomas, whose heart their noble qualities had also won, consented with joy. So they set out together. The journey, made pleasant by the charm of that true friendship which religion alone can form, passed without accident, and our pilgrims, after a long voyage, landed on the coasts of Palestine.

Marcian and Martyrius took the road back to Italy after fulfilling their vow; but Thomas could not bring himself to part so soon from that land so dear to his heart. He bade farewell to his two companions, returned to Jerusalem with his disciples, and spent three more years there, serving day and night in the church of the Holy Sepulchre and praying our Lord with tears to make known His will to him and lead him where he could labour most effectively for His glory.

One night, wearied with his prayers and vigils, Thomas fell asleep beside the tomb of Jesus Christ. He saw the Blessed Virgin Mary approach him, and she said to him: “Why this sadness and these tears? Be steadfast and take courage; the Lord has heard your prayers. Go back to Italy. When, under God’s protection, you have arrived there, look in the province of Sabina, at the place called Acutianus, for three tall cypresses standing by themselves side by side. Close by is a magnificent basilica built in my honour; it is dear to me and I often visit it. There you will spend the rest of your life. Nothing will be lacking there either to you or to yours; all good things will follow you there, and a multitude of brethren, drawn by your example, will come to labour with you for the conquest of the eternal kingdom.” While the Mother of God was speaking thus, she held out to her servant a loaf of wonderful size and dazzling whiteness, and she added: “Take this bread and go without anxiety; know that it will never fail you and that it will amply suffice for all the days of your life.” It was the bread of the love of God, the heavenly bread that nourishes the soul and makes all the trifles of earth tasteless to it. From that moment the Blessed was so inflamed with the fire of charity, and at the same time received the gift of tears to such a degree, that he could neither speak of God nor give himself to prayer or psalmody without their flowing abundantly from his eyes, or rather from his heart. The contemplation of divine things raised him far above the wretched vanities of this world. He was continually united to God by the ardour of his desires, and one would have said at every moment that his soul was about to break the bonds of flesh that held it far from its love. Thomas’s life became an unbroken prayer and as it were a perpetual song of the praises of God. It is thus that the apostle Saint John represents the Saints before the throne of God, the Saints of earth as well as the Saints of heaven; for to them the temporal life and the eternal life are but one and the same life: they do in the first, by faith and struggle, what they will do in the second by love alone and in glory. From this valley of tears their gaze is fixed on their true country. They climb towards it unceasingly by the divine rungs of grace, and when, having reached the summit by perfect holiness, so far as the holiness of man can be perfect, they see the everlasting gates still slow to open, it is no wonder that they suffer from this delay pains that we know nothing of, we who remain among our earthly affections and our base passions.

On his way back to Italy in obedience to the voice of heaven, our Saint happened to pass through Ephesus. He could not resist the desire to stay some time beside the tomb of Saint John the Evangelist, the apostle of charity above all others. He remained there three years, occupied in meditating on the great mysteries whose glorious scene he had just visited. At last, God urging him more and more, he took ship for Italy. His pilgrimage had lasted nearly seven years.

As soon as he arrived in Italy, Thomas went to Sabina. One day, when he was at a place called Lervinaire, the thought came to him to offer there the holy sacrifice of the Mass. When he had finished it, feeling tired, he told his disciples to prepare the meal with whatever provisions might still be left in their bags, and

withdrew under a tree to take a little rest. His intention was to go to Rome as soon as possible, to visit the tombs of the holy Apostles again, and then to take the road back to Maurienne. But God, who knew His servant's obedience, came a second time to make known His will to him. While the Saint was resting, the Mother of God appeared to him and said kindly: "This is the place I promised you: take courage, then, my brother, and do not let yourself be caught by cowardly mistrust." And pointing out to him three cypresses not far off, she added: "Go, and near those trees that you see you will find the basilica of which I spoke to you. There you will dwell. You will enjoy rest in God there; labour like a valiant soldier to deserve the crown of life. I will be with you and with your brethren now and always. I will bring a multitude to you, that they may learn to serve God under your guidance." Having said these words, the Blessed Virgin disappeared.

On waking, Thomas told his companions of the vision he had had and, looking round him, he did indeed see three cypresses a short distance away, towards the east. "There," he cried, "are the very trees that were shown to me. Get up, and let us go where God calls us." They went at once, but not without difficulty, for they had to cut a passage with their knives through the brambles and thorns. Having reached the foot of the cypresses, they had no difficulty in finding the basilica, and going in they gave thanks to God.

When they had spent some days there singing the praises of the Lord, Thomas's disciples began to grow weary and to say sadly: "What shall we do here, venerable father, when the provisions we have left are used up? This place, as you see, can be known only to wild beasts and robbers, who will come and cut our throats." Thomas consoled them, saying: "I trust in the infinite generosity of almighty God and in the intercession of His holy Mother that we shall have to fear neither hunger nor robbers. The goodness of the Lord will come to our help, for He has promised it by the Prophet: 'Those who hope in Him shall want for nothing'; and His promise will soon be fulfilled in our regard." The duchy of Spoleto was then governed by Faroald, the second of the name, son and successor of Transamund. This prince, intending to go to Rome, sent ahead servants and pack-animals loaded with provisions, meaning to follow them himself the next day with his escort. But during the night the holy Virgin appeared to him and said: "Give up the journey you are planning, for it is not to your advantage to go to Rome now. Follow my advice instead, which will be much more profitable to you. There is in the territory of Sabina a church consecrated in my honour, in which foreign monks dwell, serving God night and day by prayer and the singing of hymns. Have all the provisions that have just set out carried to them, so that by their prayers the Lord may be favourable to you."

Faroald at once sent the party laden with supplies towards Sabina. These men, having come to a place called Pompeianus, asked the inhabitants where the church of the Holy Virgin was that was inhabited by foreign monks. "We know," they all said with one voice, "several churches dedicated to the holy Virgin, but we cannot tell you where these monks are. However, we have it from our fathers that their forefathers had heard it said that in the land called Acutianus, near three cypresses, there was a church of wonderful beauty under the title of the holy Virgin, and that right beside it, in the time of the Romans, stood a monastery of religious. We do not know of any dwelling there now." And as they spoke, they pointed with their hands in the direction where these three cypresses were, though no one knew the way to follow to reach them. Suddenly the pack-animals, which had been halted, set off of their own accord and took precisely the direction that had just been pointed out. The drivers followed them.

As they drew near the church, the brethren, hearing the noise of a troop of men and horses, thought they were robbers and, running to the church in great fright, turned on Blessed Thomas, who was prostrate at the foot of the altar pouring out his soul before God, and said to him: "See, father, as we foretold you, robbers are coming to cut our throats." And they tried to shut the door. Meanwhile one of them saw through a hole the prince's men getting ready to unload their beasts before the church. He ran joyfully to tell Thomas and the others that not only was there nothing to fear, but that horses were arriving loaded with supplies. At once they all went out and asked the drivers where these provisions came from and who was sending them. They answered: "Faroald, glorious duke of Spoleto, warned by the holy Virgin, Mother of God, sends you this gift

and begs you to remember him before the Lord." They set down their loads, received the brethren's blessing and took the road back by which they had come.

Faroald often sent gifts to the monastery of Farfa; he even asked Abbot Thomas to come and see him at Spoleto, commended himself to his prayers and, to secure the monastery's existence, made over to him considerable lands; he then wrote to Pope John VII to ask him to confirm this donation by his apostolic authority, and charged Blessed Thomas to go to Rome to press the matter. The Sovereign Pontiff granted it willingly; he had a bull drawn up, addressed "to Abbot Thomas, religious priest, and to the community of the venerable monastery of Saint Mary, Mother of God, ever Virgin." Faroald's letter and the bull of John VII are of the year 705 or 706. They can be seen in volume II of the *Annals of the Order of Saint Benedict*.

Thus did Mary fulfil the promise she had made to Blessed Thomas and reward his trust magnificently. Thanks to the liberality of the duke of Spoleto, the monastery of Farfa was soon rebuilt (681).

The holy Virgin had told the Blessed that his example would draw to Farfa a multitude of brethren eager to march, under his guidance, to the conquest of the kingdom of God. It was a promise and at the same time a prophecy. Mary kept her word. From the depths of the solitude into which Thomas had withdrawn with his disciples from Maurienne, the fame of his holiness spread far and wide. It is with virtue as with the violet: the humbler and smaller it makes itself, the more it hides from men's eyes, the more its fragrance betrays it. The gentleness of the holy abbot's character, the tender affection he bore his brethren, his considerate charity towards strangers, to whom the door of the monastery was always open, and the wholly heavenly fervour that shone on his face, showing that he touched the earth only with his feet while his soul lived in heaven, won him every heart. So he saw flocking to him a crowd of men of every condition, come from the neighbouring regions and even from the most distant provinces. Thomas received them with joy, and in so holy a school they soon made rapid progress in the perfection of the religious life. His teaching was inspired by that spirit of kindness and gentle firmness which was the ground of his soul. But the most effective of all his lessons was his example. It was enough to see him to understand what one ought to be oneself.

An enemy of idleness, he made his religious clear the forests, cultivate the lands that Duke Faroald had given him and some others that he had bought himself, practise hospitality, and join prayer and the practice of all the virtues to the work of farming. By this means he made the roads safe everywhere and entirely renewed the face of the country.

The holy man spent thirty-five years, seven months and five days thus at the head of the monastery of Farfa, sighing for the happy day when it would be granted him to depart for the heavenly country. That day came at last. Blessed Thomas of Maurienne gave back his soul to God on 10 September in the year 715, in the midst of his weeping disciples.

CULTE ET RELIQUES. — ABBAYE DE FARFE.

Cult and relics. — Abbey of Farfa.

Blessed Thomas was buried beneath the high altar of the monastery church, beside Saint Lawrence the Syrian. When this altar was rebuilt in 1604, the two holy bodies were found enclosed in marble urns. They were then moved into the vault of the old chapel of relics, whose opening was walled up and where they rest to this day. An eleventh-century manuscript preserved in the archives of the monastery of Farfa and entitled *Lectionarium et passiones martyrum* contains the office of Saint Thomas on 12 December. The legend is divided into eleven lessons; Mabillon gives it word for word in his *Acts of the Saints of the Order of Saint Benedict*. In 1636 Gregory of Perugia, prior of Farfa, suppressed this proper office on the ground that it was not approved by the Holy See. Nevertheless the office and feast of Saint Thomas continued to be celebrated, and are still celebrated in the monastery of Farfa on the day indicated, from the common of abbots. One of the side altars of the church of Farfa is dedicated to Saint Thomas. Its painting represents the apparition of

the holy Virgin to him at Jerusalem. We cannot end this biography without saying what the monastery of Blessed Thomas of Maurienne was and what became of it in the course of the centuries. The monastery of Farfa, in Sabina, in the diocese of Spoleto, had been founded in the sixth century by Saint Lawrence, a Syrian by birth, who, having left his parents, had gone to Rome with his sister, Saint Susanna, and had afterwards withdrawn to this place to serve God there in the exercises of the religious life. He became bishop of Spoleto and is highly praised for his holy life in a bull of Pope John VII addressed to Saint Thomas and the religious of Farfa. Some years after the death of Saint Lawrence the Lombards invaded Italy. Everywhere in their path the churches were profaned, the monks massacred, the monasteries pillaged and given to the flames. They penetrated into Sabina; the monastery of Farfa fell into their hands and was completely destroyed; the church alone remained standing, but stripped and abandoned, until the moment when the Lord sent Blessed Thomas to restore the work of Saint Lawrence.

Such was the throng of those who went to the monastery of Farfa to seek a surer way to God that it was obliged to send out colonies to various places in Italy. It thus became the head of a numerous Congregation and counted six hundred and eighty-three churches under its authority. It depended only on the Pope and the emperor. Louis II, Charles the Bald, Charles the Fat,

Berengar, Otto and Henry IV of Germany confirmed its privileges, which were very extensive.

Destroyed by the Saracens in 891, at which time it held eight hundred religious, it was rebuilt fifty-eight years later, after the expulsion of those barbarians. In 1009 it adopted the reform of Cluny. In 1097 Abbot Berald, seeing that it was falling into ruin, had another monastery built on the mountain, with the revenues of the abbey and the help of the Romans. From that time on, the history of the monastery of Farfa offers nothing remarkable except the harassment of the neighbouring lords and those alternations of fervour and slackness from which no religious society escapes. Nevertheless, protected by its two holy founders, it has withstood every storm and has come down to our times, though greatly fallen from its ancient glory. In 1849 a republican band commanded by one Capiccioni broke down its doors in the name of liberty, drove out the religious and carried off all the money, grain and cattle that were found in the monastery.

We have taken this biography from the Histoire hagiologique du diocèse de Maurienne *by the abbé Truchet, parish priest of Saint-Jean-d'Arves.*

Saint Nicholas of Tolentino, Confessor, of the Order of Hermits of Saint Augustine

About 1310. — Pope: Clement V. — Emperor of Germany: Albert I.

> *Caro tunc Deum sitit, quando per jejunium abstinet et arescit.*
>
> *The flesh thirsts for God when fasting wears it down and dries it up.*
>
> *Saint Bernard.*

Saint Nicholas, called "of Tolentino" because of the long stay he made in that town, was born in the village of Sant'Angelo, near Fermo, in the March of Ancona. His parents were little favoured with the gifts of fortune, but they were distinguished by great piety. They had never had children, and his mother, named Amata, was already advanced in years. One day, when she was at prayer, she felt herself inwardly moved to make a pilgrimage of devotion to Saint Nicholas, bishop of Myra, hoping that by his intercession she might obtain a son who would be a perfect imitator of that Blessed and, like him, a great Saint in the Church. In agreement with her husband she went to visit the church of Saint Nicholas of Myra at Bari, at the far end of Italy; there they fulfilled the vow they had made, and less than a year later their faith was rewarded by the birth of a son, to whom they gave the name of Nicholas.

His parents neglected nothing to inspire him early with the sentiments of virtue; but from his childhood he was drawn to it of himself, with a discretion and a fervour far beyond his years. He shunned everything effeminate and worldly, and even the amusements of other children. He loved, on the contrary, to see religious, and tried to practise the same things he saw them do. He went to church with wonderful eagerness. There he listened to the word of God with all the modesty of an old man. He prayed with such great application of mind that everyone admired his devotion. From the age of seven he began to fast three times a week, in imitation of the great Saint Nicholas, whose child he was according to the spirit. He had a holy eagerness to receive the poor into his father's house.

All these actions, so extraordinary in a child, made the inhabitants of the village say that one day he would be a great Saint. He was still only a young student when he was provided with a canonry in the church of the Saviour at Tolentino. But because this was a profession that kept him in the world, which he intended to renounce, he resolved to embrace another state in which he could give himself wholly to Jesus Christ. He felt himself still more drawn to this generous undertaking after hearing a religious of Saint Augustine who, preaching on these words of Saint John, "The world passeth away, and the concupiscence thereof," thundered forcefully against the vanities, abuses and illusions of the world; from then on Nicholas sought only the means of consecrating himself entirely to Jesus Christ. As he had come into the world only through his parents' prayers, he would not leave them without having their blessing. So he told them of his plan; these wise Christians did not imitate most fathers and mothers, who love their children only according to flesh and blood and, with no regard for the salvation of their souls, turn them away from the religious state as much as they can; looking on this step of their son's as a fulfilment of the promises heaven had made them, they approved it with all their hearts. Among the religious Orders he chose that of the Hermits of Saint Augustine; he was received into it at only eleven years of age. After his novitiate he made his solemn vows, and from that moment he practised virtue in its highest degree.

He had a horror of vanity, which continually lays snares for the holiest actions in order to destroy their merit; to avoid this danger he watched over himself unceasingly. He walked with extreme reserve and circumspection; he regarded his brethren as so many superiors who had the right to command him, and felt in his heart a quite singular joy when he could receive some order from the very men to whom he had authority to give orders. The lowliest tasks were those he cherished most; and however toilsome they were, he did not fail to do them gladly. No word of complaint was ever noticed in him, nor any gesture of impatience, nor the least thing that smacked of ill humour. This admirable modesty made him admired and loved by everyone. His purity was angelic; to preserve this heavenly virtue he waged relentless war on sensuality, afflicting his flesh with fasts, vigils, disciplines and other great austerities; one would have said he had a body of bronze. From the age of fifteen, when the blood begins to stir the passions, he checked their violence with iron chains with which he tore his whole body. He wore a rough hair shirt with an iron girdle round his loins. He fasted four days a week, and his most delicious dishes were a little bread with vegetables poorly seasoned and half cooked. He slept only on the ground, or at most on a straw mattress, and had only a stone for a pillow. The devil, alarmed at the giant strides the young monk was making along the road of perfection, tried to stop him by means of one of his relatives, superior of a rich convent of another Order not far from his own. This religious, following the affections of flesh and blood, represented to Nicholas that his austerities had already wasted him to a skeleton; that in the flower of his age he was as broken as a man of sixty; that if he did not soon kill himself he would at least make himself quite useless to religion; and that after all he could save his soul without all these mortifications; he proposed that he should pass into his monastery, where, the rule being milder and better suited to the weakness of nature, he could work out his salvation with less trouble and yet with assurance. After this conversation Nicholas went into the church before returning to his convent; and as he was in the fervour of his prayer, angels appeared to him in the form of little children clothed in white robes, singing most melodiously, and they repeated three times these words, to confirm him in the Order of Saint Augustine: "It is at Tolentino that you must make your dwelling; stay there steadfast in your

vocation, and be assured that you will save your soul there." This vision consoled him wonderfully, and he awaited its fulfilment from the will of his superiors, who were to make known to him the will of God.

Some time later he was sent, not at first to Tolentino, but successively to Recanati, to Macerata, to San Ginesio, to Cingoli and to the hermitage of Valmanente, near Pesaro. As he was a model of virtue and observance, the provincials often moved him from house to house, so that by the holiness of his life he might edify the other religious and leave everywhere examples of his great regularity. He was ordained priest at Cingoli by the bishop of Osimo. His devotion received new increase through this divine character. His love and fervour showed visibly at Mass, which he celebrated with admirable piety. It is impossible to tell the graces he obtained from heaven for those who had recourse to his sacrifices. The departed also received great relief from them. He had several apparitions of souls he had delivered from purgatory, among others those of some religious who were expiating in the flames the slackness they had shown in observing their Rule. At last the time comes in which God willed to fulfil what He had revealed by His angels; our Saint is sent to Tolentino, where he remains thirty years. His occupation in this monastery is to labour for the salvation of souls. He often busies himself catechizing the simple, preaching the word of God and hearing the confessions of penitents; he does it with great success. His zeal is so ardent that the most rebellious hearts yield to his exhortations. He sets aflame with the fire of divine love those who are like ice; the most obstinate are shaken and at last converted by the powerful movements of his words: in a word, by his gentleness he wins all the persons sent to him, to bring them into the way of salvation. All the time left to him after these divine functions he spends in prayer and mental prayer, during which his body remains motionless and his soul, conversing familiarly with God, enjoys the delights of beatitude. When, in his great illnesses, his body is most overwhelmed with suffering, then it is that his spirit rises to heaven with greatest fervour, and the sweetness he tastes in that state takes from him all feeling of his pains. He meditates with inconceivable tenderness on the mysteries of our Lord's Passion and gives Him abundant tears for the blood he sees Him shed on the cross. The ingratitude of men, who do not cease to offend the divine Saviour after He has endured a cruel death for them, pierces his heart and makes his whole body shudder. His recollection during the divine office, at which he never fails to be present, inspires recollection in those who see him.

As there is no exercise in the cloister that the devil fights more stubbornly than prayer, in which the religious finds invincible weapons to triumph over his malice, he waged continual war on our Saint, either to make him give it up or to disturb him while he was at it. Sometimes he uttered frightful cries, imitating the bellowing of bulls, the roaring of lions, the howling of wolves, the hissing of serpents and the voices of the wildest animals. He pretended to strip off the roofs, break the tiles, smash the timbers and overturn the house; but Nicholas, laughing at his tricks, remained firm as a rock without changing his posture. One day this spirit of darkness entered his room in the shape of a bird of prodigious size and, with the beating of its wings, put out the lamp that always burned before his oratory and threw it to the ground, where it smashed it to pieces. The Saint, having finished his prayer, gently gathered up the pieces and joined them together so wonderfully that it did not appear to have been broken; he lit it again, too, with his breath. He performed the same miracle twice more, as is recorded on a large stone at the convent of Tolentino. A club is also shown there with which the devil used to maltreat him: for he was not content with persecuting him by the means we have just described, but beat him most cruelly, sometimes leaving him half dead, stretched on the floor, his flesh bruised, his body covered with wounds and his face almost drowned in his blood; one day he was found in this state by the religious in the cloister, where the devil had dragged him. In this hard combat, in which he conquered his enemy by invoking the name of Jesus, he was left lame, and remained so for the rest of his life. This signal victory may still be seen written above the door where that battle began.

Besides these temptations he had one that he overcame only by an extraordinary favour of heaven. He kept so rigorous an abstinence that he ate neither fish, nor milk, nor cheese, nor fruit, and the mere sight of the delicate dishes that empty the purse and ruin the health of sensual men gave him a disgust he could hardly

bear. The devil put into his mind that this kind of life was not pleasing to God; that since the other religious, though very virtuous, ate indifferently of whatever was served in the refectory, it was an intolerable singularity in him not to follow their example; that he would certainly ruin his health and so make himself useless to his neighbour, burdensome to the community and a charge on the whole Order. These reflections threw him into great perplexity and grieved him all the more because his only aim was to do the will of God. While Nicholas was tormented by these doubts, Jesus Christ appeared to him in his sleep and, after reproving him for this mistrust, which the striking and miraculous marks of His love He had given him ought to have dispelled, assured him that his services were pleasing to Him, that his fear was nothing but a wile of Satan, and that his name was already written in the book of life. His heart was then filled with an inexpressible sweetness that made all the bitterness his fears had caused him vanish. He could never recall it without uttering, with wonderful gladness, these words of the Royal Prophet: “I rejoiced at the things that were said to me: we shall go into the house of the Lord.” From then on he laughed at the devil and always treated him with extreme contempt whenever he urged him to relax his austerities. It is to reward them, or to give them His sanction, that God several times changed water into wine for his sake, as the story may still be seen recorded in an inscription in the old refectory of Tolentino.

Having grown old and infirm, he fasted and treated his flesh with the same severity as in the flower of his age, which made him fall into a long and dangerous illness. They tried to make him take better food, but he could never be persuaded to buy health at the price of his abstinence, and the superiors, so as not to oppose the way God was leading him, were content to oblige him to eat a little meat, which he did out of obedience. As the illness grew worse, he believed it would bring him to the grave; the thought of the judgements of God, in whose presence the angels are not pure enough, then threw him into great fear. He called the holy Virgin to his help, and at his prayer heaven opened and this Queen of angels appeared to him visibly, accompanied by Saint Augustine and Saint Monica. She cast a look of tenderness on him and spoke these loving words: “Fear not, Nicholas, all is safe for you; my Son bears you in His heart, and I take you under my protection; Augustine and Monica are your powerful intercessors.” She then advised him, for the recovery of his health, to send and ask a very charitable woman, a neighbour of the monastery, for a piece of the bread she had baked that same day, to dip it in a little water and use it as a sovereign remedy. The Saint did so, and in that very hour he found himself free of fever and as perfectly restored as if he had never been ill. It is in memory of this marvel that on his feast-day, in the monasteries of the Augustinians, little loaves are blessed with very solemn ceremonies approved by Pope Eugene IV; the sick who use these loaves, invoking the holy Virgin and Saint Nicholas, often obtain relief from them.

Our Saint’s charity towards the poor was incomparable; God confirmed it by several miracles. He kissed the feet and hands of those who came to ask alms at the convent door, adoring in them Jesus Christ, who for love of us became the first of all the poor. He went begging for them in the best houses of the town and drew large alms from them, which he distributed to them. He shared with them the bread given him at his meals, and sometimes gathered up the community’s leftovers to carry to them. One day, as he was carrying some to the poor at the monastery gate, the father prior met him and asked what he was holding in the cloth he had under his habit; the holy old man answered that it was flowers. And indeed the pieces of bread he had were found changed into very beautiful roses, though it was the month of December. The prior, convinced by this prodigy that God accepted Nicholas’s alms, allowed him to continue them without fear of impoverishing his convent. Another day, when he was begging bread for the monastery, a very needy woman gave him a loaf as an alms, assuring him that she had only flour enough left to make one like it for the whole family. The Saint, touched by the generosity of this woman who was thus taking the bread from her own mouth to give it to the servants of Jesus Christ, prayed God to reward her and to multiply the flour she had left, so that she could feed her children with it. At once this multiplication took place, so that the woman found at home a great quantity of excellent flour.

A year before his death an extraordinary star, rising over the village of Sant'Angelo where he was born, came and stopped, in full view of everyone, over the altar where he was accustomed to say Mass and make his prayers. From then on it led him from the oratory to his cell and from his cell to the oratory. In the last six months of his life the angels came down every night into his room to gladden him with their melody, to give him foretastes of eternal glory, and to show him how eagerly they awaited him in heaven. When he saw his hour approaching, he had a holy image of the *Ecce Homo* brought to him, before which he had often made his prayers; he melted into tears at the sight of so moving an object; his heart entered into great transports of love and sorrow, and his spirit was raised to a very lofty contemplation of this mystery. Jesus Christ, accompanied by the holy Virgin and Saint Augustine, also appeared to him and gave him fresh assurances of his happiness. So this man, already wholly heavenly, having asked the religious' pardon for the scandal he thought he had given them and the trouble he had caused them by his long and continual illnesses, made his general confession to his superior and then received with incredible fervour and devotion the holy Viaticum and the sacrament of Extreme Unction. During the last three days of his life he held continual converse with God, which caused him raptures, swoons and faintings of love; nothing more was heard from him but acts of penance, contrition and trust in God, of abandonment to His will, of the sacrifice of his heart and mind, and of love for Jesus Christ. Never did he enjoy a deeper peace or a greater tranquillity of mind; it even showed on his face, and his perfect serenity was proof enough of the inner joy with which his soul was filled. On the day he died he begged earnestly to be brought a cross in which a piece of our Lord's Cross was set; he adored it, bathed it with his tears and embraced it with such fervour that one would have said he meant to breathe his last upon it. Then, turning to his infirmarian, he said to him: "My brother, instead of asking your pardon for the trouble I have given you during my illness, I mean to give you still more. I beg you, for the love of our Lord, when I have lost my speech, to repeat often in my ear these words of the Royal Prophet: 'Lord, Thou hast broken my bonds; I will sacrifice to Thee for ever the sacrifice of praise,' so that I may say them in my heart when my tongue can no longer pronounce them." At last, gazing fixedly at the cross, he recited the psalm *In te, Domine, speravi*: "In Thee, O Lord, have I hoped." And as he uttered the verse *In manus tuas, Domine, commendo spiritum meum*, he gave back his pure and innocent soul into the hands of our Lord on Wednesday, 10 September, about the year 1310.

He is usually represented with a white lily in his hand, to signify his angelic purity; sometimes trampling underfoot a more or less finely dressed woman, to express his contempt for the world. He has also been painted praying for the Church suffering, or even holding out the end of his girdle to the souls in purgatory, as if to help them out of it. He is often painted in the habit of his Order, strewn with golden stars; at other times thrusting into the ground a reed that made a spring gush forth. He is also seen standing, holding a book and a small figure surrounded with rays, no doubt a host or the Sun of justice; at half length, in prayer, with two stars above his head; with an angel, carrying a basket full of loaves; holding the devil in chains and a lily in the same hand.

CULTE ET RELIQUES.

Cult and relics.

His body was buried in the chapel where he used to say holy Mass and make his prayers. God made his tomb illustrious by a great number of miracles. His canonization was carried out by Eugene IV in 1446. Sixtus V had him inserted in the Roman Breviary and ordered that his office be said; Clement X has ordered that this office be a double. The Roman Martyrology commemorates Saint Nicholas of Tolentino. Forty years after his death a religious, sub-sacristan of the convent of Tolentino, burning with an indiscreet zeal to honour his own country with some of the relics, opened the shrine in which the body lay and cut off both arms. A great quantity of blood at once flowed from them, which he gathered up as best he could so as not to be discovered; and having put this rich treasure in a cloth he had made ready, he left the convent secretly; but after walking all night at great speed he found himself back in the monastery, which obliged him to confess

his theft and ask pardon for it. This prodigy made the religious and the inhabitants of Tolentino take greater precautions to keep this precious treasure. They put the arms in a shrine of silver gilt, enriched with diamonds and precious stones, which they locked in a great chest, well fastened and bound with iron bands. The chest filled with so rich a spoil may still be seen. It locks with three keys: the convent has one, the town the second, and the illustrious and devout Mauricia family the third. It has been observed that when the Church is threatened with some misfortune these arms still give out blood, as happened at the capture of the island of Cyprus by the Turks; for a little before, the right arm sweated blood from the palm of the hand to the elbow. The same prodigy has occurred several other times in similar circumstances.

The faithful still go to visit his tomb with great devotion. It is now a fine church served by the Augustinian religious, which has the title of basilica. The tomb of Saint Nicholas is shown there, but his relics are not to be seen. They have been so well hidden that no one knows where they are.

The church of Saint-Nicolas-de-Port, in Lorraine, believes it possesses a relic of Saint Nicholas of Tolentino. It is a first phalanx of a finger, or a bone of the metacarpus. The story of this relic caused a great stir in Lorraine from 1635 to 1652. Since then its authenticity has been attacked, perhaps with good reason; for “the texture of this bone does not seem to correspond very well with the texture of the various human bones.” The church of Brou, in the diocese of Belley, possesses a relic of our Saint sent by Pope Leo XII, who, by a brief of 24 November 1834, deigned to grant in perpetuity a plenary indulgence to the faithful who, having received communion, visit the church of Brou on the Sunday after 10 September or on one of the eight following days; and in addition an indulgence of fifty days to all persons who go to pray for a moment in that church. *Acta Sanctorum; Surius; Life of the Saint, by the Rev. Father Simplicien de Saint-Martin;* Histoire hagiologique du diocèse de Belley, *by Mgr Depéry; notes supplied by the abbé de Blaye, parish priest of Imling.*

Blessed Charles Spinola, of the Society of Jesus, and His Companions, Martyrs in Japan

1622. — Pope: Gregory XV. — King of France: Louis XIII, the Just.

> *Adolescens juxta viam suam, etiam cum senuerit, non recedet ab ea.*
>
> *A young man, even when he is old, will not depart from the way he has entered upon.*
>
> *Prov. 22:6.*

Charles Spinola, of the branch of the counts of Tassarolo, had for his father Octavio Spinola, grand equerry of the emperor Rudolf II. The years of his childhood were spent in palaces where luxury and wealth displayed their magnificence; but the poisoned breath of the world did not wither the innocence of his soul.

Having left Spain, he came to Nola, in Italy, to the house of his uncle Cardinal Filippo Spinola, bishop of that city. There he began the course of literary and scientific studies meant to develop his mind. At the same time he gave himself to all the exercises proper to the training of a young gentleman. But the Lord had forestalled his soul with the sweetness of His blessing. Heaven had chosen him for a greater and a better destiny. While men foretold for the brilliant youth the highest fortunes of the earth, grace was gently taking possession of his heart, and soon this pure soul, in which the divine light shone without hindrance, understood the nothingness of human greatness, renounced every earthly attachment and turned its aspirations towards more solid goods. Often, in the silence of his heart, he reflected on the shortness of life, on the uncertainty of the day of our passage from time to eternity, on the instability of riches and honours that do not have God for their support and foundation. He regarded with a noble contempt those passing dignities of the world which vanish as soon as they are possessed, which fill their possessor with bitter anxieties and the unfortunate man who loses them with inconsolable grief. These grave thoughts were occupying him when the news spread of the martyrdom of Father Rudolf Acquaviva, a member of the Society of Jesus. The massacre of this zealous

missionary made a deep impression on young Spinola's noble heart. This triumph of a love devoted even to sacrifice stirred his emulation, and soon he felt himself seized with the desire to suffer a like death for the cause of the faith. After commending this new aspiration of his soul to God in prayer, he resolved to enter the Society of Jesus and, once admitted, to ask the favour of being sent to the Indies.

When he told his uncle of this plan, the latter, recognizing in his nephew the sure signs of a divine vocation, fully agreed to his wishes. From then on young Charles, who was in his twentieth year, did not hesitate for a single moment; he went and presented himself at the Jesuit novitiate at Nola, where he was received on 23 December 1584. The master of novices charged with forming him in the virtues that make the fervent religious was Father Bartolomeo Ricci. Charles was worthy of such a master. The seed falling on good ground brought forth a hundredfold, for his first steps in the way of renunciation and sacrifice matched the glorious end of his career. After a year of novitiate his superiors sent him to the college of Lecce, to pursue there the exercises of the contemplative life while taking part in the active life of the religious charged with the instruction of youth. From there he was sent to Naples in 1586 to follow the course of philosophy. After his two years of novitiate he pronounced the simple vows of religion, and into this engagement he put all the generosity of his soul.

He stayed for some time in Rome, where he studied mathematics; then he went to finish his course of philosophy at the college of Brera, in Milan, where, after teaching grammar for a year, he studied theology. But amid these varied studies and the fatigue of sustained work, his ardour for spiritual things did not cool. His piety and virtue made him a model for the religious and an object of admiration for people in the world.

He had a holy eagerness for prayer, especially for mental prayer, that familiar and intimate converse of the soul with God. So from day to day he gave more time to it. The hours fixed for exercises of devotion were observed with scrupulous care, and at the first sound of the bell he fell on his knees and remained motionless until the end of the meditation. Every day he recited several private prayers which clearly showed his vehement desire for martyrdom. His piety inspired in him the most touching marks of respect and love for the holy Eucharist. He loved to visit the hidden God of the tabernacle, and on holidays his delight was to stay as long as he could near his divine Master.

The life of his heart was charity, and he spent the hours of recreation talking with his brethren in religion about God or about questions related to Him. He wanted no other conversation to refresh his mind. When he happened to speak of the martyrs, and above all of those who had died fastened to a cross, his burning words and animated gestures fired his hearers with the ardour of martyrdom: he had the eloquence of passion and the poetry of enthusiasm. He cherished a filial tenderness for the Blessed Virgin Mary and, in private as in public, his words showed the love and trust of a son for the tenderest and most loving of Mothers. During the four years when he was charged with directing the students' sodality, he was able to kindle in the hearts of those young men a deep devotion to the Mother of God. It was he who devised the devotional practice of repeating the Angelic Salutation nine times in honour of the nine months during which the Incarnate Word dwelt in the womb of the Immaculate Virgin.

His desire to save souls was immense; even before he was honoured with the priestly character, he went through the villages and hamlets during the autumn holidays, to spread the seed of the Gospel word and give those rough and ignorant minds the teaching that would lead them to a more Christian life. He applied himself to this work with such zest and pleasure that, had he not obtained the mission to the Indies, he would gladly have devoted his whole life to catechizing the country people. This zeal followed him everywhere; in him the teacher was also an apostle who strove to form his pupils in virtue, and that is why he took very special care of the sodalists. He had so arranged his time that each of them had in turn a private conversation with him, and then he spoke to one of the thing necessary above all others, salvation; to another he taught the way to meditate; sometimes he exhorted these ardent souls to the love of purity; always he planted the precious seeds of the fear of God in those young hearts open to every influence of virtue.

Charles Spinola walked with a firm step in the way of religious perfection. Always intent on conquering himself, never letting slip an occasion to practise virtue and to suffer for the love of Jesus Christ, he wanted no privilege, no exemption, even when, weakened by spitting of blood and the onset of a painful illness, he might in all justice have claimed special care and dispensation from some obligations imposed by the rule. He feared, besides, that his poor health might be used as a pretext to prevent him from going to the foreign missions. Though of a delicate constitution, he had the courage to mortify his body rigorously by voluntary austerities, such as the hair shirt, the discipline and fasts beyond those prescribed. He went to serve the sick in the hospitals and took the sodalists there; and this young and valiant band, under the leadership of its chief, vied in zeal and ardour in the bodily care it lavished on the suffering members of Jesus Christ.

Faithful to the law of spiritual progress that the holy Founder of the Society of Jesus recommends and imposes on all the religious of his Order, he did not neglect that inner work of the soul by which it strives to free itself from its evil inclinations and imperfections. He advanced more and more in the knowledge and contempt of himself, was not afraid to accuse himself publicly of his faults, and applied himself seriously to correcting them. His happiness was to beg for the poor, his delight to feel privation, his joy to renounce everything that could be pleasant to him.

He was an enemy of everything that could win him esteem, and though he was gifted with great talents and adorned with much learning, he never showed the least pride, never gave the least sign of preferring himself to others; he treated everyone with a consideration full of modesty and affability. As he sincerely despised himself, insults and contempt caused him no pain: they would rather have given him joy than sadness. Such was the character of his virtue, whose most striking feature is the generosity of a lofty soul that gives itself to God without reserve and wishes to imitate the great model of all holiness, our Lord Jesus Christ. His theological studies finished, he received priestly anointing in 1594. This was for him a fresh motive to devote himself with greater ardour to virtue and to the exercises of Christian piety. From then on he began to recite the canonical hours on his knees, and he kept this pious custom even amid the hard labours of his missionary life. He usually went to confession several times a week, and he approached this sacrament with such devotion, shedding such abundant tears and uttering such loud groans, that he could be heard from the neighbouring rooms.

He had never ceased to ask for the mission to the Indies; now he sought by urgent letters to obtain the fulfilment of this desire. While awaiting his superiors' decision he was sent with another religious to Cremona to exercise the sacred ministry there. He arrived there burning with zeal and ready for every kind of devotedness. First he preached on all feast-days in the churches and even in the public squares, which was then little practised in Italy. He restored the practice of catechism by giving it himself in the parishes; and to maintain this most useful method of teaching Christian doctrine, he founded a confraternity devoted to this kind of ministry; and so that girls should not be deprived of this benefit, he persuaded some noble ladies to patronize the work by their name and example. In the convents he exhorted the nuns to perfection or took charge of their spiritual direction. He contributed effectively to the reform of a community in which each nun, forgetting the practice of the common life, lived on her own income; thenceforth, thanks to the efforts of his zeal, they lived in a manner conformed to the spirit of their vocation.

While he was busy evangelizing Cremona, the long-desired letter allowing him to leave for the Indies arrived. To him it was the command of heaven; he went at once to Milan to prepare for his departure. He had to say farewell to his family and perhaps to struggle against the alarms and fears of an over-natural affection. In vain did his relatives try by their entreaties and reproaches to turn him from his resolve; he remained firm and unshakeable. He had, he said, three reasons for leaving his country: first, his desire to preach the faith to barbarous nations; second, his will to renounce all the enjoyments he could find in his family; and third, his will to close off all access to the dignities and offices that his superiors might have imposed on him. His farewells were short, and he hastened to Genoa, where he found a ship that was to set sail within a few days.

The ship having landed him at Barcelona, he went overland to Lisbon, where he embarked for the Indies on 10 April 1596 with seven other missionaries of the Society. The voyage was long and dangerous; on 15 July they happily entered the port of Bahia, or the Bay of All Saints, and five months later they put to sea again. On 25 March 1597 they reached Puerto Rico, the capital of the island of that name; on 21 August they embarked on a merchant ship, which was captured by an English vessel near the Terceira Islands on 17 October. The captives were taken to England; set free, they embarked on 8 January 1598 for Lisbon, where they were welcomed with a joy all the keener because there had been no news of them for so long. He stayed a year in Portugal, where he prepared himself in prayer and humility to pronounce the solemn profession of the four vows.

At the end of March 1599 he embarked with Father Girolamo de Angelis and some other religious, of whom he was named superior. After a fortunate crossing he arrived at Goa, where he stayed for some time, then at Malacca, at Macao, and finally at Nagasaki in 1602. He went at once to the college of Arima to learn the Japanese language, and during this year devoted to study he directed the sodality of the Blessed Virgin that had just been established there. When he knew Japanese well enough to exercise the sacred ministry, he was entrusted with the duties of missionary at Arie, a town not far from Arima. Some hundred villages belonged to this mission, of which Arie was the centre. Now he could give free rein to his devotion to the cause of God, and he clearly showed that he spared no fatigue to maintain the flourishing state of this Christian community and to increase it if possible. He was a shepherd wholly devoted to his flock, and he forgot himself for others.

He was the father of the Christians entrusted to his care; not content with providing for their spiritual needs by the ordinary means, he also relieved their poverty with alms he obtained from the Portuguese or from Japanese Christians more favoured by fortune. But could he see without being moved to compassion, and without trying to enlighten them, the unbelievers plunged in the darkness of idolatry? It would have cost the charity with which he burned too much not to attempt their conversion. So he sought to catechize those unhappy worshippers of idols. He studied their usages, customs and manners and the ceremonies of their worship, so as to be better able to make the truth shine forth and to find easier access to their minds. God blessed the efforts of his zeal.

But while labouring and spending himself without measure, the tireless workman of the Lord did not neglect the care of his own perfection. The personal holiness of the minister of the word and the sacraments is no doubt not necessary for grace to act on souls, which are at all times subject to its heavenly influence; but it is also true that the piety and virtues of the priest draw special blessings on his work and become, as it were, an outward means that gives supernatural power an easier entry into hearts. It is therefore useful that the instrument of the divine wonders remain united to God by unceasing prayer and ardent charity.

The holy missionary had understood this; to preserve and increase his union with God he had recourse to solitude and the silence of retreat. Every month he came to the college of Arima, and by prayer, spiritual conversation and recollection he refreshed his soul; then he returned to work renewed and as it were rejuvenated in fervour. After he had devoted himself to the salvation of souls in this way for two years, obedience took him from his dear mission of Arie and sent him to the college of Kyoto, or Miyako, an important city of Japan. There for seven years he had to fill the office of minister, or second superior. He made himself admired for his virtues and loved for his charity, affability and gentleness. He again justified the reputation he had won of being an excellent religious, worthy to be held up to all as a model. He was hard and severe only with himself. Every day he took a harsh discipline, and in Lent he did not stop striking until he had drawn blood.

At the college of Miyako, as in the mission of Arie, he strove to live always with God and for God. So every year he spent a month in deep recollection, occupied solely with spiritual exercises and intimate communion with the Lord. During these weeks of retreat he was so flooded with the sweetness and delights of

contemplation that he could not hold back his tears; they flowed abundantly, above all during the celebration of holy Mass. In these dealings of his soul with God he drew that truly superhuman fortitude which made him despise life, and that generous readiness to seize every occasion of suffering. No one knew as he did how to raise courage cast down by the sight of danger, and to stir even to the enthusiasm of martyrdom those whom mere threats dismayed. While he lived at the college of Miyako he was charged with directing the sodality of catechists, and he formed them in virtue as much by his words as by his example. A man of sincere humility, he despised no one; the smallest, the most wretched and the most degraded were not beneath the attentions of his charity. It was not enough for him to relieve the poor by giving them alms; he served them with his own hands. But these voluntary abasements only turned to his honour and increased the veneration in which he was held. He was never heard to speak of his own deeds or of the distinction of his family: he thought of one thing only, to despise and humble himself. It must have cost him to be kept within the walls of a college, unable to give free flight to his zeal. A child of obedience, he made no protest against this decision of authority. He seized every occasion of exercising zeal, above all through the ministry of confession. He was always ready to receive those who came to him, and never was a sign of weariness seen on his face, never was he heard to excuse himself on any pretext when he was called to exercise this kind of ministry. He also made some apostolic excursions in the neighbourhood of Miyako. It was on one of these journeys that he was miraculously saved from imminent danger. As he was crossing a river, the boat he was in capsized and he was thrown to the bottom of the water, where he remained for some time, which brought on a serious illness.

After seven years at the college of Miyako, Father Spinola was named procurator of the province of Japan. This office was of the highest importance. The man who held it had, so to speak, all the interests of the mission entrusted to his care. To discharge such duties well requires an immense charity that embraces all the missionaries scattered over a vast territory, that gives them what they need for food, clothing, the exercise of their ministry and their journeys, that receives all requests kindly and often anticipates them with delicate attentions. The choice of Father Spinola was a good one: a broad mind, a magnanimous heart, a generous and compassionate soul. He obeyed and left Miyako for Nagasaki, an important city whose port, frequented by the ships of European merchants, made it easier for the procurator of the mission to keep in touch with the Catholic nations. The news of his departure deeply saddened the Christians, who loved and venerated him. He had already won over the Japanese that ascendancy of merit and virtue which this intelligent people, of sound judgement and lofty soul, had recognized in him.

Father Spinola held this office for seven years, that is, until the day he was arrested. It is impossible to recount all the good his charity accomplished in the exercise of this charge. He provided for all the needs of the missionaries, which is all the more remarkable because the persecution raised against Christianity was growing more violent and made the task of bringing in and distributing the necessary supplies more difficult.

The persecution, which had begun some years before, was to take on terrible proportions. In 1614 the Shogun issued a new edict of proscription and banishment against all preachers of the Gospel, threatening with death by fire all who did not obey his orders. Several persons of different conditions had already been condemned to die for the name of Jesus Christ when Father Spinola, who had remained secretly in the kingdom with some other Jesuits, was charged with exercising the functions of vicar general in the Ximo, one of the great islands of Japan, which modern geographers call Kyushu. The bishop of Japan had just died, and Father Valentim Carvalho, then provincial of the Jesuits, was, by order of the Sovereign Pontiff, administrator of that vast diocese. As he himself was obliged to hide, he had to entrust part of his authority to a faithful and devoted man: he chose Father Spinola.

It was as vicar general of the bishop of Japan that in 1615 he made the official inquiries and judicial investigations into the deeds and death of the martyrs who had fought and triumphed at Arima. One can easily imagine the holy envy he felt for those glorious athletes, remembering the thought he had long

cherished of giving his life for Jesus Christ. To be less known and to escape more easily the searches of the agents of the Japanese police, Father Spinola changed his name. In allusion to the death he desired to suffer, he had himself called Joseph of the Cross. We have few details of the labours and fatigues of his apostolate during this period. Time pressed; he had to fight, exhort, strengthen courage, purify consciences, distribute the bread of the strong, stand in the breach, and keep watch so as not to be surprised by the officers relentlessly hunting down the missionaries.

What increased the danger was the care of the affairs of the province, with which he remained charged. He had to be less hidden than the others, because he was the one to whom all had recourse. Besides, the desire to wear chains and shed his blood for Jesus Christ had made him so fearless that all admired the courage and coolness with which he braved death a thousand times. He had learned by supernatural knowledge that he would one day fall into the hands of the persecutors; but he did not know the hour fixed in the counsels of God. He could only say: *Paratum cor meum, Deus, paratum cor meum*: "My heart is ready, O Lord, my heart is ready." Forty days before he was arrested, those who saw him intimately noticed in him signs of extraordinary fervour. He celebrated the divine sacrifice more slowly, gave more time to prayer, and showed himself more cheerful and affable among his close companions.

The fury of the enemies of the Christian name grew day by day; through the revelations of some apostates they knew the names of the missionaries in hiding. Gonzoco, governor of Nagasaki, had long wished to seize Fathers de Couros and Spinola, whose apostolic activity and energy sustained the Christians of that city. He spared nothing to discover their hiding-place.

After some searching, Father Spinola was arrested in the house of a Portuguese named Domingos Jorge, together with Brother Ambrose Fernandes. His neck, hands and feet were at once bound so tightly that his flesh, torn by the cords, kept ever afterwards the livid scars of these bruises. The two captives were taken at once to the governor's house, where two other prisoners, belonging to the Order of Saint Dominic, were brought a few hours later. The four religious were put in a courtyard, where they were left all night and the following day exposed to the weather, tormented by the cold and suffering much from the bonds that cruelly gripped their limbs. On the evening of the second day some Christian servants of the governor, moved with compassion, loosened the captives' bonds a little. During the night Father Spinola heard these Christians' confessions and asked for religious habits for himself and Brother Fernandes.

The missionaries of Nagasaki had dressed like the Portuguese, so as to escape more easily the searches of the governor's officers and spies. In this disguise the priest and the religious could not be recognized; Father Spinola had brought to him the garments the Jesuits used in that country, and it was in his religious dress that he was brought before the governor and underwent his first interrogation. He was not afraid to urge Gonzoco to acknowledge the law of the true God. He showed that the bonds that took from him the use of his limbs had in no way lessened his freedom of spirit. Souls are never captive; this noble independence of the higher part of the human being is what makes its dignity.

To reason with human justice when it is preparing to commit iniquity is to condemn oneself. Father Spinola knew it; but it was not for his judges that he pronounced this defence, so moderate in its expressions and so strong in its thought. There were Christians present who heard him; the Jesuit reassured them by reducing his accusers to silence. After the interrogation of the other prisoners, held through an interpreter, they were taken back to prison. The governor, fearing that if he left the captives at Nagasaki too great a throng of the faithful would gather round them, put them in the prison of Suzuta, near Omura, where other Christians were held. Gonzoco was not mistaken. There was at Nagasaki a quite considerable number of the faithful. As they left the city, the captives of Jesus Christ found the roads lined with devout Christians who showed them their veneration and their grief.

Father Spinola, bound like a criminal and escorted by soldiers, walked first, with an officer at his side who held the rope tied round the holy missionary's neck. The other prisoners followed, led and bound in the same way. The procession made its way with difficulty through the crowd. The Christians pressed in from all sides to touch the garments of the confessors of the faith, or to bid them a sorrowful farewell. Father Spinola consoled them with affectionate words full of resignation. On leaving Gonzoco he said to him: "I thank you for having made me a prisoner, and I am very far from reproaching you for it." He walked meditating with his companions on our Lord's captivity, or singing psalms, full of joy at having been judged worthy to suffer some insult for the name of Jesus. They arrived rather late at the place where they were to spend the night. There some Christians took advantage of the presence of the confessors of the faith to purify their consciences. Father Spinola out of humility refused a horse that was offered to him, preferring to go on foot to the shore, where he was to embark for a very short passage to Suzuta. As soon as they came near the prison they struck up hymns and canticles, and at this signal the captives already there answered these songs of gladness, thus greeting the arrival of their new companions.

Father Spinola had been arrested in December 1618; he was to see his captivity drag on for nearly four years, to hear the account of the terrible ravages that were to lay waste the Church of Japan, and to witness many ruins. Yet he thanked the Lord for having arranged the presence of several missionaries and allowed them to escape the searches of the persecutors.

On 7 April 1619 the confessors of the faith were taken to Suzuta, to a prison that did credit to the barbarous genius of its inventor. Built of stakes set two fingers apart, it was two metres seven centimetres wide and five metres twenty centimetres long. Beams on which rough planks were laid formed the floor, and the door was so narrow that it barely let a man's body through. On one side opened a small window through which food was passed in. Round the prison was a space nearly two metres wide, enclosed by a double row of long, close-set stakes, pointed at the top and set with thorns; and finally a third palisaded enclosure, in which were the main gate and the passage leading to the inner prison. It was thus a kind of cage exposed to every wind, sheltering neither from the heat of the sun nor from the rigours of winter, where one could not stretch out to rest: a place of torture where the confessors of Jesus Christ were to waste slowly away, given over to the horrors of hunger, nakedness and filth… The love of God that fills their hearts will be stronger than these torments. See them come forward, and on catching sight of this dwelling destined for them, they sing with the Psalmist: *Laetatus sum in his quae dicta sunt mihi: in domum Domini ibimus*: "I rejoiced at the things that were said to me: we shall go into the house of the Lord."

Father Spinola left this prison only twice: the first time to go to Hirado, and the second to go to his death. What he and his companions had to suffer during these four years of captivity passes imagination. They were given so little food that their life was a perpetual fast, and so rigorous a one that there was just enough to keep off death but never enough to appease hunger. These prolonged privations had so weakened Father Spinola that he often wondered whether a death caused by the total exhaustion of his strength would not carry him off suddenly; but God amply made up for this destitution by the delights of His presence in the depths of their hearts. Their greatest consolation was to be able to celebrate holy Mass, and by a special mark of the divine goodness they never lacked hosts, wine, candles and the other things needed for the holy sacrifice. In their prison open to every wind, the unhappy captives were exposed in summer to all the heat of a burning sun, and in winter to the cold air, the rain and the snow, without being able to protect themselves. They were allowed neither to change their worn linen nor to wash it when it was dirty, so that from head to foot they were covered with vermin. Their gaunt and livid faces, their dishevelled hair and their long, bristling beards gave some idea of the atrocious sufferings they were enduring, and against all these physical and moral tortures they had no remedy but patience and their firm hope in God.

Father Spinola's invincible patience in bearing the long tortures of his prison, and his unshakeable courage, which seemed greedy for new sufferings, aroused a just admiration. It was a struggle kept up for nearly four

years. These slow tortures, which had drunk the blood from his veins, had so disfigured him that he had become unrecognizable to his friends. Yet the torments of his captivity did not quench his thirst for suffering. He added voluntary penances to them. Amid the privations he endured, he imposed on himself several times a week a stricter fast than that to which the prison regime usually subjected them. He wore the hair shirt almost continually. Every day except feast-days he took the discipline with his fellow captives. Charity united the hearts of all the confessors of the faith, and to preserve it better the authority of superior was given in turn each week to one of them.

The serious illnesses to which Father Spinola was subject often brought him to the gates of the grave. He had not even a little water to quench the thirst that consumed him in the heat of fever, and the guards, whose cruelty heaped up privations, would not allow water to be brought outside mealtimes. Yet amid this universal distress his soul enjoyed incredible delights in prayer. His only sorrow in his sufferings was to find himself, through the loss of his strength and the weakening of his head, unable to apply himself as before to recollection and to the habitual union of his soul with God. He sought to draw from this weakness a new subject of joy, thinking that it was the sign of an approaching dissolution of his body. But he was not to die in chains. It was Brother Ambrose Fernandes who paid this tribute to the tortures of the prison. Arrested at the same time as Father Spinola, he shared his captivity; but, weakened by age (he was sixty-nine), he could not withstand so many sufferings. He died from the effects of this accumulation of ills on 7 January 1620, and was beatified on 7 July 1867 by Pope Pius IX. Death might make gaps in the ranks of the confessors, but their number grew by the addition of new captives.

Father Spinola saw himself surrounded by a little troop of generous soldiers who rightly regarded him as their leader and were preparing for martyrdom in this hard novitiate of the prison. Men had meant to make of it a hell for the unhappy captives: it had become the vestibule of heaven. That is one of those prodigious changes that faith works; that is how, by placing his hopes in the supernatural and invisible regions, the Christian rises above the trials of earth and takes on superhuman proportions. God is near the just man in his tribulations. Grace sustains nature, which of itself would succumb to the pain, and the Christian triumphs. It is faith that makes us overcome the world.

The governor Gonzoco, having received the emperor’s order to put all the prisoners to death, had them brought to Nagasaki. The confessors of Jesus Christ at last came out of the den where they had suffered so much, and were embarked at Suzuta itself on a small vessel that carried them in a few hours to Nagoya. Then they were made to mount horses; Father Spinola rode at the head of the troop; each of them had the rope round his neck and an executioner at his side. In this way they covered two leagues. Soldiers in great numbers surrounded them, under orders to keep off anyone who tried to speak to them. Night overtook them at a place called Ouracan, where they had to stop.

The prisoners were shut up in an enclosure fenced with palisades, like a vile herd, and left there without shelter; but as heavy rain came on, they were crowded into a hut. At daybreak many Christians hurried there; only three were able to speak with the confessors of the faith. Among them was Father Spinola’s catechist. It was from this faithful disciple that the missionary learned that he was to be burned alive. The prisoners had not yet been told with certainty the kind of death prepared for them. Needless to say what immense joy the holy missionary felt on learning this good news. To thank his catechist he wished to give him some keepsake; having nothing left but his discipline, he gave him that.

The next day, towards noon, the prisoners were made to mount their horses and were led to the place of execution in the same order in which they had come. It was a small hill near Nagasaki, by the sea, five hundred paces from the one where, twenty-five years before, twenty-six martyrs had been crucified, and which had since been called the Holy Hill or the Mount of Martyrs. Almost the whole population of

Nagasaki had flocked to the hill or the shore. The streets of the city had become silent and deserted, so that the religious could move about freely in broad daylight, with more safety than they would have had in the darkness of night.

When the confessors of the faith appeared, an immense clamour rose from the crowd: a confused noise of cries, groans and words. Besides the unbelievers, the number of Christians who had come to witness the heroic death of the confessors of the faith is put at thirty thousand. The roads along which they passed were lined with a multitude of the faithful who, all in tears, threw themselves on their knees, asked their blessing or commended themselves to their prayers. The confessors of the faith consoled them, saying: “Have confidence; from heaven, where with the help of grace we hope soon to be, we will pray for you. Keep until death the faith we have taught you, and believe that God in His goodness will not abandon His cause in the midst of these great dangers.” As soon as they saw the preparations made for their execution, they showed their joy by their bearing and their words. They had to wait nearly an hour for the arrival of the second band of confessors. These, who were to come from the prison of Nagasaki, were destined to die by the sword. Among these athletes of Jesus Christ some had been condemned for having given hospitality to the religious. Their wives, their children and their neighbours were to share their fate. Among them were the wives and sons of four martyrs who a few years before had been burned alive for the love of Christ. Some days before the execution Gonzoco had summoned them before him to try to shake their conviction. They were taken from the dungeon in which they had been buried for two years; they crossed the city loaded with chains and in so wretched a state that they aroused the pity of all who saw them. Gonzoco, seeing them pale, emaciated and unable to stand, had thought it would not be difficult to bring them back to the national worship of the Kami; but he was dealing with Christians prepared for the combat by penance and prayer, two weapons that make men invincible. He soon saw his mistake: not a single one let himself be won over, and he had to send them back to their prison.

The next day they all came out together to be joined to the prisoners from Suzuta and to complete their bloody sacrifice. The two bands of the soldiers of Jesus Christ greeted one another with the warmest signs of charity, and at once a military detachment was posted round the enclosure to hold back the multitude. An officer of Gonzoco’s, named Xuquendaiu, appeared on a kind of platform, and hardly had he taken his place there when he gave the signal to begin the execution. Then each of those destined to die by fire was assigned the stake to which he was to be tied.

Twenty-five stakes were planted one behind another in a straight line. The first faced the sea, the last the mountain. From the top of each stake hung a rope; all around was laid a heap of wood, which stretched from one end of the space to the other and surrounded the twenty-five stakes. This immense pyre was enclosed by a fence of thick, strong bamboo canes arranged like a trellis. The enclosure was entered by a gate that opened on the side of the mountain.

Father Spinola prostrated himself before the tree of his martyrdom and, embracing it again and again, thanked God for this grace. When they were all tied to their stakes and the native Christians condemned to die by the sword had been brought before them, Father Spinola intoned in a loud voice the psalm *Laudate Dominum, omnes gentes*, and all the confessors of Jesus Christ, together with the Christians in the crowd who were proud to be their friends, their kin or their fellows in constancy, continued this canticle of thanksgiving with a zest and a joy that moved the spectators to tears.

While the executioners were making their swords ready, the confessors knelt awaiting the death-stroke. Soon the execution began, and two or three heads were seen to fly off and fall at the feet of a little child barely four years old, who was beside his mother, also condemned to death. He saw his mother’s head roll without changing colour, and himself received the death-stroke with a fearlessness that could not have been expected at so tender an age. As soon as this first band of martyrs had consummated its sacrifice, their heads were set facing those who were to be burned; then the pyres were lit. The fuel had been placed about two and a half

metres from the stakes to which the confessors of the faith were tied, so that the torment would be slower and more cruel, and so that by prolonged tortures the athletes of Christ would be more strongly tempted to desert their post. This ingeniously cruel arrangement was meant to produce the terrible result that the martyrs would die only after a kind of inner roasting. If the flame tended to rise or the fire grew too fierce, the executioners took care to damp it down. During those minutes that must have seemed like years, amid those atrocious pains which pierced their entrails like darts of fire, the martyrs were calm and recollected; their bodies motionless, their eyes raised to heaven, they offered God their bodies as a holocaust, like holy victims placed on the altar of charity.

Father Spinola, wholly absorbed in God, seemed to have lost all feeling. The wind blew the flames towards him, so he was one of the first to feel their fiercest and deadliest attacks. Sparks set his clothes on fire, he suddenly appeared surrounded by flames and, unable to hold out any longer against that devouring heat, he fell and soon breathed his last. His companions were not slow to follow him in death as in triumph, on 10 September 1622, according to the most widely held and best supported opinion. Here are the names of all these glorious martyrs: Francisco Morales, priest of the Order of Friars Preachers, a Spaniard; Angelo Orsucci, priest of the Order of Friars Preachers, an Italian; Alfonso de Mena, priest of the same Order, a Spaniard; Joseph of Saint Hyacinth, priest of the same Order, a Spaniard; Hyacinth Orfanel, priest of the same Order, a Spaniard; Alexis, professed choir religious of the Order of Friars Preachers, Japanese; Thomas of the Rosary, professed choir religious of the Order of Friars Preachers, Japanese; Dominic of the Rosary, professed choir religious of the Order of Friars Preachers, Japanese; Richard of Saint Anne, priest of the Order of Friars Minor, a Belgian; Pedro de Ávila, priest of the Order of Friars Minor, a Spaniard; Vincent of Saint Joseph, professed lay brother of the Order of Friars Minor, a Spaniard; Charles Spinola, priest of the Society of Jesus, an Italian; Sebastian Kimura, priest of the Society of Jesus, Japanese; Gonzalès Fusai; Antoine Kiouni; Pierre Sampô; Michel Xumpo; Jean Kiongocû; Jean Acafoci; Louis Cavara, all seven scholastics of the Society of Jesus and Japanese; Leo of Satsuma, of the Third Order of Saint Francis, Japanese; Lucie de Freitès, of the Third Order of Saint Francis, Japanese, eighty years old; Antoine Sanga, catechist of the Fathers of the Society of Jesus, Japanese; Magdeleine, his wife, Japanese;

Antoine, catechist of the Fathers of the Society of Jesus, a Korean; Marie, his wife, Japanese; Jean, aged twelve, and Pierre, aged three, their sons; Paul Nangaci, Japanese; Thècle, his wife; Pierre, aged seven, their son; Paul Tanaco, Japanese; Marie, his wife; Isabelle Fernandez, wife of the martyr Dominique Georgi; Ignace, aged four, their son; Apollonie, widow and aunt of the martyr Gaspard Cotenda, Japanese; Dominique Xamada, Japanese; Claire, his wife; Marie, wife of the martyr André Tocuan, Japanese; Agnès, wife of the martyr Cosme Taquea; Dominique Nacano, son of the martyr Matthias Nacano; Barthélemy Xikiemon, Japanese; Damien Samihi, Japanese; Michel, aged five, his son; Thomas Xiquiro, aged seventy, Japanese; Rufus Iscimola, aged seventy, Japanese; Marie, wife of the martyr Jean Xoum, Japanese; Clément Vom, Japanese; Antoine, his son; Dominique Ongatid, Japanese; Catherine, a widow, Japanese; Marie Tanaura, Japanese; members of the confraternity of the Holy Rosary. When the martyrs no longer gave any sign of life, guards were posted on all the approaches to the place of execution. The bodies remained exposed in this way for three days, at the end of which they were thrown on a great pyre. Their ashes, and even the earth that had been watered with their blood, were put into sacks and thrown into the sea. On 17 September 1627 Pope Urban VIII introduced the cause of Father Spinola's canonization before the Congregation of Rites, and the Sovereign Pontiff Pius IX, by a brief of 7 May 1867, declared them Blessed.

Taken from the Life of Blessed Charles Spinola, of the Society of Jesus, *by Father Eugène Séguin, of the same Society. Tournai, 1868.*

Saint Hilary, Pope and Confessor (467)

Hilary, successor of Saint Leo the Great (440– 461), was a native of Sardinia. His father was named Crispinus, and he sat six years, three months and ten days (12 November 461 – 10 September 467). Amid the general decline he held the reins of church government firmly. The acts of his short pontificate all aim at tightening the bond of the hierarchy, keeping capable and zealous prelates at the head of the dioceses, and preventing heresy from spreading its ravages. He promulgated a decretal addressed to all the bishops of the East, in which he set out the catholic and apostolic faith, confirming the three Councils of Nicaea, Ephesus and Chalcedon, renewing the condemnation pronounced against Nestorius, Eutyches, Dioscorus, their partisans and all heretics, and finally proclaiming the authority and primacy of the apostolic see. He published a disciplinary constitution on the sixteenth before the calends of December, in the consulship of Basiliscus and Hermeneric (16 November 465), in the basilica of Saint Mary, Mother of God. He built three oratories in the baptistery of the Constantinian basilica (Saint John Lateran), in honour of Saint John the Baptist, Saint John the Evangelist and the Holy Cross. In the last he placed a relic of the wood of the Lord's cross enclosed in a cross of solid gold set with precious stones. He instituted in the city of Rome the *ministeriales*, charged with inspecting the churches designated for the stations.[1] He built monasteries at Saint Lawrence *ad Balneum* and at the praetorium of Saint Stephen, raised an oratory in honour of the protomartyr in the Lateran baptistery, and founded two libraries there. To him is also owed the monastery inside Rome at the place called *ad Lunam*. In an ordination held at Rome in the month of December he laid hands on twenty-five priests, six deacons and twenty-two bishops destined for various Churches. He was buried in the crypt of Saint Lawrence, near the body of the blessed bishop Sixtus. The Apostolic See remained vacant for ten days.

Liber Pontificalis, translated by the abbé Darras in his Histoire générale de l'Église, *vol. XIII, p. 339.*

Saint Eunucius, Confessor, Bishop of Noyon and Tournai (about the middle of the eighth century)

God raised up Blessed Eunucius at a time of calamities and ruin. The Saracens, enemies of Christianity, were ravaging various regions of Gaul, destroying the altars and slaughtering priests and faithful, while Charles Martel was stripping the churches of their property. Eunucius was elected bishop of Noyon in the lifetime of Guy, successor of the pontiff Hunuan. Why the Church of Noyon had two pastors at once is not well known. A learned author (Charles Lecointe) speaks of it as follows: "What happened in 745 at the Council of Soissons with regard to the Church of Sens may well have happened also in the case of Noyon and Tournai. The Church of Sens was not without a pastor: it had an archbishop of great holiness named Ebbo. But as he was very old and preferred the solitary life to the exercise of the episcopal functions, the Council decided that Ardobert should govern the Church of Sens. We think that at the same Council Eunucius, for a similar reason or for another equally grave, was ordained bishop of Noyon and Tournai, although Guy was still living. And just as after the Council of Soissons Ebbo and Ardobert were both called archbishops of Sens, so we must believe that afterwards Guy and Eunucius were both called bishops of Noyon and Tournai." Eunucius fulfilled the duties of the episcopate with zeal. He went like an apostle through all the regions of the vast diocese entrusted to his care. A model to his flock by his piety, prudence and chastity, he brought back to the fold a great number of strayed sheep. Thanks to his solicitude the churches recovered the property that had been taken from them; synodal assemblies, held regularly every year, maintained discipline and good morals among the clergy; and the wise regulations of the Council of Soissons were carried into effect. As the ninth decree of that assembly shows, a number of men, in contempt of the indissolubility of the marriage bond, were marrying women whose husbands were still alive: Eunucius worked actively to destroy this criminal custom.

Our Saint had a boundless devotion to the Pontiff whose auxiliary he was. He consoled him in his sufferings and, to his last moments, lavished on him the tenderness and respect of a son. He himself ended his edifying

and laborious career about the middle of the eighth century, after an episcopate that had lasted barely three years.

The clergy and faithful of Noyon paid great honours to the remains of Eunucius, which were given as their place of burial the oratory of Saint George. In the time of Radbod, who was elected bishop of Noyon in 1068, this oratory was called the church of the Holy Apostles. It was later called the church of Saint Godeberta. Ten years later, the Pontiff's body was raised from the ground because of the miracles worked at his tomb and carried into the cathedral. This translation took place on 17 April, together with that of the bodies of Saint Mommolin and Saint Godeberta. By a kindly disposition of Providence, it escaped the sacrilegious plundering of the Normans who, about the year 860, burned the city of Noyon. Afterwards placed in the monastery of Saint Eligius, it became so famous there through its miracles and its cult that the monastery afterwards bore the name of Saint-Eunuce.

Lives of the Saints of the Diocese of Beauvais, by the abbé Sabatier.

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[1] To avoid confusing them with their namesakes, the name of their episcopal see is usually joined to theirs: Nemesian of Thubunae, Felix of Bagai, Lucius of Membresa, Felix of Utina, Litteus of Gemellae, Polyanus of Milevis, Victor of Assuras, Jader of Midila, Dativus of Badea. — *Acta Sanctorum*, Baillet, Godescard.

[2] Apelles, Luke and Clement were among the first disciples of our Lord; they are honoured especially at Smyrna (the Turks' Izmir), in Anatolia. The first feast of Saint Apelles is on 22 April.

[3] Liège today celebrates the translation of the relics of Saint Theodard, successor of Saint Remaclus in the episcopal see of Maastricht, which he made illustrious for six years after having been abbot of Stavelot (*Stabuletum*), in the province of Liège, and of Malmedy (*Malmundarium*), in the Rhine province. Some ambitious lords having seized the greater part of the lands of the bishopric of Maastricht, Theodard demanded their restitution: in fury his enemies lay in wait for him, overtook him between Spirent and Strasbourg, in the forest of Bievald (Bienenwald), and murdered him. One of his people gathered up the remains of his body, which had been hacked to pieces; they were distributed among various churches of the dioceses of Strasbourg, Speyer, Worms and Liège; later they were restored to the church of Maastricht. — Cf. the continuators of Godescard, the Bollandists, and Baillet.

[4] The Bollandists declare that they do not know this Peter, bishop of Compostela, and think that Baronius was wrong to put him in the Roman martyrology on the sole authority of Molanus, who is not always a sure and experienced guide.

[5] The stations were the basilicas, oratories or tombs of the martyrs to which, on certain appointed days, the pope and his clergy went to celebrate the solemn office. They are still mentioned in the Roman Missal.

11 September

Martyrologies

Eleventh day of September

MARTYROLOGE ROMAIN.

Roman Martyrology.

At Rome, on the old Via Salaria, in the cemetery of Basilla, the birth into heaven of the holy martyrs Protus and Hyacinthus, brothers, eunuchs of Saint Eugenia; having been arrested as Christians under the emperor Gallienus and refusing to sacrifice to idols, they were cruelly scourged and then beheaded.[1] 262. — At Laodicea, in Syria, the holy martyrs Diodorus, Diomedes and Didymus. — At León, in Spain, Saint Vincent, abbot and martyr.[2] About 555. — In Egypt, Saint Paphnutius, bishop, one of those illustrious confessors who, under the emperor Galerius Maximian, had the right eye torn out and the left hamstring cut and were condemned to the mines; later, under Constantine the Great, he generously defended the Catholic faith against the Arians and, after winning several victories over them, died in peace.[3] 4th century. — At Lyons, Saint PATIENS, bishop. About 491. — At Vercelli, Saint Aemilian, bishop. About 520. — At Alexandria, Saint THEODORA, who, having sinned through being taken by surprise, at once repented of her fault and expiated it in the religious habit by abstinence and patience, in which she persevered until her death without being known to anyone. About 480.

MARTYROLOGE DE FRANCE, REVU ET AUGMENTÉ.

Martyrology of France, revised and enlarged.

In the diocese of Albi, Saint Nicholas of Tolentino, confessor, of the Order of Hermits of Saint Augustine, whose life we gave on the preceding day. About 1310. — In the diocese of Carcassonne, Saint Eugenia of Rome, whose life we shall give on 25 December, the day on which she is named in the Roman Martyrology. 258. — In the diocese of Cahors, Saint Pulcheria, virgin, empress of the East, whose life we gave on the preceding day. 453. — In the diocese of Versailles, Saint Corbinian, first bishop of Freising (Bavaria) and confessor, named in the Roman Martyrology on 8 September, where we gave some details of his life. 730. — At Le Puy, in Velay, Saint Marcellus, bishop (of what see is not known) and martyr, beheaded by the idolaters beside an elm that took his name, on a rock that kept traces of his blood for many years. There is a chapel dedicated in his name on the spot where, according to tradition, he carried his head in his hands after it had been severed from the trunk. — At Cologne, Saint Willibert, archbishop of that see and confessor. He assembled a council in his metropolitan city (887) and the following year attended the council of Mainz. 890. — At Toul, now in the diocese of Nancy, and at Laon, in the diocese of Soissons, Saint Bodo (Leudinus-Bodo), called by some hagiographers Leudvin, Leudin or Lendin, eighteenth bishop of that ancient see and confessor. He was born in the little village of Meuse (Haute-Marne), in the original diocese of Toul, of parents distinguished by their birth, their wealth and their piety. He first entered into marriage and wedded a lady of rank named Odile; but soon this Christian couple, won by the example of the virtues of Saint Salaberga, Bodo's sister, left the world and consecrated themselves entirely to the service of God. Bodo had the monasteries of Bonmoutier, Étival and Offonville built one after another and endowed them with his patrimonial property. His virtues raised him to the episcopal see of Toul, left vacant by the death of Eborin; his episcopate was short. His body was laid in the cemetery of Saint-Mansuy and later moved to the monastery of Saint-Jean of Laon.[4] Between 660 and 680. — In the diocese of Le Mans, Saint ALMIRUS or ALMER, solitary and abbot. About 560. — At Wintershoven, on the river Herk, west of Maastricht (Dutch Limburg), Saint Vinciana, a Roman virgin, sister of Saint Landoald (19 March), missionary in the Low Countries; she helped her brother, as far as her state allowed, in the work of spreading the faith, and died at Wintershoven, where her body was buried by her brother; in 980 it was moved to the abbey of Saint Bavo at Ghent. 653. — In the solitudes of the Passais (Orne), in the original diocese of Le Mans, Saints Ernée and Alnée, hermits, whose life we gave on 9 August. 6th century. — At Luxeuil (Haute-Saône), in the diocese of Besançon, Saint ADELPHUS, abbot of Remiremont (*Romarici mons*), in the diocese of Saint-Dié. 670.

MARTYROLOGES DES ORDRES RELIGIEUX.

Martyrologies of the Religious Orders.

Martyrology of the Order of Saint Basil. — At Alexandria, Saint Theodora, who, having sinned through being taken by surprise, conceived so keen a repentance that she took the religious habit under the Rule of Saint Basil and, without being known to anyone, persevered until her death in the exercises of abstinence and patience. About 480.

Martyrology of the Order of Hermits of Saint Augustine. — Saint Rose of Viterbo, who is mentioned on 4 September and is honoured today in our Order.[5] 1252.

Martyrology of the Capuchin Friars Minor of Saint Francis. — At Offida, in the March of Ancona, in the diocese of Ascoli, Blessed BERNARD, of the Order of Capuchins, illustrious for the simplicity of his heart and the innocence of his life, and burning with an astonishing charity towards God and men, especially towards the poor and needy; it was on 22 August that he took his flight to heaven. As he shone after his death with great miracles, Pope Pius VI solemnly placed him among the Saints in the Vatican Basilica. 1694. — On the third Sunday of September, the feast of the Seven Sorrows of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

Martyrology of the Canons Regular. — At Pibrac, Saint Peter, confessor, who governed the monastery of Canons Regular he had founded in that town, trained his disciples in the perfect observance of the regular life, and flew to the Lord on 8 September, surrounded by a great reputation for holiness.[6] 1080.

Martyrology of the Order of Discalced Carmelites. — In the States of the Church and in Tuscany, Saint Jerome Miani or Emiliani, confessor.[7] 1537.

ADDITIONS FAITES D'APRÈS LES BOLLANDISTES ET AUTRES HAGIOGRAPHES.

Additions made from the Bollandists and other hagiographers.

At Zurich (*Tigurum*), a town of Switzerland on the Limmat, Saint Felix, Saint Regula his sister, and Saint Exuperius or Exuperantius, their servant, martyrs. Having escaped the massacre of the Theban Legion, they took refuge at Ursal (canton of Uri), then at Glarus, and finally at Zurich. There they built a little cell with their own hands, on the spot where the Wasserkirche (church by the water) now stands, and busied themselves preaching the Gospel to the inhabitants, who were still idolaters; so they are venerated as the first apostles of Switzerland. Decius, a Roman proconsul who then lived in the castle of Zurich and governed in the name of the emperor Maximian, had the generous athletes of the faith arrested and, after several tortures, ordered them to be beheaded. The Wasserkirche stands over their tomb; it was enlarged by Charlemagne. 303. — At Gravedona (*Grabedona*), a town of Italy in the former duchy of Milan, the finding of the bodies of the holy martyrs Matthew and Gusmeus. They were placed in 1637 in the basilica of Saint Fidelis, which was thereafter dedicated in their name. 3rd century. — At Alexandria, the holy martyrs Syrus and Serapion, named in the copies of Saint Jerome's martyrology. — At Porto (*Portus Romanus*), a town of the States of the Church, Saints Ingenuus and Hippolytus, martyrs, named in the same source. — In Calabria, a region of the former kingdom of Naples, Saint Elias of Reggio, called *the Speleote* (that is, the cave-dweller, from the Greek Σπηλαιώτη), abbot and confessor. He must not be confused with Saint Elias the Younger, called *of Galatia* after a village that has a church dedicated in his name. He lived long in solitude, then withdrew to a monastery at Reggio, of which he became abbot. During his life God granted him to work many miracles, which continued at his tomb after his death. About 960. — At Alberschwende, near Bregenz, in the Tyrol, Blessed Merbod or Marbett, priest and martyr, already named in the same martyrology on 23 March. He was born of the illustrious and very ancient family of the counts of Bregenz and spent his youth in a monastery of that town under the Rule of Saint Benedict. Later his virtues called him to the parish of Alberschwende; criminals, angered by his reproaches for their bad conduct, murdered him in the forest of Bregenz. His body was laid in his parish church, and so many wonders have been worked at his tomb that he is held in the greatest veneration by the people of that parish. 1120. — At Cingoli, a town of Italy in the former March of Ancona, Saint Sperandea of Gubbio, virgin, abbess of the Benedictine monastery of Saint Michael at Cingoli. Her body, buried in her monastery, was raised from the ground in 1497 and found without any sign of corruption; it was then placed in a shrine, where it may still be seen. 1276 or 1278. — In Japan, the blessed martyrs Gaspard Cotenda, Francis and Peter; the first was of the blood of the kings of Hirado and a catechist of the Fathers of the Society of Jesus. 1622.

Saint Theodora of Alexandria, Penitent, Nun of the Order of Saint Basil

480. — Pope: Saint Simplicius. — Emperor of the East: Zeno.

> *La pénitence est une échelle qui mène de l'abîme du vice au faîte de la vertu, de la servitude du péché à la liberté de la grâce.*
>
> *Penance is a ladder that leads from the abyss of vice to the summit of virtue, from the slavery of sin to the freedom of grace.*
>
> *Cardinal Hugh (Hugo card.).*

There lived at Alexandria, in the time of the emperor Zeno, a young lady named Theodora, who had spent the first years of her marriage most virtuously. She and her husband loved each other tenderly. But the devil, who cannot bear the lawful union of hearts, set out to disturb and at last to break so sweet and charming a peace. To succeed he made use of a young man whose great wealth gave him the means of satisfying his passions. This young libertine, seized with a violent love for Theodora, neglected no means of seducing her; she resisted at first, but in the end she gave way. This fault at once caused her incredible remorse; she came close to throwing herself into the abyss of despair. In the height of her grief, which made her seek a thousand ways of expiating her crime, she conceived the idea of putting on a man's clothes and presenting herself at a monastery eighteen miles from the city, to end her days there in the hard exercises of penance. Before granting her entry they told her that she must spend the night at the gate, to test herself and also to give the religious sure proofs of her fervour. She accepted this condition and fulfilled it with invincible courage. The next day the superior examined her on her vocation and, having admitted her, believing she was a man, said to her: "Do not think, my brother, that you are coming in here to be at your ease and without work; you will live under the yoke of obedience, and you will render the religious every service they need, not only in the monastery but also outside, wherever you are needed. You will tend the trees and sow the vegetables; you will carry water to all the regular places; you will water the garden and often make toilsome journeys to the city. None of these duties will dispense you from fasting, or from prayer, or from being in church day and night, or from the other mortifications we practise here." Theodora, who regarded all this as delights for the soul compared with what she believed she deserved for her fault, promised wholeheartedly to do exactly all that had been told her; so she was received and remained in that holy house.

Not only was she faithful to her word, but she did much more than was required of her; for she was tireless at work and continually chastised her body with very rigorous austerities. At first she ate only once a day, then only every other day; finally, having made abstinence a habit, she asked her superior's leave to eat only once a week. But to expiate on her body more and more the crime she had committed, she added to her immense labours and excessive fasts the pain of a rough hair shirt. Her holiness showed itself still more through some miracles that divine Providence gave her the power to work. Near the monastery there was a lake in which lurked a crocodile that often devoured passers-by, which had obliged the prefect of Alexandria to post sentries round about to keep people from taking their way past that spot. The inhabitants were greatly inconvenienced by it. The prefect, having heard tell of the virtue of Theodora, whom people compared to the angels, so full was she of divine grace, sent for her and, having a pitcher given to her, ordered her to go and draw water from the lake. Everyone tried to dissuade her, telling her she was going to expose herself to death; but, feeling herself moved by a firm trust in God, she obeyed blindly. As soon as she appeared at the lake—a wonderful thing!—the crocodile took her on its back and carried her out on the water, and when she had filled her vessel it carried her back to land without doing her any harm. The Saint then reproached the animal for the cruelties it had inflicted on many persons, and at that very hour made it die at her feet. Another time, when the Saint was going by night to a monastery through a forest full of wild beasts, one of these animals came before her to serve as her guide and led her safely to the monastery. But there it threw itself on the porter to devour him; the Saint delivered him; then, as he had received several wounds, she took a little oil and put it on them, and at once he was perfectly healed. The beast died on the spot. These wonders show that from a great sinner she had become a true penitent. The devil, who had vainly used a thousand stratagems to ruin her, appeared to her visibly and told her, threatening her, that he would not cease to wage cruel war on her until he had made her fall into the snare. And indeed it was not long before he raised dangerous persecutions against her.

The superior had sent her to the city with camels to lay in the monastery's supply of grain; overtaken by night, she lay down at the feet of her camels. There a young woman, tempted by the devil, came to her, believing she was a man, and solicited her to sin; later this wanton, having had a child, accused Theodora, who was at once denounced to her superior. It was a device of Satan, so that the Saint, revealing who she was

in order to clear herself, would be obliged to leave the convent where she was doing such hard penance. But she had the courage to keep her secret inviolably and let it be believed that she was guilty of the crime of which she was accused. So she was shamefully driven from the monastery, and was allowed to build a poor hut nearby to live in. The child was brought to her; she took it without protest, fed it with a little ewe's milk that the shepherds gave her as alms, and clothed it in poor swaddling-clothes that she made herself from wool she begged. Nothing could be more pitiable than the state of disgrace and suffering in which she lived. Yet she remained in it seven whole years, without ever complaining or opening her mouth to make her innocence known, rejoicing on the contrary to suffer all these affronts in expiation of the wrong she had done her husband. She lived only on wild herbs and a little water that she went to draw from the lake we have spoken of. Her eyes never ceased to shed tears. She remained exposed to all the rigours of the seasons. Now her body was scorched by the heat of the sun, now it was chilled through by the snows and rains of winter, now it was half dead from her long vigils and continual fasts, and her face became so disfigured that she could not be recognized. Yet she would never go far from the monastery, always hoping to return to it to end her days there in penance; and this the devil strove to prevent by his wiles, laying new snares for her every day, which did not, however, have the success his malice led him to hope for.

Theodora had already met her husband several times when she went about the city, and she had resisted all the tender feelings of her heart so as not to make herself known to him. The devil tried to take her on this side. He appeared to her in the form of this dear husband and, using tears, sighs, complaints and reproaches, with the most pressing words one can imagine, urged her to return to her home so that they might spend the rest of their lives together. But Theodora saw through his snares and escaped them by her perseverance. He then had recourse to force and presented himself to her in the form of a troop of wild beasts that made as if to devour her if she did not flee; but she stood firm and fearless, never leaving her place. He came to blows and treated her so cruelly that he left her covered with wounds and more dead than alive; she despised his fury still. At last he brought her gold and silver and set exquisite dishes before her; but she always laughed at his impious and malicious illusions.

At the end of seven years she was allowed to return to the monastery, on condition, however, that she should hold no office there and should remain shut up in a cell. And there she lived two more years in rigorous abstinence and continual application to God. The child we have spoken of was put with her so that she might always look after him, and she trained him so well in virtue that he afterwards became a religious in the same monastery and was finally elected its abbot for his extraordinary merit. The superior, wishing to know what lessons she was giving this child, sent some brethren to listen at the door of her cell to what she said to him, and they heard this fine instruction:

"My dear child, the time of my death is near, and I shall soon leave you; but I leave you in the hands of a good father, God, the father of all orphans; I commend you to His holy Providence. I hope too that the superior of the monastery will not fail in charity towards you, and even that the religious will be kind to you. Do not ask what your birth is: there is no true nobility but that which is acquired by virtue. Do not look to the honour of men: those who are most honoured are not the happiest. On the contrary, Jesus Christ said that it is a beatitude to suffer for love of Him insults, reproaches, ignominies and false witness that rob us of our reputation. If you want people to have some regard for you, be the first to have regard for others. Avoid sleep as much as you can. Embrace a way of life that is austere and hard on the body; let your clothes be rough, and fitter to afflict your flesh than to flatter it. Be present punctually at all the assemblies of the religious to pray with them. Never cause anyone pain. When you are questioned, answer only with your eyes lowered to the ground. Do not mock the faults of others. Groan without ceasing inwardly before God, if you wish to have a share in His consolations. Pray fervently for those you know to have fallen into some sin. Never refuse to help the sick; hasten to them eagerly. Never grow weary on the road of perfection. Serve your neighbour as if he were your master, so that you may be the friend of Jesus Christ, who for you took on the

form of a servant. Be always at prayer, for fear that you may fall into temptation; if it comes, resist it generously; and when it has passed, do not stop praying on that account, lest another time you be overcome. If you practise these maxims, my dear child, I assure you that God will always come to your help and hold out His hand to you, so that you may triumph over all your enemies."

Some time after this devout exhortation she passed peacefully from this life to a better. When she died, the abbot learned by revelation who she was and the glory she enjoyed in heaven. Her husband, by a divine inspiration, came to the monastery to see his dear Theodora; he became a religious in the same place and spent the rest of his days in his wife's cell, and he was buried with her.

She is sometimes painted with a demon before her taking her hands as if to coax her or to pull off her ring: this is a way of indicating that, after an exemplary married life of several years, she once let herself be drawn into adultery.

We have taken this story from Metaphrastes, and it is related in volume V of Surius.

Saint Patiens, Archbishop of Lyons and Confessor

491. — Pope: Saint Felix III. — King of France: Clovis I.

> *Nos œuvres sont d'autant plus agréables au souverain juge que nous les faisons avec une charité plus ardente.*
>
> *Our works are the more pleasing to the sovereign Judge the more ardent the charity with which we do them.*
>
> *Saint Lawrence Justinian.*

History tells us nothing certain about the birth, education and first employments of Saint Patiens, archbishop of Lyons. He was chosen to govern the Church of that city after the death of Saint Eucherius. About the year 470 he attended the ordination of John, bishop of Chalon-sur-Saône, at which Saint Euphronius, bishop of Autun, and the other prelates of the First Lyonnese were present. Sidonius Apollinaris, who regarded him as his bishop before he was himself raised to the episcopate, speaks of him only with great praise. He testifies that he lacked none of the virtues that make the great and holy prelate. He stresses above all his pastoral charity during a cruel famine that laid waste his diocese and the neighbouring provinces occupied by the Burgundians. Saint Gregory of Tours did not forget this fine passage in the life of Saint Patiens, and he points out that this famine was the same one in which the senator Ecdicius, brother-in-law of Saint Sidonius Apollinaris, showed a like charity towards the province of Auvergne. This generous Christian made the noblest use of the great wealth of Sidonius's family and his own, which were the first in the country; for, seeing the famine grow from day to day, he sent his men with horses and wagons to all the towns round about to bring him all those most hard pressed by want and misery. They went in every direction and brought him crowds of poor people, whom he distributed among all the houses he had in the country, where he fed them for as long as the dearth lasted. It is said that there were more than four thousand of them; and when plenty returned he had them all taken home in the same way as he had brought them. So fine an action, done solely for God, as Saint Gregory remarks, deserved to be enshrined in the annals of the Church. It is because we shall have no occasion to speak of it elsewhere that we have added it here, so as not to let its memory be lost. The charity of Saint Patiens was no less brilliant, since, according to Saint Sidonius, it reached to the furthest bounds of Gaul without confining itself to the needs he knew of. He always considered the nature of the need before looking at the rank of the needy. He went ahead to help those who could not come to him. His vigilance and insight made him discover the most hidden miseries in the depths of the provinces; and as he was no less touched by the shame and modesty of the absent poor than by the complaints and cries of those before him, he was no less intent on drying the tears of those he could not see than those of the people who presented themselves to his sight. Sidonius adds that what he did for the rooting out of heresies, the conversion of the barbarians, the reform of his people's morals and the adornment of the churches of his diocese he had in common with the other holy prelates of his time, but that he shared with no one the glory of

having exhausted himself in buying grain, of having had it distributed free throughout all the provinces of Gaul that the Visigoths, led by their king Euric, had ravaged along the Rhône and the Saône as far as the Loire, and of having set up various granaries along these rivers, chiefly on the Rhône, where he had saved the towns of Arles, Riez, Avignon, Orange, Viviers, Valence and Saint-Paul-Trois-Châteaux, which looked on him as their deliverer and as a second Joseph. Auvergne and all the rest of Aquitaine had also felt the effects of his liberality in these public calamities, and these provinces chose Sidonius Apollinaris to express their gratitude to him worthily.

The greatness and solidity of our holy prelate's virtue appeared no less in all his other actions. He knew how to combine the rules of abstinence with those of propriety, which obliged him to receive well those who came to his table. This wise balance served him to win the hearts of those he was trying to draw to God. So King Gundobad, son of Chilperic and uncle of Saint Clotilde, who lived in his city, used to praise the meals he gave, and the queen proclaimed with admiration his sobriety and his fasts. Everything grew under his hand in the house of the Lord of which he had the stewardship; only the number of heretics diminished from day to day, through the pains he took to convert them. The Burgundians, masters of the country, were Arians by sect, and most of them followed the impieties of the Photinians, who had carried Arianism to its furthest excesses. Saint Patiens brought a very great number of them back to the Catholic Church by the force of his preaching and the gentleness of his conduct towards them.

Our Saint built new churches; others were restored and adorned through his care. To him in particular are due the building of the original church of Saint-Irénée and the transformation into a rich sanctuary of the grotto in which Saint Zacharias had laid the bodies of the glorious Martyrs. An ancient inscription, preserved by the Bollandists, which could be read before the sixteenth century on the mosaic pavement of this sanctuary, leaves no doubt on this point: "Here, under one roof, are built two temples of which Patiens was the founder. A ray of light from on high lights up the bodies of the martyrs, once buried in a deep grotto. The lower sanctuary shines, while the top of the building rises majestically into the air. He walks surely towards heaven who prepares on earth such magnificent dwellings for Christ." This was indeed that crypt, remarkable for the richness of its ornaments, of which historians have left us the description, and which was later shamefully profaned and almost entirely destroyed by the Calvinists.

But nothing equals the magnificence of the restorations he made to the principal basilica of the Maccabees, if indeed, as the text of Saint Sidonius seems to suggest, he did not rebuild it entirely. The solemnity of the dedication lasted eight days, during which Faustus, bishop of Riez, famous for his oratorical gifts, was frequently heard.

Saint Patiens had two other churches built, those of Saint-Romain and Saint-Pierre-le-Vieux. The first stood on the spot where, according to tradition, the waters that ran down from the hill, dyed with the blood of the Confessors of the faith after the massacre ordered by Severus, had formed a kind of lake before flowing into the Saône. The second was meant to perpetuate the date of the day on which that massacre took place. It was the eve of the feast of Saint Peter the Apostle. It is believed that Saint Patiens also built the church of Saint Peter and Saint Saturninus, whose foundation historians assign to the year 490.

In the year 475 Saint Patiens attended the council of Arles, assembled through the efforts of Leontius, bishop of that city. It is said that some time later he assembled another council at Lyons and presented there a work in which he had collected and summarized the dogmas of the Church. This, however, is not easy to verify, any more than the alleged signature of our Saint and the other bishops to the letter of Faustus. We know of no writing by him; yet the forty-eighth of the homilies that bear the name of Eusebius of Emesa is commonly attributed to him. It is a refutation of the errors of the Photinians and Arians. But it may be said that the Church owes to him the Life of Saint Germanus of Auxerre, which he had written by Constantius, a priest of his clergy.

He died about the year 491, and perhaps on 11 September, the day on which his feast is celebrated at Lyons. It is also the day on which his name has been entered in the modern Roman Martyrology. He is not mentioned in the ancient ones. His body was buried in, or at least moved to, the church of Saint-Just. His relics were found there long afterwards; they were kept there with reverence until the sixteenth century, when they were scattered, with many others, in the troubles of the Huguenots, who wrecked the church of Saint-Just.

Les grands souvenirs de l'Église de Lyon, by D. Meynis; Baillet. — Cf. La France pontificale, by Fisquet; Histoire littéraire de la France, by Dom Rivet.

Blessed Bernard of Offida, Capuchin Lay Brother

1694. — Pope: Innocent XII. — King of France: Louis XIV.

> *La simplicité, qui n'est jamais séparée de la prudence chrétienne, a brillé admirablement dans toutes les actions du bienheureux Bernard d'Offida.*
>
> *Simplicity, which is never separated from Christian prudence, shone admirably in all the actions of Blessed Bernard of Offida.*
>
> *Cardinal Caseli.*

Bernard was born in Italy, near the place whose name he bears, on 7 November 1604. His parents were Joseph Peroni and Dominica of Appignano, honest peasants full of piety, who gave all their care to inspiring their son with deep religious feelings. The Lord blessed their efforts. Dominic (that was the name he had received in baptism, which he changed to Bernard when he took the religious habit) was an accomplished child. His docility, gentleness and obedience were admirable. He had such charity for his brothers that, when he saw them resisting their parents' wishes, he would say to his father and mother: "I will do what my brother refuses to do. If he deserves to be punished, punish me." Put in charge of a flock from the age of seven or eight, he gave himself to prayer with the ease and attraction that the Holy Spirit gives to pure souls. His good example drew the other shepherds along, and they all joined him in meditating on some truth of salvation or in reciting the Rosary.

Such was Dominic's conduct in his childhood and early youth. Guided by a wise director who had taught him the catechism, he early grew used to mastering his passions; and so the vanities of the world could not seduce him; he loved solitude and left it only when necessary. His whole occupation on Sundays was to visit the churches, pray there assiduously, and prepare himself to receive the sacraments, which he approached with angelic fervour. He begged his parents not to trouble themselves about his food on those days, but to leave him free to satisfy his piety; it held him so fast to holy practices that he often came home in the evening without having eaten anything all day. Dominic, who keenly desired to know and follow the will of God, studied his vocation with particular care. The religious state had great attraction for him, and the edifying life of the Capuchins of the friary of Offida gave him the thought of settling among them; but his parents' opposition to carrying out such a plan, and the fear of displeasing them, seemed to him obstacles very hard to overcome. The Lord relieved His servant of this anxiety; his father, though he loved him tenderly, advised him to embrace the religious state. Dominic, full of joy, saw in the words of the author of his days the expression of the divine will and, now free to follow his attraction, entered the Capuchins at Corinaldo, where he began his novitiate and took the habit on 15 February 1626. Long practised in the Christian virtues, he found it not hard to acquire the religious virtues; so he spent the whole time of his novitiate in fervour, and this fervour was so great that his brethren, surprised at such perfection, said to one another: "If such is his beginning, what will his end be?"

Bernard, having made his vows at Camerino on 15 February 1627, was sent to the friary of Fermo, a city in the March of Ancona. He had the happiness of finding in the superior of the house and in the companion

given him two solidly virtuous men, well fitted to sustain a young professed religious in the perfection of his state. But if Bernard found edification with them, he for his part excited their admiration by the way he fulfilled his duties. Among other occupations he had that of nursing the aged and infirm religious, some of whom were crippled, others afflicted with diseases or covered with sores well fitted to cause repugnance; far from showing the least aversion to them, he rendered them every service an inventive charity can devise, and he did it with a calm and gentleness that were never disturbed either by the sick men's ill humour, or by the length of their illnesses, or by the fatigue such work cost him.

Placed in turn in several houses of his Order, Bernard left behind him everywhere the good odour of his virtues. At last, when he had reached the age of sixty and his great prudence, well known to all, had inspired complete confidence in him, he was given the office of questor, or alms-gatherer, in the friary of Offida. This office is very hard among the Capuchins and at the same time very dangerous to virtue; for since the Rule of this holy Order requires the religious to live only on alms, a brother must go out every day to beg for it; he must therefore have constant dealings with lay people and enter their houses, and so runs the risk of losing the spirit of his state if he is not well grounded in it. This trial was for the Blessed only an occasion in which God was pleased to show forth his holiness. His fellow-townsmen, who remembered the wisdom he had shown in his youth, watched him with curiosity on his return to Offida; but they were soon convinced that he had only grown in perfection. They saw him during his begging rounds walking with eyes cast down and modest bearing, inspiring veneration by his angelic face. He entered houses only to visit sick benefactors. If he met some poor man who was suffering, he helped him with the most touching charity. Respect for him was universal, and it was with keen grief that the inhabitants learned that Bernard was leaving his home town to go, by order of his superiors, to the friary of Ascoli. They did not confine themselves to fruitless regrets on this occasion; they applied to the superiors to have the holy brother given back to them, and their request was heard. So he came back to Offida, where his return caused universal joy. There he took up again his office of questor, which was very hard for him, for to collect the alms he went round the outskirts of the town as far as four leagues off, often by very bad roads or in excessive heat. All these rounds were made on foot, and what made them still more tiring was that he had a serious infirmity and was constantly clothed in a rough hair shirt. When he came back overwhelmed with weariness, he could be heard exclaiming: "Paradise, Paradise!" or else: "Does this wretched body not want to suffer? If it wants to enjoy, it must suffer."

While asking for temporal help, Bernard gave the whole district where he lived spiritual help a thousand times more precious; he consoled the poor and the afflicted; taught by a supernatural light the secrets of hearts, he restored order by his counsel to criminal consciences; he prevented offences against God, and above all he had an admirable talent for settling quarrels and restoring unity in families. So when his death deprived the people of his presence, they said: "He is dead who put an end to quarrels, who brought hearts together, who made good harmony reign among relatives! Ah, if only Brother Bernard would come back!"

When the ever-increasing infirmities of the holy religious no longer allowed him to exercise the office of questor, his superiors charged him with that of porter. For him it was only a new means of practising charity towards his neighbour. The poor flocked to him, and he helped them; the afflicted came to tell him their troubles, and he consoled them. Badly brought-up children often tried his patience with their pranks: he bore with them without ever showing the least sharpness. The ignorant above all stirred his zeal; he taught them the truths of religion and prepared them to receive the sacraments. In short, the idea that his holy life gave of his virtue was so well established that people came to ask him for miracles and obtained them from him. One day a mother brought him her little son, who was dangerously ill; she put him in his arms so that he might obtain his cure, but the child died at once. Then the woman, distraught with grief, began to cry out that Brother Bernard had killed her son, and seeing him withdraw, she held him by his habit, saying: "I will not let you go until you have given him back to me alive." The holy man, moved, wept with her; then, going into the church, he went before the altar of Saint Felix of Cantalice, to whom he had a great devotion, laid the

child on the altar and, kneeling down, said with admirable simplicity: “Now is the moment to help me, my good Saint Felix.” Then he prayed for a few moments. O wonder! the child came back to life, was cured, and smiled at his mother. She, consoled and full of joy, begged the man of God’s pardon for the insults she had spoken to him.

It seemed that something would have been lacking to the perfection of the Blessed if he had not had to bear calumnies and humiliations. His concern for the needs of the poor and the pains he took to relieve them displeased some religious, who complained of it to the superiors and represented Brother Bernard as lacking discretion in the distribution of alms and so liable to harm the friary. The Father Provincial, having come to Offida, sent for the supposed culprit and treated him very roughly before the assembled community. Bernard humbly threw himself on his knees and, by the calm and joyful air with which he received this rebuke, showed how highly he valued contradictions. His innocence, which was soon recognized, only increased the admiration in which his virtue was held.

It was by thus giving the example of perfect holiness that this venerable religious reached the age of ninety. He had run this long course when, in the month of August 1694, he was seized with a violent fever; his first care, as soon as he saw that he was ill, was to prepare for a general confession. Though he had spent his life in innocence, he made it with many tears and a compunction as keen as if he had been a great sinner. As the illness grew worse he received the holy Viaticum with great fervour, after which he fell into ecstasy. Coming to himself and finding himself near his end, he said to his superior with that lovable simplicity which was his distinguishing trait: “Father Guardian, give me your blessing, so that I may go to paradise.” The guardian would grant him this favour only after Bernard had given his own blessing to him and to all present. Bernard did so out of obedience, using the crucifix he held in his hands. It was his last action. He gave back his soul peacefully to his Creator on the morning of Sunday, 22 August 1694. No sooner had the news of his death spread than a great multitude was seen arriving at the friary, not only from Offida but from the surrounding towns. They were obliged to keep him lying in state for three days before they could bury him. From then on miracles were worked through his intercession; these miracles and his virtues led the Holy See to undertake his beatification, which was pronounced by Pope Pius VI on 19 May 1795.

Taken from the Life of Blessed Bernard of Offida by Canon de Ram; he himself took it from the Supplement to Charles Butler by the abbé Tresvaux.

Saint Almirus or Almer, Solitary and Abbot in the Forests of Maine (about 560)

One of the most illustrious disciples of Saint Avitus, third abbot of Saint-Mesmin near Orléans, was Saint Almirus. Born in the country of the Arverni, he followed Saint Avitus and Saint Carilefus, while still of tender age, when they left the abbey of Menat to come and live in the cloisters built by Saint Maximinus in the territory of Orléans.

Almirus lived some years in the monastery of Micy, or Saint-Mesmin, and when Avitus and Carilefus went to hide in the forests of Maine and the Perche he followed them again; he chose himself a cell on the banks of the river Braye, at the foot of a hill surrounded by woods, on the spot where the village of Gréez now stands (Sarthe, arrondissement of Mamers, canton of Montmirail). There he built an oratory in honour of the Blessed Virgin, and close by he built a little cell for himself. He hoped to live there alone, in converse with God and the angels and forgotten by men; but Providence had other views for him, and he submitted to them. His cell soon became the refuge of fervent Christians who wished to serve God perfectly under his direction, so that in a short time more than forty monks were seen gathered in his monastery. Almirus devoted himself before all else to the care of his religious and disciples; he taught them to live according to the rules of the first Fathers of monastic life, and his example always confirmed his teaching. To give still more authority to his words and virtues, heaven sometimes deigned to work miracles. One day, when he was busy at work in the fields with the brethren, a fairly heavy rain came on; they all ran off at once and took refuge in a hut

nearby. Almirus stayed behind alone to finish his task. But the rain grew heavier and heavier, so that at last the hut could not keep the monks who had come to shelter there from being drenched. The abbot nonetheless went on with his work, and stayed until it was entirely finished. Then he came back to the brethren, and they all marvelled at how his faithfulness to the observances had protected him completely, so much so that not a drop of rain had touched him.

The blessed abbot, seeing the time of his death draw near, told his brethren the day and hour at which he would leave the earth, and when that moment came he fell gently asleep in the Lord. It was the third day before the ides of September (the 11th of that month), about the year 560.

Taken from the Histoire de l'Église du Mans *by the Rev. Father Dom Piolin.*

Saint Adelphus, Abbot of Remiremont, in the Diocese of Saint-Dié (670)

Saint Adelphus was the grandson of Saint Romaric of Austrasia and the godson of Saint Amatus of Grenoble, both abbots of the double monastery of Remiremont (*Avendi Castrum, Romarici mons*), on the left bank of the Moselle, in the diocese of Saint-Dié. As soon as he was old enough, Romaric sent him to Saint Arnulf of Metz; it was under the direction of this illustrious prelate that Adelphus trained himself in the practice of all the Christian virtues and in the first elements of letters. The historians praise the gentle serenity that shone on his face and was as it were the reflection of the purity of his soul, the beauty of his features, the gentleness of his speech, and above all his fervent piety and that spirit of detachment which made him seek his treasure and support in God alone. Having left the discipline of Saint Arnulf, he came under that of his grandfather, who governed the monastery of Remiremont, and under his eyes gave himself to the exercises of the most austere penance, striving continually to subdue his flesh by fasting and vigils. For the rest, charitable, disinterested and modest, he was always ready to obey the humblest of his brethren. So it was less from fatherly tenderness than from conviction and the desire for good that Romaric named him his successor in the direction of the two monasteries. Adelphus proved not unequal to so honourable a choice. While his hand, as firm as it was skilful, maintained the work of his predecessors, he applied himself to growing every day in fervour, mortification and the spirit of renunciation. Compunction had become his bread, and tears his drink. He ate only once a day, after sunset, and even then confined himself to what was strictly necessary to sustain life. His sister Gebetrude rivalled him in zeal for the service of God and of the neighbour.

Saint Adelphus edified the solitude of Remiremont for seventeen years. It was his custom to withdraw often to more lonely places, to pray and weep there in freedom. The further he advanced in virtue, the more he judged himself unworthy of the pardon of his faults: an example well fitted to confound our lukewarmness, especially if we consider that this Saint had probably kept his robe of innocence. The Lord, as if to grant his wishes, soon came to visit him with illness. It is likely that the excess of his austerities contributed much to those pains and that extreme weakness which made his life seem in danger at every moment. The ineffable goodness of God deigned to allow, as often happens, that the infirmities of the body should wipe away the inner stains; and amid his sharp and overwhelming pains he begged with groans and floods of tears that they might serve as a remedy for his soul. One day, when his sufferings seemed to have reached their height, he called a priest and, prostrating himself with his forehead to the ground, confessed to him all the faults with which his conscience could reproach him, begging him to impose a proportionate penance. Having then called together the monks and nuns, he said to them: "Beloved brothers and most devout sisters, I must take leave of you and go to our brethren of Luxeuil; for I wish to make my confession to them also, and I do not doubt that their prayers will obtain for me the remission of my sins." He resigned his office to Garichramnus and set out for Luxeuil, where he died soon afterwards, on 11 September, about 670. His body was afterwards brought back to his abbey; Saint Adelphus was canonized in 1051 by Leo IX.

Taken from the Vie des Saints de Franche-Comté *and completed from the* Histoire du diocèse de Nancy *by the abbé Guillaume.*

[1] Their acts are mixed up with those of Saint Eugenia, whose life we shall give on 25 December, the day on which she is named in the Roman Martyrology.

[2] See the additions of the Bollandists for 11 March, vol. III, p. 844.

[3] Saint Paphnutius was always closely bound to Saint Athanasius, patriarch of Alexandria, and to the other Catholic bishops. He accompanied him, with Saint Potamon of Heraclea and forty-seven other Egyptian bishops, to the Council held at Tyre in 335. Most of the members of that assembly professed Arianism. Paphnutius noticed among them Maximus, bishop of Jerusalem. Indignant at finding in the company of the wicked a Catholic prelate who had confessed Jesus Christ in the last persecution, he took him by the hand, led him out of the assembly, told him of the plots of the Arians, of which he had known nothing until then, detached him from their party and fixed him for ever in the communion of the holy patriarch of Alexandria. — Godescard, and Father Stilting in the *Acta Sanctorum*, 11 September.

[4] Saint Bodo is held to have given his name to the village of Boudonville, which has been a suburb of Nancy since the reign of Duke Charles III (1624–1675), and which he is said to have owned. — The abbé Guillaume, canon of Nancy.

[5] We gave her life on 4 September.

[6] See 5 September (note to the Martyrology of France).

[7] See his life on 20 July.

12 September

Martyrologies

Twelfth day of September

MARTYROLOGE ROMAIN.

Roman Martyrology.

The Commemoration (or, *if the Sunday within the Octave of the Nativity falls on this day*, the Feast) of the Most Holy Name of the Blessed Virgin Mary, instituted by Pope Innocent XI to thank God for the signal victory He gave the Christians over the Turks before Vienna, in Austria, through the intercession of the Blessed Virgin.[1] 1683. — At Alexandria, the birth into heaven of the holy martyrs Hieronides, Leontius, Serapion, Seleucus, Valerian and Straton, who under the emperor Maximinus were thrown into the sea for confessing the name of Jesus Christ. 4th century. — In Bithynia, Saint Autonomus, bishop and martyr, who, fleeing the persecution of Diocletian, came from Italy to that country, where he made several conversions; slaughtered at the altar by raging pagans while he was celebrating the holy mysteries, he thus became himself a victim for Jesus Christ. 4th century. — At Myra, in Phrygia, the holy martyrs Macedonius, Theodulus and Tatian; under Julian the Apostate they endured various torments by order of the governor Almachius, who at last had them stretched on red-hot gridirons, where they completed their martyrdom with joy. 362. — At Iconium, in Lycaonia, Saint Curonotus (*Cornutus*), bishop, who was beheaded under the judge Perennius and so won the palm of martyrdom. — At Pavia, Saint Juventius, bishop, of whom mention is made on 8 February. He was sent to that city with Saint Syrus by Blessed Hermagoras, disciple of Saint Mark the Evangelist. Both preached the faith of Jesus Christ there, also enlightened the neighbouring towns by their miraculous works and their great virtues, and died in peace amid the honours of the episcopate. 2nd century. — At Lyons, the death of Saint SACERDOS or SERDOT, archbishop of that see and confessor. 551. — At Verona, Saint Sylvinus, bishop. — At Anderlecht or Andrelec, a town in Belgium, Saint GUIDO or GUY, confessor. 1012.

MARTYROLOGE DE FRANCE, REVU ET AUGMENTÉ.

Martyrology of France, revised and enlarged.

In Brittany, Saint Kenan, surnamed Callédoc, who is believed to have been bishop of Duleek, in Ireland. He had first led the religious life in the monastery of Saint Martin at Tours; zeal for the salvation of souls made him return to Ireland, his native land, where he preached the faith first in Connacht. He then came back to

Armorican Brittany and settled in the country of Léon, where he died. He was buried at Cléder (Finistère, arrondissement of Morlaix, canton of Plouzévédé), where his tomb can still be seen. About 495. — In the diocese of Valence, Saint AEMILIAN, first known bishop of that see and confessor. 4th century. — In the diocese of Mechelen, Saint Guy of Anderlecht, confessor, named in the Roman Martyrology of this day. — In the diocese of Clermont, Saint Symphorian of Autun, martyr, whose life we gave on 22 August. About 180. — In the diocese of Autun, Saint Evantius, bishop of that see and confessor. He is believed to have succeeded Saint Pigmenius, and to have been brought up and ordained by Saint Gregory of Autun, bishop of Langres, in whose name he signed the third council of Orléans (538). He was elected bishop of Autun with one voice, so outstanding did his merit appear in the eyes of all, and after faithfully guarding his flock he went to receive in heaven the reward of his untiring care. 6th century. — In the former diocese of Saint-Bertrand-de-Comminges (Haute-Garonne), now the diocese of Tarbes, Saint Ebontius, first a religious in the monastery of Saint Victorian in Spain, then bishop of Roda and Barbastro in the same country. He died at Saint-Bertrand-de-Comminges, where some of his relics are kept. 11th century. — At Bayeux, Saint REVERENTIUS, priest and confessor. 1st century. — At Saint-Jean-d'Angély (Charente-Inférieure), in the diocese of La Rochelle, Saint Reverentianus, whom modern hagiographers suppose to be the same as Saint Reverentius of Bayeux, whose life we give on this day. 1st century. — At Remiremont (*Romarici mons*), in the diocese of Saint-Dié, Saint Perpetua, virgin, abbess of the monastery of that place, founded by Saint Romaric in 620. — In the diocese of Poitiers, the death of Saint Maximinus of Mouterre-Silly, archbishop of Trier and confessor, whose life we gave on 29 May. 349. — At Angers, the Venerable Jean Michel, bishop of that see and confessor. 1447. — In the diocese of Limoges, the Venerable Étienne Aubert, pope under the name of Innocent VI, a native of Beyssac (Corrèze, arrondissement of Brive, canton of Lubersac). Before being elected sovereign pontiff (18 December 1352) he had been bishop of Noyon, then of Clermont, cardinal-priest of the title of Saints John and Paul, bishop of Ostia and Velletri, and grand penitentiary of the Roman Curia. After a pontificate of nine years and nine months he died at Avignon and was laid in the cathedral church. 1362.

MARTYROLOGES DES ORDRES RELIGIEUX.

Martyrologies of the Religious Orders.

Martyrology of the Order of Saint Basil. — At Bova, a town of the kingdom of Italy (Calabria Ulteriore Prima), Saint Elias, abbot, of the Order of Saint Basil, founder of the monastery of Melicucca.

Martyrology of the Three Orders of Saint Francis. — Saint Alphonsus Maria de Liguori, whose memory is celebrated on 2 August.[2] 1787.

Martyrology of the Order of Friars Minor. — At Falerone, in the March of Ancona, Blessed Peregrino, or Pilgrim, confessor, of the Order of Friars Minor, remarkable for his humility and charity; having returned to Italy after a pilgrimage to the places of our Redemption, he shone during his life and after his death with the glory of his virtues and miracles, and ended his days peacefully at San Severino. Pope Pius VII approved in 1821 the immemorial cult paid to him.[3] 1224.

Martyrology of the Order of Hermits of Saint Augustine. — As with the Franciscans.

ADDITIONS FAITES D'APRÈS LES BOLLANDISTES ET AUTRES HAGIOGRAPHES.

Additions made from the Bollandists and other hagiographers.

Among the Greeks, TOBIT the father, the young TOBIAS, and SARA his wife. 7th century before Jesus Christ. — In Egypt, Saint Bona, virgin; having reached the age of twelve, she received the veil of a nun, under which she lived in great austerity, in the observance of the rule and of monastic discipline. It is related that her body gave off a most pleasant fragrance during the whole time taken for her burial. 260. — In

England, Saint Eanswith, virgin, abbess of Folkestone, of whom we spoke in the martyrology of the Bollandists on 31 August. 640. — At Genoa, in the Sardinian States, Blessed Maria Vittoria Fornari Strata, widow, foundress of the Order of the Celestial Annunciades.[4] 1617. — In the province of Munster (Ireland), Saint Ailbe, also called Elvé and Aylbée, archbishop of Munster (he fixed his see at Emly; it has since been moved to Cashel). He preached the Gospel with such unction, his miracles were so striking and his life so holy, that he converted an incredible multitude of unbelievers and drew a great number of them to walk in the ways of perfection. King Engus having given him the island of Aran (Scotland), he founded there a monastery that became so famous for the holiness of those who lived in it that it was long called Aran of the Saints. 525. — At Catania (Sicily), chief town of the intendancy of that name, Saint Serapion, bishop of that see and martyr. About 304. — At Nicomedia, now Isnikmid, a town of Bithynia on the Propontis, Saint Nicetas, martyr. His body rests in the church of Saint Raphael at Venice, where it is surrounded with great veneration. 4th century. — At Alexandria in Egypt, now Iskanderieh, in Lower Egypt, Saint Theodore, martyr, who is believed to have been invested with the episcopal dignity. As he preached the faith of Jesus Christ openly, the pagans seized him, made him suffer a thousand horrible treatments and finally threw him into the sea; but an angel having brought him back to the shore, the idolaters cut off his head. About the 3rd century. — At Nicomedia again, Saint Ammon, lector and martyr, named in the copies of Saint Jerome's martyrology. — In Asia, Saint Diofole, martyr; and Saints Matrona, Thecla and Heraclia, also martyrs, named in the same source. — In Pamphylia (now the western part of the pashalik of Itchil), a region of Asia Minor, Saint Syrus, martyr. — In Japan, the blessed martyrs Thomas Zumárraga, a Spaniard, priest of the Order of Friars Preachers; Mancius of Saint Thomas and Dominic, Japanese, professed choir religious of the same Order; Apollinaris Franco, a Spaniard, priest of the Order of Friars Minor; Francis of Saint Bonaventure and Peter of Saint Clare, Japanese, professed lay brothers of the same Order.

Tobit the Father, the Young Tobias, and Sara His Wife

Seventh century before Jesus Christ.

Tous les âges et tous les états verront dans l'histoire de Tobie et de sa famille la pratique et la récompense des vertus essentielles : la confiance en Dieu, la piété filiale, la charité envers les hommes délaissés ou souffrants, l'innocence et la pureté de la vie.

All ages and all states of life will see in the story of Tobit and his family the practice and the reward of the essential virtues: trust in God, filial piety, charity toward the forsaken and the suffering, innocence and purity of life.

— Mgr Darboy.

Tobit was of the city and tribe of Nephthali, in Upper Galilee, at the foot of Lebanon and not far from the springs of the Jordan. In the time of Salmanasar, king of Assyria, he was carried away captive to Nineveh with the tribes that formed the kingdom of Israel. As a grown man he married a woman of his own tribe named Anna, and had by her a son, to whom he gave his own name; he brought up this child in the love of the Lord and in the fear of sin. Amid the rigours of exile and misfortune he never left the way of truth: he abstained from forbidden meats and kept the divine precepts in mind. And so God made him find favour in the eyes of the conqueror, who left him great freedom and gave him his confidence. When Salmanasar died, his son Sennacherib showed himself cruel toward the captives; the total ruin of his army under the walls of Jerusalem had just enraged him. He put several Jews to death, and gave orders that Tobit too should be killed, for he was known in Nineveh for the care he lavished on his unhappy countrymen. Stripped of everything, Tobit fled with his son and his wife, and, since he was generally loved for the good qualities of his heart, he found means to hide. This trial, however, was only passing: Sennacherib perished at the hands of his sons, who had conspired against him, and under Esarhaddon, the new king, Tobit returned to his house and his goods. He at once took up his old habits of devotion again, in spite of the dangers to be feared.

A new and hard affliction was added to all the others. One day, when he was weary from the care he had given his brethren, Tobit was resting, lying at the foot of a wall. By chance some droppings from a swallows' nest fell into his eyes, and he became blind. God sent this trial to Tobit so that the patience of His servant, like his charity, might be an example to posterity. He remained firm in his convictions, without grieving over his misfortune and without letting himself be overcome by mockery and insult; for, like Job, he had to suffer the reproaches of his friends and his family. "Where," they said to him, "is the fruit of that hope with which you gave alms and buried the dead?" But he answered gently: "Do not speak so; for we are the children of the Saints, and we look for that life which God will give to those who keep an inviolable fidelity to Him." His wife herself did not spare him harsh words. She went out to work every day and came back with what she had earned to live on. Once it happened that she was given a kid and brought it home. When Tobit heard the kid bleating, he said: "Take care that it has not been stolen; give it back to its owners, for it is not lawful to eat or to touch things that are stolen." Anna grew angry and said to him: "It is plain how vain your hope is, and what your alms are good for." This is how she often treated him, for quick and weak natures grow bitter under long sorrows.

Overwhelmed on every side, Tobit began to pray to God with sighs and tears: "Lord," he said, "You are just, and all Your judgments are right, and all Your ways are mercy, truth and justice. Remember me now, Lord; take no vengeance for my sins, and do not call to mind my offences, nor those of my kindred. It is because we have broken Your commandments that we are given up to plunder, to captivity and to death, and that You have made us a byword and a laughing-stock to all the peoples who witness our dispersion. … Deal with me, then, Lord, according to Your will; command that my soul be received in peace, for it is better for me to die than to live any longer." A kind of discouragement had come over Tobit's heart; life seemed a burden to him. Now at the same time a prayer much like his was going up from another deeply afflicted soul; for this world is nothing but the vast empire of sorrow. At Ecbatana in Media there was a young Jewish girl named Sara; her father was called Raguel. She had already been married to seven men one after another. All had died at once, strangled by the demon Asmodeus, who holds in his power men given over without restraint to gross desires.

One day the unhappy Sara was reproving one of her father's maidservants for some fault. The servant answered insolently and harshly: "May we never see son or daughter of yours on the earth, you murderess of your husbands! Do you mean to kill me too, as you have already killed seven husbands?" Sara was extremely hurt by these insulting words: she withdrew to her room, where she stayed three days and three nights without eating or drinking, so as to move God by this penance. She persevered in prayer, thus warding off the curses spoken against her and striving to turn aside the shame that weighed on her marriages. At last, on the third day, she ended her prayer with these words: "Blessed be Your name, O God of our fathers, who after anger turn again to mercy and forgive the sins of those who call upon You in the time of affliction! Either I was unworthy of those who were given me, or perhaps they were not worthy of me, because You had kept me for another husband. But whoever honours You knows well that after the trials of this life he will be crowned, that after tribulation he will be delivered, and that after chastisement he will obtain mercy." The sovereign God heard the prayers of Tobit and of Sara from the height of His glory, and they were granted. The angel Raphael, whose name means "heavenly physician", put on a human form and came to heal the two afflicted souls.

Tobit, who had called for death, thought that God was indeed about to call him to Himself; and so he sent for his son and, setting out his last wishes, said: "My son, hear my words and lay them in your heart as a foundation. When God has received my soul, bury my body. You shall honour your mother all the days of your life; for you must remember the great and many perils she went through before you were born. Bury her beside me when she has reached the end of her life. Remember God every day; take care never to consent to sin or to break the commandments of the Lord. Give alms out of what you have; do not turn your face from

any poor man, for so the face of the Lord will not be turned from you. Be charitable, then, as far as you can; if you have much, give abundantly; if you have little, give little, but with a good heart. …" After further commending to his son the love of purity, justice and wisdom, Tobit added: "I tell you also, my son, that when you were a little child I gave ten talents of silver to Gabelus, of Rages in Media, and that I hold his note of hand. Take pains, then, to find him, to receive this sum of money, and to give him back his bond." And because this was the whole fortune Tobit was leaving, he said further: "Do not be afraid, my son; it is true that we are poor, but we shall have great riches if we fear God, if we avoid evil and do good."

The young Tobias answered his father: "All that you have commanded me I will do." Yet he voiced his fears about whether he could find Gabelus and make the journey to Rages alone. "Go nonetheless," the father replied, "and look for some trustworthy man to go with you for an agreed wage." The son went out and met a young man of pleasing countenance who seemed to be waiting to be hired for some service. Not able to suspect that this was an angel in visible form, Tobias said to him: "Where are you from, good young man?" The stranger answered: "I am one of the children of Israel." "Do you know," Tobias went on, "the road that leads to the country of the Medes?" "I know it; I have often travelled those roads; I have stayed with Gabelus, our brother, who lives at Rages." Tobias came and told all this to his father, who ordered the stranger to be brought in. On entering, he wished the old man lasting joy. "What joy," answered Tobit, "can there be for me, who sit in darkness and do not see the light of heaven?" The young man answered: "Take good courage; God will soon heal you." Then he promised to take Tobias to Rages and to bring him back; the old man asked him of what tribe and what family he was. The stranger answered: "I am Azarias, son of the great Ananias." The angel had no doubt taken the appearance of Azarias, and this name, which means "help of God", expressed perfectly the mission of the heavenly envoy. When the preparations had been made and farewells exchanged, the two travellers set out. The dog, a faithful friend and guardian, followed their steps.

As soon as they had gone, Anna began to weep, saying: "You have taken from us the staff of our old age. Would to God that we had never had this money for which you are sending him! In our poverty we could count ourselves rich when we saw our son." "Do not weep," said the old man; "our child will arrive safe and sound, and he will come back to us in good health, and your eyes will see him; for I believe that a good angel of heaven goes with him and orders all that concerns him, and so he will come back to us full of joy." These words calmed the mother's fears, and she stopped weeping and lamenting.

Meanwhile the travellers reached the banks of the Tigris, where they spent the first night. The young Tobias went down to the river to bathe, when an enormous fish leapt toward him. In his fright he called to his guide for help. The guide reassured him and told him to seize the fish, to kill it and to keep its heart, its gall and its liver, saying that these organs were effective remedies for driving away the demon and curing blindness. Tobias obeyed. The next day they went on with the journey, which lasted several days. On entering Ecbatana, Tobias said to his guide: "Where do you want us to lodge?" The guide answered: "There is a man here named Raguel, who is one of your kinsmen and of your tribe; his daughter is called Sara, and he has no other children. Because of your kinship all his goods belong to you, and you must marry his daughter; ask her of her father, then, and he will give her to you in marriage." "I have heard," Tobias replied, "that she has married seven husbands one after another, and that they died because a demon killed them. So I am afraid the same thing may happen to me, and that, being an only son, I may bring grief to my parents' old age and lead it down to the grave." Raphael then made him understand that this misfortune had struck only men given up to gross inclinations, and that it could be escaped by prayer and pure intentions.

Raphael and Tobias went into Raguel's house, and he received them with joy, although he did not yet know them. Yet after looking at Tobias he said to his wife: "How like my kinsman this young man is!" Then, turning to his guests: "Where are you from, young brothers?" "Of the tribe of Nephthali, in captivity at Nineveh." "Do you know Tobit, my kinsman?" "We know him," they answered. And as Raguel was saying many good things of him, the angel went on: "Tobit, of whom you speak, is this young man's father." Then

Raguel threw himself into his arms, embraced him, shed tears and said: “Blessed be you, my child, for you are the son of a great and good man.” And his wife and Sara their daughter, moved with tenderness, began to weep too; there is such charm in family affections, and so much room for tender feelings in the hearts of exiles!

After some moments of conversation Raguel had a sheep killed and a feast prepared for the travellers. And as he was inviting them to sit down at table, Tobias said to him: “I will neither eat nor drink today unless you grant my request and promise to give me Sara, your daughter.” At these words Raguel was seized with fear; he thought of the death of the seven husbands and feared as tragic an end for his kinsman; in his perplexity he kept silent. But when the angel had reassured him about Tobias’s fate, he consented to the wish expressed. “No doubt,” he said, “God has let my prayers and my tears rise up to Him; and I believe He has permitted this journey so that my daughter might marry one of her own kindred, according to the law of Moses. So I will give you my daughter.” And taking Sara’s right hand, he put it in the right hand of Tobias. “May the God of Abraham,” he said, “the God of Israel and the God of Jacob be with you; may He

Himself join you together, and may His blessing be fulfilled in you.” Then the marriage contract was drawn up, and they held a feast, giving thanks to God.

When evening came, Sara began to weep, trembling lest the joy of that day should be followed the next day by bitter sadness and a new mourning; her mother tried to reassure her. Then the two spouses withdrew. Faithful to his guide’s instructions, Tobias burned in the bridal chamber the heart and liver of the fish, which he had kept; then he reminded Sara of their common duty to ward off every danger by prayer. He himself prayed, calling on God with a pure heart and with confidence. Sara for her part said: “Have mercy on us, Lord, have mercy on us; let us both come in health to old age.”

Raguel was in great alarm. Toward daybreak he said to his wife: “Send one of your maidservants to see whether our son is not dead.” His wife sent one of her maidservants, who came back to say that Tobias was alive. In their devout gratitude the parents cried out: “We bless You, Lord God of Israel, because what we feared has not come to pass; for You have shown us mercy, and You have driven away the enemy who pursued us.”

In his joy Raguel had a great feast prepared, to which he called his neighbours and friends. He begged Tobias to stay at Ecbatana for fifteen days; he gave him half his goods at once, declaring in writing that after his death the other half too would go to his son-in-law. Tobias, however, was thinking of Gabelus: after thanking Azarias for his care, which had turned out so happily, he begged him to go himself to Rages to find Gabelus, remind him of his debt and bring him to the wedding. “For you know,” he said, “that my father is counting the days; and if I delay a little, his soul will be in distress. You see too how Raguel presses me, and that I cannot resist his entreaties.” Azarias took four servants and two camels and set off for Rages. Having found Gabelus, he received from him the sum due and gave him back his bond; then he told him what had happened to the young Tobias and brought him to the wedding. It was a great joy for Gabelus, who embraced his benefactor’s son with tears and surrounded the future of his young friend with his most devout and tender good wishes.

While the appointed days were passing in festivities at Ecbatana, they were dragging out in grief and anguish at Nineveh. Old Tobit, seeing that there was a delay, said: “Why these delays, and what can be keeping my son? Perhaps Gabelus is dead, and there is no one to pay back the money.” So he gave way to deep sadness, and Anna his wife was disheartened: they wept together.

As though Raguel had guessed the fears that troubled the family at Nineveh, he wanted to let them know by a messenger how the young Tobias was, so that Tobias might in this way stay longer at Ecbatana. But being unable to overcome his son-in-law’s resistance, he handed Sara over to him with half of what he owned in servants and flocks, and with a great sum of money. Then he said: “May the holy angel of the Lord be on

your way and protect you; may you find your parents in good health, and may my eyes see your children before I die!" Raguel and his wife embraced their daughter and let her go, exhorting her to honour her new parents, to love her husband, to govern her house wisely and to keep herself pure of all reproach.

They set out; in eleven days' march they had covered about half the way. The angel then proposed to the young Tobias that they should press on ahead, while Sara followed slowly with her servants; and he added: "Take the gall of the fish, for it will be needed." And later he said further: "As soon as you have entered the house, you shall worship the Lord your God and give Him thanks. Then go up to your father and embrace him; then put on his eyes this gall of the fish that you are carrying. Know that soon afterwards your father's eyes will be opened; he will see the light of heaven and will rejoice at the sight of you."

They went on with the journey. Meanwhile Anna went every day to sit by the road on the top of a hill, from which the eye ranged over a wide horizon. Her eyes were searching for the traveller in the direction of Media when at last she caught sight of him a long way off and recognized him. She hurried back to tell her husband the happy news. The dog, which had followed its young master on the road, ran on ahead and came to give the two old people the most eager caresses: that was its way of announcing the joyful return. Tobit rose and, blind as he was, felt his way with his feet and tried to run; then he gave his hand to a servant and went out to meet his son. The son arrived and reached his parents, who clasped him in their arms, weeping for joy. All together they worshipped God, who had blessed the journey and favoured the return.

Moved by filial piety, the young Tobias placed the fish's gall on his father's eyes. After half an hour's wait a white skin came away from the diseased eye, and the old man recovered his sight. His wife and all who knew him joined him in thanking God for such a blessing. Sara was able to arrive only after seven days; she brought the menservants and maidservants; many flocks followed her; the money she had received from her father was added to the sum repaid by Gabelus. The young Tobias told the various details of his journey and the affectionate care Azarias had lavished on him.

The old father took his son aside to find out what reward they ought to offer the faithful stranger; they agreed to offer him half their goods. At this proposal the angel answered by turning their thoughts and their gratitude back to God, who rewards good works. "When you prayed with tears," he said to the father, "and left your meal to bury the dead; when you hid the corpses in your house by day so as to bury them by night, I presented your prayer to the Lord. Because you were pleasing to Him, it was necessary that temptation should prove you. And now God has sent me to heal you and to deliver Sara, your son's wife, from the demon. I am the angel Raphael, one of the seven who stand before the Lord." At these words Tobit and his son, troubled and seized with fear, fell with their faces to the ground. "Peace be with you," said the angel; "do not be afraid. I am going back to Him who sent me. As for you, bless God and proclaim all His wonders." And he vanished. Things at once so astonishing and so sweet stirred the old man deeply, and, as though the sight he had just recovered had been the vivid symbol of an inward enlightenment, he cast a long look over the times to come and foretold in a sublime canticle the restoration of Jerusalem, the figure of the establishment of the Christian Church.

After recovering his sight Tobit lived on for many years, which he spent in the fear of God and in the peaceful joy of a pure conscience. When he was near his end, the old man called his son and the seven grandsons he had had by him; he foretold the end of the captivity, the return of the Jews to Jerusalem and the coming destruction of Nineveh, and he added: "Now therefore, my children, listen to me: do not stay here; but on the day when you have buried your mother beside me in the same tomb, think of nothing but leaving Nineveh; for I see that the wickedness of this city will bring about its ruin." And indeed, when his mother had died, the young Tobias left Nineveh, taking Sara, his sons and his grandsons, and went back to his father-in-law at Ecbatana. Raguel and his wife were still alive and in perfect health. Tobias paid them every duty of filial piety and closed their eyes. He himself fell asleep in an honoured old age and went to gather the fruit of the virtues he had practised on earth. Sara died a holy death, surrounded by a numerous posterity.

Tobit the father is represented: (1) recovering his sight at the hand of his son; (2) carrying the bodies of his unhappy countrymen and burying them.

The young Tobias is shown: (1) holding in his hand the gall, the heart and the liver of the fish, which are to restore his father's sight; (2) guided by an angel on the journey he made into Media; (3) burning the liver of the fish and praying with Sara to drive away the demon Asmodeus.

CULTE ET RELIQUES. — LE LIVRE DE TOBIE.

Cult and relics. — The Book of Tobit.

The Greek Church includes the two Tobits and Sara among the Just of the Old Testament whom it honours on 19 December. The Latin martyrologies make no mention of them. There is no likelihood that the bodies of the two Tobits and of Sara were ever taken up from the ground to be carried into the provinces of Christendom, and it is without any foundation whatever that certain authors have written that they were found at Rome in the seventh century and were carried from there, together with the body of Job, through the efforts of Rotharis, king of the Lombards (636–652), to be laid at Pavia. Only one thing is beyond doubt: representations of the young Tobias are to be seen in the catacombs of Rome.

Our ordinary Bibles contain the Book of Tobit; it comes immediately after the books of Esdras and contains fourteen chapters. One need only read it with a little attention to notice in it all the marks of truth. The simple and natural way in which things are related in it, the proper names of persons and places, the circumstances of time, the succession of the kings of Assyria, the beginning and end of their reigns, the manner of their death, and the detail of a great many particulars found in this narrative are very plain proofs that the man who composed it was no impostor.

Objections have nevertheless been raised against both its authenticity and its canonicity; but it cannot reasonably be doubted that from the time of St. Augustine the Book of Tobit and the others that we call *deuterocanonical* were received throughout the Church as divinely inspired, and that they had there an authority equal to that given to the books that had a place in the Hebrew canon. At least it is certain that from then on it was received among the canonical books in the principal Churches of the world, such as those of Italy, Gaul, Spain, Africa and Alexandria. This was enough for the Council of Carthage to declare it canonical, following this maxim of St. Augustine: "With regard to the canonical books, we must follow the authority of the Catholic Churches, which are the greater number, among which are certainly counted those that have deserved to be the see of the Apostles and to receive letters from them." It is commonly believed that the Book of Tobit was written by the two Tobits; at least it cannot be doubted that they left the material and the records for it. Tobit the father speaks in the first person in the Greek, the Hebrew and the Syriac, from the first chapter to the fourth. In chapter xii we read that the angel Raphael, before leaving them, ordered them to write down all that had happened to them. For while in the Vulgate we read, "Tell all these wonders", the Greek and the Hebrew have, "Write in a book all that has happened to you." And in chapter xiii it is said in the same texts that the elder Tobit wrote the canticle of thanksgiving that is read in that same place. A further reason for thinking that the two Tobits are the authors of this book is that it was first written in Chaldean, or Syriac, which was the language of the country of the Assyrians and the Medes, where these holy men lived.

St. Jerome, having obtained a Chaldean copy, translated it into Latin with the help of an interpreter. It is this Latin translation that we follow in our Bibles.

The Book of Tobit is very useful and very edifying; besides many fine maxims of the purest and most sublime morality, it contains two excellent models of piety, unselfishness, patience and chastity. In it we also see a striking proof of God's providence over those who are faithful to Him, and of the care that the angels take of men. It contains the history of about one hundred and forty-nine years, from the forty-sixth year of the

reign of Ozias, under which we place the birth of Tobit the father, about the year 3289, to the eighteenth year of the reign of Josias, which was the year of the death of the young Tobias, the year of the world 3380.

Extracted from the Femmes de la Bible *by Mgr Darboy; from the* Saints de l'Ancien Testament *by Baillet; and from the* Histoire des Auteurs sacrés et ecclésiastiques *by Dom Ceillier.*

Saint Guy or Guido, Solitary and Pilgrim, Called the Poor Man of Anderlecht

1012. — Pope: Benedict VIII. — Emperor of Germany: Henry II.

> *Paupertas est instrumentum perfectionis.*
>
> *Poverty is the instrument of perfection.*
>
> *Saint Antoninus.*

Although, according to St. Paul, there is no respect of persons with God, we may nevertheless say that the poor are the tenderest objects of His heart. He exalts their condition by His praises, He counsels us to embrace it; He attaches great rewards to it; He regards the poor themselves as His members, He wishes them to be treated as His children, and He assures us that nothing pleases Him more than to load them with good things; in a word, He makes Himself their father, their protector and their panegyrist. So when we give a Saint the title of "the Poor Man" because he was born in want, lived in need and died in poverty, it is not out of a low idea of his merit, but, on the contrary, so as to sum up a very great praise in that single quality.

St. Guy, commonly called *the Poor Man of Anderlecht*, was born in a village near Brussels. His parents were very poor; but having the fear of God, which they valued more than all the treasures of the world, they took great care to bring him up in piety. From childhood he showed that he preferred his poverty to the riches of the earth, and, as far as his age allowed, he strove to belong to the little flock of Jesus Christ. At certain hours of the day he would slip away from his parents and withdraw to the church to say his prayers. Nor did he fail to visit the sick poor, to whom he took everything he had been able to get from his father, and he had neither joy nor rest until he had fulfilled these two duties of Christian piety. These were fine omens of holiness, which all the inhabitants admired and which made them say openly that there was something divine in this child's actions.

One day, when he was praying in the church of Our Lady at Laeken, which is about half a league from Brussels, the parish priest of the place was struck by his recollection. His astonishment grew when, talking with him, he saw that the boy was very far advanced in the inward ways of piety. He asked him to stay in the service of his church; little Guy gladly accepted, being already resolved to forsake himself and give up his own will so as to live under the merit of obedience. His occupation in this church was to adorn the altars, to clear the spiders from the vault, to sweep the floor, to keep the sanctuary fittingly clean, to clean all the vessels, to fold the vestments and to put flowers on the shrines of the Saints; in short, he left out nothing that he judged could contribute to the majesty of this house of God, and he had no greater pleasure than to work at making it pleasing, so as to draw the faithful there and inspire them with feelings of devotion. No word contrary to Christian modesty, or savouring of vain mirth, was ever heard from his mouth. The alms given him were distributed to other poor people. He mortified his body by frequent fasts and by almost continual vigils, often spending the nights in prayer in the church. Nothing childish was to be seen in his conduct. He was an enemy of laughter, of levity and of familiarity with women. He wept for his sins with so many tears and so many signs of sorrow that one would have taken him for a great sinner. It is not surprising, then, that by such virtuous ways of acting he achieved something that seems almost impossible: to make himself agreeable to everyone without wounding his conscience.

The devil, unable to bear such happy progress, undertook to halt it by a snare he laid for him under the pretext of satisfying his charity toward the poor more fully. A merchant of Brussels, who presented himself

one evening at the door of the pastor of Laeken, received from Guy the kindly welcome he gave to all visitors without distinction. After admiring his charity, the stranger persuaded him to go into trade with him, so as to have more abundant means of relieving the needs of his neighbour, and particularly those of his own parents. Deceived by these specious reasons, Guy left the service of the Church to go into business. But God did not allow the illusion to last long. The ship and cargo in which the Saint had a share were lost just as they were about to enter port. This accident brought him to himself; he recognized his fault and conceived an extreme regret for it; and to do a harsher penance for it he resolved to go to the tomb of the Apostles at Rome and to the sepulchre of Our Lord at Jerusalem, and also to visit the other most celebrated churches of Christendom. He spent seven whole years on these pilgrimages, after which he came back to Rome, where he met Wonedulphe, dean of the church of Anderlecht, who was on his way to the Holy Land with some companions. Guy recognized them and made himself known to them, and the dean, wishing to have with him a man who had already made the journey, asked him to retrace his steps and serve as guide on his pilgrimage. Our Saint very willingly agreed, asking nothing better than to do an act of charity in which he would find fresh occasions to mortify himself and to increase his devotion. They all arrived safely at Jerusalem, where they visited the holy places consecrated by the presence, the deeds and the blood of the Saviour; but the dean and his companions were carried off by a contagious sickness just as they were about to leave Palestine. When Wonedulphe saw that his last hour had come, he sent for St. Guy and spoke to him in these words: “My most beloved Father, I give a thousand thanks to Almighty God that He is good enough to fulfil the desire of my heart; I thank you too for the good services you have done me during my pilgrimage. I see clearly that the time of my death has come; but as for you, God has made known to me that you will return to your own country. And so I beg you to assure my friends and all who are waiting for my return that I died on the way. Here is a ring that I give you, and that you will put into their hands so that they may believe what you tell them.” He charged him with several other things; after which, raising his eyes and hands to heaven, he gave up his soul into the hands of the angels who assisted him in that last moment. He was a holy man whose charity toward the poor had always been inexhaustible. As his virtue had shone forth in several miracles during his life, God honoured him with like wonders after his death as well. St. Guy witnessed the healing of three lame men and two blind men at his tomb.

As soon as our Saint had returned to Anderlecht, the sub-dean came to see him with several of his clergy; and after hearing from his lips the account of Wonedulphe’s precious death, he persuaded him to come and live in his house and spend the rest of his days there. But Guy was not there long, for God, not wishing to leave him any longer in the miseries of this life, delivered him from it very soon to give him an immortal one. On the night of the Sunday that was the day of his death, his room was filled with a heavenly light, in the midst of which appeared a dove that spoke these words: “Let our beloved now come and receive the crown of everlasting gladness, because he has been faithful.” Thus he left this world peacefully, in the year of Our Lord 1012.

He is usually represented in the dress of a pilgrim, with the pilgrim’s staff in his right hand and two palms in his left; beside him lie a horse and an ox. Above his head hovers the Holy Spirit, and rays spread all around the man of God, whose eyes are fixed on heaven as though imploring the mercies of the Lord. The people of Laeken also sometimes put keys into St. Guy’s hands, to signify that he was entrusted with the care of their church.

CULTE ET RELIQUES.

Cult and relics.

St. Guy’s body was buried with honour in the canons’ cemetery at Anderlecht.[1] His name, already venerated before he began his travels, became still more so after his blessed death. Many cures worked at his tomb increased the people’s confidence in this new patron whom heaven had given them. Indeed a multitude of

sick and infirm people are counted who found healing of their ills beside his sacred remains. About fifty years after St. Guy's death a chapel was built in honour of the Blessed Virgin, in which pilgrims came to commend themselves to his protection. Later Gerard II, bishop of Cambrai and Arras, ordered his bones to be carried into the parish church. Finally, in 1112, Bishop Odo once more raised the Saint's body from the ground and placed it in a shrine, to be exposed for the veneration of the faithful.

St. Guy is invoked for the preservation of livestock.

Acta Sanctorum; *Vies des Saints des diocèses de Cambrai et d'Arras*, by M. l'abbé Destombes.

Saint Reverentius (Révérent) of Bayeux, Priest and Confessor (First Century)

Reverentius, a native of Bayeux, was one of the disciples of St. Exuperius, commonly called Spire, the first bishop of that city. M. l'abbé Laffetay shows, in his *Essai historique sur l'antiquité de la foi dans le diocèse de Bayeux*, that St. Exuperius came to Normandy in the first century: it was therefore in the earliest days of Christianity that our Saint lived. He was ordained priest by St. Spire and faithfully carried out the mission given him of preaching the Gospel. Remarkably devout, he possessed the gift of miracles, delivered several possessed persons and converted a great number of idolaters. Since his humility could not bear the renown that his holiness was bringing him, he resolved to escape it, fled into Touraine and hid in a village of that country called Nouâtres (Indre-et-Loire). At last, after a life full of merit, this holy priest went to receive the reward of which he was worthy. His relics were carried (943) to Poitiers because of the incursions of the Northmen and laid in the monastery of Sainte-Radegonde; some years later they were translated to the monastery of Saint-Jean-d'Angély.

The Church of Bayeux has never ceased to honour St. Reverentius with a proper office. It possessed a portion of his relics, which the Calvinists destroyed by fire. These heretics likewise profaned and scattered those that rested at Saint-Jean-d'Angély.

In the church of Nouâtres there is a legend painted on the wall which dates from the fifteenth or sixteenth century. The paintings are not by a very famous artist; they show St. Reverentius preaching, baptizing, healing, and founding a church at Nouâtres; St. Reverentius on his deathbed; and his shrine, before which possessed persons are healed. There is an altar of the seventeenth century, in the Greek style, with a niche where a statue of the Saint must have stood, for this inscription is to be read there: "Saint Révérent. 1646." Not far from the village of Nouâtres there is a spring that bears the name of Saint-Révérent. The d'Argenson family had a basin built there. Something of it remains. On the face of the wall of this basin one reads: "Pray for the Messieurs d'Argenson"; and on the other side: "Pray for the Demoiselles d'Argenson." There was also a cross. Nowadays people go to wash at this spring in winter, because the water of the source is warm then.

L'abbé Th. Grasilier, priest of the diocese of La Rochelle.

Saint Aemilian (Émilien), Confessor, Presumed First Bishop of Valence (Fourth Century)

In 374 Valence had the honour of seeing one of the most celebrated councils of antiquity assemble within its walls. The city then had as its bishop St. Aemilian, the first of whom history has preserved any memory for us. It is not known what country he came from or at what date he received the government of that Church. Nevertheless it is believed, with fair reason, that he occupied its episcopal see before the year 346; for the following year he attended, with several bishops of the Gauls, the Council of Sardica, so famous for the restoration of St. Athanasius, whom the heretics had deposed, and for the measures taken there for the defence of the orthodox faith. Aemilian had the consolation of seeing at this famous assembly the most illustrious prelates of his century; he took part in their labours and signed, together with them, the letter they

wrote to all the bishops of the world who had been unable to come to the council. The frequent dealings he then had with so great a number of pontiffs, nearly all renowned for their eminent holiness, kindled in him a singular ardour for his own perfection and soon caused his rare merit to be appreciated. He formed a close friendship above all with St. Eusebius of Vercelli, that hero of the faith, that fearless defender of innocence, that prodigious man whose works and virtues have been praised by so many doctors, popes and councils.

St. Aemilian did not long survive the council that had brought so great a number of illustrious and venerable colleagues to his side. It is conjectured that he governed the Church of Valence for nearly thirty years. However that may be, his memory has remained in benediction in the city he had edified by so many virtues, and the title of Saint has been given him by all the principal ecclesiastical writers.

And so he is honoured at Valence with a public and solemn cult. The origin of this cult is lost in the darkness of the remotest antiquity; it goes back to a time when the forms later adopted for the canonization of Saints were not yet known; but everyone knows that in the first centuries the assent of the people and the authority of the chief pastors were enough to decree a religious cult to those who had made themselves worthy of it, and that even in our own day the Church herself, failing historical proofs, requires nothing more to authorize it than the testimony of a constant tradition. That indeed is the reason that has led the Holy See to approve recently the honours paid to St. Aemilian in the diocese of Valence.

Taken from the Histoire hagiologique du diocèse de Valence, *by M. l'abbé Nadal.*

Saint Sacerdos or Serdot, Twenty-Seventh Archbishop of Lyons and Confessor (551)

Born at Lyons in 486, Sacerdos belonged to one of the most illustrious families of that city and was the brother of the senator Florentius, father of St. Nicetius. His virtues, as much as his talents, gave him great credit with King Childebert, who liked to consult him in his most important affairs. After the death of Leontius (544), the clergy and people of Lyons unanimously conferred the pastoral staff on him, and Sacerdos governed his Church with the greatest prudence. On 28 October 549 he presided over the Fifth Council of Orléans, held against the heresies of Nestorius and Eutyches, although Constitutus, metropolitan of Sens, was present with several others; which is proof enough that, already at that time, the other metropolitan sees of the Gauls recognized the primacy of Lyons.

This prelate founded two new churches at Lyons, one under the invocation of St. Paul, which for several centuries had the title of collegiate church, and the other in honour of St. Eulalia, which later took the name of Saint-Georges. King Childebert, full of esteem for his virtues, called him to court to have his advice on some affairs, and Serdot fell ill at Paris. Feeling that he had come to the end of his course, the holy bishop spoke in these words to the monarch, who had honoured him with a visit: "You know, most religious prince, how faithfully I have always served you. Now that my end is near, console me and deign to grant me a favour." "Ask what you please," answered the king, "and you shall have it." "Then I beg you," the bishop went on, "to consent that Nicetius, my nephew, may be my successor in the see of Lyons, for he loves chastity, the Church and the poor, and one sees in his actions and in his conduct the whole character of a perfect servant of God." "May the will of God be done," replied the king; and Nicetius was elected with the unanimous consent of the clergy and the people.

St. Serdot died at Paris on 12 September 551, at the age of sixty-five, before the end of the council summoned to judge Saffaracus, bishop of that city. His body was brought back to Lyons and buried in the church of the Holy Apostles, now Saint-Nizier, where his relics were visited in 1308 by Archbishop Louis de Villars. His memory is honoured at Lyons on 12 September, the day of his death, and that Church invokes him in its great litanies before St. Nicetius, his successor.

Extracted from the Gallia christiana nova, *by Fisquet.*

[1] We gave the history of this feast on 9 September.

[2] We gave his life on 2 August.

[3] He is already named in the martyrology of the Franciscans on 21 March.

[4] Born at Genoa in 1562, Maria Fornari was still very young when she wished to take the veil; but out of obedience to her parents she married the Genoese nobleman Angelo Strata, by whom she had several children during a union of nine years. Her husband having died and her children being settled, in 1604, together with a very rich friend, Vincentina Lomellini, she founded a monastery whose members, besides the ordinary vows, took a fourth, that of strict enclosure, and bound themselves to work with their hands, for example by preparing linen for poor churches. Soon similar convents were founded in various places, and so was born the new Order, which in its best days counted about fifty houses, most of them in Italy, some in France and Germany. Their name of Celestial Annunciades comes from their habit being sky-blue, to remind them constantly of their true country. At Rome they are called *Turchine*, that is, the azure nuns. The Order still exists and has kept its principal house at Genoa. The convents in France were abolished by the Revolution; but the Order has lately been revived, and two convents of Annunciades have been founded, one at Boulogne-sur-Mer, the other at Villeneuve-d'Agen. Louis XIII and Anne of Austria sought her canonization from the Holy See; Pope Leo XII (brief of 2 September 1828) placed her among the Blessed and fixed her feast on 12 September. She had died on 15 December 1617. — Goschler, *Dictionnaire encyclopédique de la théologie*.

[5] Anderlecht and Brussels then formed part of the diocese of Cambrai, and now belong to the diocese of Malines.

13 September

Martyrologies

Thirteenth day of September

MARTYROLOGE ROMAIN.

Roman Martyrology.

At Alexandria, the birth into heaven of Saint Philip, father of the holy virgin Eugenia. He resigned the prefecture of Egypt to receive the grace of baptism, and Terence, his successor, having surprised him at prayer, had his throat cut. 3rd century. — Also the holy martyrs Macrobius and Julian,[1] martyred under the emperor Licinius. 4th century. — On the same day, Saint Ligorius, martyr,[2] who, living in the desert, was slain by the pagans for the faith of Jesus Christ. — At Alexandria, Saint Eulogius, patriarch, renowned for his learning and holiness.[3] About 608. — At Angers, Saint MAURILIUS, bishop, who became famous for a countless number of miracles. 426. — At Sens, Saint AMATUS or AIMÉ, archbishop and confessor. 690. — On this same day, Saint Venerius, confessor, a man of admirable holiness, who led the eremitical life on the island of Palmaria. About 604. — At Remiremont, in the Vosges, Saint AMATUS or AMET, priest and abbot, illustrious for his abstinence and for the gift of miracles. 627.

MARTYROLOGE DE FRANCE, REVU ET AUGMENTÉ.

Martyrology of France, revised and enlarged.

In the dioceses of Cambrai, Arras and Sens, Saint Amatus or Aimé, archbishop of the last-named see and confessor, named in the Roman Martyrology of this day. — In the diocese of Saint-Dié, Saint Amatus (Amet) of Remiremont, abbot, named on this day in the same martyrology. — In the diocese of Ajaccio, Saint Venerius, confessor and hermit, named in the Roman Martyrology of today. — In the diocese of Rennes, Saint Maurilius of Angers, named today in the same source. — At Carpentras (Vaucluse), in the present diocese of Avignon, Saint Antony or Antoninus, monk of Lérins, then bishop of that former see, and confessor. The inhabitants of the town of Bédoin (Vaucluse, arrondissement of Carpentras, canton of Mormoiron) have taken him as their patron. The relics of him that they kept in a shrine, and which they had hidden during the wars of the Calvinists, were discovered and burned by the latter in 1563. 473. — In the diocese of Autun, Saint Nectarius, bishop of that see, which he occupied after the death of Saint Agrippinus according to some, of Saint Evantius according to others.[4] About 550. — In the diocese of Limoges, Saint

ISRAEL, canon of the collegiate church of Le Dorat, and confessor. 1014. — In the same diocese, Saint THEOBALD, canon of the same church. 1070. — In the diocese of Tours, Saint LITORIUS (LIDOIRE or LITOIRE), second archbishop of that see and confessor. — In the diocese of Rouen, Saint Maurilius, archbishop of that see and confessor, whose life we gave on 9 August. 1067. — At Cluny (Saône-et-Loire), in the diocese of Autun, the Venerable Teuto, first a monk of the Benedictine abbey of Cluny (founded in the 10th century by Berno, abbot of Gigny), then fifteenth abbot of Saint-Maur-des-Fossés (a Benedictine monastery founded in 638), in the diocese of Paris. He showed great concern for the prosperity of the abbey he governed, and had its ruined buildings repaired at great cost. Toward the end of his life Teuto resigned his office and withdrew to Cluny, where he ended his course. About 1018. — At Vlierzele or Vliederzele, two leagues from Aalst (East Flanders), in Belgium, Saint FLÉDÉRIC or FREDERICK, confessor, parish priest and patron of Vlierzele. Date uncertain. — In the diocese of Évreux, Saint Barsenorius (Barsenore or Barsenoire), abbot of the Benedictine monastery of La Croix-Saint-Leufroy (founded in 698 by Saint Leufroy of Évreux). His body was carried to various places during the incursions of the Northmen, but the greater part of his relics was kept at the abbey of Fécamp (*Fiscannum*), in the diocese of Rouen. End of the 8th century. — In the dioceses of Cologne and Strasbourg, Saint Maternus, bishop of Trier and confessor, whose life we shall give on the following day, together with those of Saints Valerius and Eucharius, his companions. 1st century. — At Avignon, Saint Bénézet or Benedict, founder of the Congregation of the Bridge-Building Brothers of Avignon, whose life we gave on 14 April. 1184. — At Lure (Haute-Saône), in the diocese of Besançon, Saint

COLUMBINUS, abbot of the Benedictine monastery of Lure. Date uncertain.

MARTYROLOGES DES ORDRES RELIGIEUX.

Martyrologies of the religious orders.

Martyrology of the three Orders of Saint Francis. — Saint Veronica Giuliani, virgin, of the Second Order of our Father Saint Francis, whose birth into heaven is celebrated on 9 July.[5] 1727.

Martyrology of the Order of Friars Minor. — Saint Alphonsus Mary de Liguori, bishop and confessor, whose feast is celebrated on 2 August.[6] 1787.

ADDITIONS FAITES D'APRÈS LES BOLLANDISTES ET AUTRES HAGIOGRAPHES.

Additions made from the Bollandists and other hagiographers.

In the former Benedictine abbey of Afflighem (*Afflinghemium, Novum Monasterium*), in the diocese of Malines, the Venerable Franco, abbot. He took the religious habit in this monastery at the beginning of the 12th century, and after the death of Fulgentius, first abbot of the house, he was elected to replace him (1122). His learning and piety won him the veneration of religious, of good people, of bishops and of sovereigns, in particular of Henry I, king of England, who gave him considerable gifts with which he enriched his monastery. His body rested near the high altar of the former church of Afflighem, which he had built. 1133. — At Modena, in Italy, the Venerable Margaret Fontana, virgin, a native of that city. Her father was called Alessandro Fontana and her mother Francesca Morano. Her parents soon left her an orphan, and she was then taken in by one of her brothers. Anxious to keep herself pure before the Lord, she made a vow of perpetual chastity, enrolled in the Third Order of Penance of Saint Dominic, whose insignia she wore under her ordinary clothes, and gave herself up entirely to piety, to the mortification of her senses and to the crucifying of her passions. It is related that she had great compassion for the poor and disposed of many things in her brother's house in their favour. He had in his cellar a cask of exquisite wine. One day he found it empty and fell into a great rage against Margaret, who admitted that she had made it the matter of her alms; our Blessed then led her brother to the cellar and showed him that the cask was full of a liquor more excellent still than

the one he had put in. This miracle calmed his rage. Our Blessed fell asleep in the Lord at the age of seventy-three and was buried in the church of the Friars Preachers at Modena. 1513. — At Tomi, in Lower Moesia, Saints Gordian, Zoticus, Lucian, Heli, Valerian, Seleucus and several others, companions of Saint Macrobius, named in the Roman Martyrology of this day. 4th century. — At Alexandria in Egypt, today Iskanderieh (Lower Egypt), Saint Theodulus, bishop and martyr. — In ancient Apulia (the present Capitanata, and part of the territories of Bari, Otranto and the Basilicata), Saints Felicissimus and Secundinus, martyrs. — At Piacenza, in Italy, Saint Maurus, bishop and confessor. His body, raised from the ground in 1498, was placed in the cathedral, in a place of honour, by Patrick, one of his successors. About 430.

Saint Maurilius of the Milanese, Bishop of Angers and Confessor

426. — Pope: Saint Celestine I. — Emperor of the West: Valentinian III.

> *La prière du juste est la clef du ciel ; la prière monte, puis elle fait descendre la miséricorde divine.*
>
> *The prayer of the just man is the key of heaven; prayer goes up, and then it brings down the divine mercy.*
>
> *Saint Augustine.*

Maurilius was born in a village of the Milanese, of very illustrious parents who joined great virtue and singular piety to high birth. Almost from the cradle they placed him under the discipline of St. Martin, who, after leaving Hungary, had built himself a monastery at Milan, where he brought up young men in virtue and in the study of sacred letters. But as that great Saint could not carry on these devout duties for long, because the Arians, who could not bear the brightness of his holiness, forced him to leave the city after having him shamefully whipped at every crossroads,

Maurilius soon found himself deprived of this beloved master. While he was waiting in that monastery for God to give him another, St. Ambrose, bishop of Milan, took him from it to make him a lector in his church. Shortly afterwards he lost his father, who was governor of the province; and then, wishing to practise the counsel of the Gospel, he renounced all his goods, left his mother and his country, and went to St. Martin, who had been raised to the metropolitan see of Tours. He spent some years there in the chanting of the divine office; but the holy prelate, judging him fit for higher ministries, conferred Holy Orders on him, and finally the priesthood, in spite of the great resistance that his humility made him offer to his promotion. This eminent dignity was a powerful motive for him to lead a life more austere still than the one he had professed until then, so as to put himself in a state to receive a greater abundance of graces and to follow Our Lord wherever He called him.

After staying some time with St. Martin and profiting by his admirable instructions, he went to the city of Angers to labour there for the salvation of souls. As soon as he arrived, having learned that in a neighbouring village there was an old temple dedicated to the worship of idols, he resolved to destroy it; but, since he could not make use of men for the purpose, he had recourse to God and prayed Him to ruin with His own hand a place where so many souls were led astray by the wiles of the demons. At that very moment fire came down from heaven and reduced to ashes the temple and all the images worshipped in it. He then had a church built there to Jesus Christ, which he served for twelve years with extreme fervour, and around which there gathered a population that gave birth to the present town of Chalonnes. Our Saint made it his usual dwelling, even founded a monastery there, and made it, as it were, the centre of his apostolic preaching.

His holiness shone forth in several miracles. An inhabitant of the village of La Possonnière, who had long lost the use of both hands, heard a voice in his sleep saying to him: “Go to the servant of God Maurilius, ask him to make the sign of the cross over your hands, and at the same moment you will recover the use of them.” He did so, and Maurilius, after spending a day and a night in prayer, healed him instantly by the power of this sign of our salvation. A blind woman was also brought to him, bound and held with two chains

because she was possessed by a raging demon that had caused her infirmity. He looked at her with compassion, and his look alone had such power that it forced the demon to leave the body of this unhappy woman. He then traced the sign of the cross on her eyes and by this means restored her sight. By the same remedy he also saved from death a shepherd who had been bitten by a viper. By his prayers he obtained a son for a woman of Angers whose age and natural barrenness made it impossible for her ever to have children. Near the village of Chalonnes, where he lived, there was an abominable temple called Prisciacus, in which the pagans had gathered a great number of idols, which were daily the objects of their adoration and profane worship. Maurilius, full of zeal for the glory of God and the salvation of souls, went there to destroy, if he could, this den of unclean spirits. The demons who had themselves worshipped there then cried out: “Why, Maurilius, do you persecute us so harshly? We shall no longer know where to hide in all this country. You seek us out everywhere, and on every side you force us to flee.” The Saint, paying no heed to their complaints, drove them out by the sign of the cross; and having all the idols made into a heap, he had it set on fire and reduced it to ashes. Finally, on the ruins of this place of abomination, he had a fine monastery built, which was soon filled with holy religious. This is the priory of Saint-Pierre of Chalonnes, which was later given to the abbey of Saint-Serge by the bishops of Angers and rebuilt under the patronage of Our Lady. He also healed, by his mere presence, a religious tormented by fever.

Some merchants had several slaves of both sexes whom they were taking to Spain, where this trade flourished. One of the band, passing near our Saint’s church, took refuge inside and, throwing himself at his feet, begged him with tears to deliver him from this state of servitude, either by using the great credit he had with God or by paying his ransom to his master, above all because he had been stolen away from his own country to be sold in a foreign land. Maurilius, deeply touched by his misery and his unjust captivity, spoke on his behalf to the merchant who owned him; but the merchant remained inflexible and, on the contrary, ordered his men to drag him out of the church by force. Then the Saint prostrated himself on the ground and made this prayer: “Lord, almighty God, who never fail to help with Your mercy those who are in anguish and affliction, I pray You to succour this captive and to have pity on the bitterness that fills his heart.” No sooner had he finished these words than a fever seized the merchant so violently that it took his life before he could repent of his hardness. All the rest of the company, thinking the earth was about to open and swallow them up, had recourse to tears and earnestly begged the Saint to obtain pardon for the dead man and to deal leniently with them. He prostrated himself on the ground again and did not rise until he had obtained for the dead merchant the life of body and soul. These miracles caused the slave to be set free, and the merchants, acknowledging our Saint’s power, gave him great presents, of which he applied a small part to his church and had the rest distributed to the poor. We pass over in silence other wonders of this kind that St. Maurilius worked for the relief of the sick and the unfortunate, in order to speak of his promotion to the episcopal see of Angers.

After the death of the bishop of that city, all the inhabitants and the nobility assembled to elect another in his place. Each had his own particular views, founded on human interests rather than on zeal for the glory of God. While opinions were thus divided, St. Martin, who as metropolitan had the right to preside at this election, arrived. He listened patiently to the opinions of one side and the other; but, as he had the word of heaven, he at once united all minds in favour of Maurilius, who was well enough known for the merit of his virtue and the fame of his miracles. Clerics were at once sent to fetch him from his church at Chalonnes and bring him to Angers, in spite of any resistance he might offer. The envoys carried out their mission faithfully: they brought Maurilius, and God confirmed by a wonder the choice that had been made of him. As the two Saints were entering the church, a dove of wonderful whiteness came down visibly on Maurilius’s head and rested there, withdrawing only when, in the ceremony of consecration, St. Martin had to lay his hands on him. That great archbishop used to say afterwards that not only had the Holy Spirit presided in the form of a dove at the ordination of Maurilius, but that troops of angels had also been present. He spent the following night in prayer in his church, to ask God for the graces needed to carry out worthily the apostolic duties to

which his consecration had just destined him; and we must not doubt that he was heard, since he always appeared a perfect imitator of the Apostles, as much by the holiness of his life as by the miracles he worked. Indeed his word drove the demons out of the bodies of the possessed; his prayers restored health to the sick; and the sign of the cross that he traced had the power to give light to the blind, to make paralytics walk and even to raise the dead. He was adorned with an apostolic simplicity; he had a purity of heart such as is ordinarily found only in the angels; he mortified his flesh by long vigils and continual fasts; he asked God unceasingly to preserve the flock He had entrusted to him and not to let the devil carry off a single one of his sheep.

We have a prodigious and almost incredible example of this burning zeal for the salvation of the souls that divine Providence had committed to him. The child that he had obtained by his prayers for the barren woman of whom we have spoken fell dangerously ill. His mother, fearing he would die before receiving the sacrament of confirmation, which in those days was given to children, hurriedly carried him to the church of Saint-Pierre to ask St. Maurilius to administer it to him. The holy prelate was then celebrating solemn Mass. He was told what was happening; but as he was at that moment at the consecration of the divine mysteries, and not thinking he could interrupt it, he went on with his devotions. Meanwhile the innocent child died without having received the Holy Spirit by the imposition of the bishop's hands. When he learned of this mishap after the ceremony, his grief cannot be expressed; he lamented this misfortune with scalding tears, and, as though there had been negligence on his part, because perhaps his fervour had kept him a little too long, he resolved to expiate this fault by a penance of several years. It was not easy for him to do it as he would have wished in the sight of his people. And so, after a long inward struggle, he formed the plan of abandoning his bishopric and withdrawing to some unknown place, to practise there in freedom all the austerities he thought he had deserved by this failing. He carried out this plan at once and, leaving his episcopal city in secret, went to a seaport. There, on the shore, while waiting for the departure of a ship bound for England, he wrote on a stone, moved no doubt by a secret divine inspiration, his name, his rank and the day of his crossing. When he was out at sea, he noticed that he had taken with him the keys of the reliquaries of his church; and as he held them in his hands, asking himself why he had taken them, the devil, who sought only to trouble him further and to add to his grief by a new cause of sadness, made them fall into the water. Then the Saint, melting into tears, cried out in a spirit of prophecy: "If I do not find these keys again, I will never return to the country I have left." As soon as he had landed, he put on a poor garment and, looking for a place where he could remain unknown to men, hired himself out to a lord as his gardener, so as to mortify his body by the continual toil of this work. God so blessed his labour that his garden yielded all sorts of vegetables in abundance, and his virtue made him singularly loved by his master and by all the household.

The clergy and people of Angers were extremely afflicted at no longer seeing the blessed pastor whom heaven had given them. Several learned by revelation that the absence of so holy a man would be followed by great misfortunes over all their country unless they made every effort to find him. So they all assembled and chose four of their number to go and inquire on every side whether anything had been heard of him. These deputies travelled for seven years over almost the whole continent of Europe without discovering anything; England was the only place where they had not been. So they went to a port of Armorican Brittany to cross in the first ship that should set sail. While they were waiting for the crew to be ready and the wind to be fair, they saw on a stone along the shore these words that the Saint had written: "Here passed Maurilius, bishop of Angers", with the date of the day of his departure. This happy discovery gave them hope of finding him beyond the Ocean. They embarked joyfully and were making a good voyage when suddenly a large fish leapt from the sea into their ship. This wonder astonished them; but they were far more amazed when, on cutting it open, they found in its belly the keys of the reliquaries of the church of Angers. At first they feared that Maurilius had fallen into the sea in the same way and had been devoured by the fish, and this thought dismayed them. But they were reassured the following night by a vision that all four of them had, in which

they were urged to continue on their way, with the hope that they would at last have the happiness of meeting their holy bishop. Strengthened by this hope, they reached England, and, by the ministry of the angels who served as their guides, they went straight to the house of the lord where their prelate was gardener. No sooner had they entered the farmyard than they caught sight of him carrying vegetables for his master's table. They threw themselves at his feet at once and, shedding floods of tears, implored him to come back to his episcopal city and take up again the government of his Church. "I cannot," he said to them, weeping, "do what you ask of me, because I have sworn an oath never to return there until I have first found the keys of the reliquaries that I let fall while crossing the sea." The deputies at once showed them to him and told him all that had happened to them. So, no longer able to doubt God's will for him after so many wonders, he agreed to their wish. The people of that country paid him every possible honour, marvelling at this wonderful change of a bishop into a gardener, and then of a gardener into a bishop. They also gave him great presents and escorted him in state to his ship. On the night of his departure an angel appeared to him and said: "Arise, Maurilius, and go without delay to your people, who ardently desire your return. Your prayers and your piety have preserved your sheep during your absence; and, what is more, as a reward for your virtue, God will give you back the child whose death you have mourned for so long."

It is impossible to describe the joy his spiritual children felt when they had the happiness of seeing and embracing their holy pastor; and it was all the greater because his unlooked-for withdrawal had caused them so much grief. As soon as he had arrived, he went to the child's tomb, had it opened and, feeling himself filled with a firm confidence in God, began to pray and groaned for a long time, his eyes and face bathed in tears. At last, by the fervour of his prayer and the force of his sighs, he raised him to life, and because of this second birth gave him the name of René at the confirmation he conferred on him on the spot. From then on he took very particular care of him, destined him for the altar, formed him in virtue and made so holy a man of him that in the end he had him as his successor in the see of Angers. — We are well aware that some modern writers have called the truth of this whole story into question; but since their best reasons consist only of apparent difficulties that their prepossession has kept them from working out, or of sophisms that destroy themselves, we have thought that we ought not on that account to abandon the ancient tradition, of more than twelve hundred years, of the Churches of Angers in France and of Sorrento in the kingdom of Naples, of both of which St. René was bishop; nor the authority of St. Fortunatus of Poitiers, of St. Gregory of Tours and of several very trustworthy historians, who all agree on what we have related. The learned dissertation that the canons of the cathedral of Angers produced in 1650 may be consulted; it was written to establish this point of history and to answer the objections of a theologian who had attacked it with subtleties of mere criticism rather than with solid and convincing arguments.

To confirm this great miracle, which these incredulous minds, enemies of the glory of the Saints, are loath to admit, we shall relate here some others that St. Maurilius worked after his return to his diocese. A workman had set about his ordinary work one Sunday without respecting the holiness of that day; but the handle of the axe he was using stuck so fast to his hand that he could not get it off. After five months in this state, suffering very sharp pains, he had recourse to the holy bishop, confessed his fault to him and begged him with tears to have pity on his misery. Maurilius was moved with compassion and, merely by touching the handle of the axe, made his fingers straighten and his hand open, so that the axe came away from it and he found himself perfectly healed. A farmer named Belgicus ordered his servants to work on Easter Day. They did so only under compulsion; but no sooner had they begun than the master went blind. For three years he suffered continual pain. At the end of that time he learned that the blessed prelate, who was then visiting his diocese, was to pass through the village where he lived; he asked to be led to his feet, hoping that if he could touch the hem of his robe he would at once be healed. And indeed no sooner had he done so, with the help of his friends, than he recovered the perfect use of the eyes his impiety had made him lose. Our Saint was returning one day from the city of Le Mans, where his zeal had taken him to calm some discord that had arisen among the citizens; the people of the places he passed through came to him to receive his blessing. One of them laid

on the road a child of his who had been so paralysed from infancy, and whose limbs were so drawn up and deformed, that he scarcely had a human shape any longer. “Our holy pastor,” he said to his wife, “can restore our child’s health, and he will do it as easily as he gave life back to the one who had been in the tomb for several years.” When the Saint came near this pitiful sight, all the people threw themselves at his feet and implored him to have pity on the child. Unable to resist the prayers of so many people, he himself began to pray, prostrate on the ground, and did not rise until he had obtained the healing of the poor sufferer. A pilgrim had died suddenly in a village at which St. Maurilius arrived in the course of his visitation, just as they were about to carry him to the grave; he prayed for him, and the dead man rose up in the midst of the gathering, declaring that the holy bishop’s prayers had obtained life for him. He also raised to life a child who was only a catechumen, healed lepers, delivered the possessed, and worked several other miracles that it would take too long to relate.

The history of his life tells us few particulars of what he did after his return to Angers. Yet it says much in few words when it assures us that he led an apostolic life, that he lived poorly, that he drank only water and that his furniture was of little value. In Lent he ate only once in three days; at that meal he took only a piece of very hard barley bread, which he dipped in lukewarm water and seasoned with a little salt. During the whole forty days he did not leave his episcopal house, so as to give all his time to meditation on the mysteries of our salvation. He also slept on ashes and never put off his hair shirt. In the Ember Days he had no other bed than the bare ground. Yet this great austerity did not show on his face. On the contrary, one saw there a vivid picture of his inward gladness and the serenity of his conscience. His silence was cheerful and his cheerfulness silent. His correction was severe, but nothing was more pleasant than that severity. He spoke little in conversation, but his modesty spoke much for him. In a word, he always remained firm in all the practices of virtue he had prescribed for himself, and never slackened in the good he had once undertaken.

He abolished a dangerous pagan superstition that had remained in his diocese. In a village called Commonicus, a few leagues from Angers, there was a kind of rock on the top of which various sorts of trees were planted. The peasants of the district gathered there every year to hold a solemn festival, which consisted in spending seven whole days in feasting, dancing and other bacchanalian amusements. The most deplorable thing was that often, in the midst of the wine and good cheer, quarrels broke out in which several were wounded and sometimes even killed, without these wretches being in the least moved by it, because they persuaded themselves that such accidents happened by an inescapable fate. St. Maurilius, wishing to root out this cruel abuse, went to the spot accompanied by some religious and spent a night there in fasting and prayer, and the next day, at cockcrow, and a fetid smell came out of it. The Saint understood that God had heard him and that Satan had at last abandoned this place of perdition. The people joyfully rushed on the trees reputed sacred and hacked them to pieces. Having thus purified the spot, Maurilius had a church built there in honour of the Blessed Virgin, Mother of God, and in memory of this event the name of the hill was changed to *Château de la Pierre* (*Castrum Petrae*).

At the age of ninety, which he had spent in health always steady, strong and vigorous, he fell ill of a sickness which, slight as it was, he judged to be the one that would take him to the grave. After the Sunday solemnity, at which he had officiated pontifically, he assembled his clergy to warn them that his death was near. He exhorted them, for the last time he would speak to them, to live in perfect union among themselves, to bear one another a sincere and cordial affection, to guard chastity carefully, to practise patience by bearing with their neighbour’s faults, and above all to remember unceasingly, as a spur to perfection, that they had been redeemed by the blood of Jesus Christ. As soon as it was known that he was ill, people came from all the neighbouring places to visit him and receive his blessing, and his room was continually filled with people weeping over the loss the Church of Angers was about to suffer by the death of so holy a pastor. At last, on the seventh day of his illness, which was 13 September 426, while the clergy and people were reciting psalms and other prayers over him and for his intention, he gave up his soul to Almighty God in the same innocence

that he had had after he was regenerated by the saving waters of Baptism. It was the thirtieth year of his episcopate.

From the 11th century St. Maurilius was represented on the seal of the Church of Angers, blessing with his right hand and holding the pastoral staff in his left. — He is also often represented: (1) raising to life a child who had died without receiving the sacrament of Confirmation; (2) with a dove hovering near his head; (3) holding in his hand a fish from whose mouth keys are coming out.

CULTE ET RELIQUES.

Cult and relics.

The body of St. Maurilius was laid in the crypt he had prepared for himself in the middle of the cemetery of the church of Saint-Pierre, which later took the name of the collegiate church of Saint-Maurille, and where the people came to pay him their homage. The diocese of Angers chose him as its principal patron, a title of which he was deprived only at the end of the 17th century; and it took all the apathy of the 18th century to make him lose the immense popularity he had enjoyed for so long. The return to the Roman liturgy has restored some of his rights. Formerly several feast days were devoted to him, in memory of several translations of his relics. The first translation, from the crypt where he was buried to the altar of the church that had been built in his honour, was celebrated on 15 January. In the 9th century his body was carried into the cathedral for fear of the Bretons, who were spreading fire, devastation and death everywhere. In the 10th century took place the most celebrated of the translations, which was kept on 19 October, the day on which all the others were combined from the end of the 16th century. The relics were placed in a rich shrine, and the ceremony was accompanied by several striking miracles.

In 1239, on 16 August, there was another translation of the Saint’s relics. The head was separated from the body and placed in a rich silver reliquary. The great shrine was placed on the high altar of the cathedral, and at its other end on four columns that sheltered it. Two centuries later this shrine, beginning to fall apart with age, was replaced by another of silver-gilt, studded with precious stones of the greatest value. When the holy body had been laid in it, the shrine was put back on the four columns, where it remained until 1700. At that date, the high altar having been moved to the place it occupies today, the shrine was likewise moved; it was put in a large crystal tomb, which was hung above the altar. At the Revolution the relics of St. Maurilius were sacrilegiously scattered, and scarcely a few small particles of that venerated body remain. The church of Saint-Maurille at Chalonnes possesses a bone of it, and that of Notre-Dame in the same town carefully preserves a molar tooth of the Saint.

Many churches and altars are dedicated to St. Maurilius, in Anjou and elsewhere. All the martyrologies, ancient and modern, mention this holy bishop. On the borders of the parish of Saint-Maurille of Chalonnes and that of Chaudefonds there is still shown a rock called the Pierre Saint-Maurille, from the top of which the Saint used to preach the word of God; and on the road leading to Montjean a spring, long frequented as miraculous, likewise recalls the memory of the holy apostle, who, it is said, made it gush forth by supernatural power. A little arch still remains above this spring, which is almost abandoned today. Whole parishes used to come to it in procession.

Acta Sanctorum; — cf. *Histoire de l’Église du Mans*, by the Rev. Fr. Dom Piolin; and the *Vies des saints de l’Anjou*, by the Rev. Fr. Dom François Chamard.

Saint Amatus (Amé) of Grenoble, Monk of Luxeuil, Abbot of Remiremont, in the Diocese of Saint-Dié

627. — Pope: Honorius I. — King of France: Clotaire II.

Dirigez l’activité de votre âme vers tout ce qui perfectionne la vie.

Direct the activity of your soul toward all that perfects life.

Saint Jerome.

St. Amatus[1] was born in one of the suburbs of Grenoble, of noble parents who traced their descent from the ancient Romans. His father, named Heliodorus, who was deeply attached to the Christian religion, placed him early in the monastery of Agaunum, later called Saint-Maurice, in the Valais, to be instructed there in human letters and formed in the Christian and evangelical virtues. He made great progress there in a short time; and as divine love blazed up more and more in the depths of his heart, he wished to pass from boarder and student to religious, which was granted him without difficulty.

At the age of thirty, feeling himself drawn by God to a wholly solitary life cut off from dealings with the world, he left the monastery secretly and withdrew into the hollow of a rock on a neighbouring mountain, hoping to live there unknown to the world and known to God alone. His abbot, however, sent religious to look for him; they found him at the end of three days, which he had spent in unbroken abstinence. They urged him to go back to the monastery to continue his religious exercises there; but the Saint begged them to allow him to stay in this grotto and to be kind enough merely to send him, every three days, a piece of barley bread and a little water to make all his meals. The abbot, informed of his wish, was very pleased with it, because the Holy Spirit was its author, and appointed a religious named Berinus to render him this office of charity.

The devil, unable to bear so extraordinary a penance, appeared to him one day and, having poured out the water that had been brought to him, carried off his bread as well, so that he should have nothing to eat; but the Saint did nothing but praise God for it. “I give You thanks, my Lord Jesus Christ,” he said, “that You are pleased to let me prolong my fast, so that instead of three days it lasts six; for I know that the devil has taken my bread from me only by a most wise disposition of Your divine Providence.” When the religious were building him a cell, the timber they meant to use turned out to be too short; but no sooner had he raised his heart to God than the wood lengthened miraculously, even more than was necessary, and he would not let the surplus be cut off, though the symmetry of the work was spoiled by it, because it was, he said, a gift of God. At the end of a year, feeling compassion for the trouble he was giving his charitable provider, he struck the rock with his staff and made a spring gush from it. He tilled the ground around his hermitage and sowed barley for his sustenance; he had a little hand-mill made so as to grind for himself the flour he needed to live, and so he was no longer a burden to anyone. While he was grinding, he set his bare feet on small sharp stones, so as to mortify himself in everything and to overcome the temptations of the flesh by pain. A huge block of rock, coming loose from the top of the mountain, threatened to bury his cell beneath it; he forbade it, in the name of Our Lord Jesus Christ, to go any farther, and at that very moment it stopped on the slope above the little cell; it remained there in that position for a long time.

The diocesan bishop, who was the bishop of Sion, could never have enough of conversing with this excellent solitary, and he often left his palace and his cathedral to come and spend a few precious moments with him. One day he offered him a considerable sum of money, both for his own needs and to distribute to those he knew to be in want; the Saint steadfastly refused it, declaring that, having renounced the goods of the earth, he had no intention of burdening himself with them again. The bishop, not wishing to take his alms away again, put it under the altar at which the Saint, who was already a priest, used to say Mass; but this great servant of God noticed it after the bishop had gone, and, not wanting to have anything that might be an occasion of temptation, took the money and threw it to the bottom of the valley, saying: “The Lord is my inheritance; I have no need of this money.” He was clothed only in sheepskins, and in Lent he abstained even from bread and contented himself with five nuts, which he often ate only after three days of continuous abstinence.

St. Eustasius, abbot of Luxeuil, so celebrated for his great deeds, flourished at that time and was spreading the light of his holiness throughout France. Passing through Saint-Maurice on his way to Italy, he visited

St. Amatus and formed a very close friendship with him. On his way back he begged him to leave his solitude, in which he had exercised himself long enough in the private virtues, and to come to his abbey, where he could labour usefully for the salvation of his neighbour. Amatus yielded to his advice and moved to the monastery of Luxeuil. It was a firmament full of brilliant stars that gave a wonderful light; but one may say that Amatus outshone them all and made them disappear by the splendour of his virtues. His gentleness, his affability, his prudence, his humility and his patience made him dear to all the brethren; he also had a heavenly wisdom and eloquence and spoke divinely of the mysteries of our faith. These rare qualities caused him to be sent to preach the truths of the Gospel in Austrasia, where most of the people lived in very great ignorance. It was on this journey that he won St. Romaric, a rich and powerful lord, entirely to God and persuaded him to leave all things to embrace the religious life. His goods served to found a monastery; St. Amatus placed in it a community of holy women, of whom he made St. Mactefledis abbess. He healed a cripple who had no use of his feet or hands, and he drove the devil out of the body of a nun who had become possessed for having eaten an apple without permission.

Amatus divided his nuns into seven choirs, which relieved one another continually in singing the praises of God, so that there was no time, by day or by night, when the chanting of psalms and sacred hymns was not heard in that edifying monastery, and when the nuns were not adoring the sovereign majesty of their Creator. Shortly afterwards Romaric founded beside it a monastery for men, which took the name of its founder, Romberg or Remiremont, and gave it to the district. St. Amatus was placed at the head of the latter and at the same time entrusted with the spiritual direction of the nuns' monastery. To escape as far as possible the distractions that the care of his monasteries might cause him, our Saint had made his dwelling on the slope of the mountain, in a grotto formed by an overhanging rock, so low and so narrow that there was only just room enough for him to get in. That is where the parish church of Saint-Amé (Vosges) stands today. A religious let down by a rope from the top of the rock the piece of bread and the vessel of water that made up his food. He was told of it by the sound of a little bell. He came out from there only on Sundays and feast days, to distribute the bread of the word of God to his dear daughters and to his religious. His counsels were given with such gentleness that no one could excuse himself from obeying them. One day the sisters put a swarm of bees into a hive other than the one he had pointed out to them; the bees all flew away and could not stay in it; but when the sisters had caught them again and put them into the hive he had named, they stayed there and worked busily at making their honey.

A year before his death he foretold the time when he would die, and, having had a bed of ashes made for himself in order to finish on it the penance he had begun in childhood, he made before all the brethren a humble confession of all his faults, clothed in a hair shirt and humbled in the dust. His life was a continual martyrdom, and even when he lay down, instead of finding rest, he found only a continuation, or rather an increase, of pains and torments; but he rejoiced in his sufferings, because he knew they would last a short time and that their reward would be eternal. He became so thin and wasted that his bones pierced his skin and he looked like nothing but a skeleton. When he was near death, he had the famous Letter of St. Leo the Great to St. Flavian, archbishop of Constantinople, read to him, and while it was being read he said: "So I believe, O ineffable Trinity; I confess all these truths, O almighty God; this is what I hold of You, O Jesus Christ, Son of the living God; this is what I think of Your divinity, O Holy Spirit, eternal God. In short, I believe and confess one God subsisting in the trinity of Persons, and three Persons subsisting in the unity of one divine nature."

His humility was so deep that he judged himself unworthy to be buried within the church; he gave orders that his body should be placed at the door of the basilica of the Mother of God, with an epitaph that he dictated himself, in which he begged all passers-by who had obtained in that church what they prayed for not to forget to intercede for the repose of his soul, because he acknowledged that his penances had been very light for the enormity of his faults. That is how this great man spoke of a few venial sins he had committed through frailty

during his life. At last he died in the midst of his brethren, and after his death he revealed the happiness his soul enjoyed in heaven.

He is painted: (1) throwing money into a river; (2) stopping by his prayer the fall of a rock that the devil, it is said, wanted to hurl down on him; (3) making a spring flow from a rock.

CULTE ET RELIQUES.

Cult and relics.

St. Amatus was buried outside the church of the monastery, as his humility had made him wish. But at the end of a year he revealed to one of his disciples that it was God's will that his precious body should be translated into the church of the Blessed Virgin. This was in fact done; and there was a continual concourse of pilgrims at his tomb, who often received relief in their illnesses and several other things that they asked of God through the intercession of His servant.

About the year 910 his relics were taken from it, together with those of Saints Romaric and Adelphus, by Drogo, bishop of Toul, who translated them to the new monastery built at the foot of the mountain, on the other bank of the Moselle. In the following century, in 1051, Pope St. Leo, ninth of the name, at the request of Oda, abbess of Remiremont, delegated Hugh the Great, archbishop of Besançon, and Udo, primicerius of the Church of Toul, to establish the virtues and miracles of Saints Amatus, Romaric and Adelphus and of St. Gebetrudis. When the inquiry was finished, the relics of the Saints were solemnly raised and placed in the same church in a more fitting spot. Then the two delegates had the miracles whose authenticity they had established confirmed by the Pope, and had their memory inserted in the office of these Saints. Leo himself consecrated the high altar of the church. The various translations of these Saints were commemorated at the monastery of Remiremont on 15 February, 17 March, 20 August and 13 November.

The first monastery built by the Saint on the summit of the *Saint-Mont* was overthrown by the Huns and re-established by the emperor Louis III beyond the Moselle, at the foot of the mountain; it became the nucleus of the town of Remiremont. Later the nuns took the name and habit of canonesses, under the Rule of St. Benedict. Only the abbess took solemn vows; the other nuns could return to the world and even marry. The establishment lasted until the Revolution.

Acta Sanctorum; Mabillon; Surius; *Vie des Saints de Franche-Comté*; *Histoire du diocèse de Toul et de celui de Nancy*, by M. l'abbé Guillaume.

Saint Amatus (Amat or Aimé), Archbishop of Sens and Confessor

690. — Pope: Sergius I. — King of France: Thierry III.

> *Que notre condition serait heureuse, si la crainte de déplaire à Dieu était aussi grande en nous que celle de déplaire aux hommes !*
>
> *How happy our condition would be if the fear of displeasing God were as great in us as the fear of displeasing men!*
>
> *Saint Paulinus.*

St. Amatus, commonly called St. Aimé and sometimes St. Amé, came of a rich and devout family.[1] The good disposition and the remarkable virtues he showed in childhood caused him soon to be admitted among the clerics, and afterwards to be raised through all the degrees of the Church up to the sacred order of the priesthood. As his piety shed ever brighter rays from day to day the higher he rose, the clergy and people of Sens wanted to have him as their pastor. He resisted this choice as much as he could; but he was compelled by the bishops of the province to submit in this to the will of God. He fulfilled perfectly all the duties of so important a charge; for besides giving in his private conduct the example of every kind of virtue, he watched

assiduously over his people, fed them with the word of God, reproved them for their excesses, administered the sacraments to them, visited the sick, consoled the afflicted, helped the poor in their needs and did all the other things that could be expected of a very holy prelate. This life made him so terrible to the demons that they could not bear his presence and did not even dare approach him to tempt him.

Yet it was not by action but by suffering that God had resolved to perfect his holiness. He therefore allowed Thierry, son of Clovis II and grandson of Dagobert I, who was then king of France, to accept very lightly a false accusation against him and to send him into exile at Péronne, to the monastery of Saint-Fursy. He left Sens not with sadness but with joy; he blessed his people, commended them to God, and went to the place of his banishment more contentedly than if he had been going to take possession of a kingdom. St. Ultan, abbot of the monastery of Saint-Fursy, felt a filial affection for his venerable captive and tried by every means to soften the pains of exile for him; but he for his part deprived himself of everything that could please his body and relieve nature; he even girded his loins with a heavy spiked iron chain, which caused him continual pain.

After the death of St. Ultan the king changed the place of his exile, ordering St. Maurontus, son of St. Adalbald and St. Rictrudis, to take him with him into Flanders and place him in his monastery of Breuil. A great miracle that God worked in his favour at Cambrai made known to St. Maurontus the excellence of his merit and holiness. When our Saint wished to take off, in the church of the Blessed Virgin, the monastic habit he wore over his ordinary clothes, he laid it on a sunbeam that came through a window, thinking it was a bar strong enough to hold it, and the habit remained hanging in the air with no other support than the ray. Seeing this wonder, like the one we related in the life of St. Goar, St. Maurontus threw himself at his feet and begged his pardon for having taken him into his custody. Then, after keeping him with him at the monastery of Hamage, near Marchiennes, he begged him to be good enough to take charge of the abbey of Breuil, on the banks of the Lys, which he had founded on his lands. The holy bishop did not refuse him this favour; but as his soul now lived only on the contemplation of heavenly things, he made himself a little cell beside the church of this abbey, where he spent most of his time in prayer. He was so dead to the world that he was on earth as though he were there no longer; his mind and heart were perpetually in heaven.

At last it pleased God to reward him for his labours and sufferings, and He sent him a peaceful death, which was for him the passage to blessed eternity (about 690). After his death the dreadful chain with which he had tormented himself during his life was found on him, and it served to work many miracles. The Roman Martyrology and the Tables of the Church of Sens speak honourably of this excellent Prelate, who teaches us to accept patiently the afflictions God sends us and to prefer the cross of a long exile to the glory of the highest prelacies.

He is represented hanging his cloak on a sunbeam.

CULTE ET RELIQUES.

Cult and relics.

St. Aimé was buried in the church of Saint-Pierre at Merville through the care of St. Maurontus, who some years later, with the devout liberality of King Thierry, built a more spacious church, that of the monastery of Breuil having been found too small. It was St. Bain, then bishop of Thérouanne, who raised the body of St. Aimé from the ground and laid it with solemnity in this new church dedicated to Our Lady. This translation took place on 28 April in the year 697.

The cult of St. Aimé therefore goes back, as we see, to the time of his death, and his body remained in the church of Saint-Pierre, then in that of Notre-Dame, at the monastery of Breuil, until 870. In that year the invasions of the Northmen forced the religious to take refuge with their precious charge in the *castrum* of Douai, which was protected by strong walls. Some years later the religious, to save the relics from the fury of the Northmen, were obliged to take refuge at Soissons, where they remained until 896. Then they came back

to their church at Douai, where the precious remains of St. Aimé were welcomed with the liveliest joy.

In 1078 Gerard I, bishop of Cambrai and Arras, placed them in a new shrine, which was laid in a crypt under the high altar and remained there until 1206, when they were put in another shrine. The anniversary of this translation was afterwards celebrated with solemnity not only at Douai but also in many churches that had been granted particles of the body of St. Aimé. Besides that of Arras, which obtained one of his arms, the churches of Châlons, Tournai, Cambrai, Saint-Pierre of Douai, Lens, Lille, Harelbeke, Soignies, Marchiennes, Anchin, Saint-Amand, Cysoing, Saint-Martin near Tournai and Hénin-Liétard are also named.

In the Proper of the illustrious collegiate church of Saint-Aimé at Douai there are three feasts devoted to this holy bishop: the first, on 28 April, recalls the day when his body was raised from the ground by St. Bain, bishop of Thérouanne; the second, on 13 September, is the anniversary of his blessed death; and the third, on 19 October, is the translation of his relics from Merville to Douai. Although this celebrated collegiate church was demolished during the Revolution, its memory is no less dear to the people of Douai, who still keep their religious veneration for the name of St. Aimé. The people of Merville and the places round about have also kept in their hearts the memory of the virtues, preaching and works of this illustrious protector. His feast is celebrated there every year with solemnity. A chapel stands under his invocation and that of St. Maurontus, some distance from the town, on the road to Vieux-Berquin. On 13 September, the feast of the holy patron, a novena begins, during which Mass is said in this little oratory in the presence of a multitude of the faithful. In the hamlet of Le Sars, near Merville, there is also a little chapel that possesses a relic of St. Aimé. This Saint is further honoured in a special way at Herlies, a parish in the canton of La Bassée, of which he is the patron.

Acta Sanctorum; Surius; *Vies des Saints des diocèses de Cambrai et d'Arras*, by M. l'abbé Destombes.

Saint Israel, Canon of the Collegiate Church of Le Dorat, in the Diocese of Limoges

1014. — Pope: Benedict VIII. — King of France: Robert II.

> *Guidé par une aimable et profonde modestie, saint Israël travaillait pour les hommes sans aucun souci de la gloire humaine.*
>
> *Guided by a gracious and deep modesty, St. Israel laboured for men without any care for human glory.*
>
> *Eulogy of the Saint.*

St. Israel was born about the year 950 in the county of La Marche, near *Scotorium* (Le Dorat, department of Haute-Vienne). His parents were illustrious not only by their birth but also by the purity of their morals and the firmness of their faith. They vowed to offer their child to God and to give him to Him for ever. While still very young, Israel drew the first elements of sacred and profane letters at the school of the canons regular of Le Dorat, and when he had been fully initiated in them he was admitted, at about the age of fifteen, among the canons of that church.

Under their direction his mind, like those good soils that receive the seed only to multiply it, worked over by meditation and personal labour the lessons of these learned masters. In love with truth in all its forms, and devoting himself by preference to the studies that lead directly to God, he did not neglect those that aim more immediately at the interests of this world, and he soon possessed at once the twofold learning of laymen and of clerics, so that in all that country no one could have been found to compare with him. By vigour of talent and depth of knowledge he surpassed all the other clerics of the diocese, and he was, according to his biographer, the most remarkable man of that province of La Marche and the Limousin.

One precious quality shone in the young canon from the first and struck every eye; it charmed the chapter of Le Dorat no less, perhaps, than Israel's breadth of mind and his very distinguished aptitude for every kind of learning: it was a delightful humility in his dealings with his brethren and a perfect submission to the orders

of his superiors. Full of deference and respect for his masters, he honoured in them the authority of age and experience; he showed the older canons the most delicate attentions, listened willingly to their instructions and remonstrances, and was quick to profit by their warnings and advice. He had in an eminent degree that uprightness of heart of the good scholar and the perfect novice, which does not needlessly separate the love of learning from esteem and affection for the masters who are its keepers.

Full of charity toward his brethren and moved by a holy zeal for decorum in the celebration of the sacred rites, Israel willingly took the place and eagerly filled the office of canons obliged to be absent from choir at the time of the ceremonies. His true homeland was the house of God; never was his mind found wanting there or his thought distracted: chants to be sung, lessons to be read, ceremonies to be observed, he foresaw everything and saw to every detail with such care and maturity that the least prescription of the ceremonial was carried out in its place and at its hour with perfect propriety. Thanks to his vigilance, the celebration of the offices in the church of Le Dorat left nothing to be desired by the most regular and best-instructed clerics.

The young canon was animated by that spirit of God which raises and quickens every action, even the humblest. Far from coming into the holy place with an empty soul and a silent heart, Israel was filled from adolescence with the great thought that inspired his whole life: to secure by prayer and by works the salvation of the people of those regions. It was this that constantly drew him back to the sanctuary; it was this that sustained and multiplied his strength.

His happiness was to be near God and to prepare his soul by prayer for the great battles he was preparing to wage all his life against the misery and ignorance of that iron age. And so public prayer was full of attraction for him, and the great solemnities of the Church had the gift of moving him deeply, so well did they harmonize with the ardour of his desires and the liveliness of his faith. In this life so well filled with lofty thoughts, so intimately devoted to the glory of God and the relief of men, the care of the body found little room: Israel reduced it to the attentions strictly necessary for preserving his strength and health; he gave nature, with extreme parsimony and sobriety, only what was indispensable to sustain it and repair its losses.

This severity toward himself, far from hardening him to the sight of others' sufferings, had only given him more insight to understand them and more charity to relieve them. Rarely is a man who has not suffered, whether by free choice of his will or by the necessities of his condition, endowed with the tact and devotion that the heroic works of charity require: St. Israel had made them, as it were, a second nature, and he had only too many occasions to exercise his love toward the suffering members of Jesus Christ. To the needy and to strangers, to the ignorant and to the sick of both sexes, Israel lavished his time, his labour and his resources of every kind. His great love for the poor, quickened by the liveliest faith, inspired him with practices of mortification that had the most useful results. They were fruitful, because they let no particle of the time or the energy God had allotted to His servant be spent on the satisfaction of the senses; and they were morally improving, because the heroism of such conduct was like a continual sermon before the eyes of the men of that time, who were for the most part blind slaves of their frivolous interests. St. Israel added to them a practice that must have been a salutary lesson for the other canons as for all the people of the province. He had kept the free disposal of the goods he held from his family, while at the same time enjoying the revenues of his canonical prebend. Taking from his private resources the little he needed for his upkeep, he would not take for himself any of the dishes served to him in the refectory at the common table; but, regarding everything that belonged to the monastery as the patrimony of the poor, he had the portion served to him generously distributed to the needy and the sick, taking care to season it with very useful instruction.

Having become provost of the monastery, every time he rose from table he took advantage of the presence of the community to say a few words in favour of the two great works he had most at heart: the spiritual progress of his religious and the relief of the poor. He gently warned and reproved those who had been guilty of breaches of the rule, and he urged all the canons regular earnestly to a diligent observance of the canonical institutions. Then, speaking for the needy, for whom he had just set aside the portion served to him in the

name of the community, he recommended that alms be given them with care and that no one be neglected. He always had in his memory, and often on his lips, this fine saying of Solomon: “He who does not shut his eyes to the poor man, but has compassion on him, lends at interest to Our Lord.” He loved to repeat this saying of the Gospel: “Let your light shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your heavenly Father, who is in heaven!” Nevertheless, whether through humility and love for this word of the Saviour, “Let not your left hand know what your right hand doeth”, or through the conviction that it was more fitting to relieve the pressing needs of the sick at those hours of the night when they are most abandoned, Israel devoted the time of rest to works of charity. As soon as he had celebrated the office of nocturns with great devotion, at the moment when the other canons were returning to bed and everything in the town was asleep except pain and need, he went about alone in the middle of the night, seeking out the homes of the sick, lavishing his care and advice on them, and distributing to them the remedies, the alms and the help of every kind with which he had taken care to provide himself. When he had given away everything, he eagerly inquired what more might be needed, and never failed to send it without delay.

Meditating day and night on the law of the Lord, Israel scarcely allowed his weary limbs the sleep they needed. When he was thought to be asleep he went on with his vigils, persevering with new ardour in study and in the union of the soul with God through prayer. Sometimes, even, interrupting his study to go and offer it in the very sanctuary to Him for love of whom he prolonged his vigils, he left the dormitory noiselessly and went to pray in the church, taking the precaution of covering the floor with a woollen cloth so that the sound of his steps should not disturb his brethren’s rest. To be useful to the greatest number, he wrote, sometimes in Latin and sometimes in the language familiar to the people of Le Dorat, a series of sequences, hymns and canticles on the principal events of the Old Testament and of the New, down to the Ascension of Our Lord Jesus Christ. Ripened by prayer and study in the silence and humility of his retreat, St. Israel was called to exercise in the full light of public life the virtues and talents he had cultivated in solitude with modest and tireless courage.

When Hilduin came to the episcopal see of Limoges, wisdom and learning already surrounded Israel’s brow with a halo of glory and renown, whose rays, spreading ever wider, shone more brightly every day. No one in the region was ignorant of the humble canon’s merits, and Hilduin more than anyone had heard Israel’s qualities praised and had tested their worth and solidity for himself. He hastened to bring this light out into the open and make it shine on a larger stage. To draw him more surely to the city of Limoges, he entrusted him with a post admirably suited to the tireless zeal and outgoing nature of Israel’s talent: he attached him to his person as professor and master in the school of the episcopal palace.

Hilduin had every reason to congratulate himself on his choice: St. Israel taught in the city of Limoges, to the great glory of the episcopal school and the great advantage of the many disciples who came to receive his lessons. His eloquent and easy speech charmed them; the wisdom and deep learning of his teaching raised their minds and hearts. Witnessing these services rendered to the Church of God and to learning, and moved by this well-deserved renown, which he saw shining brighter and purer every day, the bishop judged him so capable by his talents, his learning and his eloquence of filling the highest ecclesiastical offices, and so worthy, by his modesty, his uprightness of mind and the purity of his life, of being honoured with them, that he would not leave him a simple canon and a simple cleric; he brought him into his council for the management of the various affairs of the diocese, and, conferring on him successively the various degrees of clerical orders, raised him to the dignity of the priesthood. Once ordained priest, and subject to new duties and harder labours, St. Israel did not neglect the graces of light and doctrine, the gifts of the Holy Spirit that he had received by the imposition of his bishop’s hands. But, following the Apostle’s counsel, always careful to watch over himself and to advance in the knowledge of divine things while helping others to advance, he prolonged his meditations and prayers and multiplied more and more the simple and familiar exhortations he was accustomed to address to the faithful.

The piety of St. Israel in the performance of his priestly functions, the purity of intention and the spirit of justice and integrity that governed each of his acts and inspired each of his steps were, says the historian of his life, beyond anything human power could have attained. For indeed, far from trusting in his own strength, he kept his mind and heart always turned toward God, from whose goodness he obtained by his prayers a redoubled vigour and energy that brought him fresh successes. All these virtues, and others more numerous still, made Israel more precious to his bishop every day. Already full of esteem for his talents, the prelate conceived for the character and virtues of the eloquent professor the liveliest and holiest affection: not content with having opened his council to him and called him to the administration of his diocese, he wished to attach him more closely to his person, and made him his chaplain, but with episcopal powers, like those of the chorepiscopi of that time.

Shortly afterwards St. Israel saw his obligations and labours increase. The precentor of the church of Le Dorat having died, Israel was canonically elected in his place by the unanimous vote of the whole chapter of canons, about the year 991. This new dignity did not make him proud, says the author of his life; but more than ever he practised humility, held avarice in horror and showed the greatest generosity on every occasion. And so no one could say with what holiness he discharged this office: shining among the other canons with the brightness of every virtue and surpassing them all in talent, he was nevertheless, in the midst of his inferiors, like one of them by his simplicity and by his tireless eagerness to obey all the prescriptions of the canonical rule.

St. Israel, having accompanied his bishop to the court of France, became personally known there to the king, who held his eminent qualities and his holiness in the highest esteem. His fame soon spread through all Cisalpine Gaul. Scarcely had he returned when he was asked for by the great lords and the people to be the restorer and first provost of the church of Saint-Junien. St. Israel hastened to reopen his school, to re-establish regular observance and to bring into play all the resources of a penetrating mind and all the zeal and vigilance of a tireless soul. The church of Saint-Junien soon became as flourishing as the church of Le Dorat, which served as its model and whose statutes and regulations Israel had brought to Saint-Junien. While he directed its members and watched over the spiritual renewal of his community, St. Israel was also rebuilding the walls of the old church of Saint-Junien; for the material building too had been badly ravaged and almost entirely destroyed.

When he had restored the walls of the sanctuary and made order and discipline flourish again, St. Israel set about securing the future of his work. To this end he bound the chapter of Saint-Junien closely to that of Le Dorat, so that, serving each other as example and support, the two churches might more surely preserve their regularity and fervour. To achieve this he neglected none of the means Providence had put at his disposal, and with this aim he set at the head of the two churches two brothers, Amelius and Arnulf, who stood out among his other disciples for their talent and piety.

In 994 a terrible scourge, called the Burning Sickness (*Mal des Ardents*), fell upon the region to which he had devoted his life. Our Saint, far from letting himself be discouraged by the extremity of the evil, saw in it only a providential opportunity to exercise his tireless zeal. He received with the greatest humanity the sick who came to ask for his care and his prayers, and lavished on them all the care their condition demanded: his food, even his bed, were theirs. Among those who had the happiness of coming near him, some felt themselves revived by his care; others, more fortunate, went back to their homes safe and sound, entirely healed through his intercession. Borne on the wings of gratitude, Israel's name spread far and wide, more glorious and more venerated.

In 1006 St. Israel had reached his fifty-sixth year. Too many ties bound the holy provost to Le Dorat for the chapter, which not long before had pressed him most urgently to stay, not to make fresh efforts to enjoy at least his last years. When Amelius, who was replacing him as subcantor at Le Dorat, died, this loss renewed all the grief that the people and the canons felt at St. Israel's absence. They would no longer allow him to

discharge his former functions through a delegated canon, and they demanded the presence of their venerable cantor. The combined entreaties of the people of Le Dorat were so pressing that St. Israel had to give way and come to live again in the cloister that had sheltered his youth and had been the confidant and witness of his first labours. St. Israel's return among them crowned this spiritual prosperity, and it was a priceless grace of Providence for these young men to live in common and in close union under the direction of a master who carried Christian virtue and holiness so high.

Thus the holy old man came to spend the last eight years of his life (1006–1014) near his birthplace and to devote all the strength of his old age to that apostolate of teaching from which nothing had been able to turn him in the course of his whole life. In the midst of these labours he daily completed and perfected that band of holy and learned young men which was the beloved work of his heart and the object of his life's ambition; it was to be the finest of his titles in heaven, and on earth it was the noblest heritage the man of God could leave to the churches of Le Dorat and Saint-Junien, which never tired, through the course of the centuries, of celebrating its memory.

After so many labours St. Israel's mission was drawing to its close: the end of his days was approaching. Weighed down by the years, which had seen him increase his merits every day, and made illustrious by his holiness and learning, the man of God was ripe for heaven. His body was emaciated by toil and privation, and all his flesh as though consumed; but his soul still overflowed with ardour and life. At last, overcome by old age and above all by vigils and mortifications, admirably prepared for the last journey, fortified beforehand with the sacraments of the Church, upheld by the prayers of his companions and continually absorbed in prayer, he gave up his beautiful soul to God on 31 December 1014.

St. Israel is represented in bas-relief on the front of the altar of the chapel in the church of Le Dorat. Two of the principal events of his life form the subject of the medallions of the stained-glass window. In the first medallion St. Israel is teaching. He is seated, in profile, with a halo, his left hand resting on a book and his right raised. St. Theobald and St. Walter, with haloes, are listening to his lessons, with two other children, also haloed, in front of them, and on the right the young Bernard, seated on a stool. Through the window of the school one glimpses the town of Le Dorat with the belfries of the collegiate church and the seminary. In the second medallion

St. Israel is visiting a sick man surrounded by his family; he is accompanied by St. Theobald and another figure. In the sky of the medallion the town with its many belfries can likewise be seen.

CULTE ET RELIQUES.

Cult and relics.

St. Israel's body was laid in a tomb to the east of the monastery, with all the honours due to his rank and all the veneration due to his holiness. The people of Le Dorat built in the Saint's honour, over his tomb, a wooden chapel, which soon became the scene of many miracles that made it popular throughout the province of La Marche. Israel's holiness being thus attested by a great number of wonders, the canons of Le Dorat began, soon after his death and with the consent of the bishops of Limoges, to celebrate his memory with a religious cult. St. Israel's body rested until 1130 in the oratory raised by the piety of the faithful; it has since been replaced by a stone chapel. On 27 January 1130 the Saint's body was raised from the ground amid a great concourse of people, carried in procession into the basilica dedicated to the Prince of the Apostles, and laid in the underground crypt, which took the name of the *Sépulcre*. Several miracles worked on the day of this translation increased the faithful's veneration for St. Israel.

A Confraternity having been established at Le Dorat "to keep watch in prayer beside the Saint's relics during the Ostension", it was confirmed on 22 July 1659 by Pope Alexander VII and enriched with precious indulgences by Pope Pius IX on 16 February 1869. The principal feast of the Confraternity takes place on 13

September, the Saint's feast day.

On 20 March 1659, through the efforts and at the request of the canons and of the whole town of Le Dorat, Mgr de La Fayette, bishop of Limoges, granted Mgr de Salaignac, bishop of Sarlat, permission to carry the holy relics from the crypt into the upper church and to place them in a gilded shrine beside the high altar, where they were carried with the greatest solemnity on 13 September of the same year. The chapter of Le Dorat sent the canons of Saint-Junien one of St. Israel's ribs.

The office of St. Israel was inserted for the first time in the Proper of the diocese of Limoges in 1669. It was also put in that of the Canons

Regular of the Congregation of France, on 8 February.

In 1793 the relics were saved from profanation; they were taken down into the crypt and, after being placed in a hollow beneath the middle chapel, were carefully covered over. In 1802 the shrine was taken from the place where it had been put, to be set again beside the altar. On 12 June 1862 the relics were examined and recognized as authentic. St. Israel's tomb, empty of its precious charge, was moved in 1825 to the chapel of the cemetery of Le Dorat, which had just been rebuilt on the ruins of the old one; and finally, on 28 June 1871, it was once more given back to the sight and veneration of the faithful in the chapel recently consecrated to the cult of St. Israel and St. Theobald: it can be seen on the left side (the Gospel side).

Extracted from the Vie de saint Israël et de saint Théobald, *by the abbé Rougerie, professor of philosophy at the minor seminary of Le Dorat.*

Saint Theobald, Canon of the Collegiate Church of Le Dorat, in the Diocese of Limoges

1070. — Pope: Alexander II. — King of France: Philip I.

> *La piété ne saurait vivre sans la charité ; Théobald, aimant Dieu dans ses perfections infinies, l'aimait aussi dans la créature qui en est l'image ; toute sa vie fut la mise en pratique de cet amour.*
>
> *Piety cannot live without charity; Theobald, loving God in His infinite perfections, loved Him also in the creature that is His image; his whole life was the putting into practice of this love.*
>
> *Eulogy of the Saint.*

Theobald was born in the village of Le Chaix, in the parish of La Bazeuge, about the year 990, of virtuous parents who, deeply aware of their duties toward the child God had entrusted to them, spared no pains to form his mind and heart. Scarcely was he of an age to study when his parents presented him as a pupil at the school of Le Dorat, where St. Israel was then shining.

His happy disposition and the fine virtues of his childhood made the canons welcome him with joy, and they sowed in his soul, together with the seeds of the clerical virtues, the first principles of sacred and profane letters. Admirably gifted in intelligence, he made such progress in the elements of grammar and literature that he easily surpassed all the children of his age: walking eagerly in the ways traced for him by the holy example and learned teaching of his master, the pupil reproduced in himself so perfectly all the virtues of which he had the shining example before his eyes that, by everyone's admission, the young Theobald soon became the living image of Israel.

In adolescence, at the moment when he most eagerly longed to develop the knowledge he had already acquired, he suddenly found himself deprived of his worthy master, who had just left the school of Le Dorat to go to the court of Robert the Pious and from there to the abbey of Saint-Junien; and Theobald resolved to leave his homeland and seek new masters and new books far away. The city of Périgueux drew the humble pilgrim's steps.

After some years Theobald, now a master in the knowledge and practice of the liberal arts, felt his heart stirred with longing at the memory of his homeland: he wanted to see again his devout parents, the quiet banks of the Brame, along which he had once led his father's modest flock, and that abbey of Le Dorat where he had received with such distinction the first elements of learning and piety. In taking the road home he had no dream of giving himself up there to the sweets of repose; for he regarded the learning he had just acquired not as the means of leading an idle life but as a precious talent entrusted by the Father of the household to his diligent vigilance. He was eager to shut himself up with it in a safe refuge, to increase it further by meditation and study, and above all to spread it around him and make it bear fruit a hundredfold.

St. Theobald took the road back to Lower Marche; he went first of all to greet his parents, threw himself at their feet and earnestly begged their permission to withdraw to a religious house where he could join devout and learned men and labour there in God's service for the rest of his days. Decided in principle on the kind of life he should embrace, Theobald nevertheless hesitated over the choice of the religious house at whose door he would knock. Yet quite near him there flourished at that time the church of Le Dorat, so dear to him, in which he was personally known and esteemed by the holy men who spent their lives serving God there in the practice of every virtue.

While he was ripening with anxious care the decision that was to fix his future for ever, the canons of the church of Le Dorat, knowing the uprightness, the learning and the holiness of this young man, thought it would be honourable and useful to their church to draw him to themselves and incorporate him into their college. They hastened to propose it to him; Theobald welcomed the proposal with great joy and embraced the rule of the canons in that devout company. This event, which fixed St. Theobald's future, was brought about above all by the eager consent and persuasive counsel of Abbo, a canon as remarkable for his personal distinction as for his birth, who then exercised a great and legitimate influence over the church of Le Dorat.

Never was the chapter of Le Dorat more brilliant than at the hour when St. Theobald was admitted to it. St. Israel, surrounded by the respect and admiration of all, was then returning from Saint-Junien after several years' absence to end his days in his homeland. He had the happiness of finding the community flourishing and the canonical rule observed in all its strictness with filial and scrupulous eagerness. It was with feelings of the liveliest joy that he welcomed his former pupil as the continuer and support of his work of reform. More than all the other canons, indeed, he felt how truly Theobald was animated by his spirit.

The essential character of holiness, which distinguishes it from all man's other prerogatives, is intimate union with God through prayer. The saints cannot be content to think of God in sterile meditations: they think of Him with that love and that trust in His goodness which are the natural breathing of the Christian soul, whether it finds outward expression in words or remains held within in recollection and silence. Theobald had given himself entirely to God: from then on his life was nothing but a continual aspiration toward supreme Truth and Beauty. It was no longer enough for him to spend the whole day in contemplation and prayer and to attend with tireless assiduity the Vigils and the office of Nocturns, which the canons of Le Dorat, like almost all the congregations of brethren, used to celebrate in the middle of the night, about cockcrow; he spent whole nights in prayer, and his tears no less than his words bore witness to the yearnings of his heart.

He gave to rest only the time nature could not do without; and lest the softness of his bed should be too pressing an invitation to sleep, he had made himself a bed whose mattress was thin and hard and whose covering was made of nothing but wretched rags of cloth. Freed from the shackles of material comfort, he nevertheless found himself hampered in his prayers and obliged to hold back his sighs and tears for fear of disturbing his brethren's sleep and rest; and wishing at last to win at any cost the holy freedom of vocal prayer and tears, he set up his bed in a place apart from the common dormitory where the other canons slept.

Prayer enlightens the mind; it tempers the character and gives spring to all the faculties. The fervent Theobald, therefore, for all his modesty, could not remain hidden in the crowd of ordinary souls. Everyone soon came to recognize his merits and to value them highly, and before long the chapter wished to use them for its good. But Theobald's humility refused the dignities that might distinguish him from the other canons and the employments that were of a kind to distract his mind from meditation. One day, however, the whole community assembled and earnestly begged him to allow himself to be made keeper of the holy place, custodian of the sacred vestments and, lastly, administrator of the treasury of the church. Theobald, dismayed and troubled to the depths of his soul, set about explaining to his brethren all the difficulties of the office, to make them understand clearly that he was unworthy of it and that they would easily find among themselves men a thousand times more capable of discharging it fruitfully. He feared that these new preoccupations, the care of the wealth and the material adornment of the church, would too quickly dull in his heart the outpourings of his love for God, and nothing could shake his resolution.

Nevertheless, in spite of his resistance, St. Theobald was promoted to the office of treasurer and, in that capacity, invested with particular duties, several of which were of real importance. They included the aedileship, or the care of the building and of the furnishings used in worship, the internal supervision of the church and the custody of the chapter's precious treasury, consisting chiefly of manuscripts, sacred vessels and relics of the Saints. Bound by love and by duty to the sanctuary, to which the need to pray constantly called him and where it kept him for long hours, Theobald left it only with the greatest reluctance and the keenest regret; having become steward of the house of God, he chained himself to the sanctuary in the closest possible way. Nothing was small in his eyes among the duties and functions of his office, because each of them, even the least important, bore directly on the service of God. And so he took care that everything should be in its place and that the furnishings and vestments of the sacristy should be carefully kept with a decency and cleanliness worthy of their august purpose. He himself arranged the holy images and prepared the altars, and he performed these thousand tasks with such eagerness and care that everyone was deeply edified. While his hands worked, his heart addressed to God this aspiration of the Prophet: "Lord, I delight in the beauty of Your house!" and he never stopped telling those around him that no pains could be too great in adorning and beautifying the place where the sovereign Majesty has deigned to choose His dwelling. Far from limiting his care to watching over the church, and to making even its walls shine with that brightness, cleanliness and good taste which reveal in the hearts of the ministers of the sanctuary a filial and eager love of the holy place, Theobald also kept order in the church: he saw to it that during the office the liturgical ceremonies were carried out with the most scrupulous exactness.

Theobald's eminent qualities, and the influence they allowed him to exercise around him, led his superiors to wish him raised to the priesthood. But the holy religious's humility set an insurmountable obstacle in the way of this wish. Neither the entreaties of his brethren nor the urgings of the venerable rector Abbo could shake his resolution: he could be brought to accept only the lower degrees of holy orders, the offices of porter, acolyte, lector and exorcist, whose functions he carried out with such care in his church, and the dignity of deacon, which he needed in order to discharge more fittingly the duties of his office as aedile of the sanctuary and keeper of the Blessed Sacrament. He could never be brought to accept the awesome functions of the priesthood; and all his life he remained a simple deacon of holy Church.

The sight of Theobald inspired piety, and more than once a word, a look, even silence was enough for him to bring back to duty the most wayward and dissolute. There were sometimes immense difficulties in bending the rough characters of that age to the yoke of rule and duty. When the silent preaching and tacit ascendancy of virtue were not enough, and it was necessary to resort to counsel and stern words to correct one of the canons, Theobald set himself aside so completely, spared the self-esteem of the guilty with such delicacy, and spoke with such humility, prudence and gentleness, that the most difficult minds and the most intractable characters often accepted his reprimands as a real service. More than once they were seen to thank him for

his advice and to correct their faults effectively. God had given Theobald the knowledge that excels all others, the difficult art of guiding souls. He used it to combat the spirit of division and discord, the greatest scourge of societies, even when they are made up of souls who have professed to give up everything so as to seek nothing but justice and truth.

For the rest of his life he never ceased to struggle to stifle in the bud the disputes and quarrels that arise all too often, on the most trivial pretexts, between people obliged to live in common: the holiest houses are not always exempt from paying this tribute to human weakness. As soon as he noticed a coolness between brethren, his ingenious charity entered the lists: he took no rest until he had succeeded in restoring harmony. As he had no authority over the members of the community, he acted in all these efforts as a volunteer messenger of peace, with no means of action but persuasion, gentleness and humility, and never authority or command.

There was one fault that this valiant soul could not bear: always busy, always finding the hours of work and prayer too short, Theobald had a mortal hatred of idleness. He used to say that Satan was never idle; that his ordinary occupation was to give occupation to those who have not the skill to find it for themselves; and that idleness was the plague of communities. Certainly no one could express a more evident truth more vigorously, or give at once both precept and example better than Theobald did. His activity was prodigious. Since he had taken the precaution of setting up his bed outside the common dormitory, he made use of this voluntary isolation to rise in the middle of the night to work and pray; he went to choir before the other canons, without disturbing them and without being a cause of fatigue or annoyance to them.

To acquire so great a mastery over his body, Theobald, far from yielding to the instincts of the flesh, had fought them by want; he had blunted them by fasting, by vigils and by going without sleep; he had succeeded in keeping them under control and directing them, so to speak, at will. His whole bearing breathed sobriety, respect for himself and for others, benevolence and kindness; he was the object of universal admiration.

He never took half-measures when it was a question of strengthening himself and making progress in the practice of virtue. So as not to be troubled by the passions and by worldly cares, he avoided with the greatest care the conversation of lay people, and above all of women: of angelic chastity, he knew how to arm himself against temptations by vigils, by fasting and by the strictest watch over himself, bringing his body into subjection so as to set up virtue as sovereign in his soul.

However minute Theobald’s occupations were, his mind did not stop at directing the work of his hands: he sanctified even the humblest of them by continual aspirations toward a higher order. It was for God alone that he did each of his actions; his mind never ceased to offer them to Him in adoration and prayer. This close union with God is the principal feature of Theobald’s soul. All the time left to him after the fulfilment of his outward duties he spent in placing himself again in God’s presence and in praying; he sought out remote and dark places, so as to flee distractions and keep his soul entirely free. The true rest of his nights was prayer. Sometimes, as he prayed, he was surrounded as it were by a heavenly atmosphere; the emotion of his heart was so lively that it showed on his face, and two streams of tears flowed from his eyes. He hid them carefully, showing on coming from prayer only a serene face, the mirror of a tranquil soul. More than once, too, the consolations he felt were so lively and his union with God so close that he was rapt in ecstasy; his soul was then absorbed in God and as though separated from the world, so much so that he seemed to have stopped breathing, and it was very hard to bring him back to himself.

An eager servant of the little and the humble, Theobald was the father of the lesser employees of the church of Le Dorat, to whom he always strove to be useful. His heart could not remain unmoved at the sight or the account of any sorrow: in his eyes, to exercise charity in its thousand different forms was at once the best use of his personal faculties and the most precious use of the treasury of the Church; always ready to do a service, he nonetheless knew how to value properly the services done to him. Only his tender concern for the

poor and the sick could make him leave that cloister, where everything breathed solitude and silence, and turn his steps outside the bounds of the monastery. When he had a moment's rest in his cell, and the duties of his office did not call him to the church or the school, he would go out of the monastery and through the town, anxiously asking whether there were any poor sick people; and as soon as he had found them, he visited them in their homes and lavished on them with admirable eagerness all the spiritual consolation and bodily relief in his power.

Following the example of St. Israel, Theobald regarded himself as a trustee of learning; he thirsted to share it around him. Uncultivated and rebellious minds, whom no one wanted to take on, those ill-favoured by nature and by learning: these were Theobald's portion. He attached himself to them with love, and even with gratitude, so happy did he consider himself to acquire fresh merit in this way by increasing his labour. To these young men, most of whom wished to enter the clerical state, he taught letters, Holy Scripture, psalmody, plainchant and sacred music. While spending long hours on this hard and thankless labour, he fed these young men at his own expense out of the revenues of his prebend, thus providing their bodily food with his own hands so as to be better able to serve them the bread of the mind. He never lost heart in this admirable work; and yet disappointments were not spared him.

One thing alone grieved that noble heart: that his admirable zeal often met in the chapter of Le Dorat with more envious men than imitators. Obstacles and calumny were therefore not lacking to him; but since his excellent and even heroic actions could not be attacked, his intentions were attacked instead and misrepresented: envy and malice interpreted them in the most unfavourable way, accusing the Saint of seeking by all his labours nothing but the approval of men and the gratification of his vanity. But Theobald, working only for God and wanting no other applause than the witness of his conscience, far from losing heart, drew from his humility and his boundless love for God the most invincible constancy.

Loaded with the visible graces of the Lord, Theobald pursued through a long career the course of his mortifications and the practice of his virtues: with tireless perseverance he advanced every day in the ways of holiness. He had just entered his eightieth year when his body, worn out by fasts and vigils, and seeming to have held out until then only by a miracle, suddenly began to weaken alarmingly. Shortly afterwards, undermined by fever and a prey to a violent disease of the bowels, and at last giving way under the weight of old age and the ravages of illness, he was carried by the canons to the austere bed from which he was never to rise again. But though he was reduced to extreme weakness, his mind and tongue did not cease for a single moment to proclaim the praises of God. Concerned only with the salvation of his soul, he made his confession for the last time with the liveliest contrition; he received the body of the Saviour as viaticum and, lastly, the sacrament of Extreme Unction. His lips did not cease to proclaim the praises of God and to pray until at last, after a long agony, he joyfully gave back his beautiful soul to his Creator on 6 November in the year 1070.

CULTE ET RELIQUES.

Cult and relics.

St. Theobald's body was buried with all the pomp his holiness deserved, amid a great concourse of people. The miracles worked at his tomb increased the veneration of the faithful, who soon built him an oratory where his remains stayed until 1130, when they were translated into the great basilica of Saint-Pierre and placed in a gilded shrine, then laid in the crypt called the *Sépulcre*. This translation was carried out by Eustorgius, bishop of Limoges, and was accompanied by several miracles.

A Confraternity established at Le Dorat "to keep watch in prayer beside the Saint's relics during the Ostension" was confirmed on 22 July 1659 by Pope Alexander VII and enriched with precious indulgences by Pope Pius IX on 16 February 1869. The principal feast of the Confraternity takes place on 13 September, the Saint's feast day.

On 20 March 1659 the holy relics were carried from the crypt into the upper church and placed in a shrine at one side of the high altar. This ceremony took place on 13 September of the same year, and it was to consecrate its memory that the feast of St. Theobald was fixed on that day, as was that of St. Israel. Until then the feast of the two Saints had been celebrated together on 27

January, followed by an Octave. On the occasion of this solemnity the chapter of Le Dorat sent the Canons of Saint-Junien a bone from the Saint's body.

The office of St. Theobald was inserted for the first time in the Proper of the diocese of Limoges in 1669. It was also put in that of the Canons Regular of the Congregation of France, on 8 February.

In 1793 the relics were saved from profanation; they were taken down into the crypt with those of St. Israel and, after being placed in a hollow beneath the middle chapel, were carefully covered over. In 1802 the shrine was taken from the place where it had been put, to be set again beside the altar. On 12 June 1862 the relics were examined and recognized as authentic. St. Theobald's tomb, empty of its precious charge, was moved in 1825 to the chapel of the cemetery of Le Dorat, which had just been rebuilt on the ruins of the old one. It remained there for forty-seven years, set against the wall of the chapel on the right side of the altar (the Epistle side). Finally, on 28 June 1871, it was once more given back to the sight and veneration of the faithful in the chapel recently consecrated to the cult of St. Israel and St. Theobald.

Extracted from the Vie de saint Israël et de saint Théobald, *by the abbé Rougerie, professor of philosophy at the minor seminary of Le Dorat.*

Saint Litorius (Lidoire or Litoire), Second Archbishop of Tours and Confessor

After the death of St. Gatian, who, as we shall relate on 18 December, founded the Church of Tours in the first century and governed it for fifty years, the see remained vacant for thirty-seven years, after which St. Litorius, a citizen of the town, was ordained second bishop of Tours. St. Gatian's apostolic labours had been poorly rewarded; but St. Litorius had the happiness of being regarded as a prophet in his own country: his zeal was rewarded with brilliant successes, and he had the consolation, once the number of Christians had multiplied, of building the first church inside the city and of turning a senator's house into a basilica.

St. Gatian's body had been buried in the cemetery of the poor, at the spot where a respectable tradition recognizes his tomb, almost opposite the west door of the present church of Notre-Dame la Riche. This cemetery soon became a centre of habitation, and St. Litorius built nearby (rue Saint-Lidoire) a basilica that bore his name, whose foundations could still be seen in the second half of the 18th century. He was buried there, since Roman law, strictly observed in Gaul, as we learn from the Council of Braga of the year 563, forbade burials inside the city. Some years later St. Martin, who had a particular veneration for St. Gatian, the first apostle of Touraine, raised his body and translated it into the basilica of Saint-Lidoire, where, according to the account of Gregory of Tours, it seems still to have been in the 6th century.

The Norman invasions seem to have brought various wanderings upon the two precious bodies of Gatian and Litorius, as upon many other relics. In 871 they were in the monastery of Saint-Médard, built on the site of the old Christian cemetery (the present school of the Brothers). On 4 February 1374 they were translated to the metropolitan church, where they remained until 1562, when they were burned by the Protestants. The memory of this translation of 4 February is still celebrated today.

Taken from the Proper of Tours; and completed, for the cult and relics, from the Histoire de l'Église catholique en France *by Mgr Jager and the* Origines de l'Église de Tours *by M. l'abbé C. Chevalier.*

Saint Columbinus of Ireland, Abbot of the Monastery of Lure, Diocese of Besançon (Date Uncertain)

St. Columbinus belonged to that fervent community which, under the leadership of St. Columbanus, founded (590) the illustrious abbey of Luxeuil (*Luxovium*, Order of St. Benedict). He was Irish. Brought up by St. Desle, or Deicolus, his godfather, he responded so well to his care that when that illustrious founder (610) of the Benedictine abbey of Lure (*Luthra*, in the diocese of Besançon) gave up the government of his community to prepare for death, he did not hesitate to designate him as his successor. Desle seemed to live again in Columbinus. The reputation of Lure spread more and more. A great number of men distinguished by birth and wealth left the world to come and embrace a more perfect life under his direction. Soon there could be seen there, in all their brilliance, the two flowers that used to adorn the solitude of the cloister in that age: piety and learning.

Such are the general features in which history presents St. Columbinus's government to us. His death was precious in the sight of God, and, like that of St. Desle, his tomb was glorious. One of the most striking wonders by which it pleased heaven to reveal the holy abbot's credit took place about the year 926. Hildegard, wife of Count Hugh, who then held the land of Lure, had the rash idea of taking for herself part of the relics with which the monastery was enriched. Since she could not detach the smallest particle of St. Desle's body, she opened St. Columbinus's tomb and took a tooth from it; but the slight resistance she met with made her doubt the power of this body, and, whether out of disdain or to put the relic to a kind of test, she threw the tooth into the fire. At that very moment she was seized with a violent pain, and neither the fervour of her prayers nor her eagerness to make amends for the sacrilege could bring any remedy.

Nearly four hundred years later the account of this wonder still stirred the piety and faith of Rudolf, duke of Austria, who had come to Lure to curb the boldness of the Burgundians and secure the independence of the monastery. He himself tells us what happened on that occasion, how he had the happiness of obtaining a relic of St. Columbinus, and what use he made of it: "We, Rudolf IV, by the grace of God duke of Austria, came in person to Lure on the 15th of the calends of April 1361. We entered devoutly into the oratory and chapel of St. Desle; then, kneeling humbly before the tomb of St. Columbinus, we asked him for some particles of his relics, which he deigned to grant us. Without meeting the least resistance, and with the abbot's permission, we detached several parts of his bones, intending to carry them to the collegiate church that we wish to have built in Vienna, and to enclose and keep them there with the respect due to them."

Some relics of the holy abbot have even come down to us, as a pledge of his protection and a claim on our homage. Devoutly gathered up in the evil days of our Revolution, they were placed, after the storm, in the church of Lure, where Mgr Gousset, then professor of theology at the seminary of Besançon, came to make the recognition of them in 1825. On 25 January 1838 M. Bergier, vicar-general of Besançon, renewed it in a ceremony in which the people's piety vied with the pastor's zeal to adorn and bless the remains of the holy founders of Lure. These precious remains were placed in an elegant shrine, offered by the generosity of the faithful, which will remain as a witness to their gratitude.

Extracted from the Vie des Saints de Franche-Comté, *by the professors of the college of Saint-François-Xavier at Besançon.*

Saint Frederick or Flédéric, Confessor, Parish Priest and Patron of Vliederzele, in East Flanders (Date Uncertain)

St. Frederick, or Flédéric as several hagiographers write it, was born in the neighbourhood of the city of Paris; at least that is the most generally accepted opinion. From his earliest years he was set to the study of letters, in which he made rapid progress. His advance in virtue was no less admirable, and, seeing the ardour with which he threw himself into works of piety and religion, one could judge that he would one day be a great servant of God.

Unknown circumstances later brought the virtuous Frederick into the regions of northern France, where we find him serving the parish of Vlierzele or Vliederzele, two leagues from Aalst (East Flanders), in the former diocese of Cambrai. In fulfilling the duties of his office he showed all the qualities of a good and holy pastor. Careful to instruct his flock in the important truths of religion and the obligations it imposes, he was no less careful to reproduce in his conduct all the virtues of Jesus Christ, the Shepherd of shepherds. Like Him, he laboured to spread everywhere the spirit of charity, concord and mutual goodwill. He could not hear without keen sorrow that hatreds and divisions had broken out among some of his spiritual children, and he did everything that can be expected of a worthy minister of Jesus Christ to reconcile them. The whole life of this holy priest was spent in the obscure and laborious functions of his pastoral ministry, which God deigned to fill with His blessings. Frederick had reached an extreme old age when, already renowned for his virtues and miracles, he joyfully gave back to his God a life he had spent in the service of the Church and of his flock.

A great number of sick people, deaf people above all, have recovered their health through his intercession. Repeated wonders have at all times drawn the neighbouring populations to his tomb, particularly on 3 September, the day on which his memory is honoured.

In the year 1545 Martin Cuper, suffragan bishop of Cambrai under the administration of Monseigneur Robert de Croy, was asked to consecrate an altar dedicated to St. Frederick and to assign him a feast day and an annual procession on the Sunday after the solemnity of the Apostles St. Peter and St. Paul. As for the altar, it was consecrated on the eve of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross, 13 September, and that day was appointed for the celebration of the Saint's feast in the parish.

St. Frederick is represented everywhere, on the altar, on the shrine that contains his body, and on the pilgrims' little banners and pictures, in priestly vestments and holding a chalice and a host.

Extracted from the Vie des Saints de Cambrai et d'Arras, *by the abbé Destombes.*

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[1] The Bollandists say that Saint Julian was martyred at Ancyra, in Galatia. As for Saint Macrobius, they have him die at Tomi (Lower Moesia).

[2] At Venice, according to the Bollandists.

[3] Saint Eulogius was a Syrian by birth. While still young he embraced the monastic life in his own country; it was in the religious habit that he set himself to study theology at the true sources of that science, Scripture, the Councils and the works of the Fathers. As he joined to tireless application a penetrating mind, a quick understanding and a sound judgment, his progress was rapid, and he was soon in a position to fight for the truth. It was this consideration that led Tiberius Constantine, on his accession to the throne, to choose him as patriarch of Alexandria on the death of John. Eulogius composed excellent works against the Acephali and the other sects of the Eutychians. Eleven Discourses by him are also known, the ninth of which is a eulogy of the monastic life, and six books against the Novatians of Alexandria. All that remains to us of these works are fragments preserved by Photius, patriarch of Constantinople. — Godescard, Baillet, Dom Ceillier.

[4] A just judge of merit, Nectarius hastened, from the first days of his episcopate, to raise Saint Syagrius to the priesthood and to put Saint Germanus at the head of the abbey of Saint-Symphorien (540). The bodies of Saints Nazarius and Celsus, martyrs at Milan, miraculously discovered by Saint Ambrose, had become the object of a famous pilgrimage. The cathedral of Autun, newly built through the care of its devout bishop, was placed under their invocation. Saint Nectarius undertook the journey to Milan to honour the precious relics of the patrons of his Church. He wished to bring back some of their bones; but as the practice of dividing the bodies of the saints was then very rare, they contented themselves with giving him a cloth dyed with their blood. Saint Nectarius attended the Fifth Council of Orléans in 549, at which seventy-one archbishops and bishops of the Gauls were present. This Council condemned the *Three Chapters* (three theological works by Theodore of Mopsuestia, Theodoret and Ibas, more or less tainted with the errors of Nestorius on the mystery of the Incarnation and on the union of the two natures in Jesus Christ) and the heresies of Nestorius and Eutyches, and made several disciplinary canons. Saint Nectarius did not long survive this Council and died about 550. — *Légendaire d'Autun*; *Propre* of the diocese; *Saint Symphorien et son culte*, by M. l'abbé Dinet.

[5] We gave her life on 9 July.

[6] See his life on 2 August.

[7] Otherwise Amet, Aimé.

[8] Some make him archbishop of Sens (*Senonensis*); others, of Sion in the Valais (*Sedunensis*). The diocese of Sens recognizes him as its bishop; his office has formed part of the Proper of Sens since the return to the Roman liturgy.

14 September

Martyrologies

Fourteenth day of September

MARTYROLOGE ROMAIN.

Roman Martyrology.

THE EXALTATION OF THE HOLY CROSS, when the emperor Heraclius brought it back from Persia to Jerusalem after the defeat of King Chosroes II. 627. — At Rome, on the Appian Way, Saint Cornelius, pope and martyr, who, during the persecution of Decius, after suffering exile, was scourged with leaded rods and then beheaded with twenty-one Christians of both sexes. Cerealis, a soldier, and Sallustia his wife, whom the same Cornelius had instructed in the faith, were also beheaded on the same day. 252. — In Africa, Saint Cyprian, bishop of Carthage, most illustrious for his holiness and learning. After a harsh exile suffered under the emperors Valerian and Gallienus, he was beheaded on the seashore six miles from Carthage, and so consummated his martyrdom. The feast of Saint Cornelius and Saint Cyprian is kept on the 16th of this month.[1] 258. — In the same place there also suffered death the holy martyrs Crescentian, Victor, Rosula and Generalis. — At Rome, Saint Crescentius, a young boy, son of Saint Euthymius, who, during the persecution of Diocletian and under the judge Turpilius, perished by the sword on the Salarian Way. 303. — At Trier, Saint MATERNUS, bishop, a disciple of the apostle Saint Peter, who converted the people of Tongres, Cologne and Trier and the neighbouring peoples. 1st century. — On this same day, the death of Saint John Chrysostom, patriarch of Constantinople, who was exiled by a hostile faction and, when he was being recalled by a decree of Pope Innocent I, died on the way from the ill-treatment of the soldiers guarding him. His feast, however, is kept on 27 January, the day on which his holy body was brought to Constantinople by Theodosius the Younger.[2] 407. — At Genoa, Saint CATHERINE, widow. 1510. — At Rottenbourg, in the Tyrol, Saint NOTBURGA, virgin. 1313.

MARTYROLOGE DE FRANCE, REVU ET AUGMENTÉ.

Martyrology of France, revised and enlarged.

At Tongres on the Geer, a town of Belgium (Limburg), the martyrdom of Saint Evergislus or Evergistus, archbishop of Cologne, where his feast is kept on 24 August. His body rests in the church of Saint Cecilia at Cologne. 5th century. — At Mohon, near Mézières (Ardennes), in the diocese of Reims, Saint Ly (*Laetus*), shepherd, whom the Bollandists believe to be the same as Saint Lié, priest and confessor, named in the Roman Martyrology on 5 November. 534. — In the diocese of Nantes, Saint Odilard, bishop of that see and confessor. 814. — At Nevers, anniversary of the dedication of the church of the general hospital of that city. The hospital was established by letters patent of Louis XIV in 1665; the original purpose of the establishment was to receive the poor beggars of the city of Nevers and the province of the Nivernais and to set them to work. The dedication of the church, under the title of Notre-Dame de Pitié, was performed by Mgr Vallot, bishop of Nevers. 1680. — At Manosque (Basses-Alpes), in the diocese of Digne, anniversary of the crowning of Notre-Dame de Romigier (*de rubo*), whose miraculous statue was discovered about the year 850 under a bush by oxen drawing the plough. The present chapel, restored after the Revolution of ’93, dates from the beginning of the 12th century. The senior chaplain of the navy, who was aboard the ship *Jupiter* at the bombardment of Sebastopol, stated that before the battle he had solemnly consecrated the ship to Notre-Dame de Romigier, and that of the whole French squadron this vessel was the only one that no enemy shell struck. 1856. — At Cancale (Ille-et-Vilaine, canton of Saint-Malo), in the diocese of Rennes, Notre-Dame du Verger, a chapel much venerated by sailors and the people of the whole district. On 14 September 1833 the parish priest of Cancale blessed a new chapel built on the ruins of the old one, which

must have gone back to about the 10th century. — At Niedermorschwihr (canton of Kaysersberg), in the diocese of Strasbourg, Notre-Dame des Trois-Épis, so called from a miraculous apparition. On 14 September 1491 the Blessed Virgin appeared to a devout blacksmith named Schoere: she held in her right hand a stalk of wheat from which came three ears, and in the other a piece of ice, and she ordered the blacksmith to go and announce to the village that if the people were converted the land would be blessed and fruitful, which was the meaning of the stalk with three ears; but that if they were not converted, the ice she held in her left hand was the symbol of the frosts, hailstorms and pestilential diseases that would fall upon the country. To perpetuate the memory of so remarkable an event, a chapel was built under the title of the Trois-Épis on the very spot of the apparition. The number of pilgrims who come there every year is reckoned at twenty thousand; missionaries of the Precious Blood are established there.

ADDITIONS FAITES D'APRÈS LES BOLLANDISTES ET AUTRES HAGIOGRAPHES.

Additions made from the Bollandists and other hagiographers.

At San Marco (*Argentanum*), in Italy (Calabria Citeriore), Saint Domniata (*Dominata*), martyr, mother of Saints Viator, Cassiodorus and Senator, also martyrs. Their bodies, first buried at the place of their execution, were later translated to the cathedral church of San Marco, where they are still venerated by the faithful today. Date uncertain. — In Tuscany, the holy martyrs Felix and his companions, named in the apographs of Saint Jerome. — At Jerusalem, Saint ALBERT OF CASTRO-DI-GUALTERI (diocese of Parma), martyr at Acre (Syria), first a canon regular at Mortara, then successively bishop of Bobbio and of Vercelli, and finally Latin patriarch of Jerusalem. He is regarded as the founder of the Order of Carmelites because in 1209 he gave them a Rule that he had drawn from that of Saint Basil and from the works of John, forty-fourth bishop of Jerusalem. He is mentioned in the Carmelite martyrology on 8 April. 1214. — At Trier, with Saint Maternus, named in the Roman Martyrology of this day, Saints EUCHARIUS and VALERIUS, archbishops of Trier and confessors. 1st century.

Feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross, after Its Deliverance from the Yoke of the Persians

627. — Pope: Honorius I. — Emperor of the East: Heraclius. — Kings of France: Clotaire II; Dagobert I.

> *Dieu a glorifié la Croix en en faisant l'autel de son sacrifice, le trône de son amour, son lit de justice, la chaire de son enseignement, le siège de sa royauté, le trophée de sa gloire ; nous devons la glorifier à notre tour en lui rendant un culte de respect et de reconnaissance, un culte de confiance et d'amour.*
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> *God glorified the Cross by making it the altar of His sacrifice, the throne of His love, His seat of judgment, the pulpit of His teaching, the seat of His kingship, the trophy of His glory; we in our turn must glorify it by paying it a worship of respect and gratitude, a worship of trust and love.*
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> *L'abbé C. Martin, Panégyriques.*

In the reign of the Eastern emperor Heraclius I (610–641), Chosroes II (590–628), king of the Persians, entered Syria, took the city of Jerusalem, plundered and burned it, and carried off to Persia Zacharias, its patriarch. The most deplorable thing in this pillage was the capture and removal of the principal part of the true Cross of Our Lord, which St. Helena, mother of the emperor Constantine, had left in that place of our redemption. Chosroes nevertheless showed it this respect, that he would not see it uncovered or allow it to be taken out of the case in which it was enclosed and sealed; and the Persians too were divinely struck with a religious awe toward it; they kept it carefully, saying that the God of the Christians had come into their country.

Heraclius, to repair such great misfortunes and to deliver the Christians of the East from the yoke of the Persians, resolved to carry the war in his turn into the heart of Persia, not only by levies of troops but by

several acts of piety. Before leaving Constantinople he came to the great church with his feet shod in black and not in scarlet, to show his penitence. He prostrated himself before the holy altar and prayed God earnestly to bless his good intentions. George of Pisidia then foretold to him that instead of the black shoes he had put on out of humility, he would come back with shoes reddened with the blood of the Persians; and the event proved it true. He commended the city to God and to the Blessed Virgin, and his son Constantine to the patriarch Sergius. Finally he took with him a miraculous image of Our Lord, declaring that he would fight with it to the death.

In this state, stronger still in his confidence in God than in the number of his soldiers, Heraclius entered Persia and defeated Chosroes, who was obliged to take shameful flight. The more victorious he was, the more he implored the help of heaven, to which he attributed such happy successes, having his army make solemn processions to ask God for the continuance of His protection and blessing. He went from victory to victory. Chosroes, afraid of falling into the hands of his conqueror, took to flight and withdrew with his wives and his treasures to Seleucia, beyond the Tigris; there his eldest son Siroes seized him and put him in prison, where he died of hunger, ill-treatment and insults. So ended Chosroes, who had laid waste the whole East, waged against the Christians the most inhuman and bloody war they had ever suffered, carried off and taken away the Cross of the Son of God, pillaged His churches, profaned His altars and committed countless sacrileges.

Siroes, seeing himself raised to the throne of Persia by such reprehensible and tyrannical means, asked nothing better than to make peace with the Romans: he therefore sent dispatches to Heraclius to obtain it. The emperor granted it willingly; but among the conditions of the treaty he obliged him above all to return the Cross of Our Lord in the same state in which his father had carried it off, and to set free the patriarch Zacharias and all the Christian slaves. He then returned in triumph to Constantinople, where he was received with great acclamations by the people; they applauded the man who had restored the honour of the Roman empire by the defeat of the barbarians. They went out to meet him with olive branches and torches, and nothing was left undone that could show the public gladness and joy at seeing the Cross of the Saviour in the hands of the Christians.

To render solemn thanks to God for the great and signal victories he had won, Heraclius wished to take back to Jerusalem himself the wood of the true Cross, which had been for fourteen years in the power of the barbarians. When he had arrived there, he laid it on his own shoulders to carry it back with greater pomp to Calvary, from which it had been taken; but when he reached the gate that leads to that holy mount, he found himself so immovable that he could not advance a single step. This wonder, whose cause no one knew, astonished everyone; only the patriarch Zacharias, judging where it came from, said to him: “Take care, O emperor, lest in this imperial robe you are wearing you are not conformed enough to the poor and humbled state of Jesus Christ when He carried His Cross.” Touched by these words and recognizing their truth, Heraclius at once took off his robe covered with gold and precious stones, took off his shoes and put on the garment of a poor man, after which he walked without difficulty and went as far as Calvary, where he set the cross back in the same place from which it had been taken. Finally, to make this triumph still more memorable and to exalt still further the glory of the Cross, several miracles were worked that day by the power of this sacred wood: a dead man was raised to life, four paralytics were healed, ten lepers cleansed, fifteen blind men given sight, many possessed persons delivered and a countless number of sick people restored to perfect health.

Afterwards it was ordained that the solemn feast of this restoration should be kept every year, and the Church still celebrates it on 14 September under the name of the *Exaltation of the Holy Cross*. It was very famous in the East, and on that day pilgrims flocked to Jerusalem from every part of the world. So much for the institution of this feast in memory of the recovery of the Cross by Heraclius; but long before, in the Greek Church and in the Latin Church, a solemnity was kept in honour of the Cross under the name of *Exaltation*,

to call to mind the words of Jesus Christ, who said, speaking of His death: “When I am exalted, that is, lifted up from the earth, I will draw all things to Myself. As Moses exalted the serpent in the desert, so must the Son of Man be exalted. When you have exalted the Son of Man, you shall know who I am.” Cardinal Baronius, in his *Notes on the Martyrology*, says that this feast was established in the time of the emperor Constantine, to thank God that the Cross was then exalted throughout the world by the freedom the faithful had to preach the Gospel and to build churches. Perhaps it was established after the true Cross had been found by St. Helena and when it was placed on Calvary.

But this feast can be kept every day and at every moment in the heart of the Christian. That is the place where Jesus Christ chiefly wishes His Cross to be exalted. The outward exaltation that takes place beneath the vaults of churches, or over the gates of cities, or even on the heads of sovereigns, is only a sign of what must take place in that living and breathing sanctuary.

We shall exalt it by a high esteem of its merit, by a great zeal to carry it as Jesus Christ carried it, by a deep respect for the sufferings that this lovable Saviour endured, by a particular care to glorify it in all our actions, and by a holy application to make it triumph in the hearts of our brethren. And what is there more noble and more salutary than devotion to this precious instrument of our salvation? For the Cross is the hope of Christians, the support of the despairing, the harbour of those tossed by the storm and the medicine of the sick. It is the Cross that quenches the fire of the passions, restores health to sick souls, gives the life of grace to those who were dead through sin and overthrows the empire of vice and impiety. It serves us as sword and shield to fight our adversaries, as sceptre to triumph over their malice, as diadem to adorn us, as rampart to defend our faith, as staff to support us in our weakness, as torch to light us in our darkness, as guide to set us right in our wanderings, and as lesson to teach us the truths of salvation. It blots out sins, stirs to penance, damps the flames of covetousness, checks ambition, dispels vanity, condemns luxury, reproves softness, leads to trust in God, opens heaven to us, strengthens us against temptations, preserves us from dangers, helps us in our misfortunes, consoles us in our afflictions, refreshes us in our labours, fills the hungry, feeds those who fast, clothes those who are stripped, enriches the poor, chastises the rich, succours the needy, accompanies travellers, protects widows, defends orphans, guards cities, preserves houses, unites friends, resists enemies; it is the honour of magistrates, the power of kings, the victory of generals, the glory of priests, the refuge of religious, the retreat of virgins and the inviolable seal of chastity.

The devout people of Lebanon celebrate the feast of the *Exaltation of the Holy Cross* with particular devotion and solemnity. On the eve, at nightfall, a hundred thousand fires blaze on all the heights, vying in brightness with the stars of heaven and reflected in the blue of the sea. There is not a hill, not a rock, not a cove of the shore, not a dwelling, from the foot of the mountains to their highest peaks, from Sidon to Tripoli, wherever a Catholic heart beats, that does not give glory to God. All the bells join their voices to the singing of the faithful, to the murmur of the waves, to the joy of the earth, to exalt the tree of life that bore the Salvation of the world.

The other miraculous effects of the holy Cross may be seen in the sermons of Andrew of Crete and of St. Peter Damian, reported by Surius. We have treated of it more fully on 3 May, the day of its finding. See also the life of St. Radegund. — Cf. Les saints Lieux, *by Mgr Mislin.*

Saint Albert of Castro-di-Gualteri, Lawgiver of the Carmelite Order

1214. — Pope: Innocent III. — King of France: Philip II Augustus.

> *La loi des cloîtres a ses juges et ses témoins, et aussi ses conseillers ; elle a deux témoins, la vie et la conscience ; deux juges, la méditation et la science ; deux conseillers, l’amour du prochain et l’amour de Dieu.*
>
> *The law of the cloister has its judges and its witnesses, and its counsellors too: it has two witnesses, life and conscience; two judges, meditation and knowledge; two counsellors, love of neighbour and love of God.*

Hugh of Saint-Victor, De claustro animae, ii, 17.

Albert was born of a noble family at Castro-di-Gualteri, in the diocese of Parma. Destined for letters from childhood, he made great progress in the liberal arts and in the study of law; but he made no less progress in piety. While still young he entered the monastery of Santa Croce at Mortara, head of a congregation of Canons Regular, where he was instructed in the divine law. Scarcely had he made his profession when he was elected prior of the community. Three years later, in 1183, he was chosen to fill the episcopal see of Bobbio; but his modesty made him imagine a thousand difficulties, which served to prolong the resistance he offered to his election. Meanwhile the bishopric of Vercelli fell vacant, and since he had not yet been consecrated bishop of Bobbio he was compelled to accept it. He governed that Church for twenty years with extraordinary vigilance and ability. He instructed his people as much by the example of his life as by his sermons, and reformed the morals of his clergy and of the rest of his diocesans; many were ashamed to remain in disorder when they saw their pastor so humble, so sober, so chaste, so severe with himself, so charitable, so generous, so compassionate toward everyone and particularly toward the poor, so assiduous at all the divine offices, so devoted to preaching. Although his chief concern was for the spiritual good of his church, he did not fail to work also to secure various temporal advantages for it. He freed it of its debts, which were large and very burdensome; increased its revenues; adorned it with new buildings; defended and strengthened its rights; and, since he was no less skilful a jurist and canonist than a good theologian, he pursued no suit whose justice he did not know perfectly, and his suits were always crowned with success.

The opinion the public held of his prudence, his penetration, his uprightness and his skill in affairs caused Pope Clement III and the emperor Frederick Barbarossa to choose him as arbiter of their differences. It is even added that he was honoured with the title of prince of the Empire by Henry VI, Frederick's successor, who for his sake also granted various favours to the church of Vercelli. Pope Clement III likewise loaded him with benefits, and Innocent III employed him in several important negotiations, notably to bring about a reconciliation between the people of Parma and those of Piacenza, who had taken up arms to destroy one another. Such were the learning, the virtues and the reputation of the holy bishop of Vercelli when he was elected patriarch of Jerusalem, whether he was known there only by repute or had previously gone there on pilgrimage.

The patriarch Monaco, a Florentine by birth, a learned and virtuous man, formerly archbishop of Caesarea, having died at the beginning of the year 1203, Cardinal Soffred, who had just arrived in Palestine as legate of the Holy See, was elected patriarch of Jerusalem by the clergy and people, with the consent of the king and the approval of the suffragan bishops. Deputies were sent to Rome to obtain the Pope's confirmation and the pallium. The Pope, having deliberated on it, sent word that the cardinal should be persuaded to accept if possible, but not compelled. He himself urged him by letter not to refuse the government of a Church in which the Lord Himself had suffered so much. The cardinal, who had at first refused, accepted at the Pope's insistence, and we have a charter of his dated 7 May 1203 in which he styles himself humble patriarch of Jerusalem and unworthy legate of the Apostolic See; but he soon abdicated and obtained a new election. All then agreed to elect Blessed Albert, bishop of Vercelli.

To bring him from Europe, deputies were sent, headed by Rainier, a Florentine by birth, who had been prior of the Holy Sepulchre and was then prior of Joppa. He obtained the Pope's consent, with a letter for Albert dated 18 February 1204, in which he says: "The prior and canons of the Holy Sepulchre have come before us and represented to us that, since our beloved brother Soffred could not be persuaded to consent to his election, they assembled and unanimously elected you patriarch. To this the king of Jerusalem and the archbishops have consented, and they have begged us by their letters not only to induce you but to compel you to consent to this election. The two cardinal legates, Soffred and Peter, have written us the same thing. Finally the suffragan bishops of Jerusalem, who claim a voice in the election (which is disputed by the prior and canons of the Holy Sepulchre), have agreed, as have the patriarch of Antioch and the bishops of his

province for their part, to commit their rights to two persons, who have again named you pastor of that same Church."

Blessed Albert humbly yielded to the Pope's urging. He came to Rome and was translated to the patriarchal see of Jerusalem, receiving not only the pallium but also the authority of apostolic legate in Palestine for four years, as the Pope testifies to the prelates and all the faithful of the country in a letter of 16 June of the following year, 1205. Albert went back to settle the affairs of the Church of Vercelli and provide for a successor, then embarked on a Genoese ship for the Holy Land, where he landed in the year 1206.

While political revolutions were overturning empires, earthquakes laying cities low, and plague and famine decimating nations and kingdoms, poor hermits were living in peace on Mount Carmel. This mountain chain, which joins Phoenicia to Palestine, naturally offers solitudes favourable to contemplation. Raised above land and sea, in the midst of empires, kingdoms, nations and peoples that are no more, out of reach of the storms of human wars, the solitary, from the height of his rocks and the depth of his caves, contemplates in safety the frequent tempests that convulse the sea in the distance. It was there that the prophet Elijah, before being carried up to heaven in a chariot of fire, loved to withdraw to escape the persecution of Ahab and Jezebel and to converse with God alone. It was there that his disciple the prophet Elisha habitually lived with the sons or disciples of the Prophets, true cenobites of the old covenant. We have no doubt that at other times, as under the persecution of Antiochus, when the faithful Israelites fled in such great numbers into the deserts and mountains, Carmel, already consecrated by the memory of Elijah and Elisha, was peopled by pious anchorites. The Hasidaeans, the Essenes, the Therapeutae and other religious and cenobites of the Old Testament must have been fond of a place so suited to the contemplative life. As these various Jewish congregations disappear, at least in name, as soon as Christianity appears, it is rightly concluded that they generally all embraced it. They may have continued under the Christian names of ascetics, monks, solitaries and others. Under the persecutions of the idolatrous emperors, which scarcely ceased for three centuries, Carmel must have served as a refuge for faithful Christians, as formerly for the faithful Israelites under the persecution of Jezebel and Ahab. The same must have happened at the invasion of

Mohammedanism, as we see on a large scale in the mountains of Lebanon, where the Christians who took refuge there formed the Maronite nation. It is therefore entirely probable that, ever since the prophet Elijah, Mount Carmel habitually served as a retreat for pious solitaries.

When Blessed Albert, patriarch of Jerusalem, had arrived in Palestine, the hermits of Mount Carmel asked him for a written rule adapted to the purpose of their institute. He gave it to them about the year 1209. It is in sixteen articles, of which we shall speak shortly. A good number of hagiographers and historians date from this legislation of 1209 the origin, properly speaking, of the Carmelite Order, which from then on spread through the whole Latin Church, produced St. Teresa and St. John of the Cross, and sent virgin martyrs to heaven during the French Revolution.

Blessed Albert, whose feast the Carmelites keep on 8 February, died on 14 September 1214. He was preparing to come to the council of Rome, but he had found himself obliged to rebuke an inhabitant of Ivrea, in Lombardy, for his disorders. Instead of profiting by his fatherly remonstrance, the wretch killed him with a stab of a knife on the day of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross, in the middle of a procession, at Saint-Jean d'Acre (a town of Syria, at the foot of Mount Carmel).

St. Albert of Castro-di-Gualteri is represented: 1° assisted at death by the Mother of God and a numerous escort of angels; 2° in the Carmelite habit, as the definitive founder of that Order; 3° holding a book and a pen in his hand, to express the statutes he drew up in order to gather the solitaries of Carmel under one form of life; 4° with a knife beside him, to symbolize his tragic end.

NOTICE SUR L'ORDRE DES CARMES ET LA LÉGISLATION QUE LEUR DONNA SAINT ALBERT.

Notice on the Carmelite Order and the legislation St. Albert gave it.

The Carmelite Order (*Ordo Beatae Mariae de Monte Carmelo*) long maintained that it had been created by the prophet Elijah (800 years before Jesus Christ) on Mount Carmel (Syria), and had continued without interruption. But it is now proved that this claim was very ill-founded, that the Order began only in the second half of the 11th century (about 1156), and that it owed its original legislation to St. Albert, patriarch of Jerusalem. This rule, as we have said, contains sixteen articles. The first deals with the election of a prior and the obedience owed to him. The second speaks of the brethren's cells, which are to be separate from one another. The third forbids them to change cells without permission. The fourth prescribes where the prior's cell is to be situated. The fifth orders them to remain in their cells and to devote themselves there day and night to prayer, unless they are lawfully occupied. The sixth deals with the canonical hours to be recited by those appointed for choir; it also sets out what those who do not know the canonical hours are to say. By the seventh the brethren are forbidden to own anything of their own. The eighth orders an oratory to be built in the midst of the cells, where they are all to assemble in the morning to hear Mass. The ninth speaks of the holding of local chapters and the correction of the brethren. The tenth recommends the observance of the fast from the feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross until Easter, Sundays excepted. Abstinence from meat at all times is ordered in the eleventh. The twelfth exhorts the brethren to put on the spiritual armour set before them. The thirteenth obliges them to manual labour. The fourteenth imposes strict silence on them from Vespers until Terce of the following day. The fifteenth exhorts the prior to be humble, and the sixteenth recommends the religious to respect the prior.

The organization of the Carmelite Order is an aristocratic monarchy, the general's power being limited by the need to ask, in certain determined cases, the advice of the definitors, who are his counsellors. Under the name of Mitigated Carmelites are understood religious instituted in 1432 who followed the Carmelite Rule as softened by Eugene IV; and under that of Discalced Carmelites, a religious Congregation established in the 16th century, which was only a reform of the Carmelites. This reform was first applied to convents of women by St. Teresa in 1562; then that Saint, helped by St. John of the Cross, introduced it into the convents of men. These Carmelites went barefoot, whence their name.

For this biography we have used the Vie des Saints *by the abbé Rohrbacher, the* Dictionnaire des Ordres religieux *by Hélyot, and the* Dictionnaire

encyclopédique de la Théologie catholique *by Goschler.*

Saint Notburga of Rottenbourg, Virgin

1313. — Pope: Clement V. — Emperor of Germany: Henry VII of Luxembourg.

> *La valeur d'une aumône ne se mesure pas à la grandeur du don, mais à la fortune et à la volonté de celui qui donne.*
>
> *The value of an alms is not measured by the size of the gift, but by the means and the goodwill of the giver.*
>
> *St. John Chrysostom.*

Notburga was born in 1265 at Rottenbourg, in the Tyrol. Her parents were well-to-do farmers, esteemed by everyone for their piety. They brought up their daughter with extreme care in the principles of Christianity, and believed they had done everything for her happiness by imprinting on her heart the love of God and of His holy commandments and the horror of vice. Notburga answered perfectly to the pious and beneficent intentions of her parents. She became a model of innocence, of the tenderest kindness and of the most heartfelt piety. She edified everyone by her modesty and her holiness. Her compassion for all who suffered was so great that, after the outpourings of her fervent devotion, she knew no greater delight on earth than to be able to offer help and comfort to the poor and the unfortunate and dry their tears. And so, when in her eighteenth year she entered the service of Count Henry as cook at the castle of Rottenbourg, whose ruins can

still be seen on a mountain near Schwaz, she found the opportunity to satisfy to her heart's content her pity for all the unfortunate and the needy. Count Henry was very rich and at the same time grand master of the court of Meinhard, prince of the county of Tyrol and duke of Carinthia; he was very pious, as was his wife Jutta or Gutta, and both were very generous to the poor. The alms that their faithful servant distributed daily to the poor, which often came in large part from the food she denied herself and from her savings, drew down the blessing of heaven on the house of Henry and Jutta. Notburga was the mother of all the needy who besieged the approaches to the castle every day. The pleasure with which she sought to relieve them outwardly was no less than the pious care with which she exhorted them to lead a Christian life.

In the midst of these good works the pious virgin did not forget to work at her own salvation, following the ways of the Lord with ever-growing fidelity by her humility, by the mastery she exercised over herself and by the fervour of her devotion.

As the highest degree of piety lacks its finest lustre when it is not accompanied by trials and sufferings, she too saw herself called to run this course of purification. She lost her good master and mistress, who passed to a better life. Henry died before his wife. When Jutta followed him, Notburga had been six years in their service. Jutta, knowing the hard and haughty character of her daughter-in-law Ottilia, who had married her son Henry, had nothing more pressing to do on her deathbed than to commend to her, in the most moving way, the care she was to have for the poor and needy and the esteem she was to have for Notburga, who was the providence of her house. Ottilia promised her dying mother-in-law all that she had asked of her with such good intentions; but soon everyone could see that it was not without a particular presentiment that Notburga had felt such deep grief at the death of the count and his pious wife. Ottilia, now mistress of the castle, strictly forbade Notburga to talk with the beggars, and she was no longer allowed to give the needy the fruit of her savings. The beggars were even ordered not to come near the castle any more. But since it was impossible for Notburga to stifle entirely in her heart the feelings she nourished for the unfortunate, Ottilia conceived such resentment against her that she ended by prejudicing her husband, who had been away for some time, against Notburga's charity. One day he was crossing the fields on horseback on his way to the castle when he met the charitable virgin at the foot of the outside staircase, carrying a load in her apron. He went up to her in a fury and asked her what she had there. Trembling, she admitted that it was part of her food that she had put aside. Tradition says she was obliged to open her apron for him. When, looking into it, he thought he saw nothing but wood shavings, he took her statement for a wicked jest and at once resolved to dismiss her. His wife, to whom he told what had happened, confirmed his suspicion, and Notburga found herself forced to leave the castle at once. The pious and innocent virgin kept silent and spoke not a word of justification against the insults with which she was sent away. She left in tears and made her way toward a neighbouring valley called Eben or Ebene, in the Inn valley. There she took service as a maid with a peasant. His wretched dwelling stood near a little church dedicated to St. Rupert, above which Mount Harterberg raises its summit into the clouds.

Notburga grew attached to this solitary dwelling and to the field work with which she was charged. She grew still more attached to the chapel, where she poured out her soul before the Lord as often as she could get away, and she never forgot to include in her prayers her former employers at the castle of Rottenbourg, which she could see from where she was. However, she had not been there long when she learned that Countess Ottilia had been struck by a very serious illness. She was allowed to come to the castle, and received from the countess, whose suffering had made her more humble, permission to approach her bed. Ottilia was deeply moved by the concern Notburga showed for her ills. She confessed to the one she had unjustly persecuted that she was a better Christian than her former mistress, whom she had come to visit with such kindness on her bed of pain. Notburga at once sought to turn the conversation and to lead her to patience, to a lively trust in the divine mercy and to sincere repentance for her sins. Ottilia died giving visible signs of repentance and Christian sentiments, after earnestly commending the support of the needy to her

grieving husband and ordering several pious foundations. St. Notburga, having returned to her service in the fields, continued her fervent exercises of devotion, sinking more and more deeply into the contemplation of God and His good pleasure. Her piety did not escape the other inhabitants of the district; for all her words and actions plainly betrayed how edifying and pure her conduct was. One day, says her biographer, she was in the fields on a Saturday afternoon with her master, busy cutting corn; when the bell announced the solemnity of the next day, she stopped working. Her master, however, wanted the harvest of that piece of land finished that same day. The pious servant asked to be allowed to keep the rest on the eves of Sundays and feast days properly, as had been stipulated in their agreement. But as the peasant insisted that she go on working, she cried out, raising her eyes to heaven and holding the scythe in her hand: "If the agreement I made about this rest is just and praiseworthy, let this scythe bear witness to it." She drew back her hand, and the scythe remained hanging in the air. The peasant, seized with astonishment and terror, begged the girl's pardon and promised never again to force anyone to work after the sound of the bell.

While the holy servant was living in that silent valley, Henry of Rottenbourg had to endure all kinds of calamities. A bloody war having broken out between Albert, archduke of Austria, on the one side, and on the other Otto, duke of Bavaria, and Conrad, prince of Salzburg, Henry of Rottenbourg, together with several other knights, took the archduke's side. His brother Siegfried sided with the duke of Bavaria; for this reason Henry's property was not spared, and his lands of Rottenbourg, Tratzberg, Rettenberg and Friedsberg were utterly laid waste. Henry was reduced almost to beggary by his brother. The people of the country attributed all these misfortunes to the ill treatment that he and his wife Ottilia, who had just died, had inflicted on Notburga and, in her person, on the poor. Henry, persuaded on serious reflection on his present situation that these evils were only a punishment for his hardness and injustice, resolved to bring this Saint back to his castle without delay, and with her the blessing of heaven and good fortune. So the next day he mounted his horse and rode to the peasant's cottage. He found the virgin working in the fields. Coming up to her, he threw himself at her feet and begged her with deep emotion to return with him to the castle and to forgive him what had happened. He undertook to make every effort from then on to conform to the wish his father and mother had expressed on their deathbeds, and to treat her as his sister and his best friend. At the same time he told her that he was about to offer his hand to the noble lady Margaret of Hoheneck. Notburga, touched by his words, hastened to make Henry rise and confessed to him, with tears in her eyes, that she had always been attached to him and his house; so she consented to go back with him to the castle. Everyone who lived there and all the poor round about, overjoyed at the return of the holy girl, had flocked to the castle. They were not disappointed in their expectation. Margaret, Henry's new wife, was as tender a mother to the poor as Notburga. Prosperity and the blessing of heaven visibly returned to that house. Margaret bore her husband several children. When, in 1305, Duke Meinhard died and in the following year his son Henry was elected king of Bohemia, the office of burgrave of the Tyrol, together with the post of master of the king's court and seneschal of the province on the Etsch, was conferred on Henry of Rottenbourg.

Notburga, still a servant and faithful to the service of God, then enjoyed several years of happiness. She devoted herself more and more to the Lord, who gave her many tokens of His grace and mercy. At last she fell ill. Henry was not a little alarmed when he learned that the pious servant had been struck by a serious illness. He hastened to her side with his wife Margaret, his sons Henry, Gebhard and Nicholas, and his daughters Elizabeth and Jutta. She made the most touching exhortations to her master's children, who were so dear to her, and gave them her blessing. Fortified with the holy sacraments of the dying, she breathed her last in 1313, on the day of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross, at the age of forty-eight. Henry had her body taken to its last resting place in a cart drawn by oxen, under the direction of a priest of the monastery of Mont-Saint-George, which was not far away. Tradition says that the cart crossed the Inn, and that the river divided its waters to give the animals a safe passage. They went through the village of Innbach and climbed along the Kasbach to the church of St. Rupert, into which they drove the cart. The Saint's body was buried beside the altar. Henry also had a chapel built near the village of Innbach, where the cart had stopped. It still

exists, having been restored several times. Many miracles were worked at her tomb. Above her burial place, which is marked by a slab of white marble, a fine church now rises. The Holy See has permitted her to be honoured as a Saint with public cult in the Church. Her body, very richly adorned, stands upright on the high altar.

She is frequently painted with a bunch of keys hanging from her girdle, to indicate a housekeeper. — She is also represented surrounded by children, because she took charitable care of her master's large family. Sometimes she is seen with a sickle in her hand or hanging in the air, to recall the incident we have related in her life.

Taken from Ræss and Weis, vol. xx, p. 177. The life of Notburga was written in German by Hippolytus Quarinonius and printed in 1646. The critical notes on this life and on the miracles worked through her intercession are in the Bollandists, vol. iv of September, where one may see a long series of engravings depicting, among other things, the principal episodes of the Saint's life.

Saint Catherine Fieschi of Genoa, Widow

1510. — Pope: Julius II. — Emperor of Germany: Maximilian I.

> *Un cœur blessé par l'amour divin est insurmontable, car Dieu est sa force.*
>
> *A heart wounded by divine love cannot be overcome, for God is its strength.*
>
> *Maxim of St. Catherine of Genoa.*

This illustrious widow belonged to the celebrated Fieschi family of Genoa, so fruitful in great men and heroes, which gave the Church two sovereign Pontiffs, Innocent IV and Adrian V, gave the court of Rome eight or nine cardinals and Genoa two archbishops, and gave its country a host of captains and excellent magistrates. Her father was Jacopo Fieschi, whose prudence and valour earned him appointment as viceroy of Naples by René, king of Sicily and Jerusalem. She was born in 1447. Although her beauty was ravishing and her constitution very delicate, she nevertheless began at the age of eight to practise very harsh and austere mortifications: she slept only on a plain straw mattress and used only a piece of wood for a pillow. She had in her room a picture representing Our Lord in the pitiful state in which He was when Pilate showed Him to the Jews and said to them: "Behold the man!" Her heart was so moved when she looked at this object of compassion that the grief she felt inwardly passed into the members of her body. She lived in admirable simplicity and in most perfect obedience to her parents; and as she was very well instructed in the way of God's commandments, she took extreme care to fulfil them exactly.

At the age of twelve God granted her the gift of prayer to such a degree that from then on she experienced the delicious ardours of holy love, especially when she meditated on the Passion of her Saviour, which was the most usual object of her thoughts. But as experience taught her that it was hard to taste these sweetnesses of grace amid the occupations and conversations of the world, she wished to become a nun, and even took some steps toward being received into a monastery in the city of Genoa called Our Lady of Graces, where one of her sisters was already professed. But her parents, who wished her to marry, refused their consent. So she remained in the world against her will and found herself obliged to marry a young nobleman named Giuliano Adorno, also a Genoese and of a very famous family.

This husband served only to exercise her patience and make her suffer for ten years; for he treated her like a stranger and gave her no knowledge of his household affairs, while he squandered all his property in useless expenses and reduced himself to poverty; he spoke roughly to her and had no gentleness or cordiality toward her. During the first five years she lived very retired, going out only to hear Mass and keeping the rest of the time shut up in her house. During the other five years, wishing to beguile her weariness, she received and returned the visits of ladies of her rank, which involved her in the world a little more than she had intended,

though always within the limits of honour and without exceeding the bounds of wisdom and Christian modesty.

But God, who wanted her in a higher perfection, imperceptibly spread bitterness over all the things in which she thought to find pleasure. Toward the end of the ten years of her marriage she fell into an extraordinary gloom and sadness, which made her wish for, and even ask God for, an illness of three months that would keep her in bed and make it impossible for her to see anyone. This word escaped her rather through a surprise of sensuality overwhelmed by anguish and sorrow than through a deliberate will. However, her sister the nun, having learned what was happening, advised her to present herself the next day to the confessor of her monastery, a man of holy life and very enlightened in the direction of souls. Catherine was hardly disposed to go to confession that day; still, to satisfy her sister, she came and threw herself at the confessor's feet to ask his blessing. But scarcely was she on her knees at his confessional when she received in her heart a wound of love for God that cannot be expressed, with so clear and piercing a sight of His divine goodness and of her own wretchedness that she almost fell to the ground. This light and this fire at the same time purified all her affective part and gave her such detachment from sin, from the world and from every creature that she cried out in the depths of her soul: "No more sin, no more world, nothing more but God!" And at that moment, had she been mistress of a million persons, she would have left them and trampled them underfoot for the glory of her Saviour. As she could not speak, it happened by good fortune that someone came to fetch the confessor for another person who was asking for him. He got up without having noticed anything; but he came back at once, and then Catherine, whose holy wound was opening ever wider, was obliged to tell him, though with difficulty, that she was not herself: "I beg you, father, to allow me to put off this confession to another time." He consented, and our penitent, leaving the confessional, went quickly home, where she gave free rein to the fire that was devouring her and let it pour out in sighs, groans and laments: "O love!" she said, "O love! is it possible that You have touched and called me with such tenderness? Is it possible that You have shown me in an instant what I see and perceive?" Her contrition for all the offences she had committed was so great that, had God not sustained her miraculously, her heart would have broken and she would have given up the ghost that very hour. Our Lord, to increase this disposition, which was supremely pleasing to Him, showed Himself to her laden with His cross and shedding blood from all His wounds in such abundance that it seemed to her the whole house was flooded with it. At the same time she understood that He shed this blood only for her sins; and this sight produced in her soul so great an increase of love and sorrow that she could not bear the strain of it. This is what made her repeat so often: "O love! no more sin; ah! no more sin, divine love!" She conceived such hatred of herself for having committed sin that she could no longer endure herself, and was ready to confess all her offences publicly so as to draw upon herself the contempt and aversion of all men.

It was in this disposition that she made her general confession; and although her sins, which were in any case light, had already been consumed in the great furnace kindled within her at the moment when God touched her, she still wept over them with a bitterness beyond conceiving. Then she was drawn successively to the feet, the knees, the breast and the sacred mouth of her crucified Spouse, and there she received wholly divine impressions which worked in her a perfect death and a holy transformation of her spirit. Leaning on His breast, she saw there His sacred Heart all burning with those heavenly flames with which she herself was aflame, and she felt as if plunged and engulfed in that furnace; which made her say: "I have no soul any more, I have no heart any more; my soul and my heart are those of my most sweet Love." The kiss she received from His mouth bound her so closely to Him that she was as it were lost in His divinity, living now only by His life, acting only by His spirit, and discerning only as far as the light of grace made her discern. Her conversion having taken place on 22 March, the day after the feast of St. Benedict, three days later, on the day of the Annunciation, she was touched with an ardent desire for holy communion. She therefore asked permission to communicate every day, and Our Lord inspired those who directed her to grant her this grace. He even showed by several wonders that this devotion was pleasing to Him; for often, without Catherine

having troubled about it, priests would call her to communion; and when she did not communicate she felt an incredible distress and a prostration of body and mind that seemed likely to bring her to the grave. She was not troubled, however, when this sacred food was withheld from her to test her; she abandoned herself entirely to the dispositions of divine Providence, all the more because she always feared she was not pure enough to share so often in this mystery, which the very angels are not worthy to look upon. She received in it unspeakable consolations, which sometimes carried her out of herself; but she told her Spouse that she did not seek Him for His caresses and consolations, but solely from the desire to be perfectly united to Him. Her body too found relief in it in its infirmities; and once, when she was extremely ill, she was cured by this precious remedy, given her three days running. She envied no one in the world but priests, because they had the power to consecrate, touch and receive her divine Love every day without anyone finding fault; and she would gladly have walked several leagues so as not to be deprived of this great treasure. Indeed, during an interdict on the city of Genoa, she went every morning half a league to receive Him, without feeling any weariness, because her love carried her and made the way seem very short. When she heard Mass she was so absorbed in the contemplation of the greatness and goodness of her Beloved that she could not tell where the priest had got to; but at the time of communion her love roused her and led her to the holy table. This sometimes made her say that she could have told a consecrated host from an unconsecrated one by a supernatural taste, just as one naturally tells wine from water.

Our Lord, redoubling His favours toward her, willed that during Advent and Lent she should live on nothing but the sacred Host. For twenty-three years, in fact, it was impossible for her, from Martinmas to Christmas and from

Quinquagesima to Easter, to keep anything in her stomach but this manna from heaven. She took only, each day, a glass of water mixed with vinegar and salt, to temper the great fire that was devouring her and consuming her inwardly. At first this way of living gave her some distress and fear, and at that time she even did all she could to eat: she sat down at table with her family and did not fail to take and swallow something, to hide this singular privilege that might win her the world’s esteem; but she was forced to bring up what she had taken; and if, out of the respect and submission she owed to her confessor’s orders, she sometimes forced herself harder to keep it down, she fell into so alarming a state that it was thought she was about to die. For the rest, during this prodigious abstinence she was no weaker than before; on the contrary, she slept better and felt more agile and vigorous than at the times when she ate like everyone else. And what is more surprising, far from keeping still, she applied herself more assiduously to the toilsome exercises of charity and mortification without feeling any weariness.

As the spirit of Jesus Christ is a spirit of penance, she was no sooner filled with it than she gave herself to extraordinary austerities and rigours. She at once declared irreconcilable war on all her senses and resolved to refuse them everything capable of giving them pleasure and to vex them in every way that holy hatred of herself suggested. Indeed, when she saw that her flesh was seeking something, she deprived it of it at once and made it suffer the very opposite. She wore prickly hair shirts and lay on bundles of thorns and on bare boards, more likely to break her bones than to give her rest. She ate no meat, no new fruit, nor any other food that might flatter the taste or make good nourishment, but only insipid things of little value. Nevertheless, since the great excess of her love had kindled in her a fire that devoured her to the bone, she suffered unceasingly from extreme hunger. Sight, hearing and speech served her only for necessary uses, or to procure the glory of God and the salvation of her neighbour. As soon as she felt in herself a repugnance to some mortification, she undertook it with intrepid strength and courage and did not leave it until she had overcome that resistance. Thus, if her stomach turned at the sight of rotting corpses, pus flowing from ulcers or other objects repugnant to nature, she at once put her lips to them, and sometimes even put some in her mouth; this made her victorious over all her repugnances and perfectly mortified all her feelings. As God gave her the grace to recognize her smallest faults and the least self-seeking of nature and self-love that crept into her

actions, she was admirably quick and exact in uprooting and destroying them. Every day she regularly made six hours of mental prayer in a very humble posture, however much her sensuality disliked it and however hard it strove to make her give less time to it. At other hours she was still most often found so absorbed in God that she neither saw nor heard anything of what was going on around her.

After four years of so austere a life, or rather of so great a death, she received from on high a mind clear, pure, free, unencumbered, and so filled with the first and eternal truth that no creature had access to it. Even at a sermon or at Mass she had no awareness of what struck her senses outwardly, but was wholly plunged in an ineffable sense of the Divinity. Yet the Spirit of God so regulated and governed her that He let her do nothing contrary to propriety; when it was necessary for her to rise to go to communion, or to go home, or to answer those who asked for her, He gave her back to herself, or made her do all these things very fittingly. Her love was so ardent that often she could hardly speak or converse with people, so that she was compelled to go and hide in order to give freer rein to this great fire. When people went to look for her, they found her lying on the ground, quite out of herself, her face covered with both her hands, but filled with delights so ineffable that there are none on earth to compare with them. Sometimes she did not hear when she was called, however loudly people shouted; at other times she heard, and at once she rose and did what was wanted of her, for she held nothing in greater horror than singularity and attachment to her own way. When she came back from these ecstasies her face was so rosy that she looked like a cherub all full of light and a seraph all covered with flames.

In one of her raptures her love gave her three rules, or means of perfection, which she faithfully observed. The first: never to say “I will” or “I will not”, nor “my” or “mine”, but only “do this” or “do not do that”, “our book”, “our clothes”. The second: never to excuse herself, but always to be the quickest and severest in accusing herself. The third: in saying the Lord’s Prayer, to take as the foundation of her whole life the maxim *Fiat voluntas tua*, “Thy will be done”, in our body, in our soul, in our riches, in our honour, in our relatives, in our friends and in everything that touches us for good or ill; in saying the Angelic Salutation, to fasten chiefly on the adorable name of Jesus as a powerful safeguard against every kind of peril; and finally, in all the rest of holy Scripture, to take the word “love” for her support, because by means of this love she would always walk in light and purity of heart and be filled with a heavenly strength and vigour that would make the greatest pains of this life perfectly agreeable to her.

It would be an endless task to describe the various impressions this spirit of pure love gave her and the different states of action and suffering through which it made her pass. At first she had such a desire to die, so as to go and enjoy her Beloved in peace, with no further fear of interruption or lessening of her love, that she regarded death as the greatest happiness that could befall her; sometimes she called it cruel because it spared her and did not end her life soon enough; at other times she called it sweet, beautiful, pleasant, charming and kind, because it was to put her in possession of the sole object of her desires. But after two years of these transports she entered into a death still more perfect and precious, ready to die or not to die according to the disposition of Providence. She saw so distinctly her original nothingness, the general corruption of her nature by sin, and that being and goodness belong properly to God alone, that she was as it were incapable of pride, presumption and vainglory. She pronounced the word “I” only with regret, persuaded that it was too bold for a creature and a sinner; if she happened to be obliged to say it in some conversation because she could not speak otherwise, she at once referred it inwardly to God, as to Him who is the source and ground of all beings. Divine love filled and possessed her so perfectly that she no longer felt body, soul, mind, will, light or activity, but was wholly melted and transformed into that blessed passion. It was love that governed her, that led her everywhere, that applied her to what she was to do and made her act, without her needing to reflect on it or trouble about it; and as pure love goes to God only for God, without attaching itself to what comes from God, she sought neither lights, nor consolations, nor sweetness, but God alone, without admixture and without intermediary. We read further in her life, which an Italian doctor

published, and in the admirable writings she herself composed on her own experiences, other marvellous traits of her perfect self-annihilation, her wholly heavenly wisdom, her incomparable zeal and her union of body and spirit with God. Souls called to supernatural states may consult them, to learn how far the ardour and impression of holy love can go.

This inner occupation, which never left her day or night, did not prevent her from devoting herself with tireless charity to the help of the poor and the sick. At the beginning of her conversion she joined the Company of the Ladies of Mercy, and, not content with settling with them in their meetings the alms to be distributed to these unfortunates, she went herself to visit them and help them in their homes, bringing them what the ladies had given. She cleaned them with surprising patience and courage, and neither dirt nor stench could ever repel her. She even took home their soiled linen and their clothes full of grease and vermin to wash them; when they were quite clean she took them back and began again to do them various services. Although she was often among these poor people, changing them with her own hands and looking after their rags, not a single vermin was ever found on her, God not permitting her charity to bring any harm to her cleanliness. Her care did not extend only to temporal needs; she also took particular care of spiritual ones. She made strong remonstrances to the poor when giving them alms, to lead them to make holy use of their pains and miseries. She exhorted the sick to patience, disposed them for confession and communion, prepared them for death and assisted them generously in that last hour on which the decision of eternity depends.

At first her husband did not find these devotions and charities very agreeable; but in the end she won him over so completely that he gave himself to devotion, consented that they should live together only as brother and sister, and finally embraced the Third Order of St. Francis, or of Penance, and faithfully practised its exercises, without however leaving his house. Afterwards he was afflicted with a cruel illness, which caused him violent pains and often threw him into great fits of impatience. Catherine, seeing him on the decline of his life, feared that these fits of impatience might endanger his salvation; so she withdrew into the secrecy of her oratory and, shedding many tears at the feet of her crucified Saviour, said to Him: “Love, I ask You for this soul; I beg You to give it to me; You have only to do it; it is in Your hands.” At the end of half an hour she felt inwardly that she had been heard; and indeed, going back that very hour into the sick man’s room, she found him completely changed and so perfectly resigned to God’s will that he was ready to suffer still sharper pains.

He died in this happy disposition, and our holy woman did not doubt that God had shown him mercy. After his death some people told Catherine that she was delivered from a great bondage and had good reason to be consoled, considering the ills she had endured from the whimsical and melancholy temper of such a husband; but she answered that she did not trouble herself about those ills, because she regarded everything in the order of God’s will, which makes evils appear as sweet and agreeable as good things. She lost almost at the same time such brothers and sisters as she had, among them that holy nun who had contributed so happily to her conversion and whom she tenderly loved; but her union with God’s good pleasure was so great that she was no more affected than if these persons had not belonged to her. Being perfectly free, she devoted herself for ever to the service of the great hospital of Genoa, where the administrators, seeing her so charitable and so full of zeal and fervour, gave her charge of everything. It is impossible to express the diligence and care with which she provided for all the needs of that great house. She never omitted anything that was her duty; the poor and the sick never lacked anything through her fault. She kept so exact an account of the considerable sums she handled for the expenses of the hospital that not the slightest error was ever found in them, either in receipts or in expenditure. But what is surprising, and must be admired by everyone, is that these occupations, capable of distracting the most eminent souls and those most united to God, took nothing away from her recollection or from that great fire of divine love with which she was all aflame. In the midst of so much business she remained in the same relish for God, the same death to herself, the same passive

state and the same suspension of her natural activity and operations as when she lived retired and solitary, the Holy Spirit joining in her outward action with pure dependence on His movement and impulse.

She was so disinterested in the management of this hospital that she would never accept any remuneration from it to live on, however small; for the little she needed, she drew on what remained of her property after her husband had squandered her dowry and the inheritances that were to serve as her jointure. Her generosity went so far as to serve and embrace the sick who were infected with the plague and with every kind of contagious disease. One day, seeing a lady of the Third Order of St. Francis who was near her end and was struggling hard to pronounce the adorable name of Jesus, she was filled with such joy that, although the lady had a pestilential fever, she embraced her and kissed her on the mouth with great affection. By this kiss she caught the disease and nearly died of it; but God restored her health so as to employ her with fresh fervour in the service of the suffering members of His Son Jesus Christ.

Nine years before her death she fell into another illness, which lasted until her last breath. One cannot imagine the ills and pains this visitation from heaven caused her: she was often within a hair's breadth of death, was nothing but skin and bone, and suffered convulsions that made those who saw them shudder and forced her to cry out aloud; yet no one could say what her illness was. Remedies did her no good, and sometimes in a week she did not eat what another would have needed for one meal. The most skilful physicians of France and Italy saw her, and all judged that this illness came not from a natural cause but from a divine operation. Indeed its true source was the devouring fire of holy love by which she was consumed. And so, in course of time, the place on her breast above the heart turned yellow as saffron, and if a live coal or a lighted candle was brought near her flesh she did not feel the burn, because, as St. Augustine says speaking of St. Lawrence, the fire that burned her within was stronger and more violent than the one that roasted her limbs. In this state she nonetheless enjoyed in the depths of her heart an unspeakable joy and consolation, so that one saw in her the union of paradise and purgatory: her soul was in a spiritual paradise through the abundance of delights with which it was inebriated; her body was in purgatory through the excess of torments in which it was plunged. She said such beautiful and lofty things about divine love and the perfections of God that everyone was charmed; persons of great virtue, much enlightened in the ways of God, came expressly from far away to visit her and enjoy for a while the happiness of her conversation, and left her only in amazement, praising the divine Goodness for the wonders it worked in her. The desire for communion never left her; she was insatiable for this food from heaven, and in the extremity of her ills her only relief was to be fed with it. In short, she was esteemed by everyone as a wholly heavenly soul, and no one doubted that she shared in that union of love which makes the blessed consummation of beatitude. In the last year of her life she was shown that she was to enter a martyrdom greater still than the one she had endured until then. This was a supernatural operation by which her spirit, living now only in God and by God, set itself to make her nature die entirely, to strip it of all that was its own, and to begin to spiritualize it so as to make it perfectly conformed to its own tastes and inclinations. One cannot describe the anguish and torture that the lower part suffered by this operation, for nothing is harder and more unbearable to it than to be deprived of its natural and sensual ways of acting and drawn out of its own activity; but Catherine sustained this strain with wonderful firmness, and such a transformation took place in her that her flesh came into accord with her spirit and took on, so to speak, the feelings, desires and affections of the higher part.

Before her death she was made to suffer further, in soul and body, the inward and outward pains of Our Lord Jesus Christ crucified; angels appeared to her and assured her of her happiness. The devil too was given power to show himself to her, but she drove him off in shame, because he has no hold on a soul that lives only by pure love. Finally she saw a spark of the glory of paradise, which increased still further the furnace that had burned within her for so many years. The author of her life has related everything that happened to her in the last month of her illness; but it is enough to say that she died in the same flames in which she had lived, and that she was taken from this mortal life perfectly purified, to go at once to enjoy Him whom she

had loved so perfectly. It was on the day of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross, 14 September 1510. Several persons had revelations of her glory; among others her physician, who was asleep at the hour of her death, woke with a start and heard her voice saying to him: “Farewell, I am leaving now for heaven.”

She is represented holding in her hand a heart pierced by an arrow.

CULTE ET RELIQUES. — ÉCRITS.

Cult and relics. — Writings.

As soon as St. Catherine’s death became known, people flocked to the church of the hospital to venerate the holy body lying in state there, and cures began to take place there in great numbers. The holy body, enclosed in a wooden coffin, was buried in the church of the great hospital; it was placed near a wall beneath which there was an aqueduct that had not been noticed. As this burial was only temporary, the holy body remained there only eighteen months, at the end of which it was taken up and found, despite the dampness of the place, in a perfect state of preservation. To satisfy public devotion it was left exposed for eight days, after which it was placed in a chapel protected by a grille that allowed those who came to visit it to see it. Later the holy body was enclosed in a marble sepulchre that had been erected quite near the high altar. Soon crowds of strangers were seen coming from all parts, and as the continual movement around the tomb became noisier and more inconvenient from day to day, it was necessary to move the tomb to a lower part of the church, where it remained until 1593. At that time a new tomb was built in a higher place, and the holy body was carried there and found in a state of perfect incorruption.

In 1642 the body, still preserved in its miraculous integrity, was translated into a shrine of elegant form enriched with gilded ornaments. In 1692, with the permission of the Sacred Congregation of Rites, it was taken out of this wooden shrine and placed in a silver ark adorned with crystal, so that it might be visible to everyone. Finally, in 1708, since the clothes that covered it were falling into tatters, it was taken out, with the permission of Pope Clement XI, on the 23rd of August. It was stripped of its old clothes, which were replaced by more fitting garments, and it was put back into its reliquary, where it still rests today without any mark of corruption.

St. Catherine was placed among the Blessed by word of mouth by Pope Julius II. In 1636 Pope Urban VIII had an inquiry made into her virtues and miracles in general. The cause remained pending until the year 1670. It was then resumed by order of Pope Clement X, and in 1675 a decree of the Sacred Congregation approved all that had been done previously. This decree was issued on 30 March and confirmed by the Pope on 6 April of the same year. Her writings were approved by Pope Innocent XI on 14 June 1676. After a great number of miracles worked through her intercession, Clement XII solemnly canonized her in 1737, and Benedict XIV inserted her name in the martyrology under 22 March.

We have from St. Catherine of Genoa a remarkable treatise on Purgatory, and Dialogues between the soul and the body, self-love and the spirit, humanity and God. These dialogues are nothing other than the voice of the flesh, which tries to draw the soul away from the interior life, and the voice of the spirit, which struggles against it and seeks to follow the divine attraction.

The first author of this life was an Italian doctor named Jacques Giunsy, who made use of the memoirs of those who had known Blessed Catherine. The Carthusians of Bourg-Fontaine translated it into French at the beginning of the 17th century. — Cf. Acta Sanctorum; Vie de sainte Catherine de Gênes, *by the abbé P…, vicar-general of Évreux.*

Saint Eucharius, First Bishop of Trier, and His Successors Saints Valerius and Maternus (1st Century)

An immemorial tradition relates that the cult of the Blessed Virgin, together with Christianity, was brought into Alsace by St. Maternus, a disciple of St. Peter and, according to several writers, the only son of the widow of Nain, whom Jesus Christ raised from the dead and afterwards admitted among His seventy disciples.[1] The tradition adds that when Maternus died at Ell in the course of his preaching, Eucharius and Valerius, the two companions of his apostolate, went back to Rome to lay their grief before St. Peter; that Peter gave them his pastoral staff, telling them to lay it on the dead man's body and command him to rise again, after which he would continue his mission with more success than before; that in the end everything happened as the Prince of the Apostles had said; and that by Maternus, raised from the dead, and his companions the churches of Strasbourg, Trier, Cologne and Liège were founded.

If this ancient account has been contradicted by certain critics who, offended by the miraculous facts they meet in history, study under the inspiration of prejudice the means of banishing them from it, or at least of casting suspicion on them, it cannot be denied that this one has powerful reasons and authorities in its favour. There are the martyrologies of the eighth, ninth and tenth centuries, and various writings of the same period, which cite this tradition as accepted from time immemorial; there is the belief religiously preserved in various Churches despite the great distances that separate them; there is the respect with which Cologne and Trier have kept the two halves of St. Peter's pastoral staff, which they divided between them, and the agreement of the ancient authors in giving this miracle as the reason for the Popes' custom of not carrying a crozier; there is the ancient basilica of the Resurrection built at Ell, where crowds of pilgrims devoutly visited the empty tomb that had served St. Maternus as a sepulchre for forty days; there is the uniform testimony of the Alsatian, German and Italian historians of centuries nearer our own; there is the proper office of the Strasbourg breviary; and there is, finally, on the one hand the uncontested fact that St. Maternus was the first apostle of Alsace, and on the other the incontestable fact that from the second century Alsace counted flourishing Christian communities.

St. Eucharius held the episcopal see of Trier for twenty-three years and fell asleep in the Lord on 8 December; Valerius succeeded him, sat for fifteen years and died on 29 January; Maternus continued the apostolic labours of his two immediate predecessors and flew up to heaven on 14 September, after governing his diocese for forty years. Their bodies were buried outside the walls of the city of Trier. Relics of St. Valerius can be seen in the underground crypt of St. Matthias at Trier; some particles have been transferred to Lisbon. The metropolitan church possesses bones of St. Maternus. Painters usually represent St. Maternus with a church with three towers, to recall that his diocese originally included the three important cities of Cologne, Trier and Utrecht, which later, because of the number of Christians, became so many episcopal sees. *Taken from the Proper of Trier; from the* Histoire des soixante-douze Disciples *by M. l'abbé Maistre; and from* Notre-Dame de France *by the Curé of Saint-Sulpice.*

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[2] See 16 September.

[3] We gave his life on that day.

[1] We have followed the chronology adopted by Baronius, the compiler of the Roman martyrology. He makes St. Maternus an apostle who received his mission from St. Peter in person, whereas some hagiographers, the Bollandists among others, maintain that he belongs to the 4th century; we have already seen that a more thorough study of these questions has shown that it is in the 1st century, and not in the 4th, that the evangelization of Gaul must be placed.

15 September

Martyrologies

Fifteenth day of September

MARTYROLOGE ROMAIN.

Roman Martyrology.

The Octave of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary. — At Rome, on the Nomentan Way, the birthday in heaven of Saint NICOMEDES, priest and martyr, who, having answered those who were pressing him to sacrifice, “I will sacrifice only to the almighty God who reigns in heaven,” was beaten for a very long time with leaded whips and flew away to the Lord. 71. — In the territory of Chalon-sur-Saône, Saint VALERIAN, martyr, whom the governor Priscus had hung up and torn all over his body with iron hooks; but, seeing that he remained unshaken in the confession of Jesus Christ and persisted in praising Him with transports of joy, he ordered his head to be cut off. 178. — At Marcianopolis, in Thrace, Saint Melitina, martyr, who, under the emperor Antoninus and the governor Antiochus, was twice led into pagan temples, and, the idols having fallen each time she entered, was for that reason hung up and torn all over her body, and finally beheaded. 2nd c. — At Adrianople, the holy martyrs Maximus, Theodore and Asclepiodotus, who received the crown of glory under the emperor Maximian. About 303. — Also Saint Porphyrius, an actor, who, having himself baptized in mockery in the presence of Julian the Apostate, found himself suddenly changed by a marvellous effect of the power of God and declared that he was a Christian; and at that very hour he was beheaded by order of the emperor and went to receive the crown of martyrdom. 362. — The same day, Saint Nicetas, a Goth, whom King Athanaric had burned for having confessed the Catholic faith.[1] About 372. — At Cordova, Saints Aemilas, deacon, and Jeremias, who, during the persecution of the Arabs, after languishing a long time in a dark prison, were beheaded for Jesus Christ and won the crown of martyrdom. 852. — At Toul, Saint EPVRE, bishop. 450. — Also Saint Lubin, bishop of Chartres.[2] 557. — At Lyon, Saint Aubin, bishop.[3] 397. — The same day, the death of Saint ACHARD, abbot. 687. — In France, Saint Eutropia, widow.[4] 5th c.

MARTYROLOGE DE FRANCE, REVU ET AUGMENTÉ.

Martyrology of France, revised and enlarged.

In the diocese of Autun, Saint Valerian, martyr, mentioned in the Roman martyrology of this day. — In the diocese of Bayeux, commemoration of Saints Nicomedes, priest and martyr, and Lubin, bishop of Chartres, mentioned today in the same martyrology. — In the dioceses of Dijon and Paris, feast of the holy Name of the Blessed Virgin Mary, whose history we gave on 9 September. — In the diocese of Poitiers, Saint Achard, abbot, mentioned in the Roman martyrology of this day. — At Toul, now in the diocese of Nancy, Saint Apronia or Aprône, commonly called Saint Evronie, virgin, whose life we gave on 15 July. About 420. — In the old Ponthieu (*Pontivus pagus*), a district of Lower Picardy, Saint Ribert, abbot of Saint-Valery-sur-Somme (an abbey of the Order of St. Benedict founded by the generosity of King Clotaire II), in the diocese of Amiens. Some hagiographers think he was a regionary bishop in Normandy and Picardy. He is patron of the parishes of Charles-Mesnil, Torcy-le-Grand and Quièvrecourt, in the diocese of Rouen. A little beyond the old mound on which the castle of Charles-Mesnil once stood, there is a venerated spring known by the name of Saint-Ribert. A tradition, supported by the very legend of Saint Ribert, holds that this devout missionary baptized there in the 7th century. Even today people come to drink the water of the spring and to dip sick children in it; and so it is commonly called *la Baignerie de Saint-Ribert* (Saint Ribert’s bathing place). Likewise, to the west of Grand-Torcy, there is a fountain halfway up a slope in a copse, which served Saint Ribert for conferring the sacrament of Baptism. 7th c. — In Auvergne, Saint Bravy (*Bravius*), a Breton by birth, a religious of the Order of St. Benedict and abbot of Menat (*Menatum*, *Bracum*), a Benedictine monastery founded in the 5th century in the diocese of Clermont-Ferrand. His head, enclosed in a silver reliquary, used to be kept in the parish church of Punsat (perhaps Le Pouzat, in the Ardèche), in the district of Combrailles (Creuse and Puy-de-Dôme). 8th c. — At Châtillon, in the diocese of Dijon, in the church of Saint-Vorles, Notre-Dame du Château, also called Notre-Dame Saint-Bernard because of the ties that this devout servant of Mary had with the sanctuary. The chapel, profaned by the Revolution of ’93, has just been restored and was solemnly blessed by Mgr Rivet, bishop of Dijon, on 15 September 1856.

MARTYROLOGES DES ORDRES RELIGIEUX.

Martyrologies of the religious Orders.

Martyrology of the Order of Discalced Trinitarians. — The Octave of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary. — On the Saturday before the Sunday within the Octave of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin, the feast of the most holy Name of Mary, whose office began to be celebrated among the Trinitarians under Blessed Simon, head of that Order; it then spread to the various Churches; finally Pope Innocent XI ordered that this feast be celebrated throughout the Church on the Sunday within the Octave of the Nativity, in memory of the memorable victory won by the Christians over the Turks who had come to lay siege to Vienna, in Austria.[5] 1683.

Martyrology of the Order of Friars Preachers. — The commemoration of our Father Saint

Dominic.[6] 1221. — The Octave of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of God.

ADDITIONS FAITES D'APRÈS LES BOLLANDISTES ET AUTRES HAGIOGRAPHES.

Additions made from the Bollandists and other hagiographers.

In the desert of Scete (Lower Egypt), Saint John Colobus, or the Dwarf, so called from his small stature, anchorite and confessor. It is related that his director ordered him to plant in dry ground the staff he held in his hand and to water it every day until it bore fruit; the disciple obeyed with simplicity, although the river that could supply him with water was a great distance away. When he had done what was prescribed for three years without saying a single word, the staff took root and bore fruit; the superior picked it, carried it to the church and said to the brethren: "Take and eat the fruit of obedience." After shedding great lustre on the solitude of Scete and forming many disciples, John fell gently asleep in the Lord, full of years and merits. 5th c. — At Nicomedia, today Izmit ("Isnikmid"), a city of Bithynia on the Propontis, Saints Archus and Archeon, martyrs. — At Sovana ("Soana"), in Tuscany, Saint Maximilian, bishop of Palermo and confessor. A considerable portion of his body is kept at Sovana; Rome possesses his head; Palermo, Pisa and the islands of Giglio and Elba (off the coast of Tuscany) have been enriched at various times with some of his bones. 5th c. — At Cleves, in the Rhine Province, Saint Luthard or Luithard, count of Cleves and confessor. Having been unable to embrace the monastic life for which he longed, he consoled himself by giving himself wholly to good works. Having married Bertha, daughter of Arnulf of Carinthia, emperor of Germany and of the race of Charlemagne, he had by her two sons, Baldwin or Baudry and Richfrid, whom he brought up in the exercises of piety. After long edifying men on earth, he went to heaven to receive the just reward of his labours. End of the 9th c. — At Myrmice, in Asia Minor, Saint Philotheus the Wonderworker, priest and confessor. 10th c. — At Bargoni or Castel-Bargone, in the diocese of Piacenza, Blessed Roland or Orland de' Medici, anchorite. After spending twenty-six years in the solitudes of Italy, given wholly to the exercises of contemplation, he fell asleep in the Lord at Castel-Bargone, whence his body was translated to Busseto, between Parma and Piacenza, to a chapel dedicated in his name. 1386. — At Genoa, Blessed Catherine, widow, whose life we gave on the preceding day. 1510. — In the Benedictine abbey of Muri, founded in 1027 in Switzerland (Aargau), Saint Leontius, a Roman martyr, whose body was translated to that monastery in 1647.

Saint Valerian, Martyr at Tournus, in the Diocese of Autun

178. — Pope: St. Eleutherius. — Roman Emperor: Marcus Aurelius.

> *Si vous considérez la récompense, les épreuves ne vous sembleront rien, et vous jugerez que vos combats sont peu de chose au prix de la couronne qui vous attend.*

If you consider the reward, your trials will seem as nothing to you, and you will judge your struggles to be of little account beside the crown that awaits you.

St. Augustine.

Valerian, having been arrested at Lyon with St. Pothinus and his companions, was thrown into prison. But the dungeon in which he was shut up having opened, he fled with the priest St. Marcellus, whose life we gave on the 4th of this month, and came to Tournus. This place was then, as has been said, a strategic point, a military station, an immense fortified storehouse in which all the provisions of the army and all the dues of the surrounding districts were piled up so as to be easily shipped out, either by the high road or by the Saône first and then the Rhône. A multitude of people constantly flowed in from every side to render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's. Not far from the Roman *castrum* Valerian had built a small, poor hut: it was his dwelling, it was the sanctuary of his God, it was the theatre of his charity. He drew to it the people of the district and strangers, winning them by his alms and by an ever kindly, ever generous hospitality. No ornament was to be seen there but a cross. This weapon of the apostle hung there on the humble wall; and he always carried another with him, hidden under his cloak. Why, his Acts go on, had the Saint chosen Tournus as the centre of his apostolic work? Because he hoped that the divine word might be heard there by a greater number of men than anywhere else, and from there radiate in every direction and be scattered, through this continual coming and going of strangers, to every point and every distance. He wished that where tribute was brought to the masters of the earth, the sovereign Master of heaven too should have His share. Valerian's thought, his holy contrivances and his zeal were not disappointed: God, who had inspired them, deigned to bless them. The conversions were innumerable.

But hell, jealous of so much success, sought to halt its course and avenge its losses by Valerian's death. The instrument that had served it so well at Chalon was to serve it again. Priscus, the frightful Priscus, still stained with the blood of Marcellus, set out on a journey to Lyon. Only ten days had passed since the apostle's martyrdom. No doubt he was going to carry to that city the news of his exploits, to deck himself with them as with a glory, and to receive there an ovation worthy of him. So off he went, already marching like a conqueror. He embarked on the Saône with part of his escort and baggage, while the other part followed the high road alongside, and everywhere the herald's voice announced his presence. That same evening, 14 September, he arrived at Tournus amid this almost royal train. There, while with barbarous and senseless glee he was enlivening the delights of the banquet with the story of Marcellus's death, he was told that Valerian, the other Christian prisoner who had escaped from the dungeons of Lugdunum, was hiding in the neighbourhood and had already made many converts. Cruel and ambitious at once, he quivered with savage pleasure at the news. For would he not hit a double mark with one blow? He would give himself once more the spectacle, still so piquant to him because of its rarity, of a Christian's death amid torments. And then, how proud he would be to appear before the prefect with this added merit and glory! The opportunity was too good to miss. He could not let this new prey escape: he would have liked to have him in his hands that very day. "Let Valerian be searched for," he cried to his men; "let him be found and brought to me tomorrow morning. I must have this Christian."

The tyrant's henchmen, guided by a few pagans, soon discovered the Apostle's dwelling. He, thinking they were neophytes coming to find him, rose at once to receive them, making the sign of the cross, offered them with his usual charity a cordial hospitality, and begged them with a touching kindness, capable of softening the hardest hearts, to be so good as to accept something. But they, like cruel wolves that nothing can tame, threw themselves on the gentle lamb; and while they prepared the chains with which they were to load him and lead him away captive, they heaped insults on him and asked him mockingly: "What is that sign you have just made over yourself? What strange ornament is that decorating this wall?" — "And here it is again," said another, noticing the cross the Saint carried under his cloak.

Valerian, after the example of the divine Master, gave himself up to them without offering the least resistance, without opening his mouth to complain; and, taken up with a single thought, the glory of God and the salvation of these poor people who knew not what they did, he hastened to use this occasion to make Jesus Christ known to them. “This sign I have made,” he answered with a noble and kindly air, and in a tone full of conviction and gentleness, “this sacred object that adorns my dwelling and my breast, is the image of the cross on which the Son of God, out of infinite love, died in our place to spare us an eternal death and to merit for us the immense happiness of immortal life in heaven.” — “Escaped from prison,” these wretches went on, well worthy, it would seem, to be the instruments of their master’s cruelty, “so you are no more afraid than your companion Marcellus to own yourself a Christian? We shall soon see.” — “Yes, I am Marcellus’s companion, and I glory in it. Like him I am a Christian. Nothing will prevent me from proclaiming it, and it will be the last word to leave my mouth with my last breath.”

During this exchange the preparations for departure had been completed. The Saint’s hands were tied behind his back; he was loaded with chains and dragged thus, like the vilest of criminals, before Priscus’s tribunal. The tyrant, fixing on him a tawny eye like that of a wild beast whose cruelty he had in his heart, said to him: “You are that Valerian who always has the name of a certain Christ in his mouth, are you not? Wretch, who expose yourself to death for a foolish error! Perhaps you do not know the fate of your companion Marcellus, victim of the same obstinacy in the same daydreams?” — “I know everything,” Valerian answered in a grave and modest but firm tone. “It is you who do not know that in speaking to me of the glorious death of my blessed brother you only give me one more reason to rouse my courage. He conquered you: his example will teach me to fight valiantly as he did, so as to win the victory as he did.” — “Take care, and adore the immortal gods: such is the will of our most divine emperor. And learn that these gods whom we worship really exist; for their whole divine race was once seen on earth by our ancestors and now reigns in heaven. And these are their images before your eyes. Here is almighty Jupiter, with Juno his wife and sister; there is Venus, the daughter of this great god; there are Mars and Vulcan, who are at once the brothers and the husbands of this goddess. So we are quite right to adore these sacred images. Offer them your homage too, or else I shall inflict on you tortures far more terrible than those I made Marcellus, your worthy colleague, undergo.”

Then the Saint spoke, less to defend himself than to instruct the bystanders by making them see plainly the absurdity of paganism. “All this display,” he said with a tone of authority and heavenly inspiration, “shows me that you are indeed the magistrate invested with public authority in this region; but in truth I should find it hard to believe if I considered only your ignorance. For after all, by speaking as you have just done, you are wantonly discrediting the decrees of the prince and the laws of the empire. What! you dare to name such divinities! You call gods vile incestuous beings who were the husbands of their own sisters! Your words are sacrileges, blasphemies insulting both to religion and to the very authority of which you are the trustee. Do you not know that the laws forbid and punish incest? And what is a crime and a shame among men you would have me approve and venerate in the gods! You do not think what you are saying, and you condemn yourself. How I pity you!… You spoke to me just now of my brother Marcellus. Ah! if only you had been shaken by the sight of his courage! If only you had understood the high lesson he gave you! Instead of speaking so unworthily of the divinity, you would adore, like him and like me, the one true almighty God, creator and master of heaven and earth, and Jesus Christ His Son, the innocent victim who was pleased to take a life like ours in order to sacrifice it in expiation for the crimes of guilty mankind, and to give us by His glorious resurrection an assurance of our own resurrection for heaven, where He reigns and will reign for all ages. There is the true living God. He is not found in a block of stone or a piece of metal; He is adored by faith in the eternal temple.”

“Ah! so you are not afraid,” said the governor, astonished but trying to hide his astonishment, “of all these instruments of torture around you; what is more, while reeling off your raving nonsense to me, you dare to

speak as if our roles were reversed and you were the judge and I the accused! Now it is my turn. Your death amid torments will show us which are the more powerful, our gods or yours." — "Yes, we shall see," answered the generous confessor of the faith in an energetic tone and with a calm but steady look under whose weight Priscus caught himself almost trembling. "My companions have shown it well enough already at Lyon, at Vienne, at Chalon, by triumphing over the same tortures with which you threaten me; and I hope, after their example and by the grace of God, to show it to you too by triumphing as they did." Suddenly Priscus in a fury ordered him to be tied to a stake and torn with iron hooks. As the holy martyr, assisted by Our Lord Jesus Christ, seemed not to suffer from this horrible torture and never ceased praising God, the tyrant, ashamed to see himself beaten, and above all afraid that the spectators, already struck by his victim's superhuman constancy and heavenly air, would declare themselves Christians if the spectacle went on any longer, hastened to put an end to it. "Take him far away from here," he said with sombre fury and ill-concealed spite, "and cut off his head." The order was carried out at once. On the way Valerian, full of joy, gave thanks to God, who was pleased to give him an eternal reward in exchange for a few days of perishable life. Soon he reached the place of execution. There, while kneeling on the ground and about to receive the blow that would break his mortal shell, he thought of the first deacon, the first martyr, his patron and model, and, a deacon and a martyr like him, prayed for his executioners and raised his eyes to heaven, saying, "Lord, receive my soul!", St. Stephen appeared to him in the bosom of divine glory, holding in his hand a crown which he presented to him on behalf of the supreme Rewarder. A moment later the valiant athlete of Jesus Christ went to receive this prize reserved for the victor, on 17 September, about the year 178. His head had just fallen on the very spot that his memory, his name, his cult and his precious remains have consecrated for ever.

CULTE ET RELIQUES.

Cult and relics.

The faithful, having buried St. Valerian's body, soon raised over his tomb a little oratory in which divine worship was celebrated. After the conversion of Constantine the humble sanctuary, no longer sufficient for the multitude of pilgrims, was turned into a basilica. By the 6th century this church was already old, for according to Gregory of Tours, who came himself to pray before the holy martyr's body, it was already in need of major repairs. The king had a basilica built in his honour. Later this abbey, having received Geilo and his monks, who brought with them the body of St. Philibert to save it from the profanations of the Normans, took the name of this holy founder of Jumièges and Noirmoutier (875). But the cult of St. Valerian, far from diminishing, received a new lustre. In the 10th century Abbot Stephen I, after repairing the devastation wrought by the barbarians in the church and the abbey, first had a new altar raised over the stone tomb containing the body of the apostle of Tournus. This tomb was in the crypt. On 26 January 980 his bones were taken from the tomb: the head was placed in a special reliquary all of gold and adorned with precious stones, representing the Saint's bust; the little cross that had rested on his breast was enclosed in a silver case; all the large bones were laid in a superb shrine; the smaller part of the relics was left in the old stone tomb, which was hermetically sealed. The relics were then carried in triumph and placed on the high altar dedicated to the Blessed Virgin. This translation was followed by a great number of miracles. The cult of St. Valerian passed down the centuries despite revolutions. In 1006, the abbey and the church having been consumed by fire, Abbot Bernère rebuilt them fifteen years later and had them dedicated. Later, as the church was too small for the number of the faithful, which had grown considerably, a second one was built which, under the title of the holy martyr, became the parish church. In 1562 the Protestants pillaged the church and the abbey, committed the holy martyr's body to the flames, and threw the ashes to the wind or into the Saône. There remain to the old and beautiful church of Saint-Philibert only a few particles of this sacred body and the stone tomb in which it had rested so long, the rest having been destroyed by the impiety of the revolutionaries.

The stone on which the Saint was beheaded was enclosed in the altar of a chapel built in his honour in the church of the hospital at Chalon. This chapel having been demolished in 1706, the venerated stone was placed in the altar of the chapel of the Blessed Sacrament. In 1854 a confraternity was formed under the patronage of St. Valerian and received the approval of the Holy See.

Acta Sanctorum; Dinet, Saint Symphorien et son culte; *Proper of Autun.*

Saint Epvre, Seventh Bishop of Toul[1]

450. — Pope: St. Leo I the Great. — King of the Franks: Merovech.

> *Neminem spernas, afflicto et egeno condoleas.*
>
> *Ne méprisez personne, soyez compatissant à l'égard de l'affligé et de l'indigent.*
>
> *Despise no one; be compassionate toward the afflicted and the needy.*
>
> *St. Bonaventure.*

St. Epvre was born at Trancault, a small village in the canton of Marcilly-le-Hayer, in the arrondissement of Nogent-sur-Seine, in the diocese of Troyes. Born of parents as pious as they were distinguished by their position in the world, Epvre gave promise from his tenderest youth of what he would later be: a fervent disciple of Jesus Christ, a religious observer of His holy law. He did not give himself to the games natural to his age; the attraction of virtue running ahead of his years, he took pleasure in visiting churches and monasteries and in conversing with persons commended by a high and solid piety. Above all he delighted in the regular practice of the works of mercy. How often, on his way back from school or from church, was he seen to strip off the clothes he was wearing to cover some beggar in rags! When he had nothing to give, he sympathized so tenderly with misery that the poor man often valued the sweetness of his consolations more than a material alms, even the most abundant.

As soon as he was master of the property that came to him by inheritance at his parents' death, he divided it into two parts and devoted the larger to the maintenance and relief of the unfortunate. He was their providence and their father, so much so that one might have applied to him these words of the holy man Job: "Compassion grew in my soul with the years; it came out with me from my mother's womb."

Epvre did not cultivate virtue alone; he had also given himself to the study of letters, and rapid progress soon made him surpass all his fellows. His brilliant eloquence won him a name among the most famous advocates; but, faithful to his inclinations of devotion and charity, he never used his talent except in defence of the poor, widows and orphans.

The practice of the law did not give him the rest and contentment he desired, and so he soon abandoned it to give himself wholly to meditation on the eternal truths. Consumed by thirst for his sanctification, he frequented the persons most advanced in perfection and carefully studied their chief virtues. Then, like an industrious bee that makes an exquisite and delicious honey from the juice of different flowers, he tried to reproduce in his habitual conduct the purity of one, the mortification of another, the holy dispositions of all.

Meanwhile his reputation had spread far and wide, and when the episcopal see of Toul fell vacant, Epvre was elected, despite his resistance, to fill that eminent place, to the great satisfaction of the people and the clergy. The honour of the episcopate did not change his heart. He kept the same humility of life, the same simplicity of dress, the same love of mortification. There was always the same affability toward all, the same gentleness in conversation. He made himself all things to all men, to win them all to Jesus Christ. Misfortune striking one of his diocesans grieved him more than if he had been its victim himself, and he likewise shared the happiness of those whom some good fortune gladdened. He never missed an opportunity of proclaiming the holy word to the people entrusted to him, and the name of Jesus was always returning to his lips, which expressed all its sweetness and all its consolations. He was that prudent and faithful steward of the Gospel

who gives his brethren their spiritual food in due season.

Through the towns and countryside that his apostolic zeal led him to travel, he threw down the temples of idols, still frequent at that time, and by the force and persuasiveness of his words he opened the eyes of the pagans to the light of the faith, which had not yet dawned on them.

God was pleased to reward so many virtues with the gift of miracles. Let it suffice us to cite two. On one of his apostolic journeys St. Epvre learned that three criminals were about to suffer the last penalty. His heart was moved with compassion; he asked for their pardon, but could not obtain it from the inexorable judge. He then had recourse to God in fervent prayer. At once the irons fell from the hands of the condemned men; the prison doors opened of themselves and let the captives pass, and they, full of gratitude, came and laid their chains at the feet of the Saint, who was still prostrate before the altar. As for the judge who had shown himself so stubborn and inflexible, he was at once possessed by the devil and died in frightful torments. In the 11th century there could still be seen in the Saint's abbey at Toul those chains, which were placed on the necks of the possessed to obtain their deliverance and cure.

The same day, as the Saint was returning to his episcopal city, he found on his way a young man possessed by the evil spirit. Whirlwinds of flame and torrents of sulphur poured from his mouth; everyone fled at his approach. At the sight of the bishop the wretch was seized with a fit of rage and rushed to meet him. But the man of God, without losing his composure, armed himself with the sign of the cross and, raising his hand, ordered him to stop. The young man only grew more furious; he breathed a poisoned flame into the bishop's face and tried to tear his limbs with his teeth; but the Saint stretched out his hand, made the sign of the cross again, and the demon took flight.

St. Epvre, already advanced in age, had a basilica built under the walls of the city; but he died before it was finished, and he was buried in it. He had occupied the see of Toul for seven years.

As he was being carried to the grave, a delicious fragrance came from his body and perfumed all who were present. Thus did he deserve to be honoured after his death who in his life had striven to spread everywhere the good odour of Jesus Christ. Another wonder accompanied his funeral: the heavens suddenly opened; two luminous clouds came down to the earth, and from the holy Pontiff's mouth there visibly came forth a dove whiter than snow, which soared up toward heaven, a clear emblem of the simplicity and innocence that had marked his life.

CULTE ET RELIQUES.

Cult and relics.

God was pleased to honour His servant's tomb with many wonders, which the monk Adso collected in his History of the Bishops of Toul, reproduced by Dom Calmet among the proofs of his History of Lorraine. This tomb was in the church that the holy Prelate had had raised not far from the walls of Toul, which death did not let him finish but which his successor St. Albaud completed. The people's confidence in the merits of St. Epvre brought innumerable pilgrims to his burial place; soon several newly built churches were placed under his patronage, and the one he himself had begun, in which his mortal remains rested and which he had dedicated to St. Maurice, came to be called only by his own name, as did the cluster of houses that grew up around it and which has kept to this day the name of the faubourg Saint-Epvre. Bishop Albaud built, close to the house of God, a monastery that became the celebrated abbey of Saint-Epvre and the seat of the episcopal schools of Toul. Of this magnificent dwelling there remain only several buildings sold to private persons; the beautiful conventual church has disappeared, and the site it occupied has become a garden.

Before the end of the 15th century the Old Town of Nancy saw a church dedicated to St. Epvre rise within its walls, not far from the ducal palace. Let us say at once, without going into details for which this is not the place, that this old church, condemned as decrepit, was demolished in recent years to make way for a new

temple, which is being completed at this moment and which by its vast dimensions and the richness of its furnishings attracts the curiosity of visitors. The relics of St. Epvre were devoutly kept in the abbey church, where they had been laid. At the beginning of the 10th century, at the approach of the Danes and the Hungarians who had just invaded Belgic Gaul, the monks of the monastery saved the shrine of their protector and placed it in the church of Saint-Jean-Baptiste, adjoining the cathedral of Toul and serving it as a baptistery. When calm had been restored, Bishop Drogo thought of keeping the holy deposit, on the pretext that it would be more useful to the faithful and more honourable to the memory of St. Epvre to place it inside his cathedral; but two religious, in order to withdraw the reliquary from the power of the prelate who wanted to deprive their community of it, laid it by night in a hiding place that was discovered only sixty years later, under the episcopate of St. Gerard, who restored the relics to the keeping of the religious of the abbey and made their solemn translation on 17 May 978.

In 1527 the abbot of Saint-Epvre obtained from Hector d'Ailly, bishop of Toul, the transfer of the relics of his abbey's holy patron from the chest in which they rested into a much richer reliquary. A new attempt to make off with these precious remains by fraud was made in 1635, but without success: the thieves were exiled and the relics returned to their lawful owners. Later, fragments of them were granted to several parish churches. In 1790, at the dispersal of the religious Orders, M. Parisot, parish priest of Saint-Epvre at Nancy, obtained from the Benedictines of the abbey of the same name at Toul the gift of the head of their common protector. On Sunday, 5 November, Mgr de Lafare, bishop of Nancy, solemnly brought it into the new sanctuary that was to shelter it. Since the restoration of worship in 1802 it has always been the object of special veneration on the part of the parishioners. After being exposed from the first vespers of the feast to the last day of the Octave, it is carried in procession to the singing of the hymns and litanies composed in its honour. This procession was at first held inside the church; but since 1854 it has gone through the main streets of the parish with all the pomp of which it is capable. At the place of our Saint's birth a chapel had been raised which, ruined by the Huguenots, was rebuilt by the lord of the place, Bernard Angenoust, about 1620. This chapel still exists in our day. Later, François le Camus, or des Caves, had relics of St. Epvre brought from Toul. They arrived at Trancault on the fourth Sunday of Lent, and it is the memory of this translation that is celebrated in that district at mid-Lent. They disappeared in the revolutionary storm.

Extracted from the Vie des Saints du diocèse de Troyes *by M. l'abbé Defer, and from the* Histoire du diocèse de Toul et de celui de Nancy *by M. l'abbé Guillaume. — Cf.* Histoire de Lorraine *by Dom Calmet;* Histoire des Auteurs sacrés et ecclésiastiques *by Dom Ceillier;* Vie de saint Epvre *by M. l'abbé Elquin, licentiate in theology.*

Saint Achard, Abbot of Jumièges, in the Diocese of Rouen[1]

687. — Pope: Conon. — King of France: Theuderic III.

> *Tout ce que vous êtes, tout ce que vous pouvez, vous le devez à celui qui vous appelle. All that you are, all that you can do, you owe to Him who calls you.*
>
> *St. Bernard.*

There lived in the city of Poitiers a very rich nobleman named Anschaire, who had married a wife equally noble and virtuous, called Ermène. Their charity toward the poor and pilgrims made them pleasing to God and men. They had a son, whom they had named Achard; they took great care over his education and sent him to the celebrated school of the monastery of Saint-Hilaire, where his master was Ansfroi, a man no less commendable for his learning and intelligence than for his eminent piety. He stayed there until the age of sixteen, advancing in knowledge and in the practice of good, forming his heart and his mind, which God was secretly preparing for what He was about to require of him.

His father, for his part, had other thoughts: as his rank required, he planned to bring his son forward at court, so as to open a brilliant future to him. Achard spent two years there in the greatest innocence, despite the dangers one runs there. Anschaire intended him for the profession of arms and the king's service. Ermène, on the contrary, wished to consecrate him to the service of the altar, because, finding herself in danger of death when bringing him into the world, she had vowed, if she were safely delivered, to give her child to the service of God; and this she believed she must carry out, for fear of drawing down the curses of heaven upon him. Achard settled this disagreement between his father and his mother; for, moved by the Holy Spirit, he came before them and told them that, having resolved to renounce all earthly things, he had no intention of embracing the vain pomp of princes' service in arms, but of giving himself wholly to the service of Jesus Christ, from whom nothing could separate him. His father, admiring this resolution, would not oppose it and left him free to follow the call of heaven.

Our Saint therefore entered the abbey of Ansion, or Saint-Jouin, which then flourished on the borders of Poitou, between Moncontour and Thouars. He was eighteen at the time, and he remained in that holy retreat about thirty-five years. Already learned in sacred doctrine and still more in virtue, he soon reached a degree of perfection that shone out in miracles: he restored health to all the sick who, by divine inspiration, came to find him and commend themselves to his prayers.

Toward the last years he spent at Saint-Jouin, an unknown voice, sounding very distinctly in his ears like an angel's, often spoke to him, awakening in him longings for some work that he could not clearly make out, and for which God seemed to need him.

It was in 677, at the time when St. Philibert, abbot of Jumièges, had just founded in Poitou the celebrated house of Noirmoutier. This Saint's reputation had spread to the borders of the country, and the mysterious voice that pursued Achard persuaded him that he would find with him what his heart was seeking without quite being able to explain it. But Philibert, after his foundation of Noirmoutier, was occupied with the abbey of Saint-Benoît near Poitiers, where Bishop Ansoald, now his friend, had entrusted him with a reform, or perhaps with a completion it still lacked. For either this house, begun under the auspices of St. Hilary by St. Viventius, had until then been only a simple gathering of solitaries; or else the monastery, destroyed three or four times by the Barbarians who overran the country in that space of nearly three centuries, still lay in its latest ruin, and it was to raising it up again that St. Philibert was applying himself. In his experienced hands the work must have prospered, and Achard found it in such a state that, convinced that it was on behalf of this work that God had spoken to his heart, he was seized with the desire to devote himself to it and to place himself under the discipline of this second founder. Philibert, for his part, took good care to admit among his disciples a man whose ability and virtue showed him to be a consummate master in the spiritual life. Achard was then sixty-four years old. His parents, who had lived so long without him, must have been all the more consoled by his return to the region where they lived, since they must then have been far advanced in age and probably in their nineties. Rejoicing to see their son contribute to the revival of a house already sanctified by such holy memories, they wished to second his generous efforts with noble gifts, and gave the monastery of Saint-Benoît a family estate they owned at Quinçay. The name of this estate passed to the abbey. St. Philibert had scarcely observed Achard's habits before he understood his great ability. He gave him the direction of the abbey of Quinçay; our Saint discharged this office admirably, and the fragrance of his piety drew to him a great number of persons who, together with fifteen monks who had come from Jumièges to form the nucleus of the community and to foster the spirit of the Rule in it, became a useful neighbourhood for Poitiers and made the whole region feel the happy influence of a truly angelic life.

St. Philibert, on the death of Ebroin, his persecutor, returned to Jumièges. He could have ended his days there among his dear religious; but love of solitude and fear of governing others made him resolve to give up the direction of that great abbey to St. Achard. For this purpose he came to Poitou and asked Bishop Ansoald to help him carry out the plan. They agreed to go together and propose the matter to the Saint. Meanwhile

St. Achard had a vision: Ansoald and Philibert appeared to him in his sleep. The one showed him a pastoral staff, the other the Rule of St. Benedict, and both said to him: “Rise, brother, and receive out of obedience the yoke that is laid upon you; take this pastoral staff to lead the religious of Jumièges to the perfection of regular discipline, and read this Rule to make them practise all that it contains.” The next day they both arrived at his monastery and, having set out their decision to him, persuaded him to go to Jumièges.

He went at once to Rouen to receive the blessing of St. Ouen, who was its archbishop; then he went to Jumièges, where he found the religious plunged in bitterness at the loss of their holy abbot. Achard governed this monastery, made up of nine hundred religious and fifteen hundred servants and domestics, with truly pastoral vigilance, and he sanctified it by the force of his words, the virtue of his example and the brilliance of his miracles. One day, as he was at prayer in his cell, he saw the devil, holding an axe of fire, cutting down a great tree under which the brethren were working at that moment, so as to crush some of them in its fall; but going to the spot that very hour, he drove him off with the sign of the cross and showed the religious the tree already burned at the foot, giving off an unbearable smell of sulphur, and the apples with which it was laden turned black as coal; they also crumbled into ashes when touched. They asked him whether he wanted them to fell it, so that the enemy might no longer use it to harm them. “No, my brethren,” said the holy Abbot, “it must not be removed; let us leave it standing in memory of the grace God has shown you in preserving you from the malice of the devil, and so that, seeing it in this state, it may warn us to be always on our guard against the wiles of the evil spirit.” When the religious had retired to their cells, he used to go round the dormitories with the cross and holy water to drive out the devil, whom he often found hidden in those holy places, seeking an occasion to tempt the religious during the night’s rest.

He had several other visions, which he used to great profit to inspire love of virtue and obedience and to instil horror of the least sins, and particularly of slackness in the service of God. The most memorable, both for the lessons it contains and for the event that followed it, is the one he had shortly before his death. He feared that his children, brought up with such care in perfection and in contempt for all earthly things, might grow lax after his death; he asked God rather to take them from this world than to allow them to fall into this misfortune, and further to make known to him what he should do to accomplish their sanctification. The following night, at the hour of the divine psalmody, he saw on one side an angel of gracious and charming countenance, clothed in a garment of light and holding a wand in his hand; and on the other a demon of frightful blackness, darting fire and flames from his eyes. As he watched them attentively, he heard the angel sharply reproaching the demon for daring to appear in those sacred places, since he had no claim on the servants of God who dwelt there and his snares were useless there, because obedience was in force, humility was practised in emulation, charity reigned in every heart, and regular observance was admirably kept. “Go and seek your conquests elsewhere,” he added; “Babylon is the place of your triumphs, not Jerusalem, from which the word of God and the blood of Jesus Christ have banished you.” The demon for his part maintained that he would not be wasting his time there and that he would lay his plans so well that he would do good business there, having a thousand wiles for achieving his designs. After this dispute the angel came up to Achard and told him not to be astonished at what he had seen and heard and to remain ever steadfast. He assured him that his prayer had been heard; that his religious would be called to the glory of God; that those whom he touched with his wand would go first; that some time afterwards they would come back full of glory to be present at his death and carry him off with them to heaven; that those he did not touch would not follow them so soon, and that he would be left on earth a while longer so as to finish strengthening them in virtue and make them worthy to appear before the majesty of God; and that he must not fail to warn those who had been touched to prepare themselves for death without delay by a general confession of all their sins, by the reception of the Holy Eucharist and by exercises of penance, until they should be called to the banquet of the Lamb.

After that the angel seemed to go away; but the Saint, noticing that the demon was still there, cried out: “You are abandoning us, O angel of the Lord! and you allow this destroying spirit to stay here to ruin the servants of God!” — “Fear nothing,” replied the angel; “I am not leaving this holy monastery, which has always been in my keeping since it was founded, and the demon, in spite of himself, will do nothing but good to the religious who are soon to die. God has only permitted him to show himself visibly to them when their souls are ready to leave their bodies, so that, such a terrible vision striking fear into them, they may have greater sorrow for their sins and so expiate in this life what would delay them from enjoying the happiness of the Saints.”

Early the next morning the holy Abbot assembled all the religious and, after telling them of the mysterious vision he had had, he powerfully exhorted those who were to go first to hold themselves ready when the Lord should call them, and those who were to remain to work with fervour to merit the same grace as the others. They all profited by this warning; but no one can describe the tears of penance shed by those who had only four days left to prepare for death. They could be seen with their bodies prostrate on the ground, imploring the mercy of God, tearing their flesh with scourges, striking their breasts hard, begging pardon for their sins in mournful voices, sighing, sobbing and giving every sign of perfect contrition. After spending three days fasting without taking any food, on the fourth, as soon as dawn began to break, they all went to the church, where they received the holy Viaticum and the last blessing of their abbot. Having strengthened their souls with the divine Sacraments, they all embraced and gave one another the kiss of peace, then withdrew to the Chapter house to await the happy moment of their deliverance. Meanwhile the Saint had psalms sung by the other religious to commend their brethren to the divine clemency. During this devout ceremony their faces became all luminous, as if they were already enjoying the presence of Jesus Christ. O admirable spectacle, worthy of eternal memory! At about the third hour some of them died, as peacefully as if they had fallen asleep. At the sixth hour another group, raising their hands to heaven and commending themselves to God, gave up their souls with inconceivable sweetness. At the ninth hour the others went on departing from this life of misery to possess one infinitely happy. Finally, toward evening, those who remained expired in the fervour of their prayers. It took eight whole days to bury all these holy religious. How happy is this monastery! how rich this ground! how precious this field, to hold within its bounds this inestimable treasure! Those who survived them were inconsolable, not at the death of their brethren, which was too precious to be regretted, but because they still remained on earth after so fine an example of the reward God gives His elect. The old men who had spent so many years in penance, and the infirm who saw themselves on the edge of the grave, felt a holy envy of them, and the uncertainty of their own lot, in which they still lived, caused them an affliction that cannot be expressed. The holy Abbot tried to restore them by inspiring in them entire conformity to the will of God, whose conduct we must always adore and whose orders we must await with patience.

Some time afterwards he had a revelation of the death of St. Philibert, and he learned that he himself would soon be delivered from the labours of this world. During the seven days that preceded his death he occupied himself in exhorting his religious to perfect concord among themselves and to continual vigilance over all their actions, for fear of giving the devil occasion to tempt them. He also taught them remedies for curing the diseases of the soul; above all he urged them not to let themselves be deceived under a specious pretext of virtue, which was the most dangerous temptation the enemy used to lead religious astray. On the day of his death, extraordinarily tormented by an acute fever that he had hidden until then, he spoke to them these last words: “I implore you, my brethren, never to let into your hearts the least aversion that could break the fraternal peace I have so often commended to you. Aversion toward one’s neighbour, as you know, my dear children, separates us from God and makes us unworthy of heaven, where the Saints are so closely united with one another. It cannot be expiated by the rigours of penance; and not even martyrdom or the shedding of blood can efface it unless it is banished from the heart. The grace I shall ask of God will be that He preserve you from this plague, which ruins the best-established communities.” As he finished these words he raised

his eyes to heaven and gave up his soul to Jesus Christ, on 15 September 687.

His body was buried in the abbey church, where his cult was soon established, and in the 9th century a church was built in his honour within the abbey precincts. Fear of the Normans caused his relics to be taken to Haspres, in the Cambrésis, where they were preserved. Some portions of them were given to the Benedictine monastery of Saint-Benoît de Quinçay (Vienne), where they were kept until the revolution of 1789. A suburb of Poitiers still bears the name of St. Achard.

He is represented with an angel touching various religious of the abbey with a wand.

His life is given in Surius. It was written by a monk of Rouen named Fulbert. It is very elegant and deserves to be read in full in its original language. For this biography we have completed and corrected Father Giry on several points, especially in the chronology. — Cf. Vies des Saints de l'Église de Poitiers *by the abbé Auber;* Vies des Saints du Poitou *by Ch. de Chergé.*

Saint Nicomedes, Priest and Martyr at Rome (about 71)

St. Nicomedes won the crown of martyrdom through his charity toward two devout virgins. One was Petronilla, daughter of St. Peter, whom our blessed priest protected against the violence of Count Flaccus, a Roman patrician who wanted to marry her; the other was Felicula, Petronilla's companion. Flaccus, seeing that his marriage with Petronilla had come to nothing, cast his eyes on her companion and did all he could to induce her to marry him; but as his solicitations could not shake the Saint's constancy, he resolved to carry by force or by cunning what was refused to his love. So he offered her a choice of two things: either to take him for her husband, or to sacrifice to the gods of the empire, knowing well that if he could seduce her faith he would win her heart at the same time. Felicula answered him nobly that she would do neither the one nor the other: that as a Christian she could acknowledge no other God than Him who created heaven and earth, and that as a virgin she would have no other Spouse than Jesus Christ, to whom she had consecrated her purity. Flaccus, angered by this answer, which was an open contempt of his false gods and of his person, handed her over to the judges to be tried. They kept her seven days in a dark room without giving her anything to eat or drink, and as long again among the Vestals, and, unable to shake her constancy, ordered her to be put to the torture and then thrown into a sewer, where she gave up her soul to God.

As soon as Nicomedes learned of it, he carried off the Saint's body by night and buried it on the Ardeatine Way, a quarter of a league from Rome. But when the matter came to the knowledge of Flaccus, who knew besides that this holy priest had done the same on other occasions, he had him arrested; and after using gentleness and craft to persuade him to sacrifice to the idols, finding him equally unmoved by his promises and his threats, he had him scourged so cruelly with leaded cords that he gave up the ghost under this torture, on 15 September. His body was thrown into the Tiber; but a cleric named Justus searched for it until he found it and buried it secretly in his garden, near the walls of the city, on the Nomentan Way. A church and a cemetery have since been built at Rome under the title of Saint Nicomedes.

Acta Sanctorum.

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[1] Saint Sabas (12 April) and Saint Nicetas (15 September) are the two most celebrated martyrs of the Gothic nation; the Greeks place the second in the class of those they call Great Martyrs. He was born near the banks of the Danube and was converted in his youth by Theophilus, bishop of the Scythians and the Goths. A victim of the persecution of Athanaric, king of the Eastern Goths, he won the crown of martyrdom by fire. His body was later translated to Mopsuestia, today Messis, a town of Cilicia of the Plains, on the Pyramus. — Godescard.

[2] 15 September is properly the day of the translation of Saint Lubin of Chartres; his death is marked in the martyrology of France on 14 March, the day under which we have given his life (vol. iii, p. 411).

[3] Aubin, who is also called Albin and Alpin, succeeded Saint Just in the archiepiscopal see of Lyon, at what date is not exactly known. Some authors have placed the beginning of his episcopate in the year 382, which is the year of Saint Just's retirement; but it seems hardly probable that he bore the title of archbishop of Lyon before that prelate's death (390). However that may be, Aubin was a

bishop of pure and holy life, and it was he who presided at the funeral of his venerable predecessor. His death is given by the martyrologies on 15 September, and we believe it should be fixed in the year 397, since it is certain that he governed the diocese for only seven years. The building of the church of Saint-Étienne, where he was buried, is attributed to him. — *Gallia christiana*.

[4] Saint Eutropia, or Eutrope, a model of Christian widows, lived in Auvergne in the time of Saint Sidonius Apollinaris, bishop of Clermont. We learn from him that she honoured her widowhood by the practice of all the virtues that could contribute to her sanctification. She joined gentleness and modesty to a wise temperance, and mortified her body by great abstinence while she fed the poor from her property. Assiduous in prayer, she kept unceasing watch over herself, having only one desire, to please God, and only one fear, to displease Him. Her virtue was tried by various afflictions. After losing her husband she lost her son and her grandson too, and so saw all the supports and consolations she could have on earth disappear; she submitted to the will of the Lord with perfect resignation and bore such painful misfortunes with the firmness of a Saint. But her patience shone out above all on the occasion of a lawsuit in which nothing less was at stake than the loss of all her property. She chose her bishop as arbiter, thus sacrificing to the love of peace what a judicial action would not have failed to award her. The year of this holy widow's death is not known, but her name is marked in several martyrologies. — Local notes.

[5] We gave the history of this feast on 9 September.

[6] We gave the life of Saint Dominic on 4 August.

[7] Also: Evre, Apre, Aper.

[8] Also: Aichard, Achart, Aicadre.

16 September

Martyrologies

Sixteenth day of September

MARTYROLOGE ROMAIN.

Roman Martyrology.

The feast of Saint CORNELIUS and Saint CYPRIAN, pontiffs and martyrs, whose birthday in heaven is recorded on the 14th of this month. 252 and 258. — At Chalcedon, the feast of Saint EUPHEMIA, virgin and martyr, who, under the emperor Diocletian and the proconsul Priscus, overcame for Jesus Christ various tortures such as prisons, scourges, wheels armed with spikes, fire, the weight of stones, wild beasts, blows of rods, sharp saws and burning pans; brought back once more to the amphitheatre to be exposed to the beasts, as she was praying Our Lord to receive her soul, one of the beasts bit her while the others licked her feet; and so she gave up her holy and pure soul into the hands of God. 303. — At Rome, the holy martyrs LUCY, a noble lady, and GEMINIAN, whom the emperor Diocletian had put to death by the sword after they had endured frightful torments and long tortures with heroic courage. 303. — Also at Rome, on the Flaminian Way, the holy martyrs Abundius, priest, and Abundantius, deacon, whom Diocletian had beheaded ten miles from the city, together with Marcian, an illustrious personage, and John his son, whom these two Saints had raised from the dead. — At Heraclea, in Thrace, Saint Sebastiana, martyr, who, converted under the apostle Saint Paul, was beheaded under the emperor Diocletian and the governor Sergius, after she had been tried in various ways. — At Cordova, the holy martyrs Roger, or Hogel, and Servus Dei ("Serdieu" or "Servio-Deo"), whose hands and feet were cut off before they were beheaded. 852. — In Scotland, Saint Ninian, bishop and confessor.[1] 432. — In England, Saint EDITH, virgin, daughter of Edgar, king of the English, who, consecrated to God from her earliest years, rather never knew the world than left it. 984.

MARTYROLOGE DE FRANCE, REVU ET AUGMENTÉ.

Martyrology of France, revised and enlarged.

In the dioceses of Paris and Algiers, Saint Cyprian, bishop of Carthage and martyr, mentioned in the Roman martyrology of this day. — In the dioceses of Blois, Chartres and Poitiers, Saint Lubin or Leobin, named in the Roman martyrology of the preceding day, whose life we gave on 14 March. 557. — In the diocese of Carcassonne, Saints Cornelius and Cyprian, mentioned in today's Roman martyrology. — In the diocese of

Dijon, Saint FRODULFUS or FROU, monk and solitary. 7th c. — In the dioceses of Laval and Le Mans, Saint PRINCIPIUS, bishop of the latter see and confessor. 511. — At Arles, Blessed LOUIS ALLEMAN, seventy-fifth archbishop of that see and cardinal of the title of Santa Cecilia. 1450. — In Alsace, Saint Roswinda, virgin. She was the youngest of the daughters of Duke Adalric and sister of Saint Odile (13 December), foundress of the monastery of Hohenbourg (*Mons S. Odiliae*), in the diocese of Strasbourg. Roswinda renounced the goods of the earth and resolved to imitate her devout sister by consecrating herself to God in the same monastery. Her body was buried at Hohenbourg in the chapel of Saint-Pierre, beside the altar, where it was found in 1663. 8th c. — Also in Alsace, Saint Eugenia, daughter of Adalbert, duke of Alsace, niece of Saint Odile and abbess of the same monastery of Hohenbourg. For fifteen years she gave her community the example of every virtue. Her body was laid in the chapel of Saint-Jean-Baptiste, near the tomb of Saint Odile. Her relics were kept in that place until the war of the Swedes, who opened her tomb and scattered her bones. Since then only a few portions of them could be kept, in the churches of Obernai (arrondissement of Schelestadt) and Willgottheim (arrondissement of Strasbourg). 8th c. — Also in Alsace, Saints Gundelinda and Eimhilda, abbesses of Niedermunster (*Inferius monasterium*), in the diocese of Strasbourg. Gundelinda was the sister of Saint Eugenia of Hohenbourg, of whom we have just spoken; Eimhilda succeeded her in the government of her monastery. Their relics were placed on the high altar of the church of Niedermunster, from which they passed to that of the village of Saint-Nabor. 8th c. — At Strasbourg, Saints Einbette (Eimbèthe, Einbeth, Eimberthe, Aimberthe, Himberte), Vorbette and Villbette, virgins, whose relics are kept in the church of Saint-Pierre-le-Vieux at Strasbourg. Toward the end of the 4th c. — At Saint-Valery-sur-Somme and at Abbeville, in the diocese of Amiens, Saint Sévolde, confessor. About the 8th c. — In the former Cistercian abbey of Savigny, in the diocese of Coutances, the Venerable Vitalis of Mortain, founder and abbot of that monastery. A native of the village of Tierceville, near Mortain (Manche), he embraced the ecclesiastical state, then withdrew with a few disciples into the forest of Craon (Mayenne) and later into that of Fougères; in 1105 he settled in the forest of Savigny and laid the foundations of a monastery there. Vitalis had a remarkable gift for preaching: he preached with success in France and in England. In 1119 King Henry I gave him the priory of Dompierre (*Domnipetra*), in the parish of Mantilly, in the Passais, with six hundred arpents of land and the pond of Morette, one of the finest in the diocese of Le Mans. Vitalis established an important community there, where he died. Several miracles took place during the three days that his body remained exposed to the veneration of the people. His remains were translated to the abbey of Savigny. 1122. — Near Mirepoix (Ariège), in the diocese of Pamiers, Saint Camelle, virgin, whose life we shall give on the following day. 13th c. — In the former Benedictine abbey of Maroilles (*Maricolae*), in the diocese of Cambrai, Saint Cunibert, abbot and confessor, a perfect imitator of the virtues of Saint Humbert, founder of Maroilles. About 680.

MARTYROLOGES DES ORDRES RELIGIEUX.

Martyrologies of the religious Orders.

Martyrology of the Canons Regular. — At Chalcedon, the birthday in heaven of Saint Euphemia, virgin and martyr, whose head is kept at the Sancta Sanctorum. 303.

Martyrology of the Order of St. Benedict. — Saints Cornelius and Cyprian, pontiffs and martyrs, whose birthday in heaven is celebrated on 14 September. 252 and 258. — In England, Saint Edith, virgin, daughter of Edgar, king of the English, who, consecrated to God from her tenderest years, rather never knew the world than left it. 984.

Martyrology of the Camaldolese Order. — Saint Cornelius and Saint Cyprian, pontiffs and martyrs. 252 and 258.

Martyrology of the Congregation of Vallombrosa. — The same as among the Benedictines.

Martyrology of the Cistercian Order. — The same as among the Benedictines.

Martyrology of the Order of Friars Preachers. — At Bologna, the memory of the precious death of Blessed IMELDA, virgin, of the Order of Friars Preachers, who, after receiving the sacrament of the most holy Eucharist, for which she had ardently longed, and being unable any longer to withstand the fire of divine love, ended the course of her mortal life and went to rest in heaven as a host of charity. 1333.

ADDITIONS FAITES D'APRÈS LES BOLLANDISTES ET AUTRES HAGIOGRAPHES.

Additions made from the Bollandists and other hagiographers.

In Japan, the blessed martyrs Michael Fimonoia, Paul Cimonoia and Dominic Xiboie, all three Japanese and of the Third Order of St. Dominic. 1628. — In Spain, Blessed Godfrey, count of Kappenberg (Westphalia), a Premonstratensian religious and founder of the monasteries of Kappenberg, Varlard and Ilmstadt. He is already named in the martyrologies of 13 January, the day under which we gave his life. 1127. — In Portugal, feast of the translation of the relics of Saint Vincent, martyr, whose life we shall give on 27 October. About 304. — In Bohemia, Saint LUDMILA or LUDOMILA, martyr, duchess and patroness of Bohemia. 927. — In the Benedictine abbey of Monte Cassino (Terra di Lavoro), in Italy, Blessed Desiderius, of the house of the counts of Capua, first abbot of Monte Cassino, then cardinal, and finally pope under the name of Victor III. He had distinguished himself among the most intimate confidants of Saint Gregory VII (1073–1080), and his firmness, joined to his other virtues, had won him a great reputation throughout Christendom and above all in Italy. And so the bishops and cardinals pressed him most urgently to accept the sovereign Pontificate and put an end to the schism that was afflicting the Church through the intrusion of the antipope Guibert, or Clement III. After long resistance he finally gave way and was elected, in the church of Santa Lucia, on 24 May 1086. While he was working to restore ecclesiastical discipline, Victor III, to preserve Italy from the ravages of the Saracens, organized against them a crusade made up of nearly all the peoples of Italy. The Christian army landed on the coast of Africa, utterly defeated the Saracens, forced the sultan of Tunis to acknowledge himself tributary to the Holy See, and took an immense booty, which was used to adorn the churches. This triumph worthily crowned the pontificate of Victor III, who died in the abbey of Monte Cassino. 1187. — At Rimini, a city of the kingdom of Italy in the province of Forlì, Saint Innocentia, virgin and martyr. She was of a noble family of Rimini; arrested at the age of seventeen by order of the emperor Diocletian, she was pressed to sacrifice to the idols; on her refusal she was beheaded. Rimini possesses her relics. 4th c. — At Borgo San Donnino ("Bourg-Saint-Domnin"), between Parma and Piacenza, in Italy, Saint Gilmer or Gislemer, one of the generous martyrs of the Theban legion. 3rd c. — At Sutri, a city of the States of the Church in the delegation of Viterbo, Saint Dulcissima, virgin and martyr. — At Nocera, in Italy, Saint Priscian, martyr, mentioned in the apographs of Saint Jerome.

Saint Cornelius, Pope and Martyr

252. — Roman Emperors: Gallus and Volusian.

> *Apprenez à vous soumettre à Dieu pour choisir non pas ce que vous voulez, mais ce que vous savez lui être agréable.*
>
> *Learn to submit yourself to God, so as to choose not what you want but what you know to be pleasing to Him.*
>
> *St. Ambrose.*

The Church of Rome, after remaining a year and some months without a pastor, was consoled for the delay by the election of Cornelius, who had all the qualities needed to steer a ship tossed by the storm that the emperor Decius had raised. He reached this first throne of the Church by learning and virtue, the only steps by which one rose to it in those blessed ages. "He was all the more worthy of it," says St. Cyprian, "because he showed by a virginal modesty and a sincere humility that in this election, at which many bishops were present, violence was being done to him, and that he did not think himself capable of bearing the great

burden being laid on his shoulders." He was a Roman by nation, the son of Castinus, and had passed through all the ecclesiastical offices, in which his zeal and prudence had won the admiration of all the faithful. And so it was these virtues alone that led him to accept this office, which in those days one could not enter without exposing oneself to every kind of torment.

He had first to fight a furious schism. Novatus, bishop of a Church in Africa whose name is not known, began it. This schismatic showed himself wholly unworthy of his prelacy. St. Cyprian, who had a great aversion to slander, says of him that he was a lover of novelties, avaricious, arrogant and proud. He depicts him as a firebrand capable of setting the whole world alight, as a seditious man fit to stir up storms and cause sad shipwrecks of the faith, and as the sworn enemy of peace and public tranquillity. He adds that the orphans whom his office obliged him to father found in him a pitiless robber; the widows, a seducer of their chastity; and the poor, a barbarian's heart insensible to their misery; that he had let his own father die of hunger, and after his death had not troubled to render him the duty of burial. To escape the punishment of his crimes he fled to Rome, where he found a fit instrument for his design. This was the priest Novatian, a man of hidden but very ardent ambition, capable of undertaking anything. The philosophy and eloquence by which he had won a great reputation had so puffed him up that he broke out in complaints and murmurs at the election of Cornelius, as if he had been wronged by not being chosen himself for the sovereign pontificate. Novatus heated him up and embittered him still further on this point by the artful praise he gave him and by contempt for the man preferred to him. They joined together in an unhappy bond of ambition and revenge and began to spread atrocious calumnies against the holy Pontiff among the faithful, to decry him and make him odious. In the end they coloured their wicked design so well that even several of those who had gloriously confessed the faith during the persecution let themselves be deceived. Novatian had always protested that he shunned the episcopate; but what followed showed clearly that under these protests he hid an inordinate desire to attain it. He wrote to three bishops of Italy, simple and ignorant men, begging them to come to Rome as soon as possible to calm the troubles of the Church, and assuring them that they alone were capable of ending them. As soon as these prelates arrived, he had them received by persons of his faction, who invited them to a great banquet that had been prepared for them; then, when they were befuddled by the wine they had been made to drink to excess, he came into the banqueting hall, and there and then had himself ordained bishop by a ridiculous imposition of their hands. Never was a man more unfit for that dignity: for besides having been possessed by the devil and delivered by exorcisms, he had received baptism on his deathbed, and in the preceding persecution he had denied his priesthood to save his life, capital irregularities according to the Canons. One of the bishops who had performed this profane ordination soon repented of his fault, and having humbly confessed it with many tears, was admitted to penance and placed among the laity. Such was the first schism and the first antipope of the Church.

Novatian, after his ordination, wrote to several bishops, and particularly to St. Cyprian, trying to take them by surprise and draw them into his communion. His letters were nothing but invectives against Cornelius, mixed with perverse and heretical doctrine. He complained among other things that the holy Pope admitted those who had sacrificed to idols to communion too easily, and said that they must be excluded from it for ever, and that it must also be refused to those who had fallen into grave sins after baptism, leaving both to the judgment of God. Thus, under a false pretext of honouring God's justice, he offended His mercy and cast souls into despair instead of filling them with fear and horror of sin. Cornelius, whom his own interest would never have moved to act, seeing that this pernicious doctrine was going to cause the loss of many souls, assembled a council at Rome, at which it was decided that a just balance should be kept in lengthening or shortening the time of penance, so as on the one hand not to give free rein to sin and on the other not to take from sinners the hope of forgiveness. It was added that priests who had renounced the faith might well be received into communion, but not into the exercise of their order. Following this decree, several persons who had been led astray by the wiles of the Novatians asked to return to the Church. To receive them, the holy Pope assembled the priests of Rome with five bishops, and on their advice granted these strayed sheep,

several of whom had confessed the name of Jesus Christ in the persecution, the grace of reconciliation, of which their prayers and tears, together with the trick that the schismatics had played on their simplicity, made them judged worthy. But to stamp out the error of the Novatians completely, he convoked in the same place a further synod of sixty bishops, and perhaps more priests and deacons; by common consent the error was condemned, and all who followed it were struck with anathema.

When St. Cornelius had thus won the victory over the schismatics, another persecution, far crueller than the previous one, broke out against the Church, kindled by the emperors Gallus and Volusian. He speaks of it in these terms in his letter to Lupicinus, bishop of Vienne: “You must know that the ark of the Lord is sorely tossed by the wind of persecution, and that the Christians are tormented on every side by unheard-of tortures to which the emperors condemn them. There is at Rome a lieutenant expressly appointed to put them to death. We can no longer celebrate the divine Mysteries either publicly or in the vaults that are not wholly secret. Many have already been crowned with martyrdom. Pray God to give us the grace to finish our course faithfully, which will not last much longer, according to the revelation we have had of it. Greet in our name all who love us in Jesus Christ.”

He was first banished to Centumcellae, today Civitavecchia; but since he no longer had any homeland on earth, he did not regard this removal as an exile. From there he wrote several letters to St. Cyprian, who sent him fine replies in return and praised him highly for the zeal and firmness he showed in defending the faith, encouraging the faithful and generously upholding the interests of the Church. But this devout exchange of letters was discovered by Decius, who was also informed of the visits the Christians often paid their holy pastor; he had him brought to Rome and, after reproaching him, with a calumny usual among tyrants, with intriguing with the enemies of the State and writing to them against his service, he offered him a choice of two things: either to sacrifice to the gods of the empire or to expect to lose his life. As Cornelius laughed at these threats, he had him struck on the mouth with leaded cords, then sent him to the temple of Mars with orders that he be beheaded if he refused to sacrifice to the idols.

Before this execution Cerealis, who was guarding him, begged him to come by his house to see Sallustia, his wife, who had been paralysed for fifteen years. Cornelius went in and began to pray for her, after which he said to her with lively faith: “In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise and stand on your feet.” And at that very hour she rose in full health, crying aloud: “Jesus Christ is the true God and the true Son of God.” The Pope baptized her and all her family, as well as Cerealis’s soldiers, who were converted at the sight of so great a miracle. These conversions angered the emperor afresh, and he had these neophytes taken with Cornelius to the temple of Mars to sacrifice to the idols. But these generous servants of the true God, having spat on the statues instead of adoring them, were at once beheaded. The following night the blessed Lucina, with some clerics of Rome, carried off their bodies and buried them in a crypt on her *praedium*, belonging to the cemetery of Callistus, on the Appian Way.

Pope Adrian I later placed the relics of St. Cornelius in the church he had built under his invocation. At the request of Charles the Bald, emperor and king of France, the body of St. Cornelius was translated and brought to the city of Compiègne and laid in a celebrated abbey that this prince had built there in honour of the Blessed Virgin and the holy martyrs Cornelius and Cyprian. In 1852 the tomb of St. Cornelius was rediscovered at Rome, on the Appian Way, in the catacomb of Callistus, exactly where he had been buried. Today his relics rest in the church of Saint-Jacques at Compiègne.

St. Jerome places St. Cornelius among the ecclesiastical writers because of several letters he wrote on various occasions; we have just mentioned some of them. During the two years he held the see he made no ordinations, because the schism and the persecutions prevented him. But although his pontificate lasted so short a time, and many obstacles were put in its way, it is nonetheless very remarkable for what this great man did for the honour of the Church and for his firmness in the storms that tried his courage. His death took place on the 14th of this month, but the Church keeps his feast only on the 16th.

He is represented: 1° giving baptism; 2° sometimes surrounded by cows and oxen, because of the likeness of his name to that of horned beasts (*cornes*, horns): a play on words no doubt led to the choice of this Pope as patron of the great herds. In Brittany he is still invoked as protector of cows and oxen, and is called Cornéli.

We have drawn this summary from the Annales ecclésiastiques. — *Cf.* Histoire de l'Église *by the abbé Darras.*

Saint Cyprian, Bishop of Carthage, Doctor of the Church, Martyr

258. — Pope: St. Sixtus II. — Roman Emperor: Valerian.

> *Bene atque utiliter prædicatur si id quod ore promitur factis impleatur.*
>
> *La parole du prédicateur n'est efficace qu'autant qu'elle est corroborée par ses exemples.*
>
> *The preacher's word is effective only in so far as it is borne out by his example.*
>
> *Maxim of St. Cyprian, de Zelo et fervore.*

Cyprian, born in paganism, came of an illustrious and wealthy family; his father was a senator. An education worthy of his rank and an ardent study of letters and philosophy early brought out the happy genius with which nature had endowed him. Literary glory was at that time one of the first claims to admiration. His fellow citizens prevailed on him to open a public course in eloquence.

Cyprian was leading, like the pagans of his day, a life at once laborious, sensual and lavish, when a circumstance, which might be called an event, came to change that destiny. At his entry into the world, a man of fine mind and varied learning was, by the charm of his conversation, the delight of the high society of Carthage. His name was Caecilius; after his conversion he edified the faithful of Carthage by a fervent and solid piety, which later earned him a call to the functions of the sacred ministry. Until his death he was a devoted apostle of that religion which had so often been the object of his disdain and his mockery. His affectionate zeal attached itself particularly to the young Cyprian. Cyprian deliberated for a long time. It cost him dearly to submit the pride of the philosopher to the authority of divine facts and teachings. His will showed itself more rebellious still than his intellect. His mind, convinced by the reasonings of Caecilius and enlightened by light from on high, already admired the intimate bonds that unite reason, conscience and faith; but his heart shuddered at the thought of detaching itself from all the things that had seduced him and held him captive. He, brought up amid luxury and honours and, as he says, amid the fasces; accustomed to the pleasures of a brilliant and lively society and to the homage of a crowd of eager clients; he who, enjoying in the pagan world all the esteem due to a wise and honest man, knew, by his own admission, how to combine pleasure and delights with that so-called wisdom, could he bind himself to a sober, retired, humbled and penitent life? Would he try to break chains that their very charm made indissoluble, inclinations born of his temperament, habits that had become a second nature? Yet amid all this tumult of the passions conscience never ceased crying to him: "Courage, Cyprian! Whatever it costs, let us go to God." At last he obeyed that voice; he rose and, trampling his own heart underfoot, threw himself generously into baptism. From that moment, as he himself attests, a complete transformation took place in the depths of his soul: what had remained obscure became luminous; what had seemed impossible became easy to him; he took a distaste for the pomp and pride of life, felt drawn to the humility of the Gospel, and found in the folly of the cross not only true wisdom but also true happiness.

Cyprian's vocation was no common one: immediately after his conversion he sold his vast possessions, among which were magnificent gardens lying under the walls of Carthage, and distributed the price to the poor. Scarcely a year had passed when the illustrious neophyte, by an exception justified by his learning and by the ardour and sincerity of his faith, was raised to the priesthood. In the year 248 the assembly of the faithful of Carthage proclaimed him bishop. He tried to escape that dignity by flight; but the Christian people ran to his house and by dint of entreaties won his consent.

The choice of so great a man to govern the church of Carthage, at a time when a new persecution was expected at any moment, inspired the Christians with wonderful courage; they were convinced that by his words and his example he would strengthen them against the malice of their enemies. The piety and vigour, the mercy and severity he showed in the administration of his office are beyond telling. Holiness and grace shone so brightly in all his conduct that he captivated the hearts of those who saw him. His face was grave and at the same time showed a devout cheerfulness. His actions were so well tempered by kindness and firmness that one did not know whether one ought rather to fear him or to love him, or rather one loved and feared him together. His dress was modest, equally removed from superfluity and from meanness. He did not wish to set himself apart from others by a vain parade of austerity, nor yet expose himself to contempt by sordid thrift; but in all things he kept a just and seemly moderation. His charity towards the poor was inexhaustible; his zeal for ecclesiastical discipline, invincible; his labours for the instruction of his flock, immense. In a word, he was the father of his people, the good shepherd of his flock, the model of other prelates and the admiration even of the ungodly and the idolaters. But the peace that the Church enjoyed for a time was soon disturbed by the cruel Decius, who seized the empire after the death of Philip (249); for scarcely did that tyrant find himself in a position to issue edicts than he published very harsh ones against the Christians: this gave free rein to the fury of the idolaters against them and filled every province with frightful carnage. Only demons could invent such tortures; many Christians were in danger of losing the faith together with the crown of martyrdom. So St. Cyprian speaks of it, and he further remarks that the first to let themselves be carried away by that storm into denying Jesus Christ were those who, in the calm of peace, had already denied Him by a bad life, and who, having attached themselves to their goods, their families and their pleasures by bonds that the Gospel condemns, could not bring themselves to lose, in its defence, the things they loved so passionately. The holy bishop then neglected nothing to strengthen his flock against so violent an attack: he spurred them to victory by his powerful exhortations; he prepared them for penance, and made them worthy of martyrdom by the practice of all the Christian virtues.

The idolaters, who knew how much courage so vigilant and generous a pastor gave the faithful, tried by every means to seize him, and their desire to put him to death was so violent that the cry went up several times from the midst of the amphitheatre that he should be brought to be devoured by the wild beasts. He would willingly have exposed himself to it; but instead of following his zeal he followed the movement of the Holy Spirit and the advice of those who, judging by inspiration from on high, persuaded him to withdraw so as to preserve himself for his flock. Indeed, what would his poor sheep have done if, at so terrible a juncture, they had seen themselves deprived of their pastor? Who would have watched over the chastity of the virgins whom the pagans were trying to seduce? Who would have brought back to penance those whom fear or weakness made give way under the rigour of the torments? Who would have defended the truth against the heretics? Who would have maintained unity against the schismatics? Who would have kept peace and the law of the Gospel among his people? Who would have comforted those who had been robbed of all their goods out of hatred for religion? Who would have encouraged the confessors, who already bore on their brows the marks of their faith and constancy, to endure a second martyrdom for which they were reserved? Finally, who would have led souls to patience, fidelity and perseverance, had the Church of Carthage lost that admirable bishop? He did not absent himself to avoid martyrdom, but to put it off to another occasion less harmful to his people. It was not the fear of death that gave him this thought, but the desire to serve the Christians the more. He was keeping himself to restore the sick, to heal the wounded, to steady the wavering, to raise up those who had fallen, and to keep his whole flock unshakably firm in the midst of the storm.

He therefore left Carthage, after assembling the faithful to tell them the reason and motives for his retreat, and remained hidden in a safe place, from which he unceasingly provided for their needs, watching over them and writing them admirable letters that had the same effect as if he had been present. He would have them come, now some, now others, to out-of-the-way places, to exhort them to suffer the torments of the persecutors with constancy. He saw to it that during the night there were persons appointed to bury those

who had died under the rigour of the tortures; that those who had only endured the pains of the rack should be carefully tended so as to heal their wounds; and, finally, that those who had lost their goods through the injustice of the tyrants should be relieved by the alms of the others. A raging plague, which ravaged the whole city at the same time, gave him fresh occasions to display his pastoral zeal. He provided for the spiritual and temporal needs of the sick, who were abandoned by everyone. He divided the duties among those he had charged with assisting them, so that no one should lack help, not even the idolaters; and everyone, fired by his letters, all filled with the fire of charity, set about carrying out the instructions he gave them with incredible fervour. As the persecution had carried off Pope St. Fabian, he consulted the clergy of Rome about his retreat during the vacancy of the Apostolic See: he was ready to sacrifice himself, if it were judged necessary, for the good of his Church. His retreat was praised and approved by those venerable churchmen, who knew how much the faithful needed the vigilance of so good a pastor.

These misfortunes were followed by another still more dangerous, since it tended to overthrow the ecclesiastical discipline that all the tortures had not been able to shake. Several Christians of Carthage who were not very firm in the faith, fearing the loss of their goods, their offices and their lives, denied their faith. Some did so openly; others, thinking to lessen their crime, obtained from the magistrates certificates attesting that they had obeyed the emperor's edicts, having declared in secret before them, either in person or through substitutes, that they renounced Jesus Christ; thus buying themselves off from making that renunciation in public, as the general law ordered. Hence they were called *Libellatici* (from *libellus*, a certificate). The Church of Africa admitted them to communion only after a long penance; but as it obliged them to very harsh satisfactions, they often turned to the confessors and martyrs who were in prison or on their way to death, to obtain through their intercession the remission of the canonical penalties they still had to undergo. The respect felt for persons who were suffering for the glory of Jesus Christ was so great that, on their recommendation, the penitents were received into ecclesiastical communion even though they had not completed the time prescribed by the canons. But this indulgence of the holy confessors had a very bad effect: those who had sacrificed or had received certificates from the magistrates were admitted too easily.

St. Cyprian was informed of it in his retreat, and tried to remedy it by three excellent letters that he wrote to his clergy, to the martyrs and confessors, and to his people, exhorting them not to relax the discipline without considering the difference between one fall and another and the time of penance already completed. Felicissimus, a turbulent man who, with five priests, had opposed the election of St. Cyprian and had since let no occasion pass of giving the holy Bishop trouble, rose against him and did all he could to set him at odds with the confessors of Jesus Christ. For, not content with working at that division, which could not succeed, he openly formed a schism, set up altar against altar, gathering his party on a mountain outside the city, and excommunicated all who did not adhere to him. But as frivolous as his excommunication was, so just and terrible was that of our Saint, who, unable to overlook any longer the disorder this rebel was causing among the people, or the other crimes of which he was guilty, struck him with anathema. Meanwhile, seeing that those who had obtained these recommendations from the confessors were pressing him and the other bishops hard to be admitted to the communion of the Church, and that his authority alone could not calm the trouble that had arisen over it in Carthage, he wrote again to the clergy of Rome, the Holy See being still vacant. That illustrious clergy judged his strictness very sound, and answered him that to use the leniency he complained of was not to heal the sick man but to kill him; that the penitents must knock at the doors of the Church and not try to break them down; that they should prostrate themselves on the threshold but not attempt to go further; that they should keep watch at the entrance of the heavenly camp, but armed with modesty and remembering that they had been deserters; that they ought to use their tears as ambassadors, and their groans drawn from the depths of their breasts as advocates, so as to prove the greatness of their sorrow and wipe out the shame of their sin. Finally it concluded that, on the advice of several neighbouring bishops, it had been thought fit to make no innovation until the election of a successor in the place of Fabian, and that meanwhile the reconciliation of those who could wait should be deferred, and granted to those near death,

provided they had brought forth worthy fruits of a true penance. St. Cyprian followed this arrangement, by which he kept and preserved ecclesiastical discipline in its ancient integrity.

In his excellent treatise on those who had fallen during the persecution, he relates the terrible punishments with which God chastised the irreverence of persons who, after defiling themselves with meats offered to idols, dared to receive Jesus Christ without having been purified by a true penance and without having earned reconciliation. He tells, among others, that a man guilty of a crime, having received the Eucharist in his hand, found nothing but ashes when he tried to eat it; and that a little girl, who had been taken by her nurse to the temple of the gods and made to taste some liquor offered to the idols, could not swallow the blood of Jesus Christ that the deacon offered her in church, according to the custom of the time, and resisted so much that she forced the nurse to confess what had happened.

This conduct of St. Cyprian, so conformable to the Canons and authorized by the Church of Rome, ought to have sheltered him from censure; but the spirit of schismatics never spares anyone, and the most eminent holiness is exposed to their malice. Privatus, whom the holy Bishop had refused to admit to a synod, plotted with five bishops guilty of apostasy to put another in the see of Carthage; and Fortunatus, one of the priests who had already formed the schism with Felicissimus, seeming to them fit for their design, they ordained him bishop, and at once sent the same Felicissimus to Rome, to Cornelius, who had succeeded Fabian, to obtain his communion by surprise and to accuse St. Cyprian. This embassy was rejected at first; but the schismatics, not losing heart, importuned the Pope so eagerly that, seeing no one arrive on our Saint's behalf and astonished at his silence in so important a matter, he wrote to him in terms that showed some displeasure with him; but St. Cyprian justified himself and answered him with such modesty that Cornelius was entirely undeceived.

As the Church enjoyed a fairly great peace in the first years of the reign of Valerian, who had succeeded Gallus and Volusian, our holy prelate took advantage of that calm and applied himself to establishing good discipline in his diocese. Among other things he refuted the error of those who offered only water in the sacrifice of the altar; he proved to them, by a host of passages of Holy Scripture, from the Old as well as the New Testament, that wine was absolutely necessary to that mystery, and that without that element one could not have the Blood of Jesus Christ. He himself testifies, in his sixty-third letter, to Caecilius, that this abuse might have come from the fact that during the persecution the faithful, who assembled at night to celebrate the divine mysteries and to take part in the Eucharist, feared being discovered in the morning by the smell of the wine. He also assembled a synod to remedy several other abuses that had crept in among the people. In it Geminius Victor was excommunicated; after his death it was forbidden to offer the oblation for the repose of his soul or to make any prayer in the Church for his relief, because, against the Canons, he had appointed a priest guardian of his children. "He," say the bishops, "does not deserve to be named at the altar of God in the prayer of the priests, who sought to turn the ministers of the Lord away from the altar and to entangle them in the care of temporal affairs, wholly foreign to their profession." They did not trouble themselves about the civil laws, which exempted no one from the charge of wards; they had regard only to the good of the Churches and to the spiritual assistance of the faithful through the care and prayers of their pastors. In that synod he had those called *Libellatici* condemned afresh, as guilty of infidelity and apostasy. He assembled several more synods concerning baptism conferred by heretics, which he believed to be null and to require repetition when the baptized returned to the Church. On this subject he had great disputes with Pope St. Stephen, who upheld, on the ground of tradition, and defined, that such baptism was valid; but as this question belongs purely to ecclesiastical history, which we do not claim to treat here, it is enough to say with St. Augustine, in his forty-eighth letter, that even if one does not find that St. Cyprian changed his opinion, it is nonetheless true that he did so; that those whom his opinion pleased may well have suppressed his retraction; and that several have even asserted that he never held that error, but that impostors, to shelter behind his authority, had attributed to him what he had never believed. Here are the very remarkable words

of that great Doctor: “Either St. Cyprian never held the opinion you attribute to him, or, if he held it, he corrected it by the rule of truth, or else he covered that stain on his most candid and most sincere conscience with the anointing of his charity, since he remained perpetually in the unity of the Church.” Our holy prelate was thus labouring without respite for the salvation of his people and the restoration of discipline when the proconsul Aspasius Paternus, after vainly using threats and promises to shake his firmness, sent him into exile. He withdrew to Curubis, a small town set on the promontory of Mercury, facing Sicily, and only fifty miles from Carthage. There, having had a revelation that within a year he was to be crowned with martyrdom, he spent all that time preparing for it by every kind of work of charity. He wrote to the other bishops and to the priests of Africa who had been banished to wild places, where they suffered great hardships, a letter of consolation that it is impossible to read without feeling oneself set ablaze with the divine fire that burned in him, and with an ardent desire to suffer for Jesus Christ. He also sent them many things they needed for their subsistence. He extended his charitable care also to the Christians who were in prison, writing to them in very urgent terms to strengthen them in the confession of their faith and spur them to patience. When he learned that Galerius Maximianus had succeeded Aspasius, he returned to Carthage and hid in the gardens that had once belonged to him and that he had sold to help the poor, so that from there he might watch over his people, who often came to find him there. But having learned that an order had been given to seize him and take him to Utica, where the proconsul was, he withdrew elsewhere, to a safe place, there to await the opportunity of suffering death in his own city, in the presence of his dear flock; and lest his retreat be misinterpreted by the faithful, he wrote them a letter to give them the reason for it. “Having been warned,” he says to them, “that soldiers were being sent to take us to Utica, we have absented ourselves on the advice of our friends, judging it more fitting that we should confess the truth in the principal city of our diocese than in another place, so as to instruct the people there by the example of our death and strengthen the weak there by our confession; because at such a moment what the bishop who confesses Jesus Christ says, he says as the mouth of all. The honour of our Church, which is now so glorious, would be much diminished if we were put to death in a foreign land. It is therefore fitting that we receive the crown of martyrdom in the sight of Carthage. This is the grace we continually ask of God for ourselves and for you, so that, dying before your eyes, we may show you the way to heaven.” He did not, however, die in Carthage; but it was in a place so near, and in the presence of so many people from the city, that one may say his wish was fulfilled.

The proconsul had him taken and brought before him to a country house near which he had withdrawn. The man who had taken him prisoner kept him the first night in his own lodging; that house was at once surrounded by men, women, children and old people who flocked there to see what would become of their holy bishop. There were many young girls in the crowd; and as the fear of death did not keep him from watching over his flock, he gave orders that they be separated and kept in the dark, for fear the soldiers might do them some violence. St. Augustine admirably praises this vigilance of the holy Martyr. When morning came, he was led before the proconsul, who showed him the order he had from the emperors to compel him to sacrifice to the gods. But finding him unmoved by all his remonstrances and threats, he condemned him to be beheaded. St. Cyprian heard this cruel sentence calmly and, lifting his heart to God, said: “I give You thanks, my Lord, that You deign to draw my soul out of the prison of this mortal body.” The faithful, who never left him, cried out for their part with one voice: “Let us go and be beheaded with him!” The executioner appeared to be trembling when he had to do his office, but the martyr encouraged him to strike the blow; and, to reward him for the grace he was about to procure him, he had twenty-five gold pieces given to him. After this heroic act he stripped off his garments, which consisted of a dalmatic, a short mantle and a linen robe. Cardinal Baronius thinks that the camail and the rochet of present-day bishops have some connection with them. All who saw this spectacle melted into tears, while he alone was in an extreme joy that showed even on his face. Everyone threw down cloths to receive his blood, so as to keep it as a precious treasure. He bandaged his own eyes and had his hands tied by one of his priests; then, having knelt down, he

generously received the death blow. As soon as his head had been struck off, the clerics, accompanied by Christians, took up his body and buried it with great solemnity, carrying lighted candles in their hands; they were all the bolder in rendering him these last duties in public, without caring about the proconsul or the fury of the idolaters, because they all ardently wished to die for Jesus Christ after the example of their holy Pastor. His martyrdom took place on 14 September.

The name of St. Cyprian is one of the finest names of Christianity, and that great man one of those whom we most admire and above all most love. God, who delights to show Himself by His mercy more than by His justice, willed also that in man goodness should be the most powerful attraction for winning hearts. Cyprian occupied the see of Carthage for only ten years; but how laborious his ministry was, and how fruitful in its results! His last gaze rested with joy on a church more numerous, more devoted and more faithful than when he had received it, and the tears of the pagans that flowed at his execution foretold to him that Carthage would soon be wholly Christian.

He is represented: 1° holding a sword in his hand, to indicate the kind of death he suffered; 2° holding a crown, after a mosaic at Ravenna.

CULTE ET RELIQUES. — ABBAYE DE MOISSAC. — ÉCRITS.

Cult and relics. — The abbey of Moissac. — Writings.

Since the fifth century the feast of St. Cyprian has been celebrated on the 16th of this month. After his glorious martyrdom two churches were built in his honour: one on the spot where he had suffered it, which was called the Table of St. Cyprian, not, says St. Augustine, because he had eaten there, but because he had been immolated there; and the other on the place where he had been buried. His relics were brought to France in the ninth century and carried to the city of Lyon, where they were placed behind the altar of St. John the Baptist. Later they were transferred to Compiègne by King Charles the Bald and deposited in the church of Saint-Corneille, as Ado says in his martyrology. “The parish church of Saint-Jacques in that town,” writes to us M. l’abbé Bourgeois, vicar general and archpriest of Compiègne, “has possessed them since the abbey of Saint-Corneille has survived only in part and has changed its purpose. The old church was demolished to make way for a shopping street called the rue Saint-Corneille; there remains only a fragment of that church, recalling the style of the sixteenth century, against which a few stalls of the herb market lean.

“The buildings of the old abbey that survive the demolitions and alienations that have taken place, now known by the name of *manutention* [the military bakery], belong to the army administration. The cloisters, which survive in great part, have been disfigured by walls closing each of the bays, and have been turned into ovens and offices; and the existing buildings, of fairly recent date, are far from offering the interest of the cloisters, whose construction may be assigned to the end of the fourteenth century.

“Inside one sees a stone staircase of grandiose proportions, recalling the workmanship of the seventeenth century. The excavation of a piece of ground called the cour Saint-Corneille has lately led to the discovery of a considerable quantity of bones, which seem to reveal the site of the old cemetery of the abbey; the abbey had in its church a chapel called the Parish of the Crucifix, and exercised a parochial jurisdiction, not within a territorial circumscription, but over the abbey’s vassals, who formed the abbot’s court in all civil and religious ceremonies.

“The abbot’s house, which still keeps its coat of arms, after being dressed up in the modern fashion, now serves as a notary’s residence.”

However, we read in the lessons of the office of St. Cyprian of the collegiate church of Saint-Pierre at Moissac, and in an official report of 21 September 1817, deposited in the archives of that church and of the bishopric of Montauban, the following details about the relics of St. Cyprian: “Abbot Roger had the body of St. Cyprian of Carthage and of several other Saints solemnly translated to Moissac in 1122; they had been

carried away from Lyon when it was threatened by the barbarians, and deposited not far from Cahors, in a place belonging to the abbey, called the valley of Lascabanes (the present parish). This translation, celebrated every year on 5 July, is called by the people the feast of *San-Cypria de Segarous*, or of the harvest, while that of 16 September bears the name of *San-Cypria de Bendegnos*, or of the grape harvest. In 1791, in consequence of the suppression of the monastic Orders, and as there were threats to pillage the church of the famous abbey, a venerable priest saved several of the relics that had been honoured there for centuries by hiding them elsewhere. In 1795 this same priest returned the said relics to the church of Saint-Pierre, recording their restitution in the register of baptisms, where it can still be read. This sacred deposit remained buried in the sacristy until, by order of Mgr de Greuville, bishop of Cahors, an inquiry was made into its identity. On 21 September 1817 the abbé de Trélissac, vicar general, afterwards bishop of Montauban, drew up and signed the official report of authenticity on the preserved relics, and in particular on the most important of them, which was the very head of St. Cyprian of Carthage, in the presence of reputable witnesses who had seen that head when it was publicly venerated, before the year 1791, the time of its disappearance. In 1864 Mgr Doney, bishop of Montauban, after fresh inquiries, confirmed the authenticity of the said head and that of several other bones of the same Saint, which, however, are mixed with others just as venerable, without its having yet been possible to identify anything individually. The solemn reinstallation of all these relics was carried out at Moissac on 15 October 1864, under the presidency of Mgr of Toulouse, assisted by several other prelates.

“The head of St. Cyprian, consisting of the upper and back part of the skull, is at present enclosed in a ciborium or oblong silver globe surmounted by a cross. In 1843 a fragment had been detached from this bone to be given to Mgr Dupuch, bishop of Algiers, who earnestly asked for it in order to take it back to the church of Africa. On the days of the two feasts of St. Cyprian (5 July and 16 September) the famous relic used to be carried solemnly in procession through the streets of Moissac. It was also carried in times of public calamity, and particularly of drought. The chapter, the consuls and all the people accompanied the reliquary, and care was taken to plunge the skull into the waters of the Tarn, which washes the walls of the town, no doubt in memory of a singular circumstance reported by Pamelius, the biographer of St. Cyprian, who says that in Africa, about the time of this Saint’s feast, an abundant storm rain usually falls, to which the sailors had given the name of *Cypriana*. The patronage of St. Cyprian is still very popular at Moissac, and the two traditional processions are by no means neglected.” Now let us say a word about that famous abbey which gave birth to the town of Moissac, today the chief town of an arrondissement in the department of Tarn-et-Garonne, diocese of Montauban. It formerly belonged to the diocese of Cahors.

Few monasteries have equalled the fame of the abbey of Moissac; the metropolis of Cluny in the south of France, it is called *Magistralis ecclesia* in a charter of the eleventh century. According to the chronicle of Aimery de Peyrac, fortieth abbot of Moissac (1377–1406), King Clovis, the victor over Alaric at Voulon (506), was on his way from Bordeaux to Toulouse when, arriving at Moissac, he was inspired to raise a church on that spot under the invocation of the apostles St. Peter and St. Paul. That is why, ever since, two candles burned constantly in his honour before the high altar of St. Peter; every day a Mass was celebrated for his intention, he was commemorated at all the canonical hours of day and night, and he was venerated almost as a Saint. Between 630 and 640, St. Amand, later bishop of Maastricht, exiled to Vasconia by King Dagobert, whom he had dared to reproach for his disorders, is said by some authors to have taken advantage of that banishment to found the abbey of Moissac. St. Amand, St. Ansbert, St. Leothadius, St. Paternus and St. Amarandus were the first abbots of Moissac.

Burned by the Saracens in the eighth century, the abbey owed its restoration to the devoted zeal of Pepin. Louis the Pious honoured it with his predilection and favours. In the acts of the council of Aix-la-Chapelle held in 817 it appears among those that owe the emperor neither military service nor fiscal dues, but only the tribute of their prayers. In the year 1030 the abbey church collapsed. About 1047 St. Odilo of Cluny visited

the community to dispose it to reform; St. Hugh, his successor, also came to Moissac in 1052 and succeeded in rallying the religious to the observances of Cluny; on leaving he gave them as abbot Durand de Bredon, one of his most faithful disciples. Durand raised up the ruined church and, having become bishop of Toulouse without returning to the government of the abbey, he celebrated the dedication of the new basilica on 6 December 1062 with a pomp unheard of even for cathedrals of the first rank. From then on donations poured in and monastic colonies multiplied; powerful abbeys, priories, lordships, churches and so on came to place themselves under the dependence of the abbot of Moissac. Pope Urban II, travelling from Toulouse to Clermont to preside over the council of the Crusade (1095), stopped several days at Moissac.

Towards the end of the thirteenth century the abbey of Moissac was at the height of its splendour. Its abbots were at once high religious dignitaries and powerful feudal lords. They then surrounded themselves with fortifications whose remains can still be seen. When after their election they went for the first time to the mother abbey, the monks of Cluny came out to meet them in procession to present them with the keys of the town; they had the right to free the prisoners under lock and key, and the next day they presided over the chapter. Pope Innocent IV granted the abbots of Moissac in 1250 the right to officiate with the mitre, crozier, ring, gloves and shoes adorned with the cross, and to give the people the pastoral blessing.

So much greatness prepared the decline. In 1295 the famous abbey counted more than a hundred and twenty monks; in 1449 it had no more than twenty. Pope Paul V secularized it in 1618 and replaced the monks of Cluny with Canons

Regular of St. Augustine. The title and traditional honours were by privilege preserved to the new abbots of Moissac. Cardinals Mazarin, Prince Régnaud d'Este and Loménie de Brienne, archbishop of Toulouse and minister of King Louis XVI, were commendatory abbots of Moissac. Under the last of the three the abbey was suppressed.

Since the Concordat of 1801 the abbey church, a splendid monument of the transitional pointed style, has become a deanery of the first class. The cloister, a rare and marvellous jewel in stone, is still intact as a whole and in almost all its details. What remains of the monastery, used at first for the various services of a Law Court, has just received a purpose more in keeping with its age-old traditions: it is a magnificent presbytery, a kind of bishop's house for the use of the parish clergy.

We have from St. Cyprian:

1° The letter or treatise *On Contempt of the World, or On the Grace of God*. The Saint composed this work shortly after his conversion and addressed it to Donatus, who had been baptized with him and seems to have been his fellow student in rhetoric. Its style is brilliant and pompous; one recognizes in it a professor of eloquence, used to declamations, who had only just left his post. The author gives in it the story of his conversion, and declares that the difficulties he met with from his passions vanished as soon as he had seriously resolved to give himself to God. He exhorts his friend to set no bounds to his fervour, because God will then set none to His graces. He then speaks of the power Christians have to force the unclean spirits that possess bodies to confess what they are, to drive them out, and to increase their torments by means of the spiritual weapons God puts into their hands. He paints the vices that lay waste the earth; he speaks to his friend of the barbarous entertainments of the circus, of the combats with beasts, of the corruption of the theatre, where the fire of an impure passion is kindled, where the heart grows soft, where the poison of vice enters the soul through all the senses, and where the spectators grow used to loving the abominations represented before their eyes; he reminds his friend that families and the most secret retreats are often defiled by jealousy, pride, impurity and so on. Against this picture of the vices he sets that of piety, which is the only means of reaching happiness, which frees the soul from the bonds that tie it to the world, which purifies it from the stains of sin, which makes it worthy of immortality, and which is, in a word, that harbour of salvation where an unalterable peace is found. Whoever wishes to make himself capable of piety must rise

above the world by despising it; be assiduous in prayer and in reading the holy law; sometimes speak to God and at other times listen to Him.

2° The book *On the Vanity of Idols*, composed by St. Cyprian while he was still only a layman. The Saint's aim is to show that those who were only men, and who committed the most abominable crimes, cannot be regarded as gods. He proves that the pagans often worshipped demons, even those that sometimes possessed bodies. He appeals to his adversaries, who had often heard demons admit what they were when the Christians used exorcisms.

3° It appears that he was a catechumen when he composed the two books of *Testimonies*. This is a collection of passages of the Old Testament relating to Jesus Christ and His Church. There is a third book of *Testimonies*, which is likewise a collection of passages, from which a system of morals emerges.

4° The book *On the Dress of Virgins* was written immediately after the Saint's elevation to the episcopal dignity, according to Pamelius, Pearson and Tillemont. But Dom Maran puts it a little before the holy doctor's episcopate, on the ground that the author claims no authority and simply follows the outpouring of his heart. Tertullian had produced a work on the necessity of veiling virgins, in which he proved the holiness of their state "by Holy Scripture, by the nature of God and by the discipline God has established among men". St. Cyprian, after describing the glory of virginity, invites virgins to watch over themselves and reminds them of the reward awaiting them in heaven.

He sharply reproaches women who dye their hair or paint their faces, claiming thereby to disguise or correct the work of God. He speaks out against the affectation of finery, which causes the ruin of so many souls.

5° The book *On the Unity of the Church*, written shortly before St. Cyprian left his retreat to return to Carthage. The author first observes that the devil sows heresies and schisms to destroy the souls that have escaped the snares of idolatry; after which he shows that the Church of Jesus Christ is essentially one. He says that to make this unity visible the Saviour built His Church on St. Peter and gave him the power of the keys; and that, although He gave the same power to all the Apostles, He willed that the source of unity should derive from one alone, and that the whole edifice should rest on that foundation. He lays down as a general rule "that in matters of faith the way that leads to truth is short and easy, and that facts take the place of any other proof". Then, coming directly to the unity of the Church founded on St. Peter, he says: "One cannot obtain the reward that Jesus Christ promised His disciples when one abandons the Church."

6° The book *On the Lapsed*. The Saint, after extolling the crown of the martyrs, bitterly deplores the fall of those who had apostatized.

He then passes to the remedies fit to expiate that fault, and speaks out against those who ask for an over-hasty reconciliation. To frighten sinners he relates several examples of persons severely punished in an altogether miraculous way for having unworthily received the body and blood of Jesus Christ.

From all he has said he concludes the necessity of penance.

7° The book *On the Lord's Prayer*, written shortly after the preceding work. St. Hilary and St. Augustine strongly recommend reading it. The latter urged the monks of Hadrumetum to learn it by heart. St. Cyprian shows in it the excellence of the Lord's Prayer and gives the explanation of all the petitions that form its subject. Speaking of the different times at which people prayed during the day, he distinguishes the first, the third, the sixth hour and so on. The chief conditions he requires in prayer are humility, reverence, attention, fervour and perseverance. He tells us that in his time the priest said, as today, in the preface of the Mass: *Lift up your hearts*, and that the people answered: *We have them to the Lord*. Our prayers, according to him, can rise to the throne of grace only when they are accompanied by almsgiving and other good works. Excellent maxims on the same subject are also found in the Saint's letters, and above all in his exhortation to continual prayer, which he sent to his clergy, recommending them to pass it on to the laity.

8° The book *On the Mortality*, written on the occasion of a horrible plague that devastated Africa. It is shown there that the servants of God must rejoice in calamities, because these furnish them with the means of practising heroic virtues and meriting heaven. “As for death,” he says, “it is fearful only to one who does not care to go to Jesus Christ; and one is in that disposition only when one has reason to believe that one will have no share in the heavenly kingdom.” He describes the happiness of those who, having escaped the storms and reefs of this world, have reached the harbour of eternity, have put on blessed immortality, and have nothing more to fear from the efforts of their enemies. He attributes excessive fear of death in a Christian to the lack of that lively faith and firm hope which strengthen the soul and make it capable of despising the queen of terrors. During this scourge, while the pagans abandoned their friends and relatives, the Christians, thanks to the maxims of the Gospel and the exhortations of St. Cyprian, devoted themselves heroically to the service of the plague-stricken. The book *On the Mortality* and the one *On the Lord’s Prayer* were translated into French by the duc de Luynes, who disguised himself under the name of Laval, and printed in 1664.

9° The *Exhortation to Martyrdom*, written in 252, at the renewal of the persecution under Gallus and Volusian. This work, made to strengthen the faithful, is a tissue of passages of Scripture.

10° The book *To Demetrianus*. This Demetrianus was a magistrate of Carthage who, though a zealous pagan, was on terms with the holy bishop. The work in question is a reply to that magistrate’s invectives against our faith; and it proves that the Christian religion is not the cause of the public calamities of the empire. It also contains a fine exhortation to penance.

11° The book *On Works and Almsgiving*, written about the year 254. It is a moving exhortation to both, which Scripture recommends to us and represents as means of obtaining mercy. The Saint says in it that one is ordinarily inexcusable in claiming to celebrate the Lord’s day without making an offering for the poor. He refutes the objections that avarice suggests.

12° The book *On the Good of Patience*, composed about the year 256, on the occasion of the disputes that had arisen over the baptism of heretics. According to the holy bishop, patience consists not only in stifling resentment or revenge; it is also taken for the whole set of virtues that help to make a man charitable, gentle and upright, that dispose him to restrain himself and to forgive, and that finally inspire him with a courage superior to every kind of trial. The pagan philosophers did not know true patience, which presupposes gentleness and humility in the one who has it; they could not please God, because they were full of presumption and self-love. A Christian must be in reality what they were only in appearance, and acquire that degree of virtue which was unknown to them in practice. To stir men to patience he cites the example of God, who is its principle and who gives it all its dignity; he brings forward the precepts of the Gospel; he shows this virtue in Jesus Christ, in the Apostles and in the Patriarchs; finally he appeals to the last judgement.

13° The book *On Jealousy and Envy*, composed shortly after the preceding work and with the same purpose. St. Cyprian shows in it that envy is the source of a great number of evils, and that it is at the same time a grievous sin and its own torment.

14° The persecution having ceased at the death of Gallus, which occurred at the beginning of the year 253, St. Cyprian held a Council at Carthage, composed of sixty-six bishops, to set the affairs of the Church in order. During this Council Fidus, an African bishop, consulted him about the Baptism of infants. He asked him whether it should be administered on the eighth day after birth, according to what was done under the old law with regard to circumcision. The Saint answered, with the other Fathers of the assembly, that no one could be refused a share in the grace of God… that it should above all be granted to infants who, by the tears they shed as soon as they see the light, seem to ask for mercy in a very touching way. We do not refuse pardon, he says, to the greatest sinners; how could we refuse it to infants who are only just born and who have no other fault than the original stain? The difficulty put to St. Cyprian was not whether infants should

be baptized, but on what day they should be baptized; and even on that point the unanimity of the Council shows what the general tradition of the Church was. Tertullian himself, who pleaded for the deferral of Baptism, calls anyone who would refuse to administer this Sacrament in case of necessity a murderer. See Count Acami, *De pædobaptismo solemni in Ecclesia Latina et Græca*, Rome, 1755. It is an excellent refutation of a letter by an English Anabaptist on the point in question.

15° *Letters*, eighty-one in number in the Oxford edition and eighty-three in that of Baluze. They deal with points of dogma, discipline and piety. Among the works of St. Cyprian several have been printed that were attributed to him although they are not his. The chief are: 1° the treatise *Against Public Spectacles*, which was written by a bishop contemporary with our Saint who had been separated from his flock by the persecution; 2° the discourse *Against Novatian*, which seems to be in the same style as the preceding work, although it is not of the same time; 3° the book *On the Celibacy of Clerics*, which is of the seventh century and contains extremely useful things.

St. Jerome and Lactantius give just praise to the eloquence of St. Cyprian. “He has,” according to the latter, “a ready, varied and pleasing invention, and, what is most essential, great clearness and precision in his ideas, that is to say, the chief of the qualities required of any writer. His narration is ornate, and becomes more interesting still through the ease of the expression. His reasonings are strong and close-knit; so that he unites everything that makes the orator; he knows how to please, to instruct and to persuade; one could not even decide which of these three talents he possessed in the more eminent degree.” There is too much labour in his letter to Donatus; but although it cannot serve as a model, it is nonetheless true that it shows a truly eloquent author.

God, according to St. Augustine, allowed some vain ornaments of rhetoric to escape St. Cyprian in the first work he wrote after his conversion, to show how much the spirit of Christian simplicity influenced his style and had the power to keep it within the bounds of true eloquence; and that is the character of the letters of the holy bishop of Carthage written afterwards: and so Fénelon observes that we may safely admire and imitate their style. Yet that great master remarks that the language of St. Cyprian betrays the harsh genius of the Africans, and that it is not always free from the far-fetched subtlety for which the authors of that time are reproached. These observations do not keep us from recognizing in the works of this Father a gentle, natural eloquence, in no way like that of the declaimers. Nothing trivial is to be seen in them, nothing that does not show uncommon learning. Everywhere one sees a great soul, full of fine sentiments expressed in a noble and touching manner. The author always speaks from the abundance of the heart. Although he sometimes uses words that seem to depart from the purity of the Latin language, it is nonetheless true that, after Lactantius, he holds the first place among the Latin Fathers who wrote that language. The first edition of the works of St. Cyprian, which appeared shortly after the invention of printing and bears neither printer’s name nor place, is more correct than most of those that followed it. The works of this Father were reprinted through the care of Erasmus, Manutius, Morel, Pamelius and Rigault. This last editor is a disguised Calvinist, according to Fell. And indeed in his notes on Tertullian and St. Cyprian many things are found that favour certain principles of Calvinism. See de l’Aubespine; Grotius, *Ep. ad Salmas.*; and Petitdidier, *Rem. sur la Bibl. de Dupin*.

In the edition of Pamelius the letters of St. Cyprian are placed first and arranged in chronological order; they do not occupy the same place in most of the earlier and later editions.

The Oxford edition appeared in 1681. We owe it to the learned Fell, bishop of that city, who added new notes to it, with the *Annales Cyprianici* of Pearson and the thirteen *Dissertationes Cyprianicæ* of Dodwell, which aim at clearing up certain points of fact and discipline. Baluze was preparing a new edition of St. Cyprian when death carried him off. Dom Maran, a Benedictine of the Congregation of Saint-Maur, put the finishing touches to his work. He also corrected some of Baluze’s notes and added new ones. He further enriched his edition with a new life of St. Cyprian. It appeared at Paris in 1726, in folio, under the following title: *Sancti*

Cypriani opera recognita per Baluzium, iterum illustrata (per D. Maran) unum e monachis sancti Mauri, qui præfationem et vitam sancti Cypriani adornavit. It was reprinted at Venice in 1758. In 1835 MM. Cailleau and Guillou brought out a new edition of the works of St. Cyprian, 2 vols. in-12; in 1844 M. Migne published an edition of the works of St. Cyprian after Baluze and Fell, the fourth volume of the *Patrologia*. To this edition have been added the most remarkable notes and studies published up to the present day. Several letters of St. Cyprian and several dissertations on this Father are also found in the third and fifth volumes of M. Migne's *Patrologia Latina*.

To compose this biography we have used the sermons of St. Augustine, St. Maximus and St. Peter Chrysologus in praise of St. Cyprian, published by Pamelius, canon of Bruges, and by Rigault; and we have completed it: 1° with *Notes on the abbey of Moissac and on the relics it possesses*, kindly supplied by M. Peujade, chaplain of the Dames du Saint-Enfant-Jésus at Montauban, and by the Rev. Father Carles of Toulouse; 2° with *Notes on the abbey of Compiègne and on the relics of St. Cyprian*, by M. Bourgeois, vicar general and archpriest of Compiègne. — Cf. *Saint Cyprien et l'Église d'Afrique*, by the abbé Freppel, now bishop of Angers.

Saint Euphemia, Virgin and Martyr at Chalcedon, and Her Companions Saint Lucy and Saint Geminian, Martyrs at Rome

About 303. — Pope: St. Marcellinus. — Roman Emperor: Diocletian.

> *Nous espérons avec la vie future une bienheureuse éternité et un éternel bonheur.*
>
> *With the life to come we hope for a blessed eternity and an everlasting happiness.*
>
> *St. Prosper.*

During the persecution of Diocletian the idolaters, in order easily to discover all the Christians and compel them to sacrifice to the idols, made use of a diabolical device that the priests of the false gods had suggested to them. They held solemn festivals in honour of some divinity and obtained edicts from the emperor obliging the inhabitants of the place to attend; and those who failed to do so were at once arrested as Christians and condemned to cruel tortures. Under Priscus, proconsul of Asia, a priest of Mars instituted one of these festivals at Chalcedon, where there was a famous temple and a notable image of that false god; everyone was summoned to come and sacrifice there, so as to pay greater honour to that demon, who was called the god of armies. All the citizens were convoked by edict, to the sound of the trumpet, with fearful threats against those who should fail to attend. On this terrible occasion the faithful divided into several groups and hid in private houses, or withdrew to lonely places to render their worship to the true God there. In one of these gatherings there was a virgin named Euphemia, who was its whole glory because of her eminent virtue, which was known and admired by the whole city. Her father, whose name was Philophron, was of a senatorial family and had held several magistracies. Her mother, named Theodorosa, was a very devout woman, whom God seemed to have given to the poor to help them in all their miseries. The care both had taken over the education of their holy daughter had made her a marvel of piety, religion and mercy.

Appellianus (such was the name of the priest we are speaking of), carefully watching for the persons who were not at the festival he had founded, soon noticed Euphemia's absence. He lost no time in informing the proconsul, who at once gave orders to seize her; and as she was found in a company of the faithful, all those who made it up were arrested with her, forty-nine in number. They were all brought before Priscus, who promised them great rewards and assured them of the emperor's goodwill if they would sacrifice to the god Mars. But the generous confessors, among whom Euphemia, by her youth, her beauty, her birth and her piety, was like a bright sun among the stars, all said with one voice and inspired by the same spirit: "Know, proconsul, that we worship only the God who by a single word drew heaven and earth and all they contain out of nothing, and that we detest the worship you pay to your idols. Make your gifts and offer your honours

to souls base and self-seeking enough to be won by them; as for us, we think so little of them that we regard them only with the utmost contempt; we aspire to one thing only, to rise to heaven to enjoy there an eternal life, which we call the kingdom of God. If you are preparing tortures for us, far from dreading their violence, we fear rather that they may not be harsh enough to give us occasion to show our love for Jesus Christ and to display the more in us the power of His grace. So, without wasting your time in empty words, put what we say to the test, so that you may see that we are more ready to suffer your torments than you are eager to make us endure them." Priscus was so incensed by this speech that he at once ordered the Martyrs to be tormented for several days with every kind of torture, which was cruelly carried out. But the more their bodies were afflicted, the more they showed the joy they felt in suffering. Then he had them put in dungeons to keep them until he could send them to Diocletian, all except Euphemia, whom he took aside in the hope of winning her by gentleness. He said to her everything he thought capable of bending her and shaking her firmness; but in vain. "I am only a girl," the generous virgin answered him, "but do you think that for that reason I am capable of letting myself be seduced by your deceitful persuasions? I do not fear your artifices, and, young as I am, I shall triumph over your malice. I have on my side my Saviour Jesus Christ, who will lend me His invisible hand to deliver me from all your snares." The tyrant was so abashed to see himself thus despised that, to revenge himself for Euphemia's Christian boldness, he had a machine built with several wheels and had her put on it to be broken and torn to pieces. But the Saint, having made the sign of the cross and called her heavenly Bridegroom to her aid, came out of that horrible torture in glory. Her wounds healed in an instant, her flesh recovered its former soundness, and her face appeared more beautiful than ever.

This wonder, instead of softening the proconsul, embittered him still more. He threatened to have her burned alive if she did not renounce the faith. "I do not fear that fire you threaten me with," she said to him fearlessly; "it is lit when one wishes, and it goes out of itself; I have courage enough not to dread pains that last hardly more than a moment; but what makes me tremble is the thought of that eternal fire which burns and will burn for ever in hell, of that fire which will blaze more and more without ever lessening, of that fire which is prepared for those who sacrifice to idols and abandon the true God." Meanwhile a great fire was made in a furnace with pitch, sulphur, tow and vine-shoots, which sent the flame forty-five cubits high. The Saint, before being thrown in, had recourse to prayer and the sign of the cross; and as two officers of justice were about to carry out the tyrant's order and plunge her into the blaze, they saw angels of terrible aspect threatening to punish them if they dared lay hands on her. This vision seized them and stopped them. Priscus, seeing that they were delaying too long, ordered two others to take their place: they obeyed, but no sooner had they done so than they themselves were devoured by the flames, while the Saint, remaining calm in the midst of the blaze as though she were in a place of refreshment, singing the praises of her God, came out of it without having received the slightest harm, even in her clothing. The first two executioners, named Victor and Sosthenes, were converted at this sight, and the very next day they were exposed to the beasts, which procured them the glory of martyrdom.

The following day the proconsul had Euphemia brought back before his tribunal, to try to persuade her to sacrifice to the idols: "Is it not folly on your part," he said to her, "to let yourself be tormented like this and to draw upon yourself, by your obstinacy, the indignation of the gods and the anger of the emperor?" "Would it then be a stroke of wisdom," our holy virgin answered him, "to let myself be deceived by your empty solicitations? Or rather, would it not be a strange folly to recognize some divinity in statues of stone made by the hand of men? Prudence tells me to worship only the true God and to despise your idols." Priscus, despairing of gaining anything over her, thought only of inventing the cruellest tortures to torment her. He had her bound to an instrument made of stones and iron blades, which was to dislocate all her limbs; but this torture did her no harm. He then had her thrown into a great pit full of voracious fish; but she was respected by those creatures, which, instead of dragging her under to devour her, carried her on their backs and bore her about on the waters. He had another pit dug, into which sharp stones, iron spikes and pieces of saws were thrown, and had it covered with a little earth, so that Euphemia, not noticing this trap, should fall into it when

she passed over it: for he attributed all her previous miracles to magic, and imagined, through a prodigious blindness that kept him from recognizing the mighty hand of God, that if she were taken by surprise she would be unable to have recourse to her usual magic. But this precaution was useless as regards the Saint, and most fatal to several idolaters. She passed over the pit without falling into it, being lifted up by the angels, and some pagans who were following her fell headlong into it and perished miserably, these words of the prophet being fulfilled on this occasion: “They have dug the pit and have fallen into it themselves.” He had saws prepared to cut her body to pieces, and great pans to roast the pieces and reduce them to ashes; but the iron lost its strength and the fire went out. At last the proconsul, furious that none of his tortures had succeeded, had her exposed to lions and bears to be devoured. Blessed Euphemia could have escaped death this time too by her prayers and the sign of the cross, as she had triumphed over fire, water, the wheels and the other torments; but having sufficiently shown the power of her heavenly Bridegroom, and ardently longing to go and enjoy His presence in heaven, she addressed this prayer to Him: “My Lord Jesus Christ, Sovereign of all the kings of the earth, having shown until now the invincible power of Your arm, by healing me of the wounds I received from the violence of the tortures and delivering me from all the dangers to which I have been exposed; having confounded the malice of the demons and shown the folly and weakness of the tyrants, give proof of Your mercy towards Your handmaid, and receive the sacrifice of her heart, which she offers You in humility. Detach my soul from this mortal body and place it in Your sacred tabernacles among the choirs of Your holy angels and of those who have shed their blood for the glory of Your name.” This fervent prayer was at once granted; for a bear gave her a single bite without inflicting any other wound, and the other beasts licked the soles of her feet, and she at once gave up her most pure soul into the hands of the angels, who were calling her to the crown of martyrdom. This happened on 16 September, at the beginning of the fourth century. A great earthquake that occurred at the hour of her death forced the idolaters to flee, and gave her parents the means of taking up her body, which they buried near the city of Chalcedon. They blessed God for the grace He had granted their daughter, and thought themselves abundantly rewarded for the care they had taken over her education, since she had won them the honour of being the parents of a Martyr.

The Church also celebrates on this day the feast of St. Lucy and St. Geminian, martyrs, who were likewise put to death under the same Diocletian. Lucy was a Roman lady: left a widow at the age of thirty-nine, she had spent the rest of her life quietly in the practice of the Christian virtues. She was already very old when Euprepius, her son, out of a false zeal for the idolatry he professed, denounced her as a Christian to that great persecutor of the name of Jesus Christ. She was at once arrested and brought before his tribunal. He asked her whether it was true that she mocked the gods of the empire and worshipped a crucified man in their place. Lucy answered generously that there was no other religion than that of the Christians, and that she was ready to suffer fire, chains and every kind of torture for Jesus Christ. On this answer she was cruelly beaten with rods; but during this punishment there was an earthquake so violent that it overthrew the temple of Jupiter, leaving not one stone upon another. As this wonder did not move the emperor, he had her put into a copper cauldron full of pitch and molten lead, where she remained three days, singing psalms to the glory of God. At the end of that time the prince, learning that she had received no harm from this torture, ordered her to be led about, ignominiously loaded with iron and lead, through all the crossroads of Rome, so as to draw on her all the curses of the populace.

She was passing in front of the house of a patrician named Geminian, who was so given to idolatry that he kept every kind of idol in his house. A dove of wonderful whiteness came down visibly upon him and, after fluttering three times in the form of a cross, settled on his head. This novelty made him raise his eyes on high; but he was more astonished still to see heaven opened as though to receive him. These marvels changed his heart in a moment; he ran after the Saint, threw himself at her feet, told her what had just happened to him, and begged her to have baptism administered to him as soon as possible. At the same time an angel appeared to the holy priest Protasius and warned him to go without delay to the prison where Lucy was, there

to baptize the new neophyte Geminian whom he would find there. Diocletian was soon informed of this event; he had them both brought before him and, after making them endure several torments, handed them over to a judge who was reputed to be pitiless towards the Christians, so that he might finish putting them to death by other tortures. This barbarian had them beaten about the head with clubs; but a fresh earthquake having occurred, his audience chamber fell and buried him under its ruins. They were then delivered to another judge, Albofrasius, who invented new torments to subdue them; but they endured them so patiently that their constancy brought about the conversion of seventy-five persons, who accompanied them to martyrdom. The cruelty of this tyrant did not go unpunished, for while crossing a bridge on horseback he fell into the river and was carried so far by the waters that his body could never be found. At last St. Lucy and St. Geminian, after so many illustrious victories, were beheaded by order of Megalius, a man of consular rank, on 16 September in the year 303. A virtuous woman named Maxima took care to remove their bodies and bury them with all the piety and reverence possible at a time when the persecution was raging so furiously. The nuns of the Visitation of Chaillot, near Paris, possessed a considerable relic of St. Geminian.

St. Euphemia is represented with a cross in her hand, to recall that, as she was being led to prison before her final tortures, she stretched out her hands to call God to her aid, and during that prayer a cross appeared above her head. — She is also shown on a pyre whose flames the angels turn back upon the executioners. — She is sometimes painted at the moment when a bear gives her death, while other wild beasts affectionately lick her feet.

CULTE ET RELIQUES.

Cult and relics.

In honour of St. Euphemia a magnificent basilica was built on the place of her burial; it became the most famous in the East, and was the place where the Council of Chalcedon was held. Some Greek authors relate that the Fathers of that Council, wishing to confound the heretics who refused to accept the profession of faith drawn up there, agreed with them that each side should write out its own and that both should be put in the reliquary where the body of St. Euphemia lay; the reliquary was sealed with the seals of both parties; and after three days of prayer, the emperor having had it opened in his presence, the profession of faith of the heretics was found under the Saint’s feet, while that of the Christians was found on her breast. Finally she stretched out her hands to give the latter to the patriarch of Constantinople as the true and orthodox one. But as it is not the custom of Councils to have recourse to miracles to learn the truths of faith, which they decide only by Holy Scripture, the tradition of the Church and the writings of the Fathers, and as, moreover, no mention of this wonder is made in the acts of the Council of Chalcedon, the account of Zonaras, Glycas and many other authors, approved by Baronius, is more probable: they say that after the Council, as the Eutychians were making a great stir in Constantinople over the profession of faith of the Fathers of Chalcedon, and as their tumult was tending to open sedition, the patriarch Anatolius, by a divine inspiration, proposed to them to put that profession with theirs on the body of St. Euphemia, and that, to their utter confusion, the Catholic one was confirmed by the miracle we have related. For many years the body of this illustrious Martyr exuded drops of blood, which were caught on sponges to be distributed to the neighbouring churches; and these precious drops always remained in the same state, without losing their crimson colour with the passage of time. The emperor Maurice, finding this wonder hard to believe, came himself to the Saint’s tomb and received several of these drops in his hands, which compelled him to confess that God is wonderful in His Saints. Her body, because of the incursions of the Persians, was transferred from Chalcedon to Constantinople; it remained there until the reign of the emperor Constantine Copronymus, who, following the impiety of his father Leo the Isaurian, the destroyer of the images and relics of the Saints, did not spare the churches and turned them into arsenals. In particular he had the body of this holy virgin thrown into the sea, to abolish the cult paid to her; but God happily made that rich treasure fall into the hands of some travellers, who carried it to the island of Lemnos, in the Hellespont, from which, through the piety of the

emperor Constantine VI and of Irene, his mother, it was brought back to Constantinople with great pomp and magnificence. Before that, St. Paulinus, bishop of Nola, had had some bones of hers, with which he enriched his church, as he himself remarks in a hymn he wrote in praise of St. Felix. At the beginning of the seventeenth century the grand master of the Knights of Malta sent a considerable portion of them, by a special envoy, to the famous house of the Sorbonne in Paris, where it was kept with singular veneration. It was carried there from the hôtel du Temple in the year 1606, on 28 December, in a solemn procession made up of the rector of the University of that city and all the doctors of that illustrious house, a great number of clergy and an immense crowd of people.

We have taken the life of St. Euphemia from Simeon Metaphrastes, and that of St. Lucy and St. Geminian from Ado, archbishop of Vienne. They are given by Surius in his fifth volume.

Saint Edith, Virgin, Princess of England

984. — Pope: John XIV. — King of England: Ethelred II.

> *Personne n'est en sécurité dans cette vie comme celui qui ne désire posséder rien autre chose que le Christ.*
>
> *No one is so secure in this life as the one who desires to possess nothing other than Christ. St. Isidore.*

Edith came into the world in 961. She was the natural daughter of King Edgar. That prince had had her by a lady of illustrious birth, whom he had carried off, and whose name was Wulfrida or Wilfrith. His wife having died, he wished to marry the woman he had dishonoured; but Wulfrida would not consent, and even went and took the veil in the monastery of Wilton, of which she became abbess shortly afterwards. She wished to take on herself the care of bringing up Edith, her daughter, who was thus snatched from the corruption of the world before she had felt its effects. That is what made the compiler of the Roman martyrology say of our Saint that, "consecrated to God from her infancy, she had not so much left the world as never known it": an infinitely precious ignorance, and the surest means of living in perfect innocence.

The young princess profited so well by her mother's examples and instructions that she became a nun in the same monastery. She performed the office of Martha towards all the nuns and those from outside, and the functions of Mary towards Our Lord; for, without regard to her birth, she applied herself to the lowliest tasks of the house, attended the sick, and made herself the servant of strangers and the poor. For them she founded, near her monastery, a hospital in which thirteen were always to be maintained. Relieving with her alms and her care those she knew to be in want, she sought out the afflicted to give them consolation, and preferred conversing with the lepers, who are abandoned by everyone, to conversing with the first princes of the kingdom. The more people were rejected by others because of their infirmities, the more welcome they were with her; in a word, Edith was incomparable in her zeal to be of service to her neighbour. Abstinence was her greatest delight, and she shunned delicate foods as eagerly as others seek them, adding to this mortification that of a rough hair shirt, which she wore next to her bare flesh so as to check the movements of nature early. Such was the life of this young princess until the age of fifteen.

The king, informed of so many fine qualities in his daughter, wished to make her abbess of three monasteries; but she thanked him and was content to propose to him for the purpose nuns whom her humility made her judge far more capable than herself of filling those places. She could not bring herself to leave a house where she had already received so many graces; she preferred obeying to commanding, and remaining under her mother's guidance to being charged with the guidance of others. But her humility appeared much more when she refused the crown of England; for after the death of St. Edward II, her brother, whom the Church honours as a martyr, the nobles came to her to offer her the sceptre, used every possible argument, and even attempted violence to oblige her to accept it. She always resisted them generously, and one could sooner have transmuted metals, says her historian, than drawn her out of her cloister and made her give up the resolution she had taken to be devoted all her life to the service of God.

She had had a church built in honour of St. Denis, and she asked St. Dunstan to dedicate it. During the solemn Mass that holy prelate had a revelation that the death of the young princess, who was still only twenty-three, would come at the end of forty days. This news moved his heart and drew torrents of tears from his eyes. “Alas!” he said to his deacon, who asked him the reason for his sadness, “we shall soon lose our beloved Edith; the world is no longer worthy to possess her. In a few years she has purchased the crown prepared for her in heaven. Her fervour condemns our cowardice; our old age has not yet been able to merit that grace; she is going to enjoy the eternal light, and we remain on earth in darkness and the shadows of death.” Having noticed during the ceremony that the Saint often made the sign of the cross on her forehead, he also said in a spirit of prophecy: “God will never allow this thumb to perish.” The event bore out both these predictions; for at the end of forty days, on 16 September 984, she gave up her soul in the same church into the hands of the angels, who honoured her death with their presence and with a heavenly melody; and that same thumb, which she had so often used to trace the sign of the cross on herself, was found thirteen years after her death without any mark of corruption, though all the rest of her body was almost entirely reduced to dust. This church of Saint-Denis, which she had often visited and watered with her tears during her life, also served as her burial place. Thirty days after her death she appeared to her mother with a serene and radiant face, telling her that the King of angels, her dear Bridegroom, had placed her in His glory; that Satan had done all he could to keep her from entering it, accusing her before God of several faults; but that, with the help of the holy Apostles and by the power of the cross of her Saviour Jesus, she had crushed his head and, triumphing over his malice, had sent him back to hell.

Several miracles have been worked through her merits. We shall relate only the following example, which shows how grievously those sin who usurp the goods of the Church. A man who had appropriated a piece of land belonging to St. Edith suddenly fell so ill that he was thought to be dead without having had time to do penance. But a little later, having come to himself, he said to those present: “Ah! my friends, have pity on me and help me by the fervour of your prayers; St. Edith’s indignation against me is so great that, to punish me for the usurpation I made of a piece of land that belonged to her, she drives my unhappy soul out of heaven and earth. I must die, and yet I cannot die. I wish to make good my injustice and restore to the Church the property I took from it.” No sooner had he shown this good will than he died peacefully.

She is represented holding a purse in one hand and a coin in the other, to show her great love for the poor.

Acta Sanctorum; Godescard; Surius.

Blessed Imelda Lambertini of Bologna, Virgin, of the Order of St. Dominic

1333. — Pope: John XXII. — Emperor of Germany: Louis V, of Bavaria.

> *La perfection de la vie chrétienne est toute dans la charité.*
>
> *The perfection of the Christian life lies wholly in charity.*
>
> *St. Thomas.*

Imelda was born at Bologna, of the noble family of the Lambertini. At baptism she received the name of Magdalen, under which she was known before her entry into religion. In the cloister she received the name of Imelda, that is, given to the world like honey, *quasi mel data*, according to the etymology of a devout and learned Carmelite religious, no doubt because of her sweetness and her extreme amiability. From the cradle everything about her proclaimed something supernatural: an extreme delicacy and an instinctive, graceful modesty that filled with admiration all who had the happiness of seeing her close at hand. To dry her tears and bring back the smile to her lips, it was enough to pronounce the blessed names of Jesus and Mary.

Scarcely out of infancy, she built herself a little oratory, where she often came to unite herself to her God in prayer and to offer Him her virginal heart. Despising the luxury of the world and all the splendours of her

father's house, she resolved to enter a monastery to embrace there chastity, poverty and voluntary obedience, and to give herself entirely to her Saviour. Having obtained her parents' permission, she entered the convent of St. Mary Magdalen at Valdipietra, near Bologna, where she put on the habit of the Order of St. Dominic, while waiting for the day when she could be admitted to pronounce solemnly the vows she had already pronounced irrevocably in her heart.

In spite of her tender age she courageously embraced all the exercises of the religious life. It is impossible to describe her bodily mortifications, her eagerness to curb the disordered affections of her heart, her love of prayer and mental prayer, and her generosity in carrying out all her duties, even the hardest. She was a constant example to her companions, even to those who were above her either in age or in religious profession. Nothing was more pleasing to her than to show her love for the Queen of angels and for the holy Eucharist. Every day she assisted at holy Mass; she meditated on its adorable mysteries with great attention, and the tears and sighs that the vehemence of her longing drew from her virginal soul, and that she tried in vain to stifle, bore witness to her ardent love for Jesus Christ and to her desire to receive Him. As her young age did not allow her to share in the sacred banquet with her companions, she suffered greatly from it, for she felt her heart catch fire and melt under the ardour of the divine fire that consumed her within. But God does not long resist the prayers of those who love Him with a deep love; for He has declared by the mouth of the Wise Man: "Those who love me are loved by me; and those who seek me early shall infallibly find me." Knowing that Imelda's virtues abundantly made up for her youth, He put her on a level with the other nuns, and showed by a striking wonder that she was worthier than her companions to receive Jesus Christ in the most holy Sacrament of the altar. It was Ascension Day, 12 May 1333; Imelda was then twelve years old. While her companions, happy and recollected, went each in her turn to take her place at the table of angels, she alone remained kneeling before her little stall, weeping with longing as she thought of their happiness. Her eyes raised to heaven, her two little hands crossed on her breast as though to moderate the violent beating of her heart, which seemed ready to burst, and pressing between her fingers the image of Jesus crucified that never left her, she said with the Bride of the Song of Songs: "Come, O Beloved of my soul! Come down into this garden which is all Yours, and gather its fruits. Either cease to bend Your gaze upon me, or let my soul fly away after You. Draw me after You: let me run to the fragrance of Your perfumes. You are to me, O my Beloved, as a bundle of myrrh: Your blessed image shall never cease to rest upon my breast; but why can I not give You shelter too, and make festival for You in my heart! Come, Lord Jesus, come, for I languish with love and am dying of desire for Your adorable presence!…" But Jesus did not come; and knowing that everything is possible to persistent prayer, she did not cease to importune Him with her cries; her overflowing heart poured itself out in loving complaints.

As she went on weeping and praying, suddenly a miraculous host detached itself from the tabernacle, passed through the grille of the choir and, hovering in the air, stopped above her. The nuns, moved by such a sight, at first dared not believe their eyes, but soon illusion was no longer possible: the miracle continued; a sudden brightness spread through the church, accompanied by a sweet fragrance; and an invisible but powerful hand held the mystic bread suspended before the young child, who, triumphant yet timid, remained divided between the joy of feeling herself so near to Him she loved and the sorrow of not yet being able to unite herself to Him. One would have said an angel in adoration rather than a mere mortal. Her confessor, told of this wonder, hastened there and, seeing in it an unmistakable manifestation of the divine will, reverently received the sacred host on a paten and gave communion with it to the blessed child.

At last her longing was fulfilled! And as though she could not bear such joy in a mortal body, she sank down upon herself, absorbed in deep contemplation. Her hands still crossed on her breast, her eyes gently closed, Imelda seemed given up to a delightful sleep. For a long time her sisters admired her in silence, never tiring of looking at her. At last, however, they grew somewhat uneasy; they called her, they begged her; they ordered her to get up; she, always so prompt in obedience, this time remained motionless; she had not heard;

they touched her, she had not felt… Imelda was no longer of this world.

In her images she is seen kneeling before an altar: a host appears above the child, as though waiting for someone to come and give it to this lover of the Eucharist.

CULTE ET RELIQUES.

Cult and relics.

The news of her blessed death, spreading far and wide, made her name famous and inspired the faithful with veneration for her tomb. God Himself, in the course of time, granted the faithful many graces through her intercession. In 1566 her relics were carried from the convent of Valdipietra to the church of the Dominican nuns at Bologna, where they rest today. Cardinal Lambertini, afterwards Pope under the name of Benedict XIV, restored and embellished the church of the Dominican nuns of Bologna while he occupied the archiepiscopal see of that city; he had a chapel and an altar raised there in honour of our Blessed, his kinswoman; later, in 1591, the miracle of her death was engraved on the stone of her tomb. Pope Leo XII, after consulting the Sacred Congregation of Rites, approved her cult and authorized the Order of Friars Preachers to recite her office and celebrate holy Mass in her honour. Her feast has been fixed on 16 September.

Acta Sanctorum; *Année Dominicaine*. — Cf. *Vie de la bienheureuse Imelda Lambertini, vierge de l'Ordre de Saint-Dominique*, by the Rev. Fr. M. Jean-Joseph Lataste, of the Friars Preachers.

Blessed Louis Alleman, Seventy-fifth Archbishop of Arles and Cardinal of the Title of Santa Cecilia

1450. — Pope: Nicholas V. — King of France: Charles VII, the Victorious.

> *Per pœnitentiam indulgentia datur, per pœnitentiam delicta absterguntur.*
>
> *La pénitence obtient miséricorde et lave les péchés.*
>
> *Penance obtains mercy and washes away sins.*
>
> *St. Isidore of Spain.*

Louis Alleman was born about the year 1390 at the castle of Arbent in Bugey (*Arbentium municipium*), of which his father, Jean Alleman, was lord, as well as of Mornay, of Coiselet in Bugey and of Montgeffon in Franche-Comté. Marie de Châtillon, his mother, would rely on no one else for the care of his early education, and she formed that young heart to the truest and tenderest piety by her example as well as by her precepts. Louis early showed a marked taste for study: after learning the elements of literature in the city of Arles, under the eyes of the archbishop François de Conzié, his uncle, his inclination drew him towards ecclesiastical studies, to which he gave himself with an ardour that was crowned with success. Girolamo Garimberto, an Italian author of the fifteenth century, tells us that he was soon reputed a great doctor in theology and canon law.

From his early youth Louis thought of consecrating himself to the service of the altar; and although at that time the ecclesiastical career could offer some attractions to ambition, his entering it was an act of heroic disinterestedness, since he thereby renounced the most brilliant future that his birth assured him in the world. Besides, a profound humility was from then on a sure guarantee of the purity of his intentions. But the more his virtue strove to hide itself, the more it betrayed his merit and revealed to all eyes the hopes the Church could found on him. And so he was not long in climbing the first rung of the ladder by which he was to rise to the summit of ecclesiastical honours: he was promoted to a canonry in the metropolitan church of Saint-Jean at Lyon, a dignity that carried with it the title of count of that city. In this post, which placed Louis among men most distinguished by birth and most venerable by age and virtue, the young canon was a model

by his regularity, his love of study and his assiduity in choir. Soon his rare merit and high piety drew all eyes to him and had him named primicerius of the church of Valence.

But so much learning and virtue, joined to a consuming zeal for the salvation of souls, called for a wider field and were to be employed in a more active and more profitable way for the Church of God. François de Conzié, his uncle, archbishop of Arles and legate of Avignon, having given Pope Martin V the fullest details of his nephew's merit and learning, and fame moreover publishing admirable things about him, the Sovereign Pontiff raised him to the episcopal see of Maguelone, transferred some time later to Montpellier. The university of that city owed to him the confirmation of its privileges, which he obtained from Pope Martin V in 1422. From his promotion to the episcopate Louis was almost never able to reside in his diocese; he administered it through vicars general, whom he delegated for the purpose on 8 March 1419. Martin V had attached him to his person with the title of vice-chamberlain of the Roman Church, during a voyage overseas made by François de Conzié, who held that dignity. He therefore spent nearly all this time at Florence, at the court of the Pope, who employed him in the most delicate affairs and entrusted to him negotiations that called for great prudence and a subtle mind.

It would be hard to find in history a man who rose as rapidly as Louis Alleman to the honours of the Church. The archbishopric of Arles having fallen vacant in 1422 through the resignation of Jean de Brogni, named to the bishopric of Geneva, the voice of the clergy and people called Louis Alleman to fill that see. Martin V hastened to satisfy wishes so much in keeping with his own desire, and which he regarded as the expression of the will of Providence.

It had been decided at the council of Constance that another should be held at Pavia five years later. Several prelates of France and Germany went to that city for the purpose at the beginning of the year 1423. But plague having broken out there, the Pope resolved to transfer the council to Siena. He sent Louis Alleman to that republic, both to win the approval of the leading men of the city for the plan of the transfer and to see to the safety and provisioning of those who would come to the council. It opened on 8 November of the same year, and the assembly ended in the month of February of the following year (1424). The city of Basle in Switzerland was designated as the place where the council would assemble in seven years. The eminent offices entrusted to the archbishop of Arles brought out more and more his erudition and the depth of his learning, as well as the holiness of his life, which he always kept irreproachable, according to the recommendation made by the apostle St. Paul to all bishops in the person of his dear Timothy. And so the Sovereign Pontiff wished to give him the most striking mark of his esteem besides by creating him cardinal, with the title of Santa Cecilia, on 24 May 1426. Louis III of Anjou, king of Naples and Sicily and count of Provence, had conceived a great veneration for Louis Alleman; and as he desired nothing so much as an occasion to give him proofs of it, he ratified all the grants that had been made to the metropolitan church of Arles by the other princes his predecessors, and confirmed the privileges, immunities and franchises that the archbishops of that Church possessed in Provence.

Meanwhile the time fixed for the council of Basle arrived. Martin V, by his bull of 1 February 1431, entrusted its presidency to Giuliano Cesarini, cardinal of Sant'Angelo. A fair number of historians have even claimed that the Pope had joined the cardinal of Arles to the cardinal of Sant'Angelo as vice-president, and that so judicious a choice was universally approved, because Giuliano and Louis were regarded as the first men of the Church, as much for their virtues as for their ability; but this fact does not seem sufficiently proved. That council, where the most important interests of religion were to be dealt with, tore Louis away for a long time from the care of his diocese and from the works that until then had absorbed all his moments and all his thoughts. He played the leading part in those debates, which had a great and unhappy resonance in the Church. Perhaps we must even admit that his presence and co-operation were an occasion of deplorable troubles, when they ought to have been a source of peace for Christians. It is well known that the council of Basle ended in the deposition of the legitimate pope Eugenius IV and the intrusion of the antipope Felix V

into the pontifical see.

Meanwhile the Christian princes were seeking to restore peace by ending the schism through the abdication of Felix, which they worked to obtain. Let us here admire the hand of God protecting His Church! He who had been the occasion, one must say the principal promoter, of these troubles through a deplorable error was not slow to open his eyes and to detest the unhappily too active part he had had in those dissensions. Louis Alleman had been the author of the nomination of the antipope Felix; but on the other hand we know, from the testimony of the most trustworthy writers, that he was also the first to beg him to end the schism by his abdication.

Louis thereby showed dispositions very different from those he had shown before, and this reparation began to bring hope to every Catholic heart. It had already begun in 1447, when Eugenius IV died and was succeeded by Tommaso of Sarzana, who took the name of Nicholas V. Negotiations had been opened at Lyon from the time of that election; Cardinal Alleman used all his strength to make them succeed, and on 9 April 1449 Felix laid down the tiara that the council of Basle had placed on his head. Nicholas V granted him handsome prerogatives, which he went to bury with his tears in his solitude of Ripaille, where he died eighteen months later. Louis, from then on, seeing the truth in its full light, was so pierced with sorrow at having fought against the vicar of Jesus Christ that, after the example of St. Peter, according to most historians, he never ceased to weep and to implore the divine mercy, and he asked nothing of heaven more earnestly than the gift of tears for the rest of his life.

The new Pontiff welcomed Louis Alleman’s precious tears with joy, and soon restored to him, as a pledge of his goodwill, all the dignities of which Eugenius IV had stripped him, and even later charged him with a legation to Germany, where he had much to suffer. The over-long dissensions that had laid waste the Church being thus happily ended, the Pope let our Blessed leave Rome, where he had gone to receive his absolution, only after lavishing on him marks of the most sincere attachment and granting him precious and extensive indulgences for his Church of Arles. Louis was preceded in his archiepiscopal city by the reputation of his virtues and of the new austerities to which he gave himself to blot out his sin of disobedience. When he had settled there, he applied himself to giving his flock the most heroic examples of Christian piety and charity. All the time not claimed by the laborious duties of pastoral administration he devoted to visiting the sick in the hospitals; he wished to see their most loathsome sores and to apply the remedy to them himself. He built churches, enlarged his cathedral, embellished the episcopal palace, founded hospitals, and by his zeal corrected all the abuses that had crept into his diocese during his absence. Moreover, our Blessed had never ceased, even during the council of Basle, to give the example of the most sublime virtues. All his actions breathed the piety that animated him, and the people had such veneration for him that they went in crowds to kiss the fringes of his robe. His piety, his penance, his humility, his patience, his majesty in religious ceremonies, his eloquence, his zeal for the salvation of souls and his abundant alms were the source of that veneration. During the whole time he presided over the council, neither study nor fatigue had been able to turn him from the practice of mortification.

This love of penance alone would suffice to create a presumption in favour of the good faith he brought to all these disputes, and to distinguish him from all those men who have troubled the peace of the Church since its beginning, and in whom corruption of heart had extinguished faith and dried up the source of divine love. But what would justify him more amply still, if the sincerity of his regrets did not sufficiently shelter him from the reproaches of posterity, is the ardour, one may say the tenacity, with which he always upheld ecclesiastical discipline; and above all the untiring zeal he showed in defending the most glorious prerogative of Mary, her Immaculate Conception, and in having it decided that its feast should be celebrated throughout the Church. So tender a devotion to the Queen of heaven is certainly not the mark of a man knowingly and wilfully engaged in schism; but in it we find Louis’s most incontestable claim to our admiration and the principal cause of his happy return to the obedience of the Church.

Louis spent a few more years on earth, during which he continued to make himself an imitator of Christ and to offer himself as a model to his people. All the virtues shone with the brightest lustre in this admirable prelate. He embraced in preference, however, humility and patience, as those best suited to repair the example of pride and obstinacy he had given in unhappy days, which he would have wished to blot out of his life but whose memory he kept in his heart to stir himself to repentance and penance. He also gave himself ardently to prayer, and the writers who have spoken of him relate that he sometimes withdrew to the abbey of Hautecombe in Savoy to give himself to that exercise without distraction. Already, during his stay at Basle, he would steal away from his many occupations to come to that solitude and steep his soul anew in the exercises of penance. At last, having reached his fifty-ninth year, laden with merits far more than with days, Louis Alleman went to offer his sovereign Judge the twofold homage of holiness and penance. He died on 16 September 1450, in a monastery of Friars Minor situated on his estate of Salonne, four leagues from the city of Arles.

CULTE ET RELIQUES.

Cult and relics.

On the very day of his funeral a priest of the city of Arles, who had suffered from a fever for many years, was suddenly delivered from it through the intercession of the Blessed. From that moment there was a continual stream of the sick, the infirm and the unfortunate of every kind, who went away only to proclaim the favours they had obtained through the merits of Blessed Alleman.

Immediately after his death his body was carried to the principal church of Arles. From then on no one doubted that he enjoyed the glory of the blessed, and he was proclaimed a saint by the universal voice of the people, which must be regarded as the voice of God whenever the holiness it exalts has shone so clearly before all eyes. His funeral was that of a father and a saint: men lamented the irreparable loss the diocese of Arles had just suffered, and raised their arms and hearts towards him to implore his protection.

It would be impossible to count the multitude that attended this ceremony; people came from the whole province of Arles, and, what would seem impossible if Saxius, a contemporary author, did not attest it, twenty-three towns were represented in the funeral procession by a multitude of priests, religious and even deputies of the people whom they sent there. His precious remains were placed to the right of the high altar of the basilica of Arles, and from then on a crowd of the faithful came there to ask for graces from on high through the mediation of one whom they regarded as invested with such great power with God. All authors, whatever their opinion on the affairs of Basle, attest that a great number of miracles took place at his tomb. In the middle of the choir a great sepulchral slab of white marble was placed, on which the cardinal is represented in pontifical vestments, the archiepiscopal cross in his hand. On the very spot of the burial, against the wall, the following inscription was put:

> *Omnia sunt hominum tenui pendentia filo, Et subito casu quæ valuere ruunt.*
>
> *All things human hang by a slender thread, and what was strong falls in a sudden mishap.*

As the odour of his sanctity spread every day more and more through the Christian world, and the miracles God was pleased to grant to those who invoked him became more and more evident, Clement VII, by a brief of 9 April 1527, granted him the title of Blessed; yielding to the urgent and humble entreaties of the people, he also allowed his ashes to be venerated on the altars. Accordingly they were enclosed in a rich bust of silver gilt, destroyed in 1792. An altar was at once raised to him in the cathedral of Arles; and shortly afterwards the religious of

Hautecombe in Savoy, remembering the examples of virtue he had given among them, raised a chapel to him in that beautiful church where he himself had so often sent up the most fervent prayers to heaven. The metropolitan church of Arles had obtained, by a decree of 19 April 1670, permission to say his office

publicly, and his feast was celebrated on the Sunday before the feast of St. Michael, with the rite of a double. The office of Blessed Alleman is still said today in the diocese of Montpellier, on 17 September.

Taken from the *Histoire hagiologique du diocèse de Belley* by Mgr Depéry, and from local notes. — Cf. *Acta Sanctorum*, 16 September.

Saint Principius, Bishop of Le Mans and Confessor (511)

After the death of Thuribius II (497), the clergy and people of Le Mans elected St. Principius to succeed him. He was born of a powerful and wealthy Gallic family; he was closely bound by ties of blood and friendship to St. Remigius, bishop of Reims, later so famous as the apostle of the Franks. It is likely that our holy prelate was born in the Second Belgic province, like his illustrious kinsman, about the time when Valentinian III was governing the empire (425– 455); he was brought up with St. Remigius and a brother of his, also named Principius, who afterwards became bishop of Soissons. All three shared that Christian and learned education which the most lettered men of the seventh century loaded with praise. By this means God prepared Principius for the difficult government of the Church of Le Mans. Indeed, an episcopate that began amid troubles and was to end before peace was fully restored was a hard trial. Principius bore it worthily.

To draw down the blessings of heaven on his labours, he never ceased to join very great austerities to continual prayer. All his life he fasted on the fourth and sixth ferias of every week; in winter he took no precaution against the cold, and in summer he did nothing to avoid the discomforts of the heat; he often visited the hospitals, served the sick himself, and relieved the poor in all their needs. He celebrated Mass every day, and when old age and infirmity no longer allowed him to stand, he had himself supported by two deacons so as not to give up that devout practice. God rewarded Principius's holiness with the gift of miracles. He restored sight to a blind man, and this wonder consoled the very great grief of that unfortunate man's mother. He also cured a great number of other infirmities of various kinds, and these wonders, joined to his works of charity, won him the veneration and love of his whole flock. Zealous for the sacred functions and for divine worship, he repaired many churches that age, and still more the ravages of war, had thrown down. The number of new churches he built is put as high as thirty.

St. Principius died on the sixteenth day before the calends of October, 511. The funeral was held with fitting pomp: the bishops of the province hastened to pay the last duties to his mortal remains, and, accompanied by all the clergy and by the disciples he himself had trained in his episcopal school, they buried his body near his predecessors in the basilica of the holy Apostles beyond the Sarthe. Many miracles were worked at his tomb and drew the faithful there for as long as the city of the Cenomani had the happiness of keeping his precious relics.

Taken from the *Histoire de l'Église du Mans* by Dom Paul Piolin.

Saint Frodulfus or Frou, Monk at Autun, Solitary in the Diocese of Dijon (7th century)

Born in the Autunois towards the end of the seventh century, and a godson of St. Merry, Frodulfus had been offered to the abbey of Saint-Martin at Autun from his tenderest infancy. One day, after the Gospel of the conventual Mass, crowned with flowers and carrying a host and a chalice in his hands, he approached the altar, led by his father; the monks spread the altar cloth over his head as a sign of adoption by the Church, and when the celebrating priest had received the host and the chalice, as a pledge to the Lord, his father, kneeling, said aloud: "I offer you my son, whose offering and hands I have myself wrapped in the altar cloth. I offer him in the name of the Saints whose relics are here; I present him before witnesses, so that he may live according to the Rule and remain in this monastery." The abbot and the senior monks ratified this engagement, and the oblate thus affiliated was brought into the abbey and clothed in the monastic habit.

Under the guidance of his spiritual father he rose to high perfection and drew from his intimacy with him, together with the love of penance and prayer, the need of solitude. Medericus, wishing to make a pilgrimage to the tomb of St. Germanus, set out with Frodulfus towards the city of Paris. Free of the duties of the common life, master and disciple gave themselves up to all the inspirations of their fervour: they prayed in silence, recited the hours of the holy office, encouraged each other in the conquest of heaven, then fell silent to converse with God. Arriving in Paris, they went to kneel at the tomb of St. Germanus, and then looked for a place of refuge where they could live unknown. There was then, near the church of Saint-Pierre outside the city, a kind of oratory open day and night to the prayers of passers-by; they made it their dwelling, and St. Merry, after serving the Lord there for two years and nine months, left there his body, overcome by death. Frodulfus closed his eyes and returned to Autun to tell his brethren of the virtues, the death and the glory of their master.

The monks welcomed him with joy and entrusted to him the government of Saint-Martin, if we are to believe the insignia of abbatial dignity with which the statue placed on his tomb was adorned. When the Saracens sacked Autun on 22 August 825, Frodulfus escaped from their hands like a bird from the fowler's net, fled towards Langres and stopped in the solitude of Barjon (Côte-d'Or), where he ended his days.

He was buried in his hermitage, and an oratory or crypt was built over his tomb. Part of his relics was given to the church of Saint-Merry in Paris, and his head to Grancey-le-Château (Côte-d'Or); the other part enriches the church of Barjon, built under his patronage.

Taken from the *Saints de Dijon* by M. l'abbé Duplus.

Saint Ludmila or Ludomila, Martyr, Duchess and Patroness of Bohemia (927)

Ludmila was born in Bavaria about the year 873; her father, hereditary count and lord of Melnik, and her mother, of an ancient and very wealthy family, were pagans. Her fine qualities drew the attention of Borivoj, duke of Bohemia, who asked for her hand in marriage. Shortly after their union that prince had occasion to hear the Gospel preached by the holy apostles of Moravia, Cyril and Methodius; he opened his eyes to the light and received holy baptism together with several of his subjects. He did more: he took the two apostles with him to Bohemia, and Ludmila, listening to the voice of God, also embraced the faith with her family. She, her father and her brothers were cleansed in the holy water by the hands of St. Methodius.

Ludmila, enlightened by the light of faith, lived a new life. She ceaselessly regretted the time spent in the darkness of paganism and lost for the Christian virtues. She grew much attached to prayer and to the reception of the sacraments, above all of the divine Eucharist, with which she loved to nourish her soul. Wishing to see all the subjects of the duke her husband share the happiness she enjoyed, she put all her efforts into preparing the way for the missionaries and helping them to win hearts. A considerable number of pagans opened their eyes and joyfully had themselves received into the bosom of the Church.

All the moments of our holy princess were devoted to the glory of God and to the advancement of His reign in souls. Yet she felt in her heart a desire to unite herself more closely to Jesus Christ by a more peaceful life, far from the honours of courts and the cares of the world. She spoke of it to her husband, who expressed the same wishes to her. Encouraging each other, they set their affairs in order and resolved to withdraw into solitude. The duke abdicated in favour of his son Vratislav, a very religious prince, and chose a retreat, there to consecrate all his days to the Lord with Ludmila and an old priest named Paul.

Unhappily the young duke took as his wife a pagan named Drahomira, whom he tried in vain to bring to the faith. She bore him two sons: Wenceslas, who was brought up by his grandmother Ludmila and became a saint, and Boleslav, who remained in Drahomira's hands and became a monster. The virtuous duke Vratislav, struck by a mortal illness, commended Bohemia to his mother, by then a widow, under whose guardianship the little duke Wenceslas was placed, and he died the death of the just. Drahomira, furious at seeing the

guardianship of her son escape her, conceived an implacable hatred for her mother-in-law and formed the plan of a pitiless revenge.

Two wretched lords, secret emissaries of her daughter-in-law, forced their way into Ludmila's apartment and strangled her in her bed with the veil she wore on her head (927). She was buried at Tetín; but her remains were transferred to the church of St. George at Prague by her grandson, St. Wenceslas, before he in his turn fell under the dagger of his brother and his mother.

Cf. *Acta Sanctorum*, 16 September; the Continuators of Godescard; Chapia, *La Sainte de chaque jour*.

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[1] Ninian (Ninias or Ninian) was the apostle of the Cumbrians (England) and preached the faith of Jesus Christ in the districts of Cumberland and Galloway. The son of a prince of the Cumbrian Britons, he had been sent to Rome for his education. There he found celebrated teachers who instructed him in all the branches of human knowledge as they were then taught; but he made particular progress in the study of the Gospel. His piety grew with his zeal, and he felt himself called to make known the worship of the true God in his own country. Pope Saint Boniface I conferred episcopal ordination on him and sent him back to Great Britain. Ninian succeeded in overcoming the savage barbarity of Tudoval, king of the Picts; he converted the idolatrous populations and built a stone church in Galloway. Until then the northern Britons had seen no building of that kind; they gave the new structure the name of *Candida Casa* (White House): it is today Whitehern or White-Horn. Ninian established his episcopal see there and dedicated the church under the invocation of Saint Martin, whose glorious tomb he had visited in the course of his travels. Whitehern became a nursery of Saints and apostolic men. Ninian died there on 16 September 432. His relics were kept at Whitehern until the so-called reformation; there is an arm of Saint Ninian in a church at Douai. — Darras, *Histoire générale de l'Église*, vol. xiii, p. 165; de Montalembert, *Les Moines d'Occident*, vol. iii, p. 19; Godescard, vol. v.

17 September

Martyrologies

Seventeenth day of September

MARTYROLOGE ROMAIN.

Roman Martyrology.

The commemoration of the sacred STIGMATA which St. Francis, founder of the Order of Friars Minor, received miraculously imprinted on his hands, feet and side while on Mount Alverna in Tuscany. 1224. — At Rome, on the Via Tiburtina (the road to Tivoli), the birthday in heaven of St. Justin, priest and martyr, who became famous for the confession he made of Jesus Christ during the persecution of Valerian and Gallienus. It was he who gave burial to Pope St. Sixtus, to St. Hippolytus and to several other Saints. He consummated his martyrdom under the emperor Claudius.[1] 269. — Also at Rome, St. Narcissus and St. Crescentian. Under Valerian. — In Phrygia, St. Ariadne, martyred under the emperor Hadrian. 130. — In Great Britain, the holy martyrs Socrates and Stephen. 4th c. — At Nyon, St. Valerian, St. Maigrin and St. Gordian, martyrs. — At Autun, St. FLOSCELLUS, a child, who, after suffering much, was torn to pieces by the beasts to which he had been exposed, and won the crown of martyrdom under the emperor Antoninus and the governor Valerian. 257. — At Liège, St. LAMBERT, bishop of Maastricht, who, having shown his zeal against the disorders of the royal household, was murdered by wicked men and entered heaven to live there eternally. 708. — At Saragossa in Spain, St. PETER ARBUÉS, first inquisitor of the faith in the kingdom of Aragon, who, cruelly murdered by relapsed Jews for the Catholic faith that he zealously protected, as his office made it his duty, won the palm of martyrdom. 1485. — The same day, St. Agathoclia, servant of a pagan woman; long ill-treated by her mistress with lashes of the whip and other various punishments, she was at last brought before the judge, who had her scourged again until her flesh fell off in strips and, seeing her persist in confessing the faith, had her tongue cut out and had her thrown into the fire. — At Cordova, St. Columba, virgin and martyr.[2] 853. — At Milan, the death of St. Satyrus, whose signal merits were described by St. Ambrose, his brother.[3] 383. — At Rome, St. Theodora, a lady of rank, who during the persecution of

Diocletian zealously devoted herself to the service of the holy Martyrs. — At Bingen, in the diocese of Mainz, St. HILDEGARD, virgin. 1179.

MARTYROLOGE DE FRANCE, REVU ET AUGMENTÉ.

Martyrology of France, revised and enlarged.

In the dioceses of Angers, Autun, Bayeux, Cambrai, Cologne, Mechlin and Paris, St. Lambert of Maastricht, mentioned in today's Roman martyrology. — In the dioceses of Carcassonne, Mechlin and Tours, the feast of the impression of the sacred Stigmata of St. Francis of Assisi, recorded today in the same martyrology. — In the dioceses of Autun and Coutances, St. Floscellus, mentioned in today's Roman martyrology. — At Le Mans, St. Flaceau, director of the nuns of Sainte-Scholastique (this house was called, by corruption, Sainte-Écolasse), and superior of a small hospice built near that abbey. The royal chapter of Saint-Pierre-de-la-Cour honoured this holy confessor in a particular way. St. Flaceau lived at Le Mans at the spot where a street bearing his name can still be seen today. In the tenth century a chapel dedicated under his invocation was built on the same spot, some vestiges of which remain in our day. Beginning of the 8th c. — At Mélinais (Sarthe), St. Regnauld of Picardy, monk of Saint-Jean-des-Vignes at Soissons (Canons Regular), then a hermit at Mélinais, not far from La Flèche, where he fell asleep in the Lord, surrounded by a few disciples who had wished to follow him into that wilderness. In 1182 the abbey of Mélinais rose over his tomb through the care of Henry II, king of England, duke of Normandy and count of Anjou and Maine. Those sick with fever, barren women and those who could not find things they had lost came to invoke him at his tomb with a confidence almost always crowned with success. His precious remains, moved several times and to different places, in 1636, 1640 and 1653, happily escaped the shipwreck of the French Revolution and have been since 1829 in the parish of Candé (Maine-et-Loire, arrondissement of Segré), in the diocese of Angers. About 1104. — At La Flèche, in the diocese of Le Mans, the feast of Notre-Dame des Vertus et des Grandeurs de Marie; the statue of the Virgin is of silvered wood and stands in the oratory of Saint-Barthélemy. This cult dates from the seventeenth century and had as its promoters the Jesuits of La Flèche. Pius IX, by a brief of 27 April 1861, granted various indulgences for visiting this chapel. — At Liège, St. Peter and St. Andolet, companions in the zeal, constancy and glorious martyrdom of St. Lambert of Maastricht, mentioned in today's Roman martyrology. 8th c. — In the diocese of Tours, St. Justin and St. Similin, priests, whose wonders St. Gregory of Tours relates. — In the Argonne (part of Champagne and Lorraine), St. ROUIN (*Chraudingus*, *Rodingus*), founder and first abbot of the Benedictine monastery of Beaulieu (*Bellus locus in Argonna*), in the diocese of Verdun. 680. — At Troyes, the feast of the translation (1159) of the body of St. Hoïlde or Houe, virgin, whose life we gave on 30 April. 5th c. — At Liessies (Nord), in the diocese of Cambrai, the feast of the translation of St. Hiltrude, virgin, mentioned in the Roman martyrology of 27 September. About 790. — Near Salles-sur-l'Hers (Aude), in the diocese of Carcassonne, St. CAMELLE (*Camilia*), virgin. 13th c. — At Trier, St. Maternus, apostle of Alsace, whose life we gave on 14 September. 1st c.

MARTYROLOGES DES ORDRES RELIGIEUX.

Martyrologies of the religious Orders.

Martyrology of the Canons Regular. — At Saragossa in Spain, Blessed Peter Arbués, canon regular and first inquisitor of the faith in the kingdom of Aragon, who, cruelly murdered by relapsed Jews because of his zeal for the Catholic faith in the exercise of his office, won the palm of martyrdom. 1485.

Martyrology of the Order of St. Benedict. — At Cordova, St. Columba, virgin, who, ever given to prayer, merited to obtain the crown of martyrdom. 853.

Martyrology of the Congregation of Vallombrosa. — The commemoration of the sacred Stigmata which St. Francis received miraculously imprinted on his hands, feet and side. 1224.

Martyrology of the Cistercian Order. — At Bingen, in the diocese of Mainz, St. Hildegard, virgin, who, having embraced the Rule of our Father St. Benedict, became famous for her humility, her piety, her patience and the glory of her miracles and heavenly revelations. 1179. — The commemoration of the sacred Stigmata which St. Francis received miraculously imprinted on his feet, hands and side. — At Cordova, the martyrdom of St. Columba, Benedictine virgin, who, raised by God to the summit of the highest virtues, merited to ascend to heaven, glorious with the double crown of virginity and martyrdom. 853.

Martyrology of the three Orders of St. Francis. — The solemn commemoration of the sacred Stigmata of St. Francis. 1224.

Martyrology of the Order of Friars Minor. — The same as above.

Martyrology of the Order of Hermits of St. Augustine. — The Octave of St. Nicholas of Tolentino, confessor, of our Order.[4] 1310.

ADDITIONS FAITES D'APRÈS LES BOLLANDISTES ET AUTRES HAGIOGRAPHES.

Additions made from the Bollandists and other hagiographers.

In Portugal and in Spain, St. Peter Arbués, mentioned in today's Roman martyrology. — At Capua, a city of the former kingdom of Naples (Terra di Lavoro), the Venerable ROBERT BELLARMINE, cardinal, archbishop of Capua, of the Society of Jesus. 1621. — In the island of Cyprus (Mediterranean), Saints Heraclides and Myron, bishops and martyrs. The first had been converted by St. Paul himself, then consecrated bishop by St. Barnabas and John Mark during their mission in Cyprus. 1st or 2nd c. — At Polizzi, in Sicily, Blessed Gandolph, confessor, priest of the Order of St. Francis. After edifying his brethren by brilliant virtues, he obtained permission to withdraw into solitude, where the people, eager for his word, still went to seek him. It is related that, like St. Francis, he had the privilege of making the birds attentive and obedient. The Bollandists relate at length the many miracles that took place at his tomb. His body, laid in the cathedral church of Polizzi, gave off a wonderful fragrance for several weeks. In 1320 it was raised from the ground and placed in the Confession of the high altar: countless wonders accompanied the ceremony of this elevation. The following ages saw the same marvels renewed, and even in our day God is pleased to grant signal favours to all who pray to Him in the name of His illustrious servant. 1260. — At Jerusalem, St. Tobias, fifth bishop of that city and confessor. — In Palestine, St. Patermuthius, St. Peleus and St. Nilus, Egyptian bishops and martyrs. — In Egypt, St. Medilama, virgin and martyr.

Saint Rouin, Founder and Abbot of the Monastery of Beaulieu, in the Diocese of Verdun[5]

680. — Pope: Agatho. — King of France: Theuderic III.

> *Solitudinem veluti matrem orationis et munditiæ quisque amplectatur.*
>
> *Attachez-vous à la solitude : elle est comme la mère de la prière et de la pureté.*
>
> *Cling to solitude: it is as it were the mother of prayer and purity.*
>
> *St. Bonaventure.*

Rouin belonged to that noble and generous Irish nation which has given the world so many examples of heroism, the Church countless saints, and France legions of apostles. He was born on one of the islands near England, about the year 594 of the Incarnation of Our Lord Jesus Christ. His parents are said to have been of a distinguished class and of considerable wealth. But whether a son of princes or of humble mountain folk, born in a palace or on the shores of the Ocean, he received with life the gift of that tender and ardent Catholic faith which had been for a century, and was to be for ever, the glorious patrimony of his people.

On leaving childhood, grace called him to the life of the cloister. He rose; he abandoned earth for heaven and his family for God; and without delay as without weakness he went to devote himself to penance, work and study in one of those famous monasteries, several of which held as many as three thousand religious and so resembled great cities.

Noticed for his learning and piety, he was raised to sacred orders and then to the priesthood. Ancient historians also state that he received episcopal consecration, probably at the age of thirty and about 624; and this seems to us in no way incredible, for the organization of the Irish Church until the twelfth century was almost entirely conventual; the division of the territory into dioceses did not exist; bishops were monks or subordinate to the abbots of the great monasteries. He could thus be seen joining the pontifical functions to the hidden virtues of the cloister. Always humbly submissive to his superior like the least of his brethren, without bishopric or fixed diocese, he had hardly any other charges than to confirm and evangelize the people, to ordain clerics and transmit to them the priestly character.

Yet St. Rouin burned with the desire to spread the truth among men, to sacrifice himself more for the coming of the reign of Our Lord, and to go even into barbarous lands to destroy the remains of paganism and found true civilization, which is faith in Jesus Christ and obedience to His Church. Gaul had given Ireland its first apostle, its beloved father, St. Patrick. Gratitude required that Ireland, now wholly converted, become a centre of light and the Island of Saints, should in its turn evangelize Gaul, some of whose tribes were not yet perfectly Christian. Now for half a century the Irish monks had been going forth and travelling through the West to pay this pious debt of their ancestors. Like swarms of bees, says St. Bernard, they flooded all the nations of Europe, and principally the north of France. Their example, the recent and famous departure of St. Columban and St. Gall, and finally the sacred impulse of the divine Spirit, decided the young Rouin to leave his earthly fatherland. He bade it a tender and last farewell; and followed by his nephew Chrodwin, his disciple Stephen and perhaps some others, he took ship and set sail for the land of the Franks.

After a long but happy voyage St. Rouin landed in Belgic Gaul. Tradition relates that he began by visiting the most famous sanctuaries and the most regular monasteries, seeking Christian wisdom with the ardour that so many others put into acquiring perishable riches or learning the profane sciences. In the course of his pilgrimages he heard of the monastery of Tholey, recently founded in the diocese of Trier on the borders of Lorraine and admirably governed by his countryman St. Wendelin. He begged the favour of being admitted, with his travelling companions, into so devout a house. His request was granted by the unanimous consent of the abbot and the religious, whose joy grew greater still when they saw St. Rouin's great virtues. "He was," says Blessed Richard, "very obedient, learned, given to prayer, of overflowing charity and of immense devotion to God; his patience, his gentleness and his kindness towards his neighbour were admired; he was always active at work, a careful observer of silence, remarkable for his spirit of justice and incomparable in humility."

At that time, of all the abbeys flourishing in Belgium and as far as the banks of the Rhine, Tholey was the most excellent school of divine and human letters. Philosophy and theology were taught there with wonderful brilliance under the direction of the monk Paul, who was soon to become bishop of Verdun. Rouin assiduously followed the lessons of that illustrious doctor, and an ancient history of his life depicts him as so attentive to his master's words that one would have taken him for a man asleep or a motionless statue; but when the moment came for him to speak himself, he shook off that kind of ecstasy into which the love of truth plunged him, and his eloquence became like a rushing river.

The professor and the disciple, both holy and learned, moved by an equal desire for religious perfection and the same love of heaven, formed an indissoluble friendship that was the charm and the strength of their lives. After one or two years of study and prayer together, Paul's elevation to the episcopal see of Verdun separated them, but only for a time. Rouin succeeded his master and continued his traditions of great piety and deep learning so faithfully that at the death of the abbot St. Wendelin he was entrusted with the government of the

whole abbey by the unanimous votes of the monks and by the authority of St. Modoald, archbishop of Trier.

The thought of the still half-barbarous, ignorant and wretched tribes that then lived in certain parts of Lorraine keenly grieved St. Rouin's spirit. The public veneration of which he was the object, and as it were the victim, in the country of Trier added to his sorrow. He also heard the beloved voice of Bishop Paul, who for nearly nine years had been begging him to come to the help of his diocese of Verdun. It was again the call of God saying to him: "Go forth from your adopted country and go into the land that I will show you." He heard it and obeyed. He entrusted the care of the monastery to his nephew, warning him to govern with gentleness, to give the example of holiness himself, and to have for his religious the solicitude of a father and the vigilance of the navigator who wishes to bring his ship into the harbour of salvation. Then he blessed his dear children; he prostrated himself in his turn before them and asked their blessing, and, followed by his disciple Stephen and a few others, he left his dear abbey of Tholey in tears. It was about the year 640, the twelfth of his stay in Gaul. St. Paul of Verdun received him with unspeakable joy and paid him the most touching honours.

Having promised St. Paul not to go too far from him and to fix his dwelling in some neighbouring solitude, St. Rouin, accompanied by only two disciples, travelled through the high hills and deep valleys of the forest of Argonne, eagerly seeking a favourable site on which to build a monastery that would be at once a house of retreat and a centre of apostolate. In this way he came to the mountain then called Vasleu or Vasloï, now Beaulieu.[1] It is like a promontory covered with magnificent oaks, jutting proudly out between the valleys of the Aisne and the Aire. From it one discovers a vast stretch of Champagne, the Barrois, and the old counties of Clermont and Verdun.

Blessed Richard thus describes, in his simple language, the first settlement of the little monastic colony at Beaulieu: "The servant of Christ and his most faithful companions, delighted with this spot, set to work. On every side they cut the branches and uproot the trees of the forest, and in the clearing they build themselves a shelter of boughs and leaves. The lair of wild beasts becomes a house of prayer. In the midst of the brushwood, do you not see the saving standard of the cross rising up? In this wilderness, which heard only the howling of wolves, the yelping of foxes, the song of the nightingale or the confused cries of beasts and birds of every kind, behold, the choir of sacred psalmody sends up its hymns of praise to God; solitude itself begins to celebrate its Creator. At once the news of this event goes round among the people. It is told in the neighbourhood that unknown pilgrims have arrived who are building themselves dwellings, not among men, but among the wild beasts."

The report of it reached a rich man named Austresius, who lived at that time on his estate at Autrécourt.[2] As the mountain of Vasleu was part of his domain, he was indignant that men sprung, as he believed, from a barbarous race should dare to enter his land and cut down trees there to make themselves little huts. He sent word to them that it was an injustice to invade another's soil as they were doing; that it was proud and audacious rashness on their part to wish to live in a forest that was not theirs; that they must therefore leave promptly, or else they might well be punished with death in the very place where they thought they had found a safe refuge. But St. Rouin, judging that the interest of souls was at stake, did not draw back before this man's threats, and generously prepared himself to suffer the harshest persecution. This virtue ought to have touched Austresius; it brought his blindness and fury to a head: his henchmen rushed to Beaulieu, seized the devout solitaries, insulted them, beat them with whips, and finally drove them out of the forest. In his affliction Rouin turned both to heaven and to Rome. A pilgrim ever untiring, he made a journey to the tomb of the holy apostles Peter and Paul and, prostrate before their glorious relics, implored through their intercession the grace to know the divine will clearly and to follow it generously, whether it brought him back to the solitudes of the Argonne or bade him settle elsewhere. Soon the adorable voice of the Spirit of God and the counsels of the successor of St. Peter decided him to retrace his steps and to take up his civilizing work again in spite of all obstacles. Meanwhile St. Rouin and his companions had scarcely left for

Rome when the proud Austresius was overwhelmed with supernatural punishments. His children died in his arms; his rich flocks were wiped out by plague; the multitude of his men-servants and maid-servants abandoned him. He himself was struck by a frightful wasting sickness, and the continual pains it caused him deprived him of all sleep day and night. He easily discovered the source of all his ills, recognized the hand that was striking him, and sincerely deplored the cruelty of his conduct towards the solitaries of Beaulieu. It was in these dispositions of repentance and penance that he learned of their return.

Our Saint was indeed arriving, armed, so to speak, with divine power, and triumphing by his benefits and his miracles. At the village of Resson, not far from Bar-le-Duc, he had sat down at the edge of a spring to rest from the fatigues of the journey and to take his frugal meal, a little bread and water. But the drought was then so great in that country that he could find nothing to quench his thirst. So he called upon the Lord, asking of His mercy the water that the arid earth refused him. Then, by a movement of heavenly inspiration, he drove his pilgrim's staff into the parched ground. A wonderful thing! exclaims Blessed Richard: behold, the spring bubbles up, gushes forth and fills the bed of the brook with its waters. The country people hurried to the spot and gazed at this marvel; and the Saint, taking advantage of their religious emotion, bought the piece of land where the spring had gushed up, in order to build a church there. But being too poor to pay the price to the widow who owned the field, he turned again to the divine omnipotence, and in the very sand of the spring he gathered enough gold to pay his debt. The field long remained the abbey's. But because it was too far away, it was exchanged for meadows in the territory of Senard. It still bears today the name of the *Fontaine de saint Rouyn*.

A noble widow, who lived in the village of Hargeville, was suffering from a very grave illness. Hearing of the twofold wonder worked by the man of God, she sent humbly to beg him to deign to come to her little estate. He came, prayed for her cure, and she at once rose up in good health. Devoutly grateful, she wished, says Blessed Richard, that her benefactor should also be her heir, and at that very moment she had the deed drawn up.

Austresius, hearing the account of these and other wonders, was filled with dismay and remorse for having persecuted and flogged so great a Saint; but as hope mingled with his grief and fear, he had him begged not to abandon him in his misery; and St. Rouin, most patient and most forgetful of the injuries he had had to suffer, hastened to answer the call of his former enemy. He listened with truly fatherly indulgence to the sick man's confessions and, interceding for him, at once restored to him his former vigour and strength. Austresius did not wish to be ungrateful; he gave our Saint for ever that same forest of Vasleu from which he had lately driven him so shamefully. His sister, named Bana, afflicted like him with a cruel wasting sickness and cured herself by St. Rouin, showed herself likewise grateful and generous: she added to her brother's magnificent gift that of her country house and her land, which was called Bonna.[3]

The time of sowing in sadness and tears was past; the time of reaping in joy had come. St. Rouin saw again with inexpressible happiness the solitude of Beaulieu, the high mountains with their endless views, the valleys where such pure water winds, and the lakes of the forest, like pearls set among emeralds. At once God sent him many disciples eager to be formed in religious perfection under his guidance. Together they worked to clear the highest plateau of that chain of hills; and there, as on a splendid pedestal, they built a monastery with its arcaded cloister, its vast halls for study and manual work, its humble cells, its granaries of charity for the poor, its hospice for pilgrims, and above all its great and magnificent church, consecrated to Jesus Christ the Saviour of the world, in honour of St. Maurice and the companions of that martyr.

Rouin, having almost completed his work of foundation, thought of giving it that complete stability which too often fails the best enterprises. He wished his monastery to remain for ever in the Argonne as a hearth of Christian life, a beacon of learning and a source of consolation for the inhabitants of those forests. He therefore asked heaven for a special protector, the Roman Church for a solemn approval, and the king of the Franks for a privilege that would shelter Beaulieu from political dangers.

In the year 645, only three years after his first journey to Rome, he set out again for the Eternal City. Rouin presented his petition to the Sovereign Pontiff and received the authorization he desired: the monastery was thus set upon the immovable Rock that is the foundation of all Christendom; it was confirmed in its existence and furnished with the sacred rights that the Holy See is accustomed to grant to regular abbeys.

Then our Saint joyfully returned towards Gaul, and when he had crossed the Alps he stopped at the famous monastery of the monks of Agaunum, on the borders of the Lower Valais. Formerly, during his stay at Tholey, he had practised the Rule of those religious, and he had chosen as patron of Beaulieu St. Maurice, their glorious protector, the illustrious leader of the Theban legion. Burning with the desire to possess some relics of this martyr, so dear to him, and to place them in his new church to be its strength and its ornament, he went secretly to the superior of the abbey; he revealed his plan to him; he begged him to favour his wishes; he moved him by his persuasive eloquence and promised him great and rich offerings in return. The provost at last yielded to such pressing entreaties and formally undertook to grant them, since he could do so without crime. The following night, for both of them feared the grief and opposition of the monks of Agaunum, they went to the tomb of the glorious martyr. The abbot of Beaulieu laid his gifts there and received the forearm bone of St. Maurice, a truly priceless treasure, more precious to him than the pearls and gold of the whole world. And before the regrets and complaints of the religious could hinder them, our pilgrims hastened to leave the Valais. Without rest or respite, strengthened as they were by their success and their happiness, they made haste to reach the mountains of the Argonne. At last they drew near their monastery; the people rushed out to meet them and welcomed them with transports of joy. And amid the acclamations of that astonished crowd, St. Rouin laid the precious relic on the altar, entrusting to the patronage of the noble martyr, and placing under the safeguard of his name, everything that already belonged, and everything that would afterwards belong, to the abbey of Beaulieu. Some years later, after serious deliberation, our Saint also went to King Childeric II, who held his court at Noyon. He asked him to protect by a royal charter the property the new monastery possessed, and this was granted him.

The abbey of Beaulieu, thus established by a Saint and patronized at once by heaven, by the Church and by society, lasted more than eleven centuries, sometimes powerful and prosperous, sometimes overwhelmed by a multitude of attacks and misfortunes. At last it fell under the blows of revolutionary impiety, and the ploughshare has come to furrow the site of its ancient buildings.

The temporal interests of the monastery were far from absorbing all St. Rouin’s attention and activity. His prayers, his vigils and his mortifications were continual, and the last religious of Beaulieu held from their ancient traditions that he ate only three times a week during Advent and Lent. Although he was wholly withdrawn into his wilderness, he was not satisfied: it seemed to him that he did not belong enough to God; that the government of the abbey divided him and chained a part of himself to created things; that the ideal of perfection he had glimpsed from his youth in Ireland, and afterwards in the monastery of Tholey, was always slow to be realized and fled before his incomplete efforts; and finally that his active life kept him from enjoying the ineffable goods of contemplation.

Now in his solitary walks through the forest he had noticed a spring of living water which divides into two brooks and flows gracefully down the opposite slopes of the hill to deep ponds that the oaks shelter with a wonderful shade. This place is separated from the abbey by a single valley, and the distance can be covered in less than an hour; and yet it is so calm, so religious, so tranquil, that one easily forgets the rest of the world there and remembers only heaven. This solitude pleased St. Rouin; he resolved to spend the last days of his life there and to await in peace the hour of the supreme pilgrimage. So he gathered his brethren; he made his wishes known to them; he pleaded the cause of his weary old age and of his soul thirsting for contemplation and divine love. In spite of their grief at losing so good a father, the monks did not dare refuse him the mark of affection he asked of them. St. Rouin was about eighty years old when, followed by a single religious, he withdrew to the hermitage later called, out of devotion, Bonneval or the Good Valley, but which has

remained known for good by the name of Saint-Rouin. The two solitaries built themselves, as on the first day of their arrival in the forest of Argonne, a poor hut of branches and leaves. On the edge of the spring they set up a rustic cross, and a few steps away they raised a little oratory, which was the true centre of all their affections here below. There they sang psalms, hymns and spiritual canticles; and at times it seemed to them that this valley of misery and tears was already vanishing and that the gates of heaven were opening for them. Every week the disciple went to the monastery to fetch the material bread that was to nourish them, together with water from the rock and the wild fruits of the forest. On Sundays and feast days the holy old man himself returned to Beaulieu to celebrate the divine mysteries solemnly and to distribute to his beloved children the word that enlightens and gives life to souls. Then, still fasting, he took again the difficult, steep path that led to his hermitage; the religious accompanied him with joy and love as far as the top of the hill that shelters Bonneval; there one still sees today a humble cross that twenty generations have devoutly renewed in order to perpetuate the memory of the counsels and the farewell that the father addressed to his sons as he went back into his inviolable solitude. “Often,” Blessed Richard tells us again, “and as long as his strength allowed, he would return secretly by night to his dear abbey of Beaulieu; he would quietly inspect it in order afterwards to correct the faults and negligences he might notice. And when the crowing of the cock, the position of the stars or the morning star (for St. Rouin, like most of the Irish, was skilled in astronomy), when these signs warned him of the approach of dawn, he would slip away unseen into the depths of the forest.”

After five years of complete retreat in the hermitage of Bonneval, the day of reward and triumph came for St. Rouin. He felt his strength failing; the fire of fever was consuming the last bonds that held that great soul captive in its bodily prison. He was even forewarned, according to a tradition preserved at Beaulieu, of the time and the precise hour of his death. Then he ordered his faithful companion to inform the abbot St. Stephen, asking him to come with all the religious of the monastery to commend to God their dying founder and father. They pressed around him; they found him lying on the ground on a hard hair cloth; they learned from his lips that his deliverance was near and that the Lord Himself was inviting him to exchange the sorrows of the present life for the joys of the heavenly fatherland. “To die,” he said, “to die so as to be united to Jesus Christ, ah! how much better that is than the continual anguish of a longer stay here below!” And as his religious begged him with groans to let himself be carried to the monastery, where he would be surrounded with more care and honour, he answered them: “The earth and all its fullness belong to the Lord; the place does not justify one whose conscience is stained with sin. It is here that I wish to end this perishable life and to enter, if it please God, into the future and immortal life. As for you, I beg you, shut my body up in the tomb as soon as possible, and thus, faithful to the commandments of the Lord, you yourselves will obtain the rest promised to the Saints in heaven.”

In the midst of these words, so full of faith, hope and humility, he fell into a deep faint; and understanding that his soul was at last about to leave its earthly dwelling, he urgently asked for the holy Viaticum. Kneeling on the ground, he received for the last time the communion of the body and blood of Our Lord Jesus Christ. Then, raising his hands to heaven and awaiting the supreme moment of departure, he began, says Blessed Richard, to sing one of the responsories the Church has appointed for the dying; the monks continued it, adding several psalms; and as the Saint could no longer lead the sacred psalmody with his failing voice, he still marked its pauses and modulations with his hand.

He kept to the end all the energy and all the clarity of his mind; the life that was little by little leaving his limbs still sparkled in his eyes. But now his arms fall, his body sinks; in vain the religious try to hold him up; their tears now water only a lifeless brow; his soul has gently freed itself from the fetters of the flesh and, adorned with the richest merits, has soared towards the eternal goods that the Lord Jesus has prepared for it. It was 17 September in the year 680, and St. Rouin was about eighty-six years old.

He is represented healing the sister of the lord of Autrécourt, named Bana. That lord, standing beside his sister, who is prostrate at the feet of the servant of God, expresses by a vigorous gesture his admiration, his gratitude and his liberality. — He is also shown making a spring gush forth by means of his staff.

CULTE ET RELIQUES. — PÈLERINAGE DE SAINT-ROUIN.

Cult and relics. — The pilgrimage of Saint-Rouin. His funeral was first celebrated in the hermitage itself, according to all the rules prescribed by the Church. Then his venerable body was solemnly carried to Beaulieu. It was laid in the great church of the monastery, in a grave dug, as he had asked and ordered, before the altar of St. John the Evangelist; but the throng of the faithful and of the sick was so great that this devout duty could only be carried out on the third day.

St. Rouin's tomb soon became glorious. True believers received there from Our Lord a multitude of benefits, the first written testimony of which goes back to the eleventh century. In the thirteenth it was stated that "the little cell of the illustrious solitary was still standing; that the sick flocked to it from all sides, principally those suffering from fever; they drew from the neighbouring spring a miraculous water that restored them to health."

The relics of our Saint did not remain long buried beneath the paving of the church; and we know that about the year 890 they were enclosed in a splendid reliquary, which the bishop of Verdun, Dado, had the monks of Beaulieu bring to the great annual procession of Mont-Jouy; there too came the religious of Montfaucon with the body of St. Balderic, and the clergy of Verdun with the reliquaries of St. Vanne and St. Airy; and at that solemn gathering miraculous cures were very frequent, as Flodoard, the ancient historian of the Church of Reims, relates. About the year 1030 Blessed Richard of Saint-Vanne, having taken over the government of the abbey of Beaulieu, which he had reformed, wrote the history of St. Rouin, his predecessor, and gave him a new reliquary, richer than the old one and admirably adorned with chasing in gold and silver.

From that distant time 17 September was devoted by the diocese of Verdun and by the Benedictine abbeys of that same diocese to the celebration of his glorious memory. The monastic and French martyrologies agree in this with the missals and breviaries of Verdun; and now, by the authority of the Apostolic See, to which our Saint was so tenderly attached, the diocese of Verdun celebrates his feast every year on 25 September, with the rite of a double. For the pilgrimage, however, and for the church of Beaulieu dedicated to St. Rouin, the feast remains fixed on 17 September.

St. Rouin's body did not always remain in his beloved solitude. In 1297 the fearsome Henry III, count of Bar, fell upon Beaulieu, pillaged and burned the monastery, laid waste the church and seized the reliquary of the holy founder to give it to the collegiate church of Saint-Maxe at Bar.[4] It was only in 1612 that Dom Isaac Noyau, prior, and Dom Nicolas Fabius, after many requests and entreaties, obtained from the dean and canons of the collegiate church of Saint-Maxe two ribs and two arm bones of St. Rouin, which they received with great thanksgiving; they brought this sacred treasure to Beaulieu.

At last the French Revolution broke out; the religious Orders were suppressed, the abbeys closed and sold. In 1790 the monks of Beaulieu carried the relics of St. Rouin to the parish church; they remained there about eighteen months; and when even the churches had ceased to be inviolable, when religion was proscribed in our unhappy country, Dom Dominique Lemaire, parish priest and prior of Beaulieu, took the sacred bones out of their reliquary; then he enclosed them in a plain wooden box, which was sealed in the presence of four witnesses and entrusted to Claude Joly, formerly forester of the monastery, a man of great probity, who kept this precious deposit with admirable care. After the storm Dom Lemaire was able to replace the relics in their old reliquary. They were carried back very solemnly to the church, where they are usually exposed in a niche to the right of the nave, close to the arch of the transept.

On 21 September 1846 an ecclesiastical commission appointed by the bishop of Verdun came to Beaulieu to establish the authenticity of the remains of St. Rouin. Mass having been celebrated in his honour, several witnesses were heard, their depositions written down, and the reliquary taken to the bishop's house. There it was examined and sealed on 15 October following by Mgr Louis Rossat, and at once returned to the parish of Beaulieu. It now contains two ribs and a large leg bone of the Saint.

The relics with which Count Henry III of Bar had enriched the collegiate church of Saint-Maxe were likewise hidden during the fury of the Revolution; and on the return of peace, recognized as authentic by M. l'abbé Rollet, a former canon of Saint-Maxe, they were deposited in the church of Saint-Étienne; they are several parts of the head, and above all the upper jawbone. The skull and an apophysis, whose authenticity is no less certain, are exposed for the veneration of the faithful in the hermitage of Bonneval.

During these eleven centuries so devoted to the cult of St. Rouin, "people did not forget," says an interesting notice published in 1865 at Saint-Mihiel, "people did not forget, in the depths of the forest, the hermitage of St. Rouin. Full of respect for everything that recalled his memory, the religious kept up the poor roof under which he had consummated his long sacrifice. An adjoining chapel no doubt covered the patch of ground that served as his deathbed: a modest and venerable sanctuary, whose origin was its whole beauty, where one imagined one could see and hear the great servant of God.

"After praying fervently and making an offering before his image, the devout pilgrims went to refresh themselves at the neighbouring spring, where the holy solitary dipped his daily bread. It has always been believed that by drinking this water with confidence in the merits of the Blessed, the sick, those with fever above all, obtain their cure. The valley of Bonneval was visited with great zeal and devotion; it perhaps owed that meaningful name to the stay of its first guest, and afterwards received from public gratitude, for countless benefits, that of Saint-Rouin."

The religious of the abbey of Beaulieu were no less eager to honour this solitude, the last and favourite dwelling of their admirable founder. They cleared a certain extent of woodland around it to make the hermitage healthier; and early on they built there a small cell for a solitary, whom they chose from among the most virtuous and oldest of the monastery, so that he might be able to bear the rigours of so great an isolation and be worthy to succeed, in that wilderness, the illustrious anchorite whose memory he was to perpetuate.

In 1610 the hermitage unfortunately became secularized and was kept by laymen. In the year 1626, on the site of a ruined chapel whose foundations were identified in 1866, a new and fairly elegant sanctuary was built, consisting of three pointed bays and a vaulted choir. It adjoins on one side the modest buildings reserved for the hermit. This oratory and its outbuildings were sold on 18 March 1791 before the director of the district of Clermont. But while the great abbey of Beaulieu fell miserably under the demolisher's hammer, the little priory of Saint-Rouin remained standing and intact, as if to perpetuate the memory of an admirable virtue and to link our generation, so little Christian, to the more believing generations of the past. A very faithful and well-informed witness of the events concerning our hermitage has stated that none of those who succeeded one another there, as owners or tenants, removed a single stone from that ancient foundation. Nevertheless the poor chapel, placed under interdict by the diocesan authority and turned into a barn, did not improve with the years. In 1865 the last owner announced the sale of the materials of the chapel, which he saw himself obliged, to his keen regret, to demolish because of its imminent collapse. This opportunity seemed offered by divine Providence to give the hermitage back to the religion that had built it and to the piety of the peoples who had loved it so much. An appeal was made to Christian charity. The surrounding parishes and a great number of generous persons from more distant parts responded so well that not only could the price of the chapel, the buildings and the small adjoining estate be paid, but also, from the year 1866, the shaken walls and vaults could be strengthened, the objects necessary for divine worship bought, and the exercises of the renewed pilgrimage inaugurated. Our Holy Father Pope Pius IX and Mgr the bishop of Verdun have enriched it with several indulgences. Since the restoration of this pilgrimage (17

September 1866), the holy sacrifice of the Mass has been regularly celebrated in the chapel at eight in the morning every Thursday of the fine season, that is, from 15 March to 15 November; and the sacraments of Penance and the Eucharist are administered there to devout visitors. The chapel and the adjoining hermitage have become the property of the diocese of Verdun; they are administered by priests designated by the episcopal authority.

We have abridged the excellent notice *Saint Rouin et son pèlerinage* by M. Jules Didiot, doctor of theology, honorary canon of Bayeux, curator of the public library of Verdun. Verdun, 1872.

Saint Lambert or Landebert, Bishop of Maastricht and Martyr

708. — Pope: John VII. — King of France: Childebert III.

> *La loi de Dieu a été donnée comme un fouet pour les pécheurs endurcis, comme un précepteur pour ceux qui avancent, comme une consolation pour les âmes parfaites.*
>
> *The law of God was given as a whip for hardened sinners, as a tutor for those who are advancing, and as a consolation for perfect souls.*
>
> *St. Thomas Aquinas.*

St. Landebert, later called St. Lambert, was born shortly after the year 640 at Maastricht. Aper or Evre, his father, was descended from a royal family and was the most considerable lord of the country of Liège and of the city of Maastricht. Herisplendis, his mother, was also of very illustrious birth. God gave them this son for the glory of their house and to reward their virtue. He received baptism at the hands of St. Remaclus, who was also his godfather. Giles, a religious of the Cistercian Order at the abbey of Orval, says that shortly before his birth the daughter of a French lord, named Line, who was blind, was told by an angel to go to Herisplendis and offer herself to nurse the child she would bear; that God miraculously gave her milk, with which she rubbed her eyes and recovered her sight; and that our Saint was suckled with this virginal milk. He adds that St. Lambert, while still in the cradle, twice spoke to his nurse to reproach her for the negligence she had shown in doing what she had been told.

These wonders, a presage of his holiness, obliged his parents to take particular care over his education. They entrusted him to St. Landoald, archpriest of Maastricht, under whom he made admirable progress in virtue and in divine and human learning. His adolescence was also marked by miracles: by the power of his prayers he made a spring gush forth for workmen who, building a church, lacked water to quench their thirst; and he carried live coals in his cloak without its being damaged. To perfect him further, his parents then placed him under the discipline of St. Theodard, who had succeeded St. Remaclus, first in the government of the abbeys of Malmedy and Stavelot, then in the episcopal see of Maastricht. He profited so well by that great man’s instructions that, growing visibly, so to speak, in grace, wisdom and merit, he won everyone’s admiration: for from then on he began to establish himself inviolably in the love of God, to burn with zeal for the salvation of his neighbour, to despise all the things of earth, and eagerly to seek everything that could lead him to perfection; in a word, to desire nothing but the glory of Jesus Christ and to sacrifice himself unceasingly to His divine majesty. After the death of that holy prelate, who was murdered in defence of the property of his Church, he was carried off rather than elected, though he was only twenty-one (others say thirty-two), to fill the episcopal see of Maastricht. He alleged in vain his great youth, his lack of experience and other reasons: he was obliged to yield to the insistence of the clergy and people, who loudly declared to him that whatever he might do he would be their bishop and they would elect no other; that, their election being unanimous, it was a clear sign that they had made it only by the movement of the Holy Spirit. The life he led under the splendour of the mitre showed clearly that he was worthy of it and that no better choice could have been made. His office of pastor gave him the means of displaying the sentiments of religion and piety with which his heart was filled. Every day he offered the sacrifice of the Mass for the people God had

entrusted to him, and he offered himself as a holocaust to His divine Majesty by the rigorous austerities he constantly practised on his still tender and delicate flesh. Order and truth were the finest ornament of his household; equity and justice accompanied all his actions; his ordinary occupation was to preach the maxims of the Gospel to his flock; he rebuked vice with pastoral freedom, encouraged the slack to do good, and strengthened in virtue those who sincerely intended to perfect themselves. He exhorted everyone to lead a Christian life, of which he himself gave admirable examples by his conduct. His look was pleasant and engaging, and his mind enjoyed perfect tranquillity and calm; his words were full of unction and his conversation charming; his soul lived only on the delights of grace and was entirely dead to all the pleasures of earth; his hands were open to give alms to the needy, his arms stretched out to receive the wretched, and his heart tender to feel for the afflicted.

Childeric II, king of Austrasia, having been assassinated in 673, Lambert, who had been attached to that prince and had enjoyed his favour, felt the repercussions of this revolution. He was driven from his see and an intruder named Pharamond was put in his place, who for seven years ruined order and piety in that diocese.

Lambert bore this disgrace with wonderful constancy, and his only grief was to leave in the hands of a ravening wolf the souls Providence had entrusted to him. His people could not see him go without bursting into tears; on every side in the city voices were heard saying: “Alas! we are losing our holy pastor. Who will defend us against the fury of our enemies? The bravest will lose heart; the weak will no longer be able to stand; the poor, the orphans and the widows will become the prey of a scoundrel; we shall all be exposed to his violence. Come, come, let us follow our bishop wherever he goes; and if we must die with him, let us despise a life that without his presence would be more unbearable to us than death.” These words were broken by sighs and groans that drew tears from the holy prelate. He tried to console them, assuring them that he was not abandoning them, that he would always carry them in his heart, and that he would ceaselessly pray for them to the sovereign Shepherd of souls. He then exhorted them to the fear of God, to patience in their affliction and to the practice of good works, so as to draw down on themselves the protection of heaven; then, after giving them his blessing, he left them to withdraw to the monastery of Stavelot, on the borders of his diocese. It was an earthly paradise for the regular observance kept there in all its purity, and the religious who lived there were so many angels occupied only with the contemplation of heavenly things.

He increased the number of these faithful servants of Jesus Christ, who received him with all the honour due to his character; but far from allowing himself to be distinguished from the others because of his dignity, he wished to follow the common life as if he had been a simple religious. The smallest observances were inviolable rules for him, and the only difference noticed in him was that his humility was deeper, his abstinence more rigorous, his prayer longer and more fervent, his submission to superiors greater, his conversation more edifying, his mortification more austere, his obedience more prompt, his assiduity at the divine office more untiring; in a word, all his virtues more perfect and more brilliant. Here are several of them contained in a single incident. Having risen one winter night to pray, he dropped one of his sandals, which made a noise. The abbot heard it and, as a punishment for this breach of silence, ordered the culprit, whom he did not know, to go and pray at the foot of the cross set up in front of the church. Lambert obeyed without a word, and went to the appointed place barefoot and clad in a simple tunic. He prayed there on his knees for three or four hours. When the monks had gone into the warming-room after Matins, the abbot asked whether they were all there. He was told that only the one he had sent to pray before the cross was missing. He was at once sent for: but what was the surprise of the whole community when Lambert came in all covered with snow and almost stiff with cold! The abbot and the religious threw themselves at his feet to ask his pardon. “May God,” he said, “forgive you the thought that has come to you of judging yourselves guilty for this action. Does not St. Paul teach me that I must serve God in cold and nakedness?” God showed that this sacrifice had been very pleasing to Him by a heavenly light that was seen on his face at the end of

his penance. St. Lambert spent seven years in that holy house, not as in a place of exile, but as in a paradise where he tasted all the delights of the religious life. If he had been driven from his see by the ungodly, he found himself with blessed citizens of heaven; if he was no longer in an episcopal palace, he was in the company of the Saints; and if he no longer had a flock to govern, he laboured to govern himself so as to gain eternity. At the end of that time the affairs of the Church and of religion changed their aspect. The detestable Pharamond, who had had only the name of bishop without performing any function of a true pastor, was driven out for his horrible crimes, not only from the bishopric of Maastricht but from the whole province; and Ebroin, mayor of the palace, the wickedest and cruellest of all our Saint's persecutors, received by a violent death the punishment his perfidy deserved (781). Pepin, surnamed of Herstal, governed France during the strange revolutions by which the monarchy was then shaken. That prince, who had much religion, was not unaware of the injustice done to St. Lambert; informed besides of his merit and holiness, he sent envoys to him at the monastery of Stavelot to beg him to return to his episcopal see, of which he had been unjustly deprived. He found it very hard to leave his solitude, and his humility made him find new reasons for not taking up again a charge of which he had always thought himself unworthy; but the insistence of the envoys, and still more his zeal for the salvation of souls, obliged him to return to Maastricht. He entered it all the more gloriously in that he came back only after enduring a harsh persecution. The joy at seeing him again equalled the grief that had been felt at his loss, and the acclamations of the whole people showed clearly enough how constantly his return had been longed for. The public rejoicing that showed in the voices and faces of all the inhabitants cannot be expressed. This general joy grew still more wonderfully through the brilliance of his virtues, of which he continued to give his people admirable proofs.

In his heart one discovered the fullness of the divine law; his mouth was the oracle of truth; the greatness of his gentleness, the vigour and prudence of his counsels and the justice of his actions delighted all who had the honour of approaching him. He made no distinction of persons; the poor could approach him as easily as the greatest lords; if he esteemed the virtuous, he did not therefore despise sinners, whom he strove by every means to bring back to their duty; everyone found in him the feelings of a father and a pastor. His conversation was innocent and chaste, his faith constant, his hope firm, his charity entire, his wisdom singular, his doctrine apostolic and his life wholly holy. He was modest in his furnishings; tapestries and comfortable chairs did not enter his house; his clothes were without ornament, and his chief garment was a hair shirt on his bare flesh. He carefully visited his diocese, without excepting the most remote villages and farms; he had the skill to discover where the souls were that cared nothing for their salvation, so as to try to win them for Jesus Christ. The Taxandri, or inhabitants of the country of Middelburg and the islands of Zeeland, were still living in the darkness of idolatry: he undertook to convert them to the Christian religion and went to preach the Gospel to them. At first he suffered much ill-treatment from those peoples, who wished to put him to death as soon as they heard him condemn the worship they paid to idols; but his zeal was not discouraged; he rejoiced at their insults, continued to instruct them, and showed them so well the impiety of their superstition, the unity of God, the Trinity of the divine persons, the creation of the world, original sin, the malice of the demons who had themselves worshipped as gods, the mystery of the Incarnation and the death of Jesus Christ for all men, that he brought the greater part of them to the Church. He baptized them, broke their idols to pieces, consecrated temples for them and ordained priests for them to confirm them in the faith: whence he is called the Apostle of the Taxandri.

Several persons of noble birth, touched by his words and moved by his example, renounced all the vanities of the world and, despising their riches for the sake of eternal goods, embraced a life of penance. Among others there was a young lord named Hubert, a native of Aquitaine, count of the palace under King Theuderic, learned in human letters and very famous in the armies. Oda, the aunt of this same St. Hubert, widow of a duke of Aquitaine, through the exhortations of our Saint so despised the world that, after distributing to the poor a great part of her very considerable property, she used the other part to found a monastery near Liège, where she spent the rest of her days in holiness. Blessed Landrada, most illustrious by birth, built on one of

her estates a famous monastery, where she received from the hands of the holy bishop the veil of virginity, which she kept inviolate until her death. Several young women followed her example and consecrated themselves to Jesus Christ in the same house. A wonderful thing is related of this holy virgin. On her deathbed she sent to ask St. Lambert to come and see her. As he was very far away, she died before he arrived; but she appeared to him on the road and told him that she was enjoying heavenly beatitude. The Saint asked her where she wished her body to be buried. “Look up,” she said to him, “and you will see a light in the form of a cross, which will show you the place of my burial.” He raised his eyes and saw that this light fell directly on the village of Wintershoven, where she had lived in her childhood under St. Landoald. When he reached the monastery he told the nuns of his vision and informed them of their holy mother’s wish; but those good sisters paid no heed to it and, not wishing to be deprived of one who had loved them so tenderly during her life, had her buried in their own house. The Saint let them do so; but when after three days he had the tomb opened, the body was no longer found there. It had been miraculously carried by the angels to the very place the Saint had indicated to the blessed prelate.

Pepin, of whom we have spoken, a prince otherwise commendable for his intelligence, his prudence and his valour, forgot his duty towards God and men and, to the great scandal of all the peoples, repudiated Plectrude, his lawful wife, to take a concubine named Alpaïs. That great captain, who had won so many illustrious victories over his enemies, could not conquer himself in this matter; he gave way to a shameful passion after making the most formidable warriors of Europe give way under the strength of his arm. Nothing was lacking to his power, his happiness, his fortune or his glory, and God had favoured him in all his undertakings; but instead of giving Him thanks for it, he transgressed His law by separating what He Himself had joined by the sacrament of marriage. It was for the bishops of the kingdom to rebuke him and to say to him, with the freedom of the forerunner of Jesus Christ: *Non licet tibi*: “It is not lawful for you to put away your wife in order to keep a concubine as you are doing.” They were well convinced of it, but they did not dare open their mouths to do so. Lambert alone, unable to keep silent about anything when the glory of God and the salvation of souls were at stake, had the boldness to speak to him. He forcefully showed that prince the horror of his sin, the scandal he was causing everywhere and the divine punishment he must fear, and which he would surely not escape if he did not break off that detestable liaison. Alpaïs, fearing that the zeal and authority of so great a prelate might make an impression on Pepin’s heart and that he might in the end yield to his salutary remonstrances, urged Dodo, whom some say was her brother, a man powerful through his great wealth and a confidant of the same Pepin, to put a stop to Lambert’s exhortations. Dodo spared nothing to succeed. He spoke of it to the holy bishop. He tried to win him with fine words or to intimidate him with threats; but seeing him fearless and always equally set against the adultery, he thought only of having him killed.

These reprimands of the holy bishop did not prevent Pepin from always showing him all the respect he knew to be due to his virtue and his character; he even deferred much to his advice in everything that did not touch his passion. One day he sent word to him to come to Jupille to discuss some affairs of state with him. Alpaïs, who was there at the time, did what she could to win St. Lambert over to her interests, but in vain. She had him asked at least not to make remonstrances to the prince in public. But no other answer could be drawn from him than that everywhere he would do his duty and speak as a bishop. During his stay there Pepin gave a banquet for the great men of his court and begged the holy prelate to attend it. When drink was offered to the prince, he gave the cup to the Saint so that, drinking first, he might bless it and then hand it back to him: imitating in this the emperor Maximus, who did the same to St. Martin. The bishop did what Pepin required of him. The other courtiers followed this example and begged St. Lambert to hand them the cup after blessing it. And as several were asking him for this same favour at once, Alpaïs put out her hand so as, as it were, to steal the cup with his blessing. The holy bishop, noticing it, turned to Pepin and complained to him of this trick of the concubine, who wished thereby to boast of being in communion with him; and rising at once from table, he left the room, resolved to withdraw from the court. Alpaïs took offence at it and won the

prince over so well that he forbade St. Lambert to leave before first taking leave of her; but the holy bishop answered him generously that he could not do as he wished, since the Apostle forbade him to have any dealings with an immodest woman. “I feel a keen sorrow,” he added, “that you still keep her after all the remonstrances I have made to you about it. I greatly fear that, if you do not give her up, the anger of God will fall on you to punish you for the scandal you are giving to all France.” Alpaïs, who heard these words, fearing more than ever that if Lambert lived longer he would in the end persuade Pepin to send her away and take back his wife, pressed Dodo to carry out his pernicious design as soon as possible. Then Dodo, taking with him a handful of soldiers, went to the house of the bishop, who had withdrawn to Liège, and surrounded it on all sides to keep him from escaping. The Saint awoke at the noise of the soldiers. He could have offered some resistance; but as he knew that the servants of Jesus Christ win the victory only by dying for Him and not by defending themselves against their enemies, he offered none. He simply prostrated himself in prayer, his arms stretched out in the form of a cross, to ask God for the crown of martyrdom that was prepared for him. Meanwhile the soldiers went in, unmoved by a cross of light that appeared in the air above his house; and after murdering two of his nephews, named Peter and Andolet, with some others, they ran him through with their swords and took his life, on 17 September 696 according to the tradition of the Church of Liège, and 708 or 709 according to the Bollandists.

Giles of Orval also says that the true cause of this death was the vengeance of Alpaïs. Anselm, a canon of Liège who lived in the middle of the eleventh century, also gives it as the principal cause. Regino and Sigebert, in their chronicles, are of the same opinion; Godeau, however, says that Pepin, touched by the holy bishop’s remonstrances, was reconciled with Plectrude, who had withdrawn to Cologne to the monastery of Saint-Maur du Capitole, which she had founded, and that more than sixteen years before the death of St. Lambert he shut Alpaïs up in the monastery of Orp, where for the rest of her days she did a very harsh penance, which posterity might set as an example to persons who have fallen into faults like hers; he proves it by acts that Pepin made with his wife after this reconciliation, in 692; in 696, the year of St. Lambert’s martyrdom; then in 701, 703 and 714. He adds that our Saint was killed while praying to God in the oratory of Saints Cosmas and Damian at Liège, which was then only a village. However that may be, no one doubts that he was put to death for having shown episcopal vigour in rebuking vice and defending the honour of the Church and of religion.

Divine justice was not slow to punish in a terrible manner those who had had a hand in the death of this great prelate. Dodo was struck with so shameful a disease that no one could bear to be near him; his body was thrown into the Meuse. The man who had dealt the mortal blow fought with his brother, and they killed each other. Several of the soldiers perished within the year; and if any escaped, they lost their minds and their goods, or were afflicted with so many calamities that they thought themselves much more unhappy to live than to die.

St. Lambert is represented: 1° holding a crutch, either to recall that he was cured of his sickly state or because of the sick who went to his spring to recover their health; 2° with a lance in his hand, to indicate the manner of his death; 3° with angels bringing him a crown; 4° sometimes carrying his head, like St. Denis; 5° holding a book, with two men overthrown behind him; 6° in the print room at Paris he is represented holding his crozier and a book; his hands are clad in gloves adorned with precious stones. He is covered with a magnificent *châsse* (reliquary).

CULTE ET RELIQUES.

Cult and relics.

Those who escaped the fury of the murderers took up his body, put it on the river and carried it to Maastricht, to his cathedral church. It is said that immodest women who tried to approach the body to kiss it with the other faithful were repelled by a divine power, to show how much the Saint had abhorred the immodesty of

Alpaïs. He was not, however, buried in his cathedral; for the canons, fearing that if they paid him this honour they would bring some ill-treatment on themselves from the authors of his death, carried him to a small church of St. Peter outside the city and put him in his father's tomb without even daring to raise any monument to him. But heaven gave him the honours that earth refused him: a fragrance came from the place so sweet that it surpassed that of the most exquisite perfumes, and heavenly music was heard there for a long time. Several years later St. Hubert had him transferred from there to Liège, to the church he had built on the spot where the Saint had suffered martyrdom. At the same time he transferred there the episcopal see of Tongres, which St. Servatius had previously transferred to Maastricht; and since then that village has become one of the most famous cities of the Low Countries. His body, at the time of its translation, was found whole, without any mark of corruption. As the church built by St. Hubert was falling into ruin, the famous bishop Notger rebuilt it about the year 975. It was burned towards the end of the twelfth century, then rebuilt about the year 1250. This superb monument was razed by the French revolutionaries. At the end of the nave, which was of extraordinary height and width, stood the vast chapel of Saints Cosmas and Damian. The reliquary that held the body of St. Lambert was a gift of St. Hubert. The gold reliquary of finished workmanship that contained St. Lambert's head was a present of Bishop Érard de la Marck, who in 150– (the last figure is broken in the printed copy) had the episcopal palace built. The famous mausoleum of gilt bronze that this prelate had had made for himself during his lifetime stood in the middle of the choir. The authors of the *Voyage littéraire* say that in the matter of tombs nothing came near this monument. The French revolutionaries carried it to a château near Givet, where they broke it up entirely in the year 1794. The church of Liège still possesses today the head of the Saint, which people succeeded in withdrawing from the revolutionary bands.

The memory of St. Lambert is very famous, not only in Flanders but also in France and in various parts of Europe, where several churches built in his honour can be seen. The miracles worked at his tomb may be read in the historians we have cited. His feast is kept with great solemnity at Vaugirard, near Paris, whose church is dedicated in his honour.

Acta Sanctorum; various Lives of the Saint by Gotescalc, deacon, and Stephen of Liège; *Essai historique sur l'ancienne cathédrale de Saint-Lambert et sur son chapitre*, by M. le baron Xavier Van der Steen de Jehay. — Cf. Darras, *Histoire générale de l'Église*, t. xvii, p. 61.

Saint Hildegard or Hiltegard, Virgin and Abbess of Mont-Saint-Rupert, in Germany

1179. — Pope: Alexander III. — Emperor of Germany: Frederick Barbarossa.

> *L'espérance est comme l'œil de la charité, l'amour céleste est comme son cœur, et l'abstinence comme leur liaison.*
>
> *Hope is as the eye of charity, heavenly love is as its heart, and abstinence as their bond. Maxim of St. Hildegard.*

St. Hildegard was born in 1098 at Bickelnheim, a market town of Germany in the county of Spanheim. Her father, who was named Hildebert, and her mother, called Melchtide, were both considerable for their nobility and for their great wealth. Having recognized by several signs that she was called to a singular familiarity with God, and that all her inclinations carried her to the love of Jesus Christ alone and to contempt of the world, they placed her, from the age of eight, under the guidance of a holy virgin named Jutta, who gave her the habit of the Order of St. Benedict. This illustrious maiden, who was the sister of Meginhard, Count of Spanheim, at whose court Hildebert lived, dwelt as a recluse in a hermitage on the mount of St. Disibod. She took extraordinary care to bring her up in innocence and humility, and, for all her learning, taught her the psalms of David, so that she might recite and sing them to the praise of God. Hildegard profited admirably in so holy a school, and, by the progress she made in virtue as well as by the divine lights she continually

received from heaven, she was confirmed in the resolve to seek nothing but heavenly things. But God, to purify her still further and to try her fidelity, sent her great illnesses; for she was in a continual languor accompanied by very sharp pains. She could rarely walk, and her body became so wasted that she was no more than a skeleton and an image of death. Yet the more she weakened outwardly, the more her spirit was strengthened by the intimate communications she had with God; so that the warmth seemed to withdraw from her limbs only to kindle her heart more and more and to increase the fervour of her love for Jesus Christ.

As she was thus applied to God alone, whom alone she strove to please, she heard a divine voice which commanded her henceforth to put in writing all the things that would be made known to her. The delay she made in obeying this order from heaven, for fear of not being approved by men, caused her illness to redouble. The anxiety in which she found herself on this account obliged her to have recourse to a religious: she disclosed to him the cause of her infirmity and the command she had received; and, by the counsel he gave her, after he had laid the matter before his abbot and other spiritual persons, she was entirely resolved to follow this heavenly inspiration. As soon as she set herself to begin, her strength returned all at once; and although she had never learned to write, she made a book of the visions and revelations she had had until then, and put it into the hands of the abbot for examination. He did not trust his own judgement in a matter so delicate and so important, but went to Mainz to confer about it with the archbishop and the learned men of his Church. From there he went to Trier, where he learned that Pope Eugene III had come after the Council of Reims, over which he had presided. This Pope, so as to decide nothing without mature deliberation, sent the Bishop of Verdun to Hildegard with other very enlightened persons, to examine by what spirit she had discovered so many marvels. They reported that the humility and simplicity of the Saint were sure signs that she was led only by the Spirit of God; and so he himself read these divine writings in the presence of Adalbero, Archbishop of Trier, of the cardinals and of all the clergy, and there was no one in that learned company who was not delighted by their soundness and who did not bless the goodness of God for having communicated himself in so rare and admirable a manner to a simple maiden. St. Bernard, Abbot of Clairvaux, who was of the assembly, represented to the Pope that he ought not to leave in obscurity a person to whom God communicated such fine lights, but ought to use his authority to confirm what she had already dictated and to encourage her to continue writing similar things. Eugene, acquiescing in this view, wrote her a letter exhorting her to gather carefully all the things that the Holy Spirit would reveal to her; and, to give her still more authority, he wrote another to the abbot and the monks, to let them know the good opinion he had of the holy recluse. Abbot Trithemius says that St. Bernard went to see her himself, to have the happiness of conversing with her; that he was fully satisfied, openly confessed that she was inspired by God, exhorted her to perseverance, strengthened her in the ways of her calling, and even formed with her a holy friendship, which he kept up by several letters; that he wrote them to her either to console her in the continual illnesses by which she was afflicted, or to give her the instructions he judged necessary for her in the extraordinary guidance that divine Providence exercised over her. But Fr. Stilting, in the fifth volume for September of the *Acta Sanctorum*, has shown that this story is entirely false.

This inquiry ordered by the Pope, and followed by so authentic an approval, spread everywhere the report of Hildegard’s holiness; the fragrance of her virtues soon drew to her a great number of persons, who came to consult her on the difficulties of their consciences, on the means of working out their salvation and of advancing in perfection. Several young women asked her for the religious habit, and so great a number presented themselves that, since her hermitage, of which St. Jutta had left her superior, could not hold them all, she was obliged to have a more spacious one built. The mount of St. Robert or Rupert (near Bingen), so called because it belonged to the domain of that holy duke and because he had ended his days there in holiness with Blessed Bertha, his mother, and St. Guibert, confessor, was the place of this new retreat, which was shown to her by God in a vision. Count Meginhard, whose daughter, named Hiltrude, had become a nun under the guidance of our Saint, made her a gift of it, after buying it from the canons of Mainz and from the

Count of Hildesheim, on whom it depended. The abbot and the monks were very reluctant to consent to her leaving their neighbourhood, and opposed it for some time; but she fell into a supernatural languor which left her unable to move. This usually happened to her when she was prevented from carrying out the orders she received from heaven, or when she herself delayed doing so; whereas, when she set about complying with them and was no longer thwarted, her strength returned all at once. The abbot therefore allowed her to go to the new monastery of St. Rupert; then she rose from her bed as though she had never been ill, and went there. This change caused as much grief to the persons she was leaving as it brought joy to those whom she was going to honour with her presence.

In this new dwelling God continued to enlighten her with his heavenly lights. It would be impossible to explain in any words but her own how she received them; this is what she says of it in a letter to a monk of Gembloux: “I am always filled with a holy fear, because I recognize in myself no power to do good; but I stretch out my hands to God like two wings, and, as the wind of his grace blows between them, I feel myself mightily upheld by his divine strength. From my childhood until now, when I am seventy years old, I have had this vision unceasingly in my mind: it seems to me that I am lifted up to the firmament and spread out through the air towards very distant regions, and in this state I see in my soul great marvels that are shown to me. I do not see them with the eyes of the body; I do not hear them with my ears; I do not discover them by any of my senses, not even by the thoughts of my heart, nor by ecstasies, for I have never had any; but, with my eyes open and fully awake, I see them clearly, day and night, in the depth of my soul.” It is not surprising if, in this happy disposition, she had such ease in putting into writing all the things that the Holy Spirit revealed to her, not only in the natural order but also in the supernatural. This state of continual contemplation did not prevent her from fulfilling the duties of the active life and from labouring, as far as she could, for the salvation of souls. She listened to the persons who came to find her, saw into the depths of their consciences, and always gave them salutary advice suited to the state of their hearts. She answered by letter others who consulted her. The monk Wilbert put to her thirty very thorny questions, which she resolved with lights so profound and so sublime that this writing cannot be read without admiration. At the request of the abbot and monks of St. Disibod she wrote the life of that holy confessor, and at the prayer of some others she wrote that of St. Rupert. She composed homilies on all the Gospels of the year, the reading of which shows that she spoke only by divine inspiration. She expounded in particular the Gospel of St. John, whose mysteries are incomprehensible to the greatest minds. She wrote more than two hundred and fifty letters to exhort various persons to heroic acts of virtue. In them, by a singular gift of God, she lays bare the secrets of their inner life and gives instructions suited to their state. Those she addressed to the Archbishops of Trier, Mainz and Cologne contain several predictions of calamities that were to come upon the world. In a word, there was no considerable person of her time to whom she did not give wholly divine counsel. She wrote to Eugene III, Anastasius IV, Adrian IV and Alexander III, sovereign pontiffs; to the Emperors Conrad III and Frederick I; to the Bishops of Bamberg, Speyer, Worms, Constance, Liège, Maastricht, Prague and all Germany; to the Bishop of Jerusalem; to several prelates of France and Italy; to a great number of abbots; to

St. Elisabeth of the Order of Cîteaux; and to a multitude of priests, theologians and philosophers of Europe. All these epistles are full of mysteries and secrets that the Holy Spirit had revealed to her, and the replies of so many great men have been preserved at the monastery of St. Rupert.

She travelled through several cities of Germany to announce to the clergy and the people things that God had commanded her to make known to them. The poorest had a share in her lights as well as the powerful of the world: she did not refuse them letters of consolation when they asked her for them, and by her prayers she obtained for them the graces they needed in their illnesses, miseries and afflictions. She convinced some Jews who came to question her about the Law and the Prophets, and proved to them that the mystery of the Incarnation, which they were still awaiting, had been accomplished. She knew the hearts of those who came to her out of curiosity, and told them truths so moving that they at once changed their minds. She gave

remedies to persons who consulted her about their bodily or spiritual ailments. She often had revelations concerning the salvation or damnation of those who came to visit her. She saw the glory to which some were to be raised in heaven, and the pains that others were to suffer in hell. She made good use of this discernment of spirits and consciences in governing her nuns. She forestalled their little disputes, their sadness in their vocation, their sloth and slackness in their regular duties. All that she said was accompanied by so much gentleness and unction that no one could resist the impressions she made in the innermost depths of souls.

But, although Our Lord favoured his beloved Hildegard with such extraordinary graces and such abundant blessings, and honoured her almost continually with his holy visits, he nonetheless permitted her to be greatly persecuted and afflicted in many ways. She had illnesses that may be said to have been above nature. Once she was for thirty days in so pitiful a state that no one knew whether she was dead or whether her soul still animated her limbs, so withered and stiff did they appear. At other times her body was reduced to such weakness that no one dared even to touch it, for fear of killing her. Now it was shrivelled and as if frozen, now it was all on fire with the heat of the violent fevers that tormented her. It was nevertheless in these burning pains that she had the most beautiful visions and that God communicated to her the greatest lights. We have already noted that her sickness visibly increased when she did not promptly carry out what was prescribed to her in her revelations. One day she became blind for not having made known a thing she had been ordered to declare, and she recovered her sight only after she had complied. She also suffered much from the devils, who used all their artifices to rob her of her humility, to shake her patience and to make her lose her confidence in Jesus Christ. They assailed her with horrible temptations to blasphemy and with thoughts of despair; by divine permission they mingled in her illnesses, and treated her, without however touching her soul, with all the cruelty their rage could suggest to them; but she had the consolation of seeing angels appointed to defend her against their fury. Several times she saw a cherub with a sword of fire in his hand, who drove them from her presence and compelled them to withdraw into hell. She often saw these spirits of darkness in frightful rages because, instead of winning the least victory over her weakness, she always triumphed over their malice and used it to unite herself more closely to her God.

Yet these were not the bloodiest persecutions she suffered, terrible as they appear; the darts of slanderous tongues were very painful to her, because they attacked the signal favours she received from her Spouse. She was honoured, applauded and approved in the manner we have described; yet Providence further permitted the devil to stir up several persons who caused her strange interior sufferings. Some doubted whether these revelations were not illusions rather than divine inspirations. Others said openly that she was deceived and led astray, and that, besides, it was not for a simple, ignorant and unlettered maiden to meddle with composing works of piety; that her supposed familiarities with the Holy Spirit were only empty imaginings; that the visions she put about should pass only for chimerical ideas, without any valid foundation; and that, in short, she ought to be prevented from speaking instead of being consulted as an oracle. Some even of her own nuns let themselves be carried away into murmuring against her, complaining of her exactness, as too scrupulous, in making them keep the regular observances, and reproaching her that, through a daydream rather than a vision, she had taken them away from the mount of St. Disibod, where they lacked nothing and which was the most pleasant dwelling in the world, to transfer them to the hill of St. Rupert, an unhealthy and marshy place because of the nearness of the river Nahe, which flows into the Rhine, and where they lacked everything. But Hildegard remained always firm, constant and calm in the midst of these storms. And if they were violent enough to touch her at their beginning, they never had the strength to cast her down, or even to shake her. As she had not been lifted up when she was given praise, she did not let herself be cast down when she saw herself slandered. She looked upon this adversity with the same eye with which she had regarded prosperity, adoring unceasingly in the one and the other the divine Providence, from which alone she awaited all her help. And so God, taking up her defence, set her above envy; he made her innocence shine forth, chastised her persecutors and obliged them to acknowledge their fault; finally, he showed by several marvels that she did and had done nothing except by the movement and guidance of his Holy Spirit.

She healed several sick people who implored her assistance, delivered a child of seven months from a strange swelling that afflicted it in all its limbs, and restored to health a dying girl and a dying young man by making them drink water she had first blessed. Two women who had lost their reason recovered it by her merits. Another, from Italy, troubled with an issue of blood, was cured by one of her letters. The mere touch of her clothes and of things she had used worked admirable cures. She drove the devils out of the bodies of the possessed, and gave sight to a blind child. A young person named Lutgarde conceived so violent a passion that she fell into a languor which brought her within a hair's breadth of death. Her parents, learning from her own lips the cause of her illness, sent her to the Saint to disclose her trouble and to ask the help of her prayers. Hildegard at once betook herself to prayer, then blessed some bread, moistened it with her tears and sent it to the sick girl. No sooner had the girl tasted it than she was entirely delivered from the passion that was consuming her. Finally, our Saint worked many other miracles which it would take too long to relate here; they may be seen in the authors whom we shall cite at the end of this summary. It must only be observed that, when she had performed some miraculous act, God permitted her pains and illnesses to increase extraordinarily, so that, as she herself confesses in her writings, she might always keep to the sentiments of true humility, and the greatness of her revelations and the brilliance of the marvels she worked might not give rise in her mind to thoughts of pride and self-esteem.

Such was the life of St. Hildegard until the age of eighty-two; having foretold her death by a revelation she had of it, she went to join her heavenly Spouse, whom alone she had sought on earth. It was on 17 September in the year of Our Lord 1179. At the hour of her death, which came at daybreak, two rainbows were seen in the air, crossing one another over the whole hemisphere towards the four quarters of the world; and at the point where they met there appeared a luminous body the size of the disc of the moon, from the midst of which came forth a cross, which at first was quite small but afterwards widened beyond measure, and was further surrounded by other luminous circles, also bearing shining crosses; from it there sprang a wonderful brightness by which the whole mountain was lit up. God doubtless wished to show by these symbols how much this holy virgin had suffered during her life, how pleasing she had made herself to Jesus Christ by her sufferings, and with what glory she was rewarded in heaven. Her body, which gave off a very sweet fragrance, was buried with honour in the monastery of Bingen, which she had so long sanctified by the practice of the most excellent virtues. Her tomb has been honoured by several miracles.

She is represented: 1° at the moment when, as she breathed her last, a shining cross appeared in the sky; 2° carrying a church, as foundress of a monastery; 3° visited by a solitary; 4° giving a chalice and money to a poor priest or hermit.

CULTE ET RELIQUES. — SES ÉCRITS.

Cult and relics. — Her writings.

St. Hildegard was buried in the monastery of St. Rupert, where a rich mausoleum was raised to her. This monastery having been pillaged and burned by the Swedes in 1632, the Benedictine nuns who occupied it withdrew and took with them the relics of their holy abbess to the priory of Eibingen, in the diocese of Mainz, of which St. Hildegard was the foundress. It is there that she has since received the honours which the great number of her miracles has caused to be paid to her. Her name is celebrated in the annals of the Church of Germany. Her canonization, twice taken up, has not been completed; but her cult is permitted and the decree of beatification has been issued. Her name is inserted in the Roman Martyrology.

The works we have of St. Hildegard are: 1° her *Letters*, one hundred and forty-five in number, including those which various persons addressed to her; 2° the *Scivias*, or her visions and revelations, in three books; 3° the book of the *Divine Works of the Simple Man*, or *Visions on All the Points of Theology*, in three parts; 4° the *Solution of Thirty-Eight Questions*; 5° the *Explanation of the Rule of St. Benedict*; 6° the *Explanation of the Creed of St. Athanasius*; 7° the *Life of St. Rupert* or Robert; 8° the *Life of St. Disibod*; 9° *On the*

Subtleties of the Various Natures of Creatures, in nine books. All these works are collected in volume CXCVII of Migne's *Latin Patrology*, through the care and with the notes of Dr. Reuss.

Acta Sanctorum; Dom Ceillier; *Life of St. Hildegard*, by Abbot Theodoric, given by Surius; the *Annals of Cîteaux*; *History of the Holy Virgins of that Order*, by Henriquez; Nicolaus Serarius, of the Society of Jesus, gave an abridgement of her life in chapter xxxvii of book ii of his *History of Mainz*. It is in all these authors that we have found the particulars we have related in this history.

The Stigmata of St. Francis of Assisi

1224. — Pope: Honorius III. — King of France: Louis VIII, the Lion.

> *Stigmata Domini Jesu in corpore meo porto.*
>
> *I bear the marks of the Lord Jesus in my body.*
>
> *Gal., vi, 17.*
>
> *Que veulent dire ces plaies ? Ce sont des bouches éloquentes qui persuadent le mépris du monde et la gloire de la croix.*
>
> *What do these wounds mean? They are eloquent mouths which urge contempt of the world and the glory of the cross.*
>
> *Fr. Nouet, Méditations.*

One would need to be in an actual transport of divine love to explain worthily the wonders of this mystery, which consists in this: that Our Lord Jesus Christ, by a signal and extraordinary favour, was pleased to engrave the five principal wounds he received in his Passion on the body of his faithful servant St. Francis of Assisi, founder and patriarch of the Order of Friars Minor. As we have no words strong enough to portray so great a subject, we shall borrow those of two excellent men whose hearts were wonderfully set on fire with that love: the one shall be the Seraphic Doctor, St. Bonaventure; the other, St. Francis de Sales, Bishop and Prince of Geneva. Here is what St. Bonaventure says of it in the thirteenth chapter of his *Legend*:

"St. Francis, two years before his death, withdrew to Mount Alverna to fast there for forty days in honour of St. Michael. In the course of his penance and in the fervour of his contemplation, he felt himself extraordinarily filled with a heavenly sweetness and laden with graces so intimate that he longed with a wonderful ardour to be united more perfectly to Jesus Christ crucified. He was carried away into God by these seraphic flames; his whole heart, through an extremely tender compassion, was transformed into his Saviour, who, out of an excess of charity, allowed himself to be put to death for the salvation of men. One day, about the feast of the Holy Cross, he had the following vision. A seraph, having six wings equally luminous and fiery, came down from the height of heaven, and, drawing near the place where he was, appeared to him in the form of a man crucified. His feet and hands were stretched out and fastened to a cross, and his wings were so arranged that two rose above his head, two were spread out to fly, and the other two covered his whole body. This prodigy astonished him wonderfully, and at that very moment there arose in his soul a mingling of joy and sorrow. On the one hand he felt an inexpressible gladness at seeing a seraph appear to him so familiarly and in so extraordinary a manner; but on the other, the figure of Jesus Christ suffering on the cross pierced his heart with a sword of bitterness. While he was attentively considering this divine sight, an inner voice told him that, although sufferings in no way befitted a heavenly spirit, which is impassible, he was nevertheless given the sight of a suffering seraph so that he might understand that it was not by an outward martyrdom but by a mystical burning of divine love that he was to be transformed into the likeness of Jesus Christ crucified, of whom he must be a living image. After a mysterious and wholly familiar converse with this blessed spirit, the vision disappeared; and at once this holy patriarch felt his heart burn with a seraphic ardour, and then there were made on his body painful impressions which made him conformable to the divine Crucified whom he had seen. For at that instant the marks of the Saviour's wounds

appeared on his hands and on his feet, and his right side also received a red scar, as if it had been opened by the thrust of a lance; and so great a quantity of blood even flowed from it that his garments were drenched with it." That, in substance, is what St. Bonaventure says of so astonishing a favour, which Jesus Christ granted to St. Francis and of which no example had been seen in all the preceding centuries.

St. Francis de Sales, in the sixth book of his incomparable *Love of God*, in the fourth chapter, where he speaks of the loving languor of a heart wounded with love, explains this mystery admirably. His words are so devout, so moving and so forceful that, although they are no longer in the exact purity of our language, we have nevertheless not dared to alter them, as much out of the respect we have for this great Saint as for fear of lessening the force and unction he gave them through the ardours of his love. Here, then, is how he speaks:

"This great servant of God, this man all seraphic, seeing the living image of his crucified Saviour represented in a luminous seraph who appeared to him on Mount Alverna, was moved more tenderly than can be imagined, and was seized with a sovereign consolation and a sovereign compassion. For, gazing on that fair mirror of love, at which the angels can never gaze enough, alas, he swooned with sweetness and contentment; but, seeing also on the other hand the living representation of the wounds of his crucified Saviour, he felt in his soul the fierce sword which pierced the sacred breast of the Virgin Mary on the day of the Passion, with as much inward pain as if he had been crucified with his dear Saviour. O God, Theotimus, if the image of Abraham raising the death-blow over his dear only son to sacrifice him, an image made by a mortal painter, had indeed the power to move and to make weep the great St. Gregory, Bishop of Nyssa, every time he looked at it, oh, how extreme was the tenderness of the great St. Francis when he saw the image of Our Lord sacrificing himself on the cross! — an image which not a mortal hand but the master hand of a heavenly seraph had copied and drawn from its own original, and which represented so vividly and so naturally the divine King of angels torn, pierced and crucified.

"This soul, then, thus softened and almost wholly melted in this loving sorrow, was by this means found extremely well disposed to receive the impressions and marks of the love and the sorrow of its sovereign Lover. For his memory was wholly steeped in the thought of this divine love; his imagination was strongly applied to picturing the wounds that appeared in the image presented to him; his understanding was filled with the infinitely vivid impressions which his imagination furnished to it; his love, in short, employed all the powers of his will to conform itself to the passion of his Beloved. Thus this soul was doubtless found wholly transformed into a second Crucifix; and the soul, as the form and mistress of the body, using its power over it, imprinted on it the pains of the wounds with which it was wounded, in the places corresponding to those in which its Lover had endured them. Love made the inward torments of this great St. Francis pass to the outside, and wounded his body with the same dart of sorrow with which it had wounded his heart. As for the openings in the flesh, the ardent seraph darted rays of a brightness so piercing that it really made in the flesh the outward wounds of the Crucified which love had imprinted inwardly in the soul. So the seraph, seeing that Isaiah dared not undertake to speak because he felt his lips defiled, came in God's name to touch and purify his lips with a coal taken from the altar, thus seconding the Prophet's desire. Myrrh yields its *stricte* and first liquor as if by sweat and transpiration; but that it may give out all its juice it must be helped by incision. In the same way the divine love of St. Francis appeared throughout his life as if by sweat, for he breathed nothing in all his actions but that holy love. But to make its incomparable abundance appear completely, the heavenly seraph came to pierce and wound him; and so that it might be known that the wounds were wounds of divine love, they were made not with iron but with rays of light! O true God, Theotimus, what loving sorrows! For not only then, but for all the rest of his life, this poor Saint went about always dragging and languishing, like one very sick with love." Such are the words of St. Francis de Sales. They show us that divine love is infinitely more powerful in its working than natural and sensual love; and that, if we do so little for God while we find nothing difficult in pleasing the world, it is because we scarcely love the one at all and are wholly impassioned for the other.

The blessed servant of God, having completed his fast of forty days, left the mountain and returned to his monastery to celebrate the feast of St. Michael there. As the sacred wounds appeared visibly on his body, he did what he could to keep them hidden from the eyes of men. He had never yet used shoes; from that time on he wore them, and took care always to have his hands covered. But in spite of all his precautions the wonders God had worked in him were noticed. Several of his religious saw them, as they afterwards attested on oath. Some cardinals also had the consolation of seeing them, as they certified by word of mouth and in writing. Pope Alexander IV, while still a cardinal, was one of these, and in a sermon at which St. Bonaventure was present he declared that he had seen them with his own eyes. After his death St. Clare also saw them, with fifty religious and a great number of lay people, who kissed them on the day of his burial.

This signal favour was a reward God gave him even in this life for his devotion to Jesus crucified. At the beginning of his conversion his soul had been filled with a tender compassion for the sufferings of his Saviour. The Crucifix had spoken to him several times and had given him hope that one day he would be conformed to it. One religious had seen a cross come forth from his mouth, and another had witnessed a vision in which two swords in the form of a cross pierced his breast. He was seen raised in the air during a sermon of St. Anthony of Padua, who was preaching on the inscription of the cross. In short, his whole life had been nothing but a perfect imitation of Jesus Christ crucified. It was fitting, says St. Bonaventure, that before his death he should be a finished image of him, and that, after burning inwardly with the desire to be like his dying God, he should bear the likeness of him gloriously on his body by the sacred stigmata.

Several miracles were worked by the power of these mysterious wounds. In the province of Rieti a dreadful plague was ravaging all the cattle, and no human remedy could stop it. A God-fearing man was warned in a vision to go to the convent of St. Francis, to ask there for some of the water that had been used to wash the feet and hands of this faithful servant of God, and then to sprinkle the cattle with this water. He did so, and at once the animals were entirely cured. Before the appearance of the seraphic St. Francis on Mount Alverna, hailstorms used to form which, breaking over the neighbouring places, ruined the crops; but after the Saint’s stay there and the grace he received there, these storms ceased, and the sky, to the great astonishment of the inhabitants, became as clear in that place as it was round about. Having touched with his hand a poor man numb with cold, he caused in him a warmth so gentle and so powerful that it gave him strength to walk easily over the rocks and through the snow.

Other miraculous things are also reported that happened in connection with these divine wounds. Pope Gregory IX had doubts about the wound in the side: the Saint appeared to him and, after rebuking him for his unbelief, raised his arm and uncovered it to him, and blood flowed from it which the Pope himself received in a phial. A religious of his Order who, unable to understand how this mystery had come about, called it into doubt, was very severely reprimanded by St. Francis, who appeared to him also. A priest of the province of Apulia, in the kingdom of Naples, looking at a picture in which our Saint was represented receiving the stigmata, began to doubt the truth of this story; and at once he felt himself struck in the hollow of his hand with a sharp pain, and, taking off his glove, saw there a wound which made him admit from his own experience that the thing was possible, and confess openly that he believed the fact represented in the picture.

All these wonders, which God worked to prove the wonder of the stigmata, led the Church to institute a special feast to stir the faithful to devotion to the Passion of Our Lord and to rekindle in their hearts the love of sufferings, which make Christians perfect images of his sacred humanity. The Sovereign Pontiffs Gregory IX and Alexander IV issued express bulls for this purpose. Benedict XI permitted its office to be said publicly. Later Sixtus V ordered its commemoration to be inserted in the Roman Martyrology on 17 September. Finally the Pope has granted to all clerics to say its office as a double, as appears from a decree of the Congregation of Rites.

Saint Peter Arbués, Inquisitor of the Faith in the Kingdom of Aragon, and Martyr

1485. — Pope: Innocent VIII. — Sovereigns of Spain: Ferdinand and Isabella.

La vérité est amère pour les méchants, et les lois de la justice leur sont dures.

Truth is bitter to the wicked, and the laws of justice are hard to them.

St. Isidore.

Peter Arbués, more generally known in Spain by the name of the Master of Epila, *el Maestro de Epila*, or, by abbreviation, Mastrepila, was born about the year 1435. The place of his birth, Epila, was a small market town or fortified castle of Aragon, seven Spanish leagues west of Saragossa. It was there, on the banks of the little river Jalón, that his early childhood passed, cradled in the legends of holiness and chivalry which, in those heroic times, made every Spanish heart beat faster. For the rest, his many biographers tell us nothing of his early years, except that he drank in piety with his mother's milk and showed admirable aptitude for study. His father, Don Antonio de Arbués, belonged to the grandees of Spain, as his arms attest: three bendlets azure on a field or. The Arbués were allied to King James the Conqueror; they had already given two archbishops to Saragossa, the capital of the kingdom. His mother, Sacha Ruiz, was of the noble family of Sabada. Young Peter had five sisters, four of whom were married somewhat later to the most illustrious gentlemen of Aragon. As soon as he was of age to attend the public schools, he was sent first to Huesca and then to Bologna, the great Italian university. A journey from the region of the Ebro to that of the Adriatic was a far more difficult and perilous undertaking than it is today; but in those times reputed barbarous nothing was feared when it came to running in search of learning. Bologna had a Spanish college founded by an archbishop of Toledo and always very full. Peter followed its courses there with as much success as diligence, and the historians of his life note that he won the first prize in theology. He stayed there until the age of thirty-nine and returned only when furnished with all the degrees the famous university could confer. His merit, enhanced by his birth and his great connections, could not fail to draw the attention of the clergy. Two years after his return, in 1476, he was elected a member of the chapter of Saragossa, and made his profession among the Canons Regular of St. Augustine, who then served that metropolitan church. Spain was at that moment at the highest point of her strength, if not yet of her territorial greatness. She had just been united, without shocks and without violence, under the associated sceptres of Ferdinand and Isabella, those two spouses who had the rare good fortune to find, and the wisdom to employ, so many great men to second them in their vast undertakings — a Ximenes in their councils, a Gonsalvo of Cordova at the head of their armies, a Christopher Columbus on their fleets — and who added to this the glory of deserving that the surname of Catholic should eclipse for them, in the memory of men, that of Great.

Ferdinand and Isabella planned, once the unity of the Peninsula had been accomplished, to complete its independence as well. But, wishing first to consolidate the results already gained, they resolved to reduce to impotence the enemies within: the Moors, conquered by arms but still untamed, and their auxiliaries the Jews, before delivering the last assault on Granada, the bulwark of Mohammedanism on this side of the Strait of Gibraltar. They therefore thought of the Inquisition. They reorganized it, extended its powers and made its penal code more severe — not without opposition on this last point from Sixtus IV, who was alarmed at this too purely political instrument in royal hands and would authorize capital sentences only with the reservation of the right of appeal to Rome. Relations between the two courts even reached such a strain on this account that the ambassadors were recalled on both sides and Ferdinand ordered all his subjects to leave Rome. The Pope at last gave way. He approved the institution while maintaining his reservations, and a former confessor of Queen Isabella's childhood, Thomas de Torquemada, prior of the Dominicans of Segovia, was named Grand Inquisitor General and charged with applying the new institution, which from the outset gave excellent results. His mission was not without difficulties or dangers. To help him in it there was need of

bold, firm and incorruptible men, yet at the same time enlightened, of sound judgement and dauntless heart. No one was found in Saragossa who seemed to combine all these qualities in a higher degree than Canon Peter Arbués. He was therefore offered the post of first Inquisitor of Aragon, a post he was to fill jointly with Father Gaspar Inglario, a Dominican.

The canon saw in this offer not the honour and power it conferred on him, but an opportunity to contribute to the glory of God and the good of his country. He judged that religion and *protestantisme* did not allow him to refuse; he accepted. In taking on the duties of Inquisitor, Peter Arbués fully intended to fulfil them. Only, to draw from them all the fruit he hoped for, he relied less on the power of a skilfully organized administration than on the force of persuasion and charity. Ardent in procuring conversions, he was no less prudent in accepting only those that were sincere and proven, as much to avoid the profanation of the sacraments as to lessen the danger of relapses, which then exposed the guilty to the full rigour of the laws. He was often seen preaching in public; he was met wherever there was a soul shaken by the grace of God, wherever a wavering heart of doubtful perseverance was pointed out to him: in the poor man's hut and at the rich man's counter, at the bedside of the sick, in the prisons where relapsed and apostates were shut up, and even at the foot of the stakes where some were going sadly to expiate their inconstancy.[1]

But, as the most effective preaching is that of example, Peter was above all concerned to show in his own person the virtues of the priest and the apostle, and for this he strove to possess them. Not content with having cut out of his house and table all luxury and everything superfluous, he gave himself up to the most rigorous privations. Voluntarily poor, he was generous to the poor and lovingly sought occasions to practise the works of charity, both spiritual and temporal. He prayed with great fervour and, even in the midst of outward labours, kept his soul constantly raised towards heaven. Such was his humility that, in the words of his Italian biographer, he behaved towards his inferiors as an equal and towards his equals as an inferior. A Spanish contemporary, Juan Gracia Salaverte, adds that he was endowed with the gift of prophecy and that he foretold the fall of Granada, a fall that no one yet dared to foresee except as a distant thing. So many labours and virtues, while drawing upon him the veneration of the faithful, could not but earn him the hostility of the enemies of the Church. His colleague Gaspar Inglario having died in the year 1484 and not having been replaced, did they come to imagine that if Peter Arbués disappeared in his turn the dreaded tribunal would remain abolished? All we know is that a certain number of Jews held a secret meeting by night at which his death was resolved.

At the head of this plot were a rabbi and three rich merchants named Gaspar de Santa Cruz, Mateo Ram and Pedro Sánchez. They had no difficulty in finding accomplices to carry out what they themselves were ready to pay for handsomely. They hired a certain Juan de Labadía, whom they found already greatly exasperated against the Saint because one of his sisters had been condemned by the Inquisition; a Frenchman named Vital Durant; another, a man of Toulouse, called Bernard Léofan; a Juan Sperandio; a Tristam, of León; and a Gran, of Valencia — all of that race of adventurers ready for every crime, who in the matter of evil deeds fear only those that are badly paid.

The secret, however, was not so well kept that nothing leaked out. Several friends of the threatened Inquisitor suspected it. Among others, Antonio Salverte, counsellor to Their Catholic Majesties and husband of one of Peter Arbués's sisters, warned him of the danger and begged him to be on his guard. "If I die at their hands, I shall die for the faith," replied the Saint, with an air which showed plainly enough that the prospect gladdened rather than saddened him. And he changed nothing in his conduct. The assassins made an attempt to get in through the window of the room where he slept; but, frightened by the cries of the people of the house, they withdrew in haste and went to the cathedral, where they hoped to find him chanting Matins. Not having found him there, they put off the blow to another time.

In the night of Tuesday the 14th to Wednesday the 15th of September, two of them, Juan Sperandio and Vital Durant, entered the metropolitan church when no one was left in it and hid themselves there. At the hour of

the night office the canons came in one after another, Peter Arbués among them. He stopped before the high altar, on the Epistle side, and remained on his knees there for some time, which allowed the two wretches to recognize him perfectly while they crept towards him. At last, at the moment when he was saying in a low voice these words of the Angelic Salutation, “And blessed is Jesus, the fruit of thy womb,” and when the choir was singing these verses of the Psalmist, “For forty years I was close to them, and yet their hearts still wander far from me,” the assassins rushed upon him. One, Durant, struck the canon on the head with a dagger and fled; the other, Sperandio, dealt him two blows in the throat and likewise took flight. The Saint fell, uttering only these words: “Praised be Jesus Christ! I die for his holy name!” The singing stopped; the other canons ran up. They raised him, still breathing, uttering no complaint and radiant. They carried him home, deeply troubled and with the greatest care.

Meanwhile the two assassins, terrified more by the gentleness of their victim than by their own crime, hesitated and lost their way in the vast church. Already people were running in pursuit of them, crying out to shut the doors; but their comrades, who were waiting for them posted at the entrance, ready to lend them a strong hand, seized them and dragged them away. Their punishment, however, was only deferred.

Once brought home and put to bed, the wounded man recovered his speech only to calm the tears of his friends and to pity, not himself, but the assassins, to pray for them and forgive them. He exhorted those around him to calm and resignation, exactly as though he had no personal concern in what was causing their distress. His room had become a sanctuary. People came there with silent step to gaze on the dying martyr and admire his angelic serenity. Those who could not come in knelt at the door and prayed for him, telling themselves that soon it would be he who, from the height of heaven, would pray for them. He lived two days, received the sacraments and died peacefully forty-eight hours after being struck, at midnight, on 17 September 1485.

One may easily imagine what must have been first the dismay and then the anger of the inhabitants of Saragossa at the news of this tragic event. The Jews no longer dared to appear in the streets. But for the intervention of the magistrates, and in particular of the archbishop and viceroy, Ferdinand of Aragon, they would all have been massacred, even those who sincerely deplored the crime committed. As a sign of mourning, divine service was interrupted for three days and the altars covered with black cloths; the cathedral, which had been profaned, was solemnly reconciled and blessed anew. For two years an officiant in mourning vestments recited the *Miserere* there at the beginning of the night office, and those present answered aloud on their knees.

The burial took place on the Saturday, amid the concourse of the whole city, as one may say without exaggeration. The procession was accompanied by the archbishop-viceroy and all his clergy. The body was laid in a stone coffin on the very spot where he had received the mortal blow. Then a strange phenomenon was seen. At the moment when the body touched the ground, all the blood that was there, and which out of respect no one had washed away, seemed to come back to life. This blood, which was already dried and scarcely recognizable, became warm, liquid and steaming, and began to flow in large drops as if it were issuing at that very moment from the veins from which it had spurted. It even increased in quantity and spread beyond the space it had first reddened. The people crowded round, filled with wonder. They dipped handkerchiefs, paper and linen in it, precious relics which were afterwards religiously preserved; it was hardly possible to make one’s way through the crowd and approach this miraculous blood; and in spite of the number of those who wished to carry some away, there was enough for everyone, and far more than the body of a single man can contain.

This prodigy was renewed fifteen days later, on 29 September, at the beginning of Matins. The *Acta Sanctorum*, which relate it, do not accept it lightly. They reproduce at length the official reports drawn up on the spot concerning this twofold fact by the public notaries Lalueza, Francès, Juan de Anellinos and Antico de Viagès, reports signed also by the jurist Bartolomé del Molino and seven other citizens of Saragossa.

Forty-two years later, in 1507, at the inquiry for the process of beatification, there were still six eyewitnesses who attested the fact on oath.

Living, Peter Arbués had been regarded as a Saint; dead, and dead by assassination in the circumstances we have just described, he could not but be venerated still more. Patriotism helped in this as well as piety, and the government, which was anxious to keep alive the animosity against the infidels so long as they held an inch of Spanish soil, naturally set the example. But what contributed most to it was something that depended neither on the passions nor on the calculations of men: the multitude of miracles that God worked at his tomb or through his intercession, not counting that of the blood related above. The Bollandists report several, which it would take too long to reproduce here. Yet we cannot resist the pleasure of translating from Salverte the following simple and touching account:

“Among the miracles submitted to the Bishops of Barbastro and Tarazona, commissioners of the Holy Apostolic See, and recognized as true by them, are two raisings of dead children. The first of these children had died at Villamayor, a town near Saragossa. Already the bells were ringing and he was being carried to burial. But the mother, who loved him tenderly, as mothers love, took the body and lifted it in her arms, saying with great anguish and devotion to Peter Arbués, for whom she had a particular devotion: ‘Saint Mastrepila’ (it will be remembered that this is the popular name of the holy canon), ‘I offer you this fruit of my womb; it is yours; raise him up, if you please, my Saint!’ At that very instant the fresh rosy colour which death had blanched reappeared on the child’s cheeks; his eyes opened, his lips moved and smiled towards his mother. The crowd, joyful and filled with wonder, accompanied the mother and child to the tomb of the Mastrepila, and there they hung up, among the other votive offerings, the shroud in which the little dead child had been laid.”

He is represented in the habit of a canon regular, with the palm and the instrument of his martyrdom.

CULTE ET RELIQUES.

Cult and relics.

Ferdinand and Isabella raised to the martyred Inquisitor, with the magnificence befitting such great princes, a marble tomb on which his statue could be seen, and which they had surrounded with commemorative inscriptions.

In 1490 the municipality of Saragossa, in thanksgiving for the end of a plague attributed to the martyr’s intercession, offered at his tomb two lamps, one of them of solid silver, to burn there night and day at the city’s expense. His feast was celebrated from that time on 15 September with solemnity; and when Pope Urban VIII, in 1625 and 1634, had prohibited in general all cults directed to servants of God not yet beatified or canonized, the cult of the Venerable Peter Arbués was formally placed among the exemptions by a decree of the Sacred Congregation of Rites dated 23 March 1652.

This was in a way a commitment to do still more and one day to set up the process of his canonization. The Emperor Charles V and Kings Philip III and Philip V had already addressed a formal request for it to the court of Rome. Pope Paul V began, in 1615, a regular and rigorous inquiry, which was carried on by three Auditors of the Rota and two Spanish bishops at Saragossa and in all the places where there lived memories connected with the martyr. At last, on 17 April 1664, under Pope Alexander VII, the solemn ceremony of beatification took place with all Roman and Spanish pomp in the Basilica of St. John Lateran. That of canonization was reserved for the glorious pontificate of Pius IX, who on 29 June 1867, in the presence of five hundred bishops, archbishops and patriarchs, conferred on Peter Arbués the title of Saint. The relics of Peter Arbués have been translated to a side chapel of the metropolitan church of Saragossa, enriched with all that the piety of the peoples could find most precious. His famous statue in white marble is to be seen there on the tomb.

We have taken this life from the *Revue du Monde catholique*, July 1867 issue.

Saint Floscellus (Floscel or Flocelle), Martyr at Autun (about 257)

About the year of Jesus Christ 257, Valerian, having come to visit the city of Autun, tried to restore the worship of the gods there and to halt the progress of the Gospel by the sword. Now, while he was having sacrifices offered to the idols and the name of Christ blasphemed, a young apostle of twelve named Floscellus was running everywhere to reassure the Christians and strengthen them in the faith. “Do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul,” he told them; “fear only Him who casts the sinner’s body and soul into hell.”

A traitor, Camarinus, denounced him to the emperor, who had him brought to the forum by lictors and came out to question him. “Detestable young man,” he said to him, “what plot do you dare to hatch against us? Who drives you to destroy the worship of the visible gods?” — “Unjust persecutor and teacher of iniquity,” answered Floscellus with the majesty of an apostle, “listen to me: if you wish to enter the house of God, take care not to defile the Church of Jesus Christ.” — “And you, take care not to be overwhelmed with torments, like the Crucified, in payment for the treacherous counsels you have tried to make prevail against us.” — “I do not fear your threats; I fear the Lord our God.”

Thus provoked, Valerian ordered Floscellus to be stretched on a rack and scourged. “Christ is my confidence,” said the valiant soldier under the rods that were tearing his body; “he is my boldness. It is he who helps and sustains us.” And Valerian, enraged, cried to the executioners: “Torment him harder, for he deserves it.” — “O folly! You will gain nothing from my tortures, for I believe in God who gives strength.” — “Break his jaw, so that he may stop insulting us.” — “My boldness grows with my confidence in the Lord…” Then, beside himself with anger, Valerian had him thrown into a dungeon with a lion. Floscellus said to God: “Come to my help, for you are mighty.” At that very instant the animal fell dead at his feet; the dungeon was miraculously lit by seven torches and filled with very sweet perfumes, and then angels brought him a mysterious bread which gave him new vigour. Meanwhile Valerian ordered the lictors to see what was happening in the prison; and seeing the brightness of the light, the lion lying dead and the young martyr singing hymns, they hastened to report to the prince what they had just seen. He, struck by so wonderful a fact, which he attributed to magic, ordered the executioners to burn him alive. A pyre was therefore lit, but the flames were put out by torrents of rain from a storm that came up suddenly, and the martyr was delivered once again. Then his hands and tongue were pierced; he was stripped of his clothes and covered with a linen tunic, and his head was cut off in the public square, in the presence of a barbarous multitude and before the eyes of a prince more barbarous still, who was not ashamed to shed the blood of a child of ten or twelve.

A tradition worthy of belief names Fleury, near Autun, as the place where he was buried. About the year 996, on 26 April, he was translated to the collegiate church of Beaune (Côte-d’Or), then in the diocese of Autun, at the same time as St. Herné, and became there the object of a fervent cult. On 9 November 1265, Simon de Brie, Cardinal of the title of St. Cecilia, legate of the Holy See and afterwards Pope, assisted by Girard de Beauvoir, Bishop of Autun, solemnly raised from the ground the precious remains of the martyr and enclosed them in a shrine, to present them for public veneration in a place called Gagnare, more honourable and more fitting. His cult became famous in the town of Beaune, and God was pleased to consecrate it himself by miracles. Two feasts were celebrated there in his honour: one on the day of his martyrdom, 17 September, and the other on 9 November, the day of the solemn translation of his relics. This precious treasure has happily been preserved. Today it enriches the churches of Beaune and the cathedral of Autun; the latter has the happiness of possessing a bone of his head.

Taken from the *Saints de Dijon*, by the Abbé Duplus, and from *Saint Symphorien et son culte*, by the Abbé Dinet.

Saint Camelle, Virgin and Martyr, in the Diocese of Carcassonne (13th century)

St. Camelle lived in the time of the Albigensians and dwelt in a monastery of virgins. When these heretics came to ravage the country, overthrowing churches and monasteries, Camelle, forced to flee to preserve her virginity, threw herself into a well at the moment when they were about to overtake her, and so won the palm of martyrdom. The well can still be seen beside the church which was built in her honour soon afterwards and which today shows signs of great age. The relics of the Saint were placed on the altar of this church, and a passage dug beneath allows pilgrims to pass under the tomb, above which stands the statue representing the virgin dressed as a nun. The pilgrimage of St. Camelle, in the parish of that name, was formerly of great renown, and it is still frequented in our day. Vows are made to the Saint chiefly to obtain the birth and the salvation of little children. In 1679 the Queen of France, Maria Theresa, wife of Louis XIV, made a vow to St. Camelle and sent Cardinal de Bouzy to the place of pilgrimage in her stead. In 1819 the Duchess of Angoulême had a novena of prayers made at Sainte-Camelle and sent as an offering vestments of very great value, which are still called the Duchess's vestments. Some relics of St. Camelle were kept at Toulouse, in the former chapel of Sainte-Catherine, in the Saint-Michel quarter.

We owe this notice to the kindness of the Rev. Fr. Carles, missionary of the Calvary, at Toulouse.

The Venerable Robert Bellarmine, Cardinal, Archbishop of Capua, of the Society of Jesus (1621)

Robert Bellarmine, born at Montepulciano in 1542 and, through his mother Cynthia Cervini, nephew of Pope Marcellus II, was not only an able theologian, an excellent preacher and the most famous controversialist of his time; he was also one of the holiest and most zealous prelates in whom the Catholic Church glories. His career is all bright with good works, virtues, labours and glory. He entered the Society of Jesus at eighteen, and shortly afterwards was charged by his superiors with teaching theology at Louvain. His preaching aroused such lively enthusiasm that even Protestants came from England and Holland to hear him. After seven years' stay in the Low Countries he returned to Italy. Gregory XIII chose him to occupy the chair of controversy he had just established. Sixtus V then gave him as theologian to the legate whom he sent to France in the year 1590. Clement VIII, nine years later, obliged him by a formal command to accept the cardinal's hat, and on 21 April 1602 named him Archbishop of Capua. Finally, as Paul V wished to keep him near his person, Bellarmine resigned his archbishopric and devoted himself to the affairs of the court of Rome until 1621.

What he had been until the moment when so many honours came to surround him, he always remained at heart; he had nothing, apart from the marks of his dignity, that distinguished him from a simple Jesuit. He kept the rules of the Society as faithfully as possible, and he wished to give back his soul to God in the novitiate of the Gesù. Indeed, having had himself carried there at the beginning of his illness, he laid down there the burden of his body and flew away towards the purest radiance of the divine sun, from the very place where he had consecrated himself entirely to God. Gregory XV wished to visit the dying cardinal; he, gathering his strength, addressed to him these words, which show the veneration he had for the Vicar of Jesus Christ: *Domine, non sum dignus ut intres sub tectum meum*. Then he asked the Reverend Father André, his intimate friend, to put in writing that he was dying, by the mercy of God, in the bosom of the Catholic Church and in the true faith, and that he thought no otherwise at his last hour than when he was writing his *Controversies* and defending the Church. And, feeling his strength fail, he recited the Apostles' Creed, the fiftieth Psalm, the Lord's Prayer and the Angelic Salutation, pressed the crucifix tenderly in his arms, and, assisted by the prayers of all the Fathers of the Society, gave back his soul very peacefully to his Creator on 17 September 1621, at the age of seventy-nine.

His funeral, by order of the Sovereign Pontiff, was carried out with all the splendour displayed for those of the Princes of the Church; but what surpassed all the religious pomp were the tears, the regrets and the veneration of the people, which, in the outburst of its grief, the pontifical guard called out to moderate so much eagerness could not contain. Let this suffice to give an idea of his reputation for holiness.

The tomb of the learned and pious cardinal is placed near the altar of the church of the Gesù in Rome, on the Gospel side. This magnificent mausoleum, which is the work of Bernini, was erected by Cardinal Odoardo Farnese, from the designs of Girolamo Rainaldi. Besides several other figures, two statues of great beauty can be seen on it, one representing Religion and the other Wisdom; both are from the chisel of Pietro Bernini. This is the inscription that is read on the mausoleum: *Roberto cardinali Bellarmino Politiano è societate Jesu Marcelli II. P. M. Sororis filio Odoardus Cardinalis Farnesius Sui erga virum, quem Patris loco semper coluit Amoris nunquam morituri Monumentum pos. Obdormivit in Domino Anno sal. MDCXXI. Ætatis suæ LXXIX*. (To Robert Cardinal Bellarmine of Montepulciano, of the Society of Jesus, son of the sister of Marcellus II, Supreme Pontiff, Odoardo Cardinal Farnese placed this monument of his never-dying love for the man whom he always revered in the place of a father. He fell asleep in the Lord in the year of salvation 1621, of his age the 79th.)

Bellarmine enriched the Church with a great number of learned works. The most widespread is his *Course of Controversy*, a vast arsenal in which are found weapons of the finest temper for attack and for defence. Never had Protestantism a more formidable opponent, nor Catholicism a more successful champion. The dissidents have admitted that he presented their difficulties in all their force and knew how to destroy them with skill and solidity. The best editions of his *Controversies* are those of Paris, called the *Triadelphes*, and that of Prague, in 1721, all in 4 volumes folio.

We have besides from the learned cardinal a *Commentary on the Psalms*, which is highly esteemed; *Sermons*, somewhat ordinary as to style, but strong in reasoning and moving in their unction; a *Treatise on Ecclesiastical Writers*; another *On the Temporal Authority of the Pope*; a *Writing on the Obligations of Bishops*; a *Hebrew Grammar*; some *Letters* and *Hymns*, among which is distinguished that for the feast of St. Magdalen, *Pater superni luminis*, etc.

His works of piety form five small treatises, which are: 1° *De ascensu mentis in Deum*, or *Steps for Raising One's Mind to God*; 2° *On the Eternal Happiness of the Saints*; 3° *On the Mourning of the Dove*, or *On the Blessing of Tears*; 4° *The Seven Words of Jesus Christ on the Cross*; and 5° *On a Good Death*.

Bellarmine's style is neither pure nor elegant, but it is concise, clear, precise and fairly noble; it abounds in quotations from Holy Scripture, of which he had a thorough knowledge. The cardinals his contemporaries regarded him and spoke of him as a Father of the Church and a man consummate in holiness; and so Pope Clement X had the juridical inquiries for his beatification begun in the year 1674.

The principal editions of his complete works are those of Cologne, 1617–1620; Venice, 1721–1728; and Naples, 1858.

Taken from the *Esprit des Saints*, by the Abbé Grimes. — Cf. Goschler, *Dictionnaire encyclopédique de la théologie catholique*; and Godescard, Brussels edition, 1854.

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[1] There are relics of his at Freising (Bavaria), at Mainz and at Rome. — Father Sollier, in the *Acta Sanctorum*.

[2] Columba was born at Cordova, an episcopal city of Spain, and showed herself very zealous for the exercises of religion from the first years of her life. Her elder sister Elizabeth having built a double monastery at Tabanos, on mountains two leagues from Cordova, Columba came to place herself under her guidance and joined to the reading of Holy Scripture the practice of all the religious virtues. The Moors having driven the monks and nuns from Tabanos, the nuns took refuge in Cordova and lodged in a house next to the church of Saint-Cyprien. Meanwhile the infidels continued to persecute the Christians: Columba, by a particular inspiration of the Spirit of God, went out secretly from her monastery and betook herself to the place where justice was administered. Having declared herself a Christian, she was arrested and condemned to be beheaded. She was buried in the church of St. Eulalia at Cordova. — Godescard of Brussels.

[3] Satyrus was the son of Ambrose, praetorian prefect of the Gauls, younger brother of St. Marcellina (17 July) and elder brother of St. Ambrose, bishop of Milan. He came into the world towards the end of the reign of Constantine the Great (306–337) and was brought up at Rome, where his mother had withdrawn after her husband's death. He held important posts there, was a great help to his brother St. Ambrose, spent his life with him in the exercises of piety, and died in his arms. He was buried by his brother in his cathedral church at Milan, near the famous martyr St. Victor. In the complete works of St. Ambrose one may read the two discourses that this illustrious Father of the Church delivered on the occasion of his brother's death. — Baillet.

[4] We gave his life on 10 September.

[5] *Alias*: Roding, Rodinge and Rouyn; in Latin: *Rodvicus*, *Rodincus*, *Rodingus*, *Craudingus*, *Chraudinus*, *Chraudingus*, *Graudingus*, *Ghrodingus*.

[6] The name *Waslogium*, Vasleu, Vasloï, seems to survive in that of *Waly*, a village at the foot of Beaulieu.

[7] Autrécourt, in Latin *Austresii curtis*, took its name from the lord Austresius. It is a village one league from the ancient *Waslogium*.

[8] Hargeville (*Argisi villa*) lies some distance from Resson, near Vavincourt, on the road that St. Rouin would have taken to return to Beaulieu. Near Autrécourt, to the south, a small valley still bears the name of Bonne.

[9] It seems to us that the relics of St. Rouin were not all carried to Bar-le-Duc. For the abbey of Beaulieu later possessed a *tibia* of that sacred body, which does not appear among the relics granted by the collegiate church of Saint-Maxe in the course of the seventeenth century. This bone was perhaps in a separate reliquary, and the religious may have been able to withdraw it from Count Henry's rapacity.

[10] These executions, wrongly called *autos-da-fé*, were infinitely rarer than is imagined. "An *auto-da-fé* or act of faith," says a Protestant historian (Hefele, in his *Ximenes*, page 322), "consisted neither in burning nor in putting to death, but partly in pronouncing the acquittal of persons falsely accused, partly in reconciling the repentant with the Church; and there were many *autos- da-fé* at which nothing was seen burning but the candle which the penitents held in their hands as a sign of their faith." When the *auto-da-fé* entailed an execution, this took place on the following day or one of the days after. Llorente himself, the historian who, under pretext of relating the history of the Inquisition, disfigured it with such fury, cites for the year 1486 four *autos-da-fé* at Toledo, in which no fewer than a total of three thousand three hundred and fifty guilty persons were punished. But of this number, how many were put to death? Not a single one: Llorente admits it. The punishments generally consisted of a penance, the recitation of a psalm — something, in short, like the famous torture of Galileo.

18 September

Martyrologies

Eighteenth day of September

MARTYROLOGE ROMAIN.

Roman Martyrology.

At Osimo, St. JOSEPH OF COPERTINO, confessor, of the Order of Friars Minor Conventual, whom Clement XIII placed among the Saints. 1663. — The same day, the birthday in heaven of St. Methodius, first Bishop of Olympus in Lycia and then of Tyre, very famous for the elegance of his style and for his learning, who, as St. Jerome reports, was crowned with martyrdom in the island of Negropont, in Greece, at the end of the last persecution.[1] About 312. — In the territory of Vienne, in Dauphiné, St. FERREOLUS, martyr, who, although raised to the rank of tribune, was nonetheless arrested by order of the most impious governor Crispinus, cruelly beaten with rods, loaded with chains and then shut up in a frightful dungeon. His bonds having been broken by God's permission and the doors of the prison opened, he came out; but, taken again by those who were pursuing him, he received the palm of martyrdom by the edge of the sword. 304. — The same day, the holy martyrs Sophia and Irene. — At Milan, St. Eustorgius, the first of that name, bishop, famous for the praises St. Ambrose gave him. 331. — At Gortyna in Crete, St. Eumenes, bishop and confessor. 7th c.

MARTYROLOGE DE FRANCE, REVU ET AUGMENTÉ.

Martyrology of France, revised and enlarged.

In the dioceses of Cambrai, Carcassonne, Dijon, Clermont, Nice and Saint-Dié, St. Joseph of Copertino, confessor, mentioned in today's Roman Martyrology. — In the dioceses of Clermont, Fréjus, Lyons,

Perpignan, Rodez, Saint-Flour and Soissons, the memory of St. Ferreolus, martyr at Vienne, mentioned today in the same martyrology. — In the diocese of Paris, St. John Chrysostom, Doctor of the Church, whose life we gave on 27 January. 407. — In the diocese of Besançon, St. DIZIER or DIDIER, Bishop of Rennes, and

St. REGINFROID or RAINFROY, deacon, both martyrs. 7th c. — In the diocese of Limoges, St. Ferreolus, bishop of that see and confessor. He enjoyed great credit and was much loved by his people. It is related that in a popular rising he saved the life of Mark, referendary of Chilperic, who had come to levy new taxes. The fine church of Brive-la-Gaillarde (Corrèze), in the diocese of Tulle, was rebuilt by him; it had been burned in the war of Gundovald, who claimed to be the son of Clotaire I and had had himself proclaimed king. Ferreolus was a particular friend of St. Yrieix, whose funeral he conducted. About 590. — In the diocese of Coutances and Avranches, St. Senère or Senator, also called Sinier, Sendre and Sénier, bishop of that see and confessor. He was born near Coutances (Manche) and was brought up in the service of God from his earliest years. While still young he entered the monastery of Scicy, today Saint-Pair (Manche, arrondissement of Avranches, canton of Granville), then governed by St. Paternus or Pair, whom he succeeded in the see of Avranches (a former bishopric, transferred to Coutances). He governed his flock with admirable solicitude. When an inhabitant of Avranches had become deaf and dumb after a long illness, the holy bishop miraculously restored his hearing and speech; to a man blind from birth he also restored the use of his eyes; and many possessed persons were delivered by him. In the midst of the labours of the episcopal life he kept the habits of the monastic life. From time to time he withdrew to Scicy, from where he went to preach the Gospel to the neighbouring peoples and in the towns of the coast. He ended his days and was buried in the oratory of Scicy, beside St. Paternus. Rouen long possessed his relics, from which it sent particles to Louis XIII when he was ill. The Revolution of ’93 profaned and lost them. 6th c. — In the diocese of Strasbourg, St. RICHARDIS, empress, foundress of the abbey of Andlau, in Alsace. 893 or 894. — At Bergues (Nord, arrondissement of Dunkirk), in the diocese of Cambrai, the feast of the translation of St. Winoc or Winnoc, Abbot of Wormhout and confessor, whose life we shall give on 6 November. 717. — At Cousolre (Nord, arrondissement of Avesnes, canton of Solre-le-Château), in the diocese of Cambrai, St. WALBERT, confessor, and St. BERTILIA or BERTILLE, his wife. 7th c.

MARTYROLOGES DES ORDRES RELIGIEUX.

Martyrologies of the Religious Orders.

Martyrology of the Order of Friars Preachers. — At Rome, on the Appian Way, St. Cornelius, pope and martyr, who, during the persecution of Decius, after being exiled, was torn with whips loaded with lead and then beheaded with twenty-one Christians of both sexes. A soldier named Cerealis and Sallustia his wife, whom this Pontiff had instructed in the faith, were also beheaded the same day. 252. — In Africa, St. Cyprian, Bishop of Carthage, very renowned for his holiness and his learning: after a harsh exile which he had suffered under the Emperors Valerian and Gallienus, he consummated his martyrdom by being beheaded on the seashore six miles from Carthage.[2] 258.

Martyrology of the three Orders of St. Francis. — At Osimo, in the March of Ancona, St. Joseph of Copertino, confessor, of the Order of Friars Minor Conventual, remarkable for his humility, his patience and his wonderful ecstasies; the Sovereign Pontiff Clement XIII placed him among the Saints. 1663.

Martyrology of the Order of Friars Minor. — The same as above.

Martyrology of the Capuchin Friars Minor of St. Francis. — The same as above.

Martyrology of the Order of Hermits of St. Augustine. — At Valencia in Spain, St. THOMAS OF VILLANOVA, bishop and confessor of our Order, who, because of his signal and ardent charity, is rightly called the Father of the poor. Alexander VIII placed him among the Saints on 1 November 1658 and ordered his feast to be celebrated today. 1555.

ADDITIONS FAITES D'APRÈS LES BOLLANDISTES ET AUTRES HAGIOGRAPHES.

Additions made from the Bollandists and other hagiographers.

At Droné or Dronero, a town of Italy in the marquisate of Saluzzo, the holy martyrs Constantius, Victor and their companions, put to death for the faith under the Emperor Maximian. There was at Dronero an abbey dedicated under the invocation of St. Constantius. 4th c. — In Egypt, St. Tiberius, confessor. 1st c. — Also in Egypt, St. Trophimus, martyr. — At Amalfi (*Melfia*), a town of the kingdom of Naples (Principato Citeriore), St. Stephania, virgin and martyr. — At Nicomedia, today Izmit, a town of Bithynia on the Propontis, St. Oceanus, martyr. — In Italy, St. Isidore of Bologna, bishop. — In Ethiopia (southern Egypt), St. Matthew the Ascetic, anchorite.

Saint Dizier or Didier, Bishop of Rennes,[3] and Saint Reginfroid or Rainfroid, Deacon,[4] Martyrs

7th century.

> *Le sublime de l'héroïsme chrétien consiste dans l'amour des ennemis, parce que c'est la plus difficile de toutes les vertus, et celle qui coûte le plus à la nature.*
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> *The summit of Christian heroism consists in the love of enemies, because it is the most difficult of all the virtues and the one that costs nature most.*
>
> *St. Augustine.*

St. Dizier was born in the seventh century in the city of Rennes, where his family held a distinguished rank. To the distinction of his birth he added the lustre of the purest virtues, and his life was as glorious before God as it was edifying in the eyes of men. From his youth he was distinguished by the ardour of his faith. Far from letting himself be captivated by the temporal advantages he could find in the bosom of his family, he was ready to sacrifice them for the love of Jesus Christ, and feared nothing so much as to deliver his soul to the seductions of the world. He studied sacred letters in the city of Rennes, and in a short time made the most remarkable progress in all the sciences taught in the schools of that city. But he did not study merely out of barren curiosity; for he applied himself to reproduce in his conduct all the teachings he read in the Holy Scriptures, so that he soon passed for the most accomplished of the pupils. God rewarded the happy dispositions of his servant. Dizier was admitted to the tonsure, and when he had afterwards passed through all the degrees of the priesthood, he was elected by the voice of the people and the clergy to fill the high office of the episcopate.

This new dignity only gave more impetus to his zeal. After the duties of the sacred ministry, his most habitual occupation was to take care of the poor, the captives and all who were suffering. The austerities of fasting, the practice of vigils and assiduity in prayer, by detaching his heart from earthly things, gave a livelier ardour to his faith; and if he showed himself hard on himself, he became only the more devoted and merciful towards others. So all blessed his name, and God rewarded his piety even in this world by surrounding him with public veneration.

For a long time the life of St. Dizier passed thus in the practice of the good works he performed in the midst of his people. God then inspired him with the holy thought of going to visit the tomb of the Apostles and the other sanctuaries of Rome. While burning with the desire to sanctify himself by this pious pilgrimage, the holy bishop also aspired to the happiness of preaching the Gospel of Jesus Christ among the peoples he would pass through. For schisms and heresies had darkened the truth in many souls, and all true children of the Church were then turning themselves into apostles to combat error wherever they met it. Dizier took with him a number of companions eager to follow him, among them his deacon Rainfroid or Reginfroid, whom he had once held at the baptismal font and whom for that reason he called his son. On their way the pilgrims

visited all the places consecrated to the blessed martyrs and confessors, and St. Dizier had the happiness of obtaining relics there, which he gathered as a precious treasure. At last he reached Rome, the object of his desires, and hastened with his companions to prostrate himself at the venerated tomb of the Apostles. He besought the Lord, in the name of the Saints whose ashes he kissed, to purify him of his faults and make him worthy of that heavenly crown which does not fade. Before leaving Rome he wished to visit all its sanctuaries, to implore the prayers of the Saints and to be edified by the example of the virtues practised in those places. He then took the road back towards Gaul, turning over in his heart all he had seen in the holy city and thanking heaven for the graces he had received there in abundance. While he was travelling up through Italy with his companions, the sun, grown hotter, made their journey extremely painful, and St. Dizier, fearing for the health of his friends, wished to hasten out of those burning regions and return to the midst of his flock. But God had disposed otherwise. All his companions except two fell ill, and several died on the way. St. Dizier, happily preserved, had the dead honourably buried, and, having wept for them for several days, distributed abundant alms for the repose of their souls. When he had fulfilled these sacred duties he resumed his journey, his heart saddened by these misfortunes, and arrived on the borders of Germany, in the country then called Morvaugie. It is today the Ortenau, a country lying between the Bleich, the Oos and the Rhine, in the Grand Duchy of Baden. The duke of this country was called Williarius. St. Dizier stayed there a few days, at the end of which he set out for the wilderness of the Vosges — so the mountainous regions lying between Lorraine and Sequania were called. He arrived in the county of Burgundy and stopped near an oratory dedicated to St. Martin, on the mountain which now bears the name of Saint-Dizier. This country, today included in the diocese of Strasbourg, then formed part of the diocese of Besançon, to which it belonged until the end of the last century. St. Dizier, accompanied by his deacon Reginfroid, went into the oratory to pray. The inhabitants of the country gathered round them to receive words of salvation from the mouth of the holy bishop. Some, however, had come only out of idle curiosity, and perhaps with the secret desire of laying snares for the travellers. St. Dizier celebrated the Holy Sacrifice and spoke to the people salutary words by which several of those present were deeply moved.

The deacon Reginfroid then gathered up the sacred vestments St. Dizier had used to celebrate Mass, and the two pilgrims resumed their journey with the servant who accompanied them, named Willibert. But some of the witnesses of this scene had noticed the precious objects that had just served for the Holy Sacrifice — a chalice, a paten and a cruet of silver which the holy bishop had recently received as gifts from Duke Williarius. These greedy and wicked men conceived the plan of seizing them, even at the price of murder.

They therefore followed the travellers' track, intending to kill them and strip them of their treasure. St. Dizier had made his way towards the place which today bears the name of Sainte-Croix.[1] When he arrived there he stopped before a young tree, whose branches he spread out on both sides in the form of a cross, and before this sign of our redemption he knelt and began to pray with his companions.

Soon the robbers who meant to despoil him arrived and rushed sword in hand upon the pious travellers. First they killed Reginfroid; then they threw themselves on Willibert, the bishop's servant, whom they wounded cruelly in the head. Finally they ran St. Dizier through with the sword while he was still in the attitude of prayer. When they had carried off his riches they left him still breathing and went back by the way they had come. Meanwhile St. Dizier was murmuring a last prayer. On the point of death he raised his head and saw that his servant was not mortally wounded. "In the name of the Lord," he said to him, "rise, my brother, and try to make your way to the handmaid of God, Pomponia, who received us today, so that she may bring a priest here to bury our bodies in the oratory of St. Martin." Willibert, making a supreme effort, took a pliant branch from the shrubs around him to bind his wounded head and dragged himself as best he could to the oratory. Meanwhile St. Dizier gave back his soul to God, having prayed to his last breath, on 18 September, towards the end of the seventh century.

The news of the death of the holy strangers soon spread through the country. The chief of that region, named Rabiacus, was informed of it and went with his men to the scene of the crime. A few moments later the priest who served the oratory of St. Martin arrived, accompanied by the pious Pomponia and by Willibert, the bishop's servant. The bodies of the Saints were placed on a cart and taken to the chapel, where they were buried with the greatest honours.

CULTE ET RELIQUES.

Cult and relics.

The memory of the two holy Martyrs remained in veneration in the places sanctified by their death, and the people came in crowds to honour their tomb. As early as the year 727 St. Dizier had become the object of a public cult, as is attested by a charter of the abbey of Murbach, by which Count Eberhart gives to that monastery Delle, with the basilica where the body of St. Dizier rests. In the oratory of St. Martin were kept several precious objects that had belonged to the holy bishop: his pastoral staff, which had escaped the flames, the rug on which he rested, his priestly vestments, his writing tablets and the horn stylus he used for writing. These objects and others besides were carefully kept as precious relics that recalled the martyrdom of St. Dizier. The chief of the country, Rabiacus, witnessing the cult paid to the holy bishop, had his tomb adorned and placed on it a silver plate, elegantly carved, on which the martyr's name was engraved. St. Reginfroid was associated in the cult paid to St. Dizier, and we still have a very ancient hymn in which their virtues and their glorious death are celebrated. A royal abbey was founded at Saint-Dizier under the invocation of the holy martyrs Dizier and Reginfroid. Their relics rested in the abbey church; but later they were translated to the abbey of Murbach, to which the monastery of Saint-Dizier was given. This village nevertheless always remained under the patronage of the holy martyred bishop, and in 1041 Blessed Hugh the Great, Archbishop of Besançon, dedicated its newly rebuilt church there. The name of St. Dizier, usually accompanied by that of his deacon, is found in several ancient martyrologies. That of Murbach mentions him on 17 September, as does that of Usuard. Aubert Le Mire, listing the Saints of the diocese of Besançon who are honoured with a proper office, says that the feast of St. Dizier is celebrated at Besançon on 18 September, as is indeed seen in the old liturgy of that diocese and in the martyrology of the metropolitan church. Ferrari in the *General Catalogue of the Saints*, André du Saussay in the *Gallican Martyrology* and Châtelain in the *Universal Martyrology* also mention St. Dizier. His name is found in the old litanies of Besançon. But his feast has no longer been mentioned in the Breviary of that diocese since the parish of Saint-Dizier was detached from the archdiocese of Besançon to become part of the diocese of Strasbourg.

Taken from the *Vie des Saints de Franche-Comté* and the *Acta Sanctorum*. — Cf. *Les Saints d'Alsace*, by the Abbé Hunckler; *Vies des Saints de Bretagne*, by the Abbé Tresvaux.

Saint Thomas of Villanova, of the Order of Hermits of St. Augustine, Archbishop of Valencia

1555. — Pope: Julius III. — King of Spain: Charles V.

> *Habuit Thomæ apostoli sollicitudinem in inquirendis; Aquinatis puritatem in edocendis; Cantuariensis constantiam in defendendis.*
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> *Comme l'Apôtre saint Thomas, il a cherché avec soin la vérité ; comme saint Thomas d'Aquin, il l'a enseignée dans toute sa pureté ; comme saint Thomas de Cantorbéry, il l'a défendue avec courage.*
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> *Like the Apostle St. Thomas, he sought the truth with care; like St. Thomas Aquinas, he taught it in all its purity; like St. Thomas of Canterbury, he defended it with courage.*
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> *Decree of Canonization of Bl. Thomas of Villanova.*

All the virtues have particular beauties which make man pleasing in the eyes of God; but charity to the poor has above all charms so ravishing that the Holy Spirit seems to have taken pleasure, in the sacred Books, in extolling its merit in magnificent terms. Not only does he praise it highly, but he also wills that the whole Church should proclaim the liberality of charitable men, to show that he himself keeps a singular remembrance of it and that the ages to come must preserve an eternal memory of it: *Eleemosynas illius enarrabit omnis Ecclesia Sanctorum.* Churchmen must therefore make known to the faithful the lives of these illustrious heroes of charity, so that, according to the oracle of the Holy Spirit, posterity may never forget their pious liberality, may admire it and be grateful for it until the end of time. St. Thomas of Villanova was one of those men whom their charity makes immortal in the memory of posterity.

He was born in the town of Fuenllana, in the diocese of Toledo, in Castile, in the year of Our Lord 1488. His father was named Alonso Tomás García, and his mother Lucía Martínez Castellanos. Both natives of Villanueva de los Infantes, a small town of Castile, they were noble, virtuous and rich; but they would have become very poor through almsgiving if God had not providentially multiplied their resources. They never sold to the merchants the grain they drew from the harvest of their lands, preferring to keep bread in reserve to feed the starving rather than treasures to enrich heirs. They lent wheat without interest to the villagers, for sowing or to live on until harvest time. They kept flocks of sheep whose profit was set aside to relieve the needs of the poor. Never were two married persons better agreed in employing their revenues holily for the needs of the unfortunate. And so miracles are related which God worked to sanction and favour their charitable prodigality. It was from these pious parents that St. Thomas drew in, from the cradle, that extreme compassion of which we shall see such fine examples in what follows. It was noticed that on the day of his birth a frightful plague that was laying the whole country waste suddenly ceased; and so the room in which he was born has always been religiously honoured since as a sacred place. His mother took care to inspire him early with sentiments of piety: she taught him to pronounce the delightful name of Mary, which imprinted on his heart a wonderful tenderness for that Queen of angels. It has been observed that he performed the most striking actions of his life on some of her feasts: he took the religious habit on the day of her Presentation, he celebrated his first Mass on Christmas Day, he accepted the episcopal dignity on the day of her glorious Assumption, and he gave up his spirit on the day of her Nativity.

As soon as he was old enough he was sent to school, where he became a model of modesty and good conduct. He served Mass with a devotion that had nothing childish about it. He liked to sweep the church and adorn the altars; as a little child he loved to imitate the ceremonies of the Church; when he played the preacher he really was one: he repeated to his schoolfellows the truths he had retained from the sermon; he was then very moving; he himself melted into tears and often drew them from the eyes of his hearers. At seven he became noted for his love of the poor: he gave his breakfast to the first poor person he met, and several times stripped himself to clothe those of the poor who lacked garments. One day, when his mother had dressed him in new clothes, he gave them away and put back on the old ones he had taken off. Another day, when he was alone in his father’s house, six poor people came to the door. He could not refuse them charity; but as he did not have the key of the store-room, he had recourse to six chickens that were still following a hen, and gave one to each. His mother, not finding them on her return, asked him what had become of them; he confessed what he had done with them, adding ingenuously that if a seventh poor person had come he would have given him the hen as well. Far from reproving him for this liberality, she praised Our Lord for it within herself, praying him to bless these first sentiments of charity which he was inspiring in him by his grace, and to increase them for his greater glory. He made himself the intercessor of those who asked help of his parents, inquired carefully into their misery and then described it in terms so moving that he was never refused. Sometimes he took the dinner prepared for the reapers and went to carry it to the poor. He did the same with other things he could lay hands on, and God, to confirm this extraordinary conduct, made up for it by his Providence. At that age when innocence keeps virtue sheltered from the dangers of the world, he began to practise mortification, so as to make his flesh feel the pains of penance even before it was

capable of the pleasures of concupiscence. He shut himself in his room to spend whole hours there in prayer and to take the discipline until he bled. He wore a rough hair shirt, as a strong armour that protected him against the rebellions of the flesh. He could not manage his austerities so carefully that his mother did not come to know of them: the discipline he used was found all bloody. She was touched to see her son's mortification written in characters of blood; but she took care not to prevent it, knowing well that purity is preserved only among thorns, and that the surest remedy to forestall the revolts of nature is to fortify oneself against it with such defences. Indeed Father Jacques Montiel, his confessor, testified publicly that our Saint never let the precious lily of his chastity wither, and that he kept it pure and entire until the grave. His parents, having noticed the signs he gave of the goodness of his mind and of his virtuous inclinations, sent him at the age of twelve to study at the University of Alcalá. There he went through all his classes in the humanities and studied rhetoric, philosophy and theology with a wonderful success which drew the eyes of everyone upon him. But his virtue made him still more admirable than his learning. He never uttered a single word that turned to his own advantage, any more than to the prejudice of his neighbour. No bitterness was ever seen in him, whether he was answering or arguing in the schools, and he was seen on the benches and in the heat of disputation as modest and as calm as if he had no interest in it. Young as he was, he was often taken as arbiter of disputes that the ablest had been unable to settle, and his charity and his inclination to peace found means unknown to the prudence of the flesh to reconcile the most heated minds.

During the course of his studies he learned of his father's death, which obliged him to go to Villanueva, rather to soften his mother's grief by his presence than to put his domestic affairs in order. Having read his father's will, which left him, among other goods, a fine large house, he gave it up to his mother with the rest of his inheritance, not wishing to divide anything with her. But at the same time, although he was then only seventeen, he pointed out to her that, to make good use of this inheritance, she ought to devote it to the poor and make it into a hospital at Villanueva, where there was none as yet. This virtuous woman, going beyond these salutary counsels, shut herself up in her hospital and spent the years of her widowhood in the service of the poor. This action was so pleasing to God that he rewarded the mother of our Saint, even in this life, with several miracles, such as multiplying the wheat in the granaries before people's eyes, increasing the linen and cloth she used to clothe the poor, and curing several desperate illnesses with the sign of the cross.

Thomas of Villanova then returned to Alcalá to continue his studies. His virtue and his talent shone there as before. The professors publicly exhorted the other students to follow his example and imitate his conduct. At twenty-six he taught philosophy; among his hearers was the celebrated Domingo de Soto, whom Spain acknowledges as one of her greatest theologians. The University of Salamanca, informed of our Saint's success, succeeded in drawing him to that city to teach moral philosophy. The young professor, indifferent to temporal advantages, had long been preparing himself for the religious life. He applied himself more and more to prayer, fasting, mortification of the senses and works of charity, above all to helping the students, for whom he had an extreme compassion. He distributed to them the greater part of his salary. At last, after consulting God and deliberating maturely, he entered the Order of St. Augustine, whose habit he took on the day of the Presentation of Our Lady, at the convent of Salamanca (in November 1516). He thus entered that Order at about the same time as Luther was leaving it and consummating his apostasy.

The virtues that served as the base and foundation of the spiritual edifice he began to raise in his novitiate were, first, an almost continual prayer. He remained in prayer from Matins until the hour of Prime, and from Prime until it was time to return to choir. Among the books of devotion he read, he was particularly attached to St. Bernard, the reading of whom was a delicious food for his soul. He used the interval between Vespers and Compline to go over his theology, so as to keep its ideas always fresh. Thus he practised from his novitiate what he so often said afterwards: that the good religious prays while studying and studies while praying. This prayer was supported by a very deep humility: this professor, so renowned and so applauded, was the first at the exercises ordinarily used to test the submission of novices. The most abject employments

were those he sought with the greatest eagerness; and these virtues were accompanied by a very exact abstinence and an austerity which the Rule did not command. Besides the fasts of the Church and of the Order, he kept several others with his superior's permission. He slept no more than four or five hours at most. His bed was only a simple straw mattress, and during Advent and Lent he lay only on boards — a practice he kept all his life, even as archbishop.

One may judge from these beginnings with what fervour he made his profession. He received in it all the more interior sweetness because he could not see others make this ceremony without shedding abundant tears. The solitude of the novitiate had suspended the works of his charity; but as soon as he was free to perform them he practised them with a wonderful ardour and humility, and one may say that there was no place in the monastery where he did not show his charity. He visited the sick so often that one would have said the infirmary was his ordinary dwelling. He delighted in feeding them, making their beds, wiping their sweat, cleaning their rooms and rendering them still more humbling services. When he knew the needs of his brethren he anticipated them and offered himself to them with incomparable promptness and gladness. He used to say that the infirmary was the bush of Moses, where God was found among the thorns of toil, in serving and bearing with the sick, and where the heart was kindled with the flames of charity by the acts of humility, patience, kindness and mortification that could be practised there. And so, when the sick saw him come in, they regarded his visit as that of an angel come down from heaven to sweeten their bitterness, calm their anxieties, temper the heat of their fever and soothe their pains — in a word, to bring them by his mere presence wholly divine consolations.

Having been ordained priest some time after his profession, he celebrated his first Mass on Christmas Day with a tenderness and devotion not easy to express; for he was so absorbed in the contemplation of the infancy of Our Lord that the sight of this mystery rapt him into ecstasy, particularly when the *Gloria in excelsis* was sung and at these words of the Preface, *Quia per incarnati Verbi mysterium*, which he could utter only with torrents of tears. The same sentiments of love towards a God made a child came upon him every year; this obliged him, when he was archbishop, to say the first two Masses in his chapel, so as to have only his chaplains as witnesses of these divine workings. His face was then so radiant that its brightness could not be borne when one came to look at him. His priesthood served him as a new motive to labour with more fervour than ever for Christian and religious perfection. He sometimes said that it is a very bad sign in a priest when he is seen approaching the holy altar every day without becoming better or more mortified. He lived in continual recollection, so that, his mind always free and his heart clean, he might be better disposed for the celebration of the divine Mysteries, the mere thought of which, constantly present to him, inspired him with wonderful sentiments of God. He had no idle moment in the whole day; those who had business with him ordinarily looked for him in only one of these five places, which he had consecrated to the five wounds of Our Lord: at the altar, in the choir, in his cell, in the library or in the infirmary. He declared that these places were his homeland, where his soul rested, and that the others were only prisons to him. He also said that the streets of towns should not serve religious as a promenade, but only as a pilgrim's road; that visits should not be made out of civility or pure compliment, but out of a truly Christian zeal and with a sincere desire to procure the salvation of souls by holy and salutary conversations. He could not bear to see an idle and useless religious, and compared him to a soldier without arms exposed to the attack of his enemies.

In spite of his love for an obscure and hidden life, he was set by his superiors to teach theology at Salamanca, and in his course he expounded the Master of the Sentences. He had a solid mind and judgement, but his memory was not so happy, which obliged him to great labour; yet this laborious employment did not make him relax any of his ordinary exercises, and he also continued to visit the sick, according to his pious custom. He neglected nothing to make his students learned; but he took no less care to lead them to virtue, because, he said, science and great erudition without piety are like a sword in the hands of a child, who can only hurt

himself with it and do no one any good. He did not, however, carry things from one extreme to the other, for he equally blamed those who, under pretext of devotion, did not apply themselves enough to study; because, he also said, if piety is profitable to the one who possesses it, it cannot be so to the Church or to one's neighbour when it is not accompanied by learning and by understanding of Holy Scripture and the Fathers; and it is a great error, he added, to think that the study of letters does not agree with the recollection of the cloister.

He was next employed in preaching. He acquitted himself of it with such zeal that he at once became the admiration of Salamanca. Some said he was a St. Paul for the depth of his doctrine; others called him the Elijah of the new law because of the zeal that accompanied his discourses. There were even some who compared him to a seraph come down from heaven for his wonderful ardours. He preached the Lent in the cathedral when Spain was in flames through the rising of most of her provinces against their sovereign, in the year 1521. It was with the greatest success, according to Fr. Jean de Magnanaton, afterwards Bishop of Segovia, who speaks of it as a witness and as one of the conquests of our hero. He made so great a number of conversions in that famous city that one would have said Salamanca had become a monastery, so great and universal was the reformation of morals there among all sorts of conditions and persons. Everyone became so kindled with the fire of devotion he lit in their hearts that people breathed nothing but penance, prayer, frequenting of the Sacraments, works of charity and generally the practice of all the Christian virtues. Many young men renounced the world to embrace the religious life; the novitiates of all the Orders of Salamanca were filled, and the superiors were obliged to send the postulants to other towns of Castile. This extraordinary vogue led Charles V to wish to hear him, and he was so satisfied that from the first time he made him his ordinary preacher. This prince was eager for his sermons: sometimes, so as not to miss them when St. Thomas was preaching outside the palace, he laid aside the royal majesty for an hour and mingled privately with the congregation. It was easy to see that his doctrine was in no way studied and that he worked rather to win hearts by the unction of his words than to please the ear by their arrangement. He learned more at the foot of the crucifix and in prayer than in books; and so he did not approve of preachers who neglect prayer and spend all their time heaping up thoughts and conceits to deliver in the pulpit. "It is in prayer," he said, "that man receives the lights that enlighten his mind and the ardours that warm his will. It is in prayer that he shapes the arrows by which the hearts of his hearers must be pierced. Study alone without prayer fills the understanding only with subtleties and curious things, and leaves the breast cold and frozen, and it is impossible that movements of fire and burning words should come forth from there." He did not give these instructions to turn anyone away from study, but to show the necessity of prayer, to which he admitted he owed the success of his preaching.

He had a certain light or inner sight by which he knew the spiritual needs of his hearers; and, what is admirable, although they were of different conditions, they felt themselves enlightened and kindled by the force of one and the same discourse, as if he had spoken to each of them in particular. His mind was so strongly penetrated by the truths he preached that several times he was rapt in ecstasy in the middle of his sermon. One Maundy Thursday, expounding these words, *Domine, tu mihi lavas pedes*, he entered so deeply into their meaning that, after saying, "What, Lord! To me, to me — you, you who are my God, the glory of the angels and the beauty of heaven!" he remained unable to go on, and no other movement of life was seen in him except that tears flowed abundantly from his eyes. The same thing happened to him when preaching on the day of the Transfiguration on these words, *Bonum est nos hic esse*, and at the clothing of a novice, while expounding these, *Soror nostra parvula est*. These ecstasies were usual with him when he contemplated the mysteries of the law of grace; but the longest and most wonderful was the one he had as archbishop on Ascension Day, on these words, *Videntibus illis elevatus est*; for, as if he had accompanied the glorious triumph of Our Lord, he remained from morning until five in the evening in a continual rapture, wholly withdrawn into himself and without any sign of life appearing in him.

Two and a half years after his profession (1519), he was elected prior of Salamanca, although, according to the custom of the province, no one was raised to that office until he had served the Order for seven years; but because of his rare merit an exception was made in his favour. He acquitted himself of it so well that he was continued in it at the end of three years, and then elected at Burgos and at Valladolid; and finally he was twice provincial of Andalusia and once of Castile. His humility made him regard his subjects as his masters, and his charity made him treat them as his children. God had given him the discernment of spirits: knowing the inclinations of the religious, he governed them with incomparable gentleness and prudence; he commanded more by his example than by his words, and he distinguished himself from the others by his holiness and his exact observance rather than by his power and dignity. He chose his moment for correction so well that, as he took away from it what is importunate and disagreeable, it was always received with docility and followed by amendment. The meekness of his heart made so much charm and grace shine out on his face and in his speech that the most stubborn yielded to his remonstrances. When he discovered some fault, before rebuking the guilty he expiated it by fasts and by disciplines to the point of blood, as if he had committed it himself. It cannot be told how many religious he brought back to their duty in this way: the slack regained their first fervour, the weak were strengthened against the frailty of nature, and the obstinate promptly returned to obedience. He opposed novelties above all, saying they were sources of trouble and dissension in religious houses, and he was content to have the ordinances of the province exactly observed. He recommended four things in particular.

First, that the divine offices should be celebrated with all possible reverence, attention and devotion, and that the mind should always accompany the voice, both in choir and at the holy altar, God pouring out his blessings on a monastery only in proportion to the worship paid there to his majesty.

Secondly, that meditation and spiritual reading should be practised there without fail, because, as it is natural heat that preserves animal life, so it is meditation that gives religious the strength to perform all the duties of their state with gladness. He who neglects it is undevout at the altar, distracted in choir, frivolous in the cloister, dissipated at conferences, peevish and restless everywhere. Work irks him, obediences displease him, the devil’s artifices deceive him, temptations triumph over his frailty; in a word, he is a blind man without a guide, who gropes his way, stumbles at every step and goes astray in the middle of the highways themselves.

Thirdly, that peace, union and fraternal charity should be kept without any impairment, because a religious in sourness and bitterness of heart is the image of a reprobate; his body serves his soul only as a portable hell in which it already suffers the darkness of passion, the fire of anger, the bites of hatred, the insatiable hunger for revenge, the devouring worm, and the alarms and anxieties of a bad conscience.

The fourth thing he had chiefly at heart was that no one should remain in sloth and idleness. He called this vice the deadliest enemy of virtue, the ruin of the soul, the contagion of morals, the reef on which chastity founders and the source of every kind of disorder. Though he was very restrained in the exercise of his authority, if a religious was found wandering about the convent and wasting time laughing, murmuring or in other useless and frivolous doings, he wished him to be reproved charitably the first time; the second time, vehemently, in full chapter; and the third time, to receive the discipline with the rigour the constitutions prescribe for grave faults. By these means he made observance flourish in all the houses under his direction, whether as prior or as provincial. He himself observed the rule with such punctuality, despite his great occupations, that he put to shame those who neglected to submit to it. His firmness, however, was so well tempered by gentleness that all loved him and admired his virtue, whose good odour spread on every side.

The high reputation he had acquired gave him great credit, and he used it profitably to help the afflicted. The Emperor Charles V esteemed him so highly that he could refuse him nothing. This prince had condemned to death some very considerable gentlemen convicted of the crime of high treason. The greatest men of Spain — the admiral, the constable, Cardinal Tavera, Archbishop of Toledo, even the Infante Philip, who was king

after Charles his father — had interceded to obtain their pardon without being able to move the monarch. St. Thomas went to him and asked pardon for the guilty, assuring him that they repented of their crime and would henceforth be his most faithful servants. And at once, without further formality, the emperor granted his request, to the great astonishment of the whole court. “You must not find it strange,” he said, “that I have changed my mind at the prayer of the Father Prior of the Augustinians of Valladolid; his requests are commands to me. He is a heavenly man who holds in his hand the key of hearts; he moves them and turns them as he pleases. Does not this incomparable servant and friend of God well deserve that we should pay him even now the honours we would render to the Saints, if they asked some favour on earth — they to whom we turn every day to obtain favours from heaven?” This praise, from the mouth of an emperor as judicious as Charles V, is worth more than all we could say of this admirable religious. A noble lady of the city of Burgos could not forgive a man who had killed her son; she was pursuing her vengeance hotly, and none of the entreaties of the persons who had some influence over her had been able to soften her heart. St. Thomas undertook to bring her back to humanity. He went to see her in her house; but — O marvel of God’s almighty power in the conversion of a woman offended and beside herself with grief! — as soon as she saw him she came to meet him, prostrated herself at his feet, and, as if the mere sight of our Saint had cast into her heart the purest sentiments of mercy, she declared aloud that she forgave the murderer. To win such victories without a fight, one must have a sovereign and absolute power over minds.

While he was making the visitation of the convents of the province under his direction, Charles V of his own accord named him to the archbishopric of Granada, and summoned him to Toledo so as to hand him the warrant himself. But the Saint begged the emperor so earnestly to excuse him from accepting this charge that he would not press him any further. Yet God, who wished to make him a worthy shepherd of his people, soon afterwards brought about an occasion to place him on the episcopal throne. The archbishopric of Valencia fell vacant through the resignation of George of Austria, uncle of Charles V, raised to the bishopric of Liège by a brief of Paul III, and the emperor, who was then in Flanders, had to provide for it. He had no intention of naming St. Thomas, for fear of distressing him and being refused once again; instead he named a religious of St. Jerome — Our Lord so permitting it to show that his election was to be a stroke of Providence and not the work of men’s hands. The secretary drew up the warrant and, believing he had heard the name of Fr. Thomas of Villanova, filled it in with his name. The emperor, much surprised at this change, asked him why he had not carried out his orders. “Sire,” replied the secretary, “Your Majesty will do me the honour of believing that I listened attentively and that you named Fr. Thomas to me; but if I have misunderstood your orders, this fault will soon be repaired by drawing up another warrant in which I shall put whatever name pleases Your Majesty.” — “No,” answered the emperor; “what is written shall remain written. You have done better than I said, or I said better than I thought. I see well that this election comes from God and not from me.” Thomas was in the choir of his convent at Valladolid, singing Compline with the community, when one of the officers of the viceroy, Prince Philip, son of Charles V, brought him the warrant of his nomination. The brother porter, delighted at the news, hurried into the choir and, approaching our Saint, who was prior, announced to him in a rather loud voice that a person from the court was waiting for him in the parlour. St. Thomas did not go out until the end of the office; and, having received the imperial ordinance, he told the messenger calmly that he would go and confer about the matter with the viceroy, and condemned the brother porter to take the discipline for not having entered the choir with enough gravity. The next day he went to the palace, and, after very humbly thanking the prince for the honour the emperor his father was doing him, he begged him to support his refusal, because he knew himself incapable of bearing the burden of the episcopate. He went back to see him two or three more times to repeat the same prayer, and at last, prostrating himself at his feet, he put the warrant back into his hands, begging him to forgive him for acting in this way, since he did it only to discharge his conscience. Several great lords came to find him in his convent to oblige him to yield to the emperor’s choice; the Cardinal of Toledo even spoke to him privately in his cell and did all he could to move him. But it was in vain. All his resistance made it clear that other means must be used to win him. It was

therefore decided to have recourse to his provincial, so that he might command him in virtue of holy obedience, and under pain of excommunication, to accept his nomination to the episcopate. This expedient had all the success that was hoped of it; for, as he saw the person of God in that of his superior, he humbly submitted to his orders.

It was a loss for the Order of St. Augustine to be deprived of so great a man, especially as he had been deputed by the last General Chapter, held in the year 1543, with two other Fathers, one from Italy and the other from France, to revise the constitutions of the Congregation, which had been altered in many places. But it was a considerable gain for the Church to have so vigilant a shepherd in one of the principal episcopal sees of Spain. So everyone showed joy at it, while he alone was plunged in an ocean of sadness. To see his drawn face and count his sighs, one would have said that some grievous accident had befallen him. The thought that he was going to lose the peace and security of the cloister to expose himself to the dangers of the episcopate overwhelmed him with grief. The thought of the account he must render for so many souls, at the peril of his own, made him tremble. He stayed shut up in his cell, unwilling even to receive the visits of friends who wished to congratulate him. Thus he spent all the time from his nomination to his consecration in tears and prayer; the ceremony of consecration was performed by the Archbishop of Toledo in the city of Valladolid.

A few days later, fearing to keep waiting the sheep who longed for the coming of their shepherd, he set out on foot for Valencia, dressed simply in his much-worn religious habit, with a hat almost as old as himself, with no other pomp or company than one religious and two servants of the convent. On the way he thought of going to see his mother, who had begged him to pass through Villanueva de los Infantes. This seemed reasonable to him; but after commending the matter to God, as he was accustomed to do in all his doubts, he went straight to Valencia, judging that the Church, which was his spouse, ought to be preferred to his own mother. As soon as he set foot in the territory of his diocese, which had long been suffering from an excessive drought from which a great dearth was feared, the heavens opened and gave abundant rain. He went to the monastery of his Order called Our Lady of Succour, outside the walls of Valencia, where he lived for some days as a simple religious, going to choir and refectory with the others. At last, on the first day of the year 1545, at the age of fifty-six, he made his entry into his episcopal city with angelic humility and modesty. At the door of his church he would not use the velvet cushions prepared for him; but, after adoring the cross, which he embraced with many tears, he humbly kissed the ground at its foot.

The first thing he did after these ceremonies was to visit the prisons of the officiality, adjoining the archiepiscopal palace. When he saw that they were damp and dark, seeming less made for men than for animals, he said, sighing and shedding tears: “I order these dungeons to be filled in and their entrance walled up; they are not fit for public thieves — how could priests have been shut up in them? God forbid that under my administration any cleric should ever be condemned to spend even an hour in them! It is by very different means that I intend to correct my brethren and win them to God.” The members of his chapter, seeing his poverty, made him a present of four thousand ducats; he at once had this sum carried to the administrators of the great hospital, telling his priests “that he would always regard as done to himself the good done to the poor of his diocese.” Honours were far from changing his ways; he always kept the modesty and plainness of a religious, both in his dress and at his table. For some years he wore the same habit he had brought from the monastery, and in the eleven years he was archbishop he had only two new ones.

Only common dishes were served at his table, except for one rather better dish which he had added for guests. One day he had a lamprey that had cost four reals sold again, so as to give the price of it to the poor. Besides the ordinary fasts of his Rule, which he always observed as rigorously as in the cloister, during Advent, Lent and on the eves of feasts he fasted on bread and water, which he took in secret so as to be seen by no one. He used only earthenware dishes, except for a small salt-cellar and some silver spoons that were laid for persons from outside. Every day he cut something from his own fare for the food of the poor. He

often reminded his steward that the property of the archbishopric did not belong to the archbishop, and that he must take good care to incur no superfluous expense, for fear of having to render a strict account of it at God's judgement. He had several relatives of low condition; yet he did not blush to see them at his house, to converse with them familiarly and to acknowledge them as such in the presence of the greatest lords, though they were poorly dressed and in peasant fashion; he gave them what they needed, without raising them above their condition. Such was the domestic life of St. Thomas; let us now see what he did for the government of his Church.

He began with the visitation of his diocese, which he made with all possible vigilance, going even into the smallest villages and preaching everywhere with apostolic zeal. He used pardon rather than severity to root out vices. In this way he won a vast number of persons whom he might perhaps have made only hypocrites or desperate men had he treated them according to the rigour of the Canons. After his visitation he assembled a synod, at which he had regulations made to cut off several disorders he had noticed among the clergy as well as among the people. It is true that the canons of his cathedral opposed them and sent him a notary to appeal to the Pope, claiming that His Holiness had exempted them from the jurisdiction of the Ordinary. But the Saint, who sought only the glory of God and not at all to extend his own authority, made this fine reply: "I am not their judge; very well, God shall be. They will not obey my Synod and they appeal to the Sovereign Pontiff; and I appeal from their resistance to Jesus Christ. He knows well how much they need reform. Let them escape my justice if they will; but they will never escape his, and they must of necessity appear before his tribunal." But they were soon obliged to implore that very justice to which they had found it so hard to submit.

The governor, contrary to the laws of the time, had a canon and another cleric arrested, tried and condemned, though they should have appeared only before the ecclesiastical courts. The canons had recourse to the archbishop and, asking his pardon for the past, begged him to defend the immunities of the Church thus violated. St. Thomas asked the governor to account for this injustice. The governor refused all reparation. Then the prelate was obliged to use censures. The Duke of Calabria, viceroy of the province, had him asked to lift these censures, and sent him word that, if he did not, his council was of the opinion that the temporalities of his Church should be seized. But St. Thomas, in no way frightened by these threats, answered him with three things that deserve to be written in letters of gold. The first, that the episcopal character he bore obliged him to defend the rights of the Church with the sword of censures when they were violated, just as the character of minister of the King of Spain obliged the duke to defend the royal authority by arms when it was attacked. The second, that if his temporalities were taken, it would not be he who was wronged but the poor, to whom they belonged. "For to me," he said, "what harm would come of it? Can one strip a man who is already naked? Will they drive me out of my diocese? Would to God I were allowed to leave it! I would go back with joy to my little cell, which I left only with regret, and I would live there more content than I am in this palace." The third, that he despised his life no less than temporal goods, and that he was ready to shed his blood to the last drop in defence of the Spouse of Jesus Christ, whose keeping had been entrusted to him. This firmness stopped the viceroy and brought about the conversion of the governor, who publicly made amends for the injury he had done the Church. On an occasion when he could not satisfy the wishes of the Emperor Charles V, it was pointed out to him that he was risking offending that monarch. "I should be grieved," he answered, "to give His Majesty the least cause to be angry with me; but if I cannot content him without offending my God, here is the key of our cell, which I always carry at my girdle; he has only to allow me to withdraw to it, and I will gladly leave my archbishopric and go and shut myself up there."

But of all the virtues, the one that shone most brightly in St. Thomas, and which is as it were the distinctive mark of his holiness, is his charity to the poor. He loved them so tenderly, and was always so ready to do them good, that he often took the bread from his own mouth and deprived himself of necessities to relieve

them in their miseries. Ordinarily four or five hundred of them came to his palace every day, and he gave them food. When it was represented to him that many of these poor were only idlers and vagabonds who abused his kindness and sometimes deceived his servants by taking two alms instead of one, he said: “If there are such people here, it is for the governor and the police magistrate to see to it — that is their duty; mine is to help all who present themselves at my door. What does it matter to us if they deceive us, provided we give them alms in sincerity of heart and in the name of Jesus Christ, whose members they are? Perhaps the one we refuse will be an angel sent by God to test our charity.” The revenue of his archbishopric amounted to eighteen thousand ducats. He used a thousand of them to maintain some chaplains he had founded in his cathedral, so as to increase the number of those who attended the night office; two thousand for new converts; four thousand for the upkeep of his household. All the rest, except a pension of two thousand which he paid to Dom George of Austria, his predecessor, was for the poor, without keeping anything back for the following year. He had the list of the shamefaced poor of each parish, and had them called one after another so as to give them alms himself without obliging them to make themselves known to others. He also went to visit them every week to inquire into their needs and provide for them.

To persons who had once known wealth and whom misfortune had reduced to poverty he gave enough to live decently. When he could not give them charity himself, he gave it through some priest or religious. He also took the greatest care of foundlings, of the sick and of poor girls. He took charge of little orphans who were without means and without help, and, when they were old enough, he had them taught a trade so that they could earn their living.

His almoner was charged with supplying the fever patients and other sick persons with the best meat to make broth for them, and generally with everything prescribed by the physician whom he had charged with the care of the poor. He added something special for those who had incurable diseases, to console them and soften the bitterness of their misery.

The compassion he had for poor girls whose virtue was in danger because of their extreme poverty made him extraordinarily generous towards them. He took care to marry them and provide them with a dowry according to their condition. Those who, though of better birth, were in the same need received a larger alms. No influence was needed to engage his zeal; there was no need to exaggerate one’s needs to make him open his hand; he was never happier than when he could anticipate the needy with his liberality. He sometimes even gave double what was asked of him, because he always thought he was doing too little for the poor; his charity, which had neither limit nor measure, made him wish to do still more.

Several persons burdened with debt were freed from their difficulties by the sums he gave them to satisfy their creditors. He wished all the poor to be free to speak to him whenever they needed his help. When someone apologized for coming to trouble him a second time, he said: “My child, do not speak to me like that; I am not in the least troubled by those who have recourse to me in their needs. Do you not know that I hold my office only to receive your complaints and bring them all the relief I can?” A gentleman of Valencia, to whom the Saint gave fifteen crowns every month to support his family, found himself obliged by some mishap to have recourse to his benefactor; but, as the ordinary alms he received from him made him timid, he came by night to ask one of the almoners to represent this need to him. St. Thomas was deeply touched by it. “See,” he said, “how great this poor gentleman’s distress must be, since, notwithstanding the usual fifteen crowns, he comes at this hour to ask us for more; let him be given twenty crowns at once.” And a moment later, having the almoner called back: “Count him out forty,” he said, “for my heart tells me that it is not without great need that he comes here at such an hour. Try to console him, and tell him from me to trust in God.” One day he was told that another gentleman, to whom he also gave fifteen crowns (that was his ordinary alms for the nobility), was making bad use of them: instead of using them for the needs of his household, he was losing them at gambling, and it would be well to cut them off so as to make him wiser. “God forbid!” replied the holy prelate. “For if he does one wrong with the alms we give him, he will perhaps

do two if we come to take it away from him." Nevertheless, though he defended the accused man in his absence, he did not fail to reprove him strongly in private, threatening to give him nothing more if he did not change his conduct; and this correction greatly profited the guilty man.

A craftsman with whom our Saint had been unable to agree over the purchase of a piece of work worth only eighteen or twenty sous went away rather dissatisfied with his customer, whom he suspected of avarice; but when necessity forced him to have recourse to him to obtain the means of marrying his daughter, he received sixty crowns from him. The steward, who knew what had happened the first time, could not help saying to the archbishop: "Some time ago, my lord, you were much more particular with this man; you haggled with him over eighteen or twenty sous, and now you give him a considerable sum." — "The expense I was making then," replied the Saint, "was for myself; but now I am giving alms. There it was a question of my goods, or rather of goods I was to use for my own needs; but here it is the goods of the poor. I must spend nothing but what is strictly needed for my upkeep, and even that I spend only with reluctance; but when it comes to helping the needy, I have no difficulty in doing it abundantly, since it is their property and I am bound to spare nothing to relieve them in their needs."

Having let himself be persuaded by some friends to build a hall in his palace to make it more convenient, he long wept over this expense, which he afterwards judged hardly necessary, because by it he had deprived the poor of the money he had spent on it. He also greatly regretted having founded a college for poor students in the University of Alcalá, because, as that city was not in his diocese, he believed God would demand a strict account of him for having spent that sum on others than his own flock. What also troubled him was that he had given its administration to the religious of his Order, fearing he had followed his own inclination too much in this; and to make up for these two faults, though in the eyes of men they were acts of perfection, he founded another college in the University of Valencia and placed priests in it to instruct the poor of his diocese.

St. Thomas's largesse seems at first sight inexplicable; but one ceases to be surprised if one considers the virtue of almsgiving and how usual it is for Our Lord to multiply it in the hands of his servants, to give them the means of helping more of the unfortunate. Indeed his granaries were several times found full of grain when they were thought to have been emptied by drawing on them. The linen used to make shirts for the poor yielded much more than could be hoped for according to the course of nature; even money multiplied as it was distributed; and it was the same with bread and flour.

These marvels and many others have been established by authentic proofs, as may be seen in the authors we shall cite at the end of this summary. And so, having in his hands the treasures of divine Providence, he had no need to harass his tenants to be paid his revenue. When a farm was to be let, although it was put up to auction and everyone was free to bid, he would not allow the rent to exceed what was fair. One day, having learned that two men were trying to outbid each other for one of these farms and were raising the price in rivalry to their own detriment, he sent word to them to stop. If some loss befell his tenants by accident, he bore the damage without waiting for them to speak to him of it; he remitted to them as alms what he could have demanded of them in justice.

This great charity, which made him relieve all the poor in their bodily needs, was only a consequence of the zeal he had for the salvation of men. For their conversion he used, besides his preaching and private remonstrances, groans at the foot of the crucifix, and he practised rigorous austerities on his innocent flesh. He preferred to shed tears and blood before God to bring his people back to their duty rather than use other means that would have cost him less had he chosen to use the authority of his office. Licentiousness and debauchery, which in his time had reached almost their height, not only among lay people but also among persons consecrated to God, gave ample matter to his zeal. He would take sinners into his private room so as to be free to unburden his heart to them and to say and do for them all that his fervour inspired. This room, where he performed all his secret devotions, was as pleasant to good people as it was terrible and dreadful to

the wicked; and, as if God had set up there the tribunal of his last judgement, the former received in it a foretaste of paradise through the blessings the Saint gave them, while the others, through the accusations of their own consciences, felt in advance the terrors and alarms of their condemnation. There, in their presence, he set himself to pray; then he made them moving exhortations capable of softening the hardest hearts; and finally, all bathed in tears, he took the discipline for them with such rigour that he did not stop striking until the ground was stained with his blood. Thus, by his own blood-letting, he cured the incurable diseases of his flock.

Informed that a cleric whom he had several times reproved for his bad life was still continuing in it with scandal, he had him brought to his private room, and, after pointing out to him the wretched state in which he was living, said to him: “As it is perhaps my indulgence that has fostered your debauchery, and as you have remained in it only because I was too slow to punish it, I must now suffer the penalty for it.” And at once, prostrating himself before a crucifix, he scourged himself so severely with the discipline that the guilty man, no longer able to bear the remorse of his conscience, threw himself at his feet and promised him, before the image of Jesus Christ crucified, that he would change his life; and in fact he lived afterwards with as much edification as he had formerly given scandal. The holy prelate often repeated this same penance in private for hardened sinners, whose conversion God at last granted him. One day, having been unable to win a debauched man by his exhortations, he touched him and made him change his conduct by uncovering part of his breast and shoulders, bruised and bloody from the austerities he had performed for him. “See, my brother,” he said to him, “see the marks of the penance I have imposed on myself for your sins. If you are unhappy enough to continue your disorders, despising the mercy I am showing you, take care lest God, who is just, deprive you of his.” He had a list of all the vicious priests, of all lay people living in concubinage, of gamblers, usurers, married persons who were separated, and generally of all who were suspected of some vice, so as to reprove them at the right time and place and lead them to amend their lives.

The thought that he must render an exact account of all the souls of his populous diocese so terrified him that he begged the emperor to obtain from the Holy See the division of Valencia into several bishoprics, whose bishops would better know the needs of their faithful. He also worked with great ardour for the conversion of the Moors, who then occupied a large part of Spain. Several times he asked to be relieved of his archbishopric so as to devote himself entirely to this work; not having obtained it, he obtained at least that learned and virtuous men should be maintained in the parishes where these infidels lived. At his urging a seminary was founded to bring up the children of the new converts. Every year he devoted two thousand crowns to the upkeep of this house, which he increased in proportion to the number of children received there. A little before Lent he would summon the preachers and confessors to his palace to exhort them to labour during that season, which he called the harvest time of the Gospel, with untiring zeal for the conquest of souls.

This incomparable ardour for the good of his neighbour made him long for a general Synod at which the reform of morals in all the states of the Church could be undertaken. He took many steps to obtain its convocation. As he never ceased to lift up his hands to heaven to merit this grace, he seems to have had a revelation that it had at last been granted to the Church; for one day, coming from the altar, he assured one of his officers that before long he would see happen what he so eagerly desired. Indeed, the very next day letters were received from Pope Paul III announcing the assembling of the General Council of Trent. Broken with age and weakened by illness, he was unable to go there; but he did not fail to work much for it by other means. Most of the bishops of Castile passed through Valencia and all came to lodge with him. He discussed with them thoroughly the needs of the Church, and pointed out to them that this Council, whose principal aim was to root out the newborn heresy of Luther and Calvin, was no less necessary for the reform of life and morals, then almost universally corrupt. He gave them advice and counsel which these same prelates admitted on their return had been very well received by all the Fathers. He deputed in his place the Bishop of

Nuesca, to whom he gave a memorandum full of fine instructions he had judged important for the good of the Church. Of all the articles he charged him to put before the assembly we shall content ourselves with reporting two, which give an idea of his purpose.

He asked that a bishop should be forbidden to pass from one bishopric to another, so that, being unable to hope for anything better than what he possessed, he might love more the people of whom God had given him the guidance. He also wished all parishes and benefices with the cure of souls to be filled by priests native to the place, or at least to the diocese. These Spanish bishops encountered during the crossing a frightful storm which threatened them with certain shipwreck. Having invoked our Saint, who had foretold to them that they would reach Trent safely, they were miraculously delivered by his merits. At the height of the tempest they saw him walking at the prow of the ship as if to serve as their guide, holding in his hand a crozier with which he showed the way, calmed the winds, levelled the mountains of water, tamed the fury of the waves and completely quelled the storm, while at the same time he raised the courage of these good prelates, banished fear from their hearts and filled them with inexpressible consolation. This they themselves attested at Trent, and afterwards at Valencia on their return.

This admirable fidelity in discharging all the duties of his office ought, it would seem, to have set his conscience at rest; yet he was always filled with fear of the judgements of God, to whom he had to render a strict account of the souls his providence had committed to him. He had so high an idea of the obligations of a good shepherd, and his humility inspired him with so lowly an opinion of himself, that he believed he had not sufficiently fulfilled them. Since obedience had laid this burden on him, he said, he had had no joy that was not at once crossed by the extreme sadness his position as archbishop caused him. This fear did not leave him at peace for a moment; it troubled him even in his sleep, so that he often woke all trembling and went to the room of his confessor, who lodged near him, crying out to him in a plaintive and alarmed voice: “Father, Father, do you think I can be saved with my bishopric? Is there hope that I shall work out my salvation in it?” He made several entreaties to the emperor to be relieved of it; but, having obtained nothing from his sovereign on earth, he had recourse to the King of kings, and besought him with most fervent prayers, accompanied by abundant tears, to deliver him from the danger he was in. On the day of the Purification of the Blessed Virgin, as he was making this same prayer, prostrate on the ground in his oratory, he heard a voice which, coming from the crucifix, said to him: “Thomas, do not be distressed; have a little more patience; on the day of my Mother’s Nativity you will receive the reward of all your labours.” And, as an incontestable testimony of this revelation, the mouth of the crucifix, which had once sweated blood in his presence, remained open, although before it had been closed; and, what is no less wonderful, teeth of copper were seen so well formed and so distinct that the ablest sculptors admitted it was not possible to make the like with the instruments of their art. From then on, as if he had already seen his tomb open, all his actions were only a continual preparation for death.

On the following 29 August he was attacked by quinsy, which obliged him to take to his bed; he foresaw the fulfilment of what God had promised him. He made a general confession and wished to receive the Viaticum, which was brought to him in procession by his clergy. Three days before his death he had brought to him five thousand ducats that remained to him and sent them to be distributed to the poor of the parishes of the city, forbidding that a single penny be kept back. On the eve of his death he asked whether the whole sum had been distributed; he was told that all the poor had been satisfied and that there still remained twelve hundred crowns, which would be distributed without delay as needy persons were discovered. “Ah, what are you saying?” cried the holy archbishop. “I beg you, for the love of God, do not let this money remain in my house tonight. Let poor people be sought everywhere — for they are my patrons and my intercessors — and let them be given it so abundantly that nothing is left; otherwise let it be carried to the hospital. Go, I beg you, although it is already midnight, and do not lose a moment; it will be a signal favour you will do me.” He was satisfied; and when the distribution was finished they came to tell him that not a penny of the five thousand

ducats remained. “Oh,” he cried, full of an inexpressible joy, “how you have just consoled my poor soul with that word!” Then, turning to the crucifix, he said to it, shedding tears of joy: “My God, you had made me the dispenser of your goods for the poor; I thank you for having given me the grace to dispense them so that nothing remains in my hands; so I shall have the happiness of dying as a poor friar.” A moment later the treasurer came to tell him that he had received some money, and asked him what he wished done with it, as well as with his furniture, which he had not yet disposed of. “At once,” he answered, as if he feared that death might find him the owner of something, “let this sum be given to the poor, and let my furniture be taken to the rector of the college I founded.” There remained to him, then, only the bed on which he was lying; but, wishing to die in perfect poverty, he gave it to the jailer of his prisons. And shortly afterwards, remembering that it was no longer his: “My friend,” he said to the jailer, “allow me to die on your bed; otherwise I will gladly get down and lie on the floor, so as to be nearer my grave.” On the Saturday evening, the eve of the Nativity of Our Lady, he received Extreme Unction with a fervour that delighted those present. The next day, 18 September, he had Mass said in his room, and after the consecration he began the psalm *In te, Domine, speravi*, which he recited slowly and meditatively as far as the verse *In manus tuas, Domine, commendo spiritum meum*. As he uttered these words he ended his life on earth, to go and enjoy an eternal life in heaven. It was in 1555, in the sixty-seventh year of his age and the eleventh of his episcopate.

Paul V, who beatified him, ordered in his bull that in the images and pictures made of the Saint he should be represented in pontifical vestments, mitre on head, but holding a purse in his hand instead of a crozier, that countless poor should be shown around him, and that beneath should be written: *Blessed Thomas of Villanova, surnamed the Almsgiver*.

CULTE ET RELIQUES. — ÉCRITS.

Cult and relics. — Writings.

INSTITUT DES FILLES DE SAINT-THOMAS DE VILLENEUVE.

Institute of the Daughters of St. Thomas of Villanova.

His body, which lost nothing of its natural beauty in death, was buried, according to his last wishes, at Our Lady of Succour, in a vault made beneath the pavement facing the altar dedicated to the Mother of God. Over the tomb a catafalque was raised adorned with the insignia of the holy archbishop. The funeral rites held for him were magnificent; but what made them most famous was to see in his funeral procession more than eight thousand five hundred poor people, who filled the air with their sighs and groans for the loss they had suffered in the person of an incomparable father and protector. And so on his epitaph no other praise was set than that of *Almsgiver*, which the Church has not failed to give him in the proper antiphons of his office as the distinctive mark of his holiness. In 1582 the body was raised from the ground and carried into the conventual church, where it was found as intact as it had been at the moment of his death and giving off a sweet fragrance. The precious remains were then placed in a tomb of white marble, above which was hung a silver lamp that was to burn night and day.

The miracles worked at his tomb greatly increased the devotion that already animated all hearts towards the blessed archbishop. He was invoked with still more faith and confidence, and with the prayers the prodigies multiplied. In a few years all Spain resounded with the name of St. Thomas of Villanova. On all sides thousands of voices were raised to ask for his beatification. In 1604 the holy body was taken from the tomb in which it lay and placed in the same church beneath the choir of the religious, between two altars. On 7 October 1618 Pope Paul V proclaimed Thomas of Villanova Blessed. The promulgation of the apostolic letters took place at Valencia on 25 April of the following year. Amid an immense concourse of the faithful, the head of the Blessed was carried from the church of Our Lady of Succour to the cathedral, where it was placed in a rich reliquary and entrusted to the keeping of the chapter.

By the terms of the brief, permission to say the office of the Blessed was granted only to the Hermits of St. Augustine of both sexes in the kingdom of Valencia and to the regular and secular clergy of the city of Valencia itself. The following year this favour was extended to the religious men and women of the Order of St. Augustine spread through the provinces of Castile, Aragon and Catalonia, and to all the regular and secular clergy of Villanueva de los Infantes. Pope Gregory XV, by an indult of 14 May 1621, extended this permission to the whole Order. Finally Pope Alexander VIII canonized him on 1 November 1658.

A volume of his *Sermons* has been printed which, though in a rather plain style and without the flowers of human eloquence, nonetheless breathe that air of devotion, as well as the zeal and charity with which his heart was animated. They are above all filled with so great an unction when he treats of the Love of God, of Humanity and of Mercy, his three principal virtues, that it is impossible to read them without being touched by the same sentiments. As it was said of St. Bernard that he was the St. Augustine of France, so we may say of St. Thomas that he was the St. Bernard of Spain.

The Third Order of St. Augustine would be little known in France but for the zeal of Father Ange Proust, of the Order of Hermits of St. Augustine, of the community of Bourges, who, being prior of the convent of Lamballe in Brittany, and moved with compassion at seeing so many poor without help, instituted a society of pious women for the service and restoration of hospitals. It was from the example of St. Thomas of Villanova, Archbishop of Valencia, that he drew this idea; he even placed his society under the invocation of that illustrious father of the poor, and it has kept his name. Father Ange Proust nevertheless gave these women the Rule of St. Augustine. Several houses were founded in Brittany, at Moncontour, Saint-Brieuc, Dol, Saint-Malo, Rennes, Quimper, Brest, Landerac, Morlaix, Châteaubriant, etc. They also had a house in Paris, in the Faubourg Saint-Germain, near the Incurables.

Their dress consists of a black robe closed in front and fastened with a leather belt; for headdress they have cornets of white linen falling like a veil over the shoulders; beneath these cornets hangs a pointed neckerchief, and they wear a white apron when they are in the house. When they go out they put over their cornets a hood of *pomille* or black gauze and over it a large black veil; their face is framed in white muslin joined under the chin and forming a band, like the Sisters of Nevers. They take simple vows; and as they pronounce them, a silver ring is put on their finger, and then a poor woman embraces them, saying: “Remember, my dear Sister, that you are becoming the servant of the poor.”

For the composition of this biography we have used the *Lives* of the Saint by Fathers Michel Salon, Nicaise Baxi, Claude Mainbourg and Hilarion de Coste. — Cf. *Acta Sanctorum*, volume v for September; *Histoire de saint Thomas de Villeneuve*, by the Abbé Dabert; and *Esprit des Saints*, by the Abbé Grimes.

Saint Joseph of Copertino, of the Order of Friars Minor

1663. — Pope: Alexander VII. — Emperor of Germany: Leopold I.

> *Si rectam vivendi rationem expetis, te in humilitate exerce, sine qua recta vitæ ratio consistere nequit.*
>
> *Si vous désirez mener une vie sainte, exercez-vous à l’humilité, sans laquelle toute sainteté de vie est impossible.*
>
> *If you wish to lead a holy life, practise humility, without which all holiness of life is impossible.*
>
> *St. Ephrem, De recta vivendi ratione.*

People of the world are dazzled by the heavenly splendour with which Our Lord surrounded this Saint on earth; but the devout faithful, citizens of a kingdom that is not of this world and accustomed to its light, will love to see that splendour unclouded; it is for them that we are going to unveil it.

Copertino, a small town in the diocese of Nardò, lying between Brindisi and Otranto and six miles from the coast of the Gulf of Taranto, will see its name handed down and revered through all the ages, because it has become the surname of Joseph Desa. He was born there on 17 June 1603, in a stable where his poor mother,

Francesca Zanara, had taken shelter from the insults of the officers of the law, who were pursuing her for some debts contracted by the father, a carpenter by trade.

He was baptized in the mother church of Copertino, dedicated to Our Lady of the Snows, received confirmation a little later, and, as soon as his age allowed, was set to learn the elements of religion and of letters. But he showed himself more taken with the things of God than with those of the world, with the science of the Saints than with that of men. It was in holiness that he was one day to grow great; and in the ranks of the Seraphic Order, as on the stage of the world, he was indeed admired less for the brilliance of his learning than for his heroic virtues. “From his earliest childhood, at the age of five,” say the acts of the process of canonization, “he gave such signs of holiness that, to be already venerated as a perfect man, he lacked only age.” God, the creator of this excellent soul, seemed to rest in it with delight, so as soon to raise it to the sublime contemplations which for sixty years kept him absorbed in God like a dweller in heaven. Marvellous raptures drew him so completely from the earth that it may be said that for perhaps half his life his feet did not touch the ground.

The churches of Copertino were the scene of this privileged child’s amusements. He loved to visit their altars and adorn them with flowers. Under the sacred vaults his heart was kindled with a holy ardour. To have the image of the divine Master nearer to him, he built in a corner of his poor home a little altar from which he could no longer tear himself away, and before which, for part of the days and nights, he recited the rosary and the litanies, thus preparing his soul for the divine dew which heaven was already raining upon him in abundance. At so tender an age, at eight years old, when he barely understood what supernatural gifts might be, he felt, under the impulse of grace, ecstatic movements which drew him gently to the contemplation of heavenly things. Often at school, among the other children, the sound of the organ and of the singing taught to the more advanced pupils was enough to make the book fall from his hands. His mind then rose to invisible things: he remained motionless, eyes fixed on heaven, mouth half open, so that his companions gave him the nickname of “Gaping Mouth”, which stayed with him for a long time. But God admirably crucifies the servants he loves; early on he mingles with the milk of consolations the more solid food of sufferings. Our young Saint had first to bear the severity and even the roughness of his mother, who was pious but very harsh and punished the least heedlessness of childhood as a fault. Then, when he was a little over seven, an internal abscess, which soon spread its ravages outwards, obliged him to keep to his bed and seemed to leave him strength only to suffer. All remedies were useless. At last he obtained his cure from the Blessed Virgin, and, being thus restored to life, he wished to consecrate it to God by wholly exemplary and devout conduct. He began again to frequent the churches and to attend the holy sacrifice of the Mass regularly. To earn his living, and also to avoid idleness, he was learning the trade of shoemaker. The persistent application of his thoughts to God while he worked made it clear enough that he was not born for the earth. To elevations of mind he added mortification of the flesh, and treated his body with singular rigour. Fra Lorenzo, Cardinal de Lauria, who had long and close dealings with Joseph, declares that even then he wore on his flesh a hair shirt of very rough bristles and abstained from meat. He was content with fruit and bread. If he sometimes took a soup of herbs and vegetables, he always seasoned it with a very bitter powder of dried wormwood. He fasted habitually, sometimes went three days on end without eating, and if anyone blamed him for it he would answer with a smile: “I forgot.” His manner of making mental prayer, unlettered as he was and trained only in the school of God, was admirable. He took his subject of meditation from a book; it turned on the Holy Trinity, or on the Life or the Passion of the Saviour. His will was then kindled; he identified himself, so to speak, with the divine Persons, and these wholly heavenly communications, which grace deigned to work in him, lasted as long as his prayers.

When he had reached the age of seventeen, Joseph applied to be received among the Conventual Franciscans. He had two uncles of distinction in that Order; he was refused nevertheless because he had done no studies. All he could obtain was to enter the Capuchins as a lay brother; but there too he had to suffer rebuffs: the

very graces with which God seemed to overwhelm him were to bring contempt upon him. Absorbed in unceasing contemplation of divine things, in ecstasy in church, in ecstasy in the house, living solely in God, he seemed dead to everything else. If the superiors entrusted him with the care of the refectory, he would drop the plates and dishes, whose fragments were afterwards seen fastened to his breast or his shoulders as a sign of penance. Reprimanded for having several times put out black bread instead of white, he declared that he could not tell one from the other. To test his obedience, the Father Master charged him with carrying water from one place to another; our postulant obeyed with unalterable patience, but it took him a whole month to carry out this slight task. Wherever he felt the movements of divine grace, in choir, in the cloisters, in the garden, he would stop and kneel. His long halts on his knees, in places that were sometimes uncomfortable and bristling with stones, caused a very painful swelling of his knee.

In the end it was judged that Joseph lacked wit, aptitude, even health for the manual work of the house, and without other reason he was dismissed. What a humiliation, or rather what a mortal grief for this poor servant of God, to see the door of every monastery thus shamefully and irrevocably shut against him! He related afterwards that at that moment he had felt as though the skin were being torn from his flesh. None of his relatives would offer him a home; he was looked on as a vagabond, a madman who disgraced his family. His mother gave way to her usual violence towards him. Nevertheless she went to lay his pitiable state before the Conventual Franciscans. Brother Giovanni Donato, the young man’s maternal uncle, resisted her entreaties. All she could obtain was that Joseph should wear the habit of the Third Order of St. Francis with the title of oblate, and in that capacity be attached to the service of the stable and charged with grooming the mule.

But God, who twice took shepherds of flocks to set them at the head of his people and entrust them with the leading of the armies of Israel, was about to rise up in defence of his servant. That God, who had already brought Joseph as a child out of a stable, was preparing to bring him out of the one to which his youth was now relegated.

Admitted thus to the convent of the Grottella as an oblate, the servant of God gave there such marks of humility, obedience and true mortification that, as virtue usually does, he drew to himself first every eye and then every heart. He went barefoot to beg alms for the convent. Less anxious to obtain bread than to win souls, he let fall from his lips simple but penetrating words that persuaded people to flee vice and to practise that Christian life of which he offered so perfect a model in his own person. To bare feet and the roughness of the hair shirt he added a tight iron chain that girded his loins and shoulders; he fasted every day and slept barely a few hours, giving the rest of the night to prayer or to the study of the elements of the Latin tongue. Even sleep became a suffering for him, for his bed consisted only of three planks. A bearskin served him for mattress and a sack of straw for pillow. For the rest, always cheerful, always smiling, his speech revealed in a touching simplicity the keenness of his mind and the soundness of his judgement. He obeyed at the least sign, taking on with pleasure the hardest and meanest tasks and showing himself tireless in them. So much virtue could not long remain unrecognized or unknown. The goodness of his heart, and above all his eminent piety, soon won him every vote. God, who willed him to be in the Congregation of the Conventual Minors, was secretly at work rough-hewing this block and carving in it the admirable image that has become the object of the Church’s veneration. At the request of his uncles, who had given up their prejudices, Joseph was taken to Altamura in the month of June 1625, where a provincial Congregation was assembled. He was examined there; his fitness for the clerical state was recognized; he was given the religious habit under the name of Brother Joseph, and he thus found himself enrolled among the sons of the convent of the Grottella. He would dearly have liked to reach the priesthood, but for lack of instruction he could not. His efforts to learn were constantly fruitless. He thought he had done a great deal when with great difficulty he managed to pronounce a few syllables correctly. All his learning amounted to reading rather badly and writing still worse. He could never explain any of the Gospels of the year except the one that begins with the words *Beatus venter qui te portavit*: “Blessed is the womb that bore thee.”

The Mother of God, who willed to raise her servant's understanding so high, seemed to take pleasure in giving him the meaning of a Gospel of which she is the subject, and in herself bringing him into the sanctuary. Joseph therefore learned by heart the words of this Gospel, their meaning and their force, and, armed with this knowledge as with a shield, presented himself boldly for examination. By a secret disposition of Providence, the Bishop of Nardò, Girolamo de Franchis, who knew him and had a high opinion of his virtue, conferred minor orders on him without difficulty on 3 January 1627, and the subdiaconate on the following 27 February. He was quite as ready to confer the diaconate on him; but a member of his household reminded him that under the canons the preliminary examination was obligatory. Joseph therefore had to undergo this examination. Full of confidence in God and inwardly assured of the protection of the most holy Virgin, he presented himself with the assurance of a doctor accomplished in the study of the sacred sciences. The bishop took the book of the Gospels and opened it; an angel seemed to guide his hand, for the passage he came upon was precisely the one beginning with the words *Beatus venter*. He ordered Joseph to explain the passage. The servant of God let a smile escape him, and, with his eyes fixed on heaven more than on the book, recollected in God and in his divine Mother, he read, explained and commented on the passage fluently, as a master of theology might have done. Accordingly Joseph, to his very great joy, received the diaconate on 20 March 1627. There remained promotion to the priesthood, for which the examination was to be held at Poggiardo, in the Cape of Otranto, by Battista Deti, Bishop of Castro, a severe prelate dreaded by ordinands. Joseph went to Poggiardo in the company of several young students, his brethren of the convent of Lecce, all picked men. The first to be questioned answered so well that the prelate judged it needless to question the others; he admitted all the candidates without distinction, our Saint included, who was thus made a priest of God, in a manner, by God himself, on 4 March 1628. Back at the convent of the Grottella, he resolved to die more and more to himself and to live in God by contemplation. Regarding himself as an exile from paradise, condemned to dwell in a land of enemies, he purposed to fight and thereby to conquer heaven. To triumph over the world he separated himself from the world, so far as to seem no longer part of it. His cell, next to those of the other religious, exposed him to the curiosity and devout indiscretions of his brethren. Although this cell looked more like a tomb than the dwelling of a living man, he often left it for a still more solitary retreat. His favourite retreats were a recess in the vault of the church and a little chapel dedicated to St. Barbara, standing in an olive grove near the convent. Hidden and lost, rather than withdrawn, in these places, he spent whole days there in contemplation or in ecstasy, or given up to the terrible penances of which we shall speak.

He stripped himself of everything the Rule allowed him, keeping nothing in the world but the tunic that covered him. Then he threw himself at the foot of the crucifix and cried: "Here I am, Lord, alone, deprived of everything, completely poor; be my only good; all other riches are peril and ruin to me, a reef and a shipwreck." Thus rid of everything and henceforth more nimble for heaven, thus cast into the arms of divine Providence, he went wherever it pleased the superior to send him. He wore simple sandals and a poor tunic, part of which was often missing on his return. The people in their veneration stole scraps of the Saint's garment, his cord and even his rosary to make relics of them. Joseph did not notice these thefts, or, if he noticed them, he explained them in a way that brought severe reprimands upon him. He was reproached for his heedlessness and his carelessness: the convent, they said, was not rich enough to give him a new tunic every day. He accepted these reprimands, meant to exercise his humility, as deserved: "Father," he would say, "do not send me out any more; never send me out; let me vegetate in my cell." On one of these occasions when the Saint lacked necessaries, God, whose eyes are always fixed on his servants, had an inhabitant of Lecce give him a tunic, a cord, shoes and a hat. Joseph liked to recall this incident and long afterwards used it to lead his brethren to trust in divine Providence. All his affection was centred on his cell; he kept himself withdrawn there and empty of everything. By poverty he had just conquered the world and its pomps; he undertook also to conquer the devil, and armed himself against that formidable enemy with two swords: obedience and humility. His obedience guessed and anticipated the command. In the ecstasies with which he

was so often favoured, a word from the superior was enough to recall him to himself and to the world. That word was the chain that brought him back from heaven to earth. He never left his cell or the convent, he never ate meat, except at the express order of the superior. “Obedience,” he said, “is the torment of the devil, and of all exorcisms the most powerful.” His humility was heroic. Joseph sank himself in the sense of his nothingness. He had never thought himself more unworthy of the priesthood than since he had been exercising its functions. On touching the most holy Body of Our Lord he felt an inexpressible awe. He would have liked, he said, to have a spare thumb and forefinger for each hand, to be used only at the holy sacrifice of the Mass and afterwards shut away in a casket, so as never to employ them for any other purpose. To hear him, he was the greatest sinner in the world, a reprobate, the cause of every evil. In the convent and outside it he had himself called “the sinner”, which gave rise to the marvellous story we are about to relate: One day, on we know not what business, he was at the house of a sister of the Third Order named Chiara Margioti. Another sister arrived accompanied by a little child of three. Joseph bent down to caress the child and said to him: “Little one, say as I do: Brother Joseph is a great sinner, worthy of hell.” The child, who could barely stammer, pronounced in a very clear voice the following sentence: “Brother Joseph is a great saint, worthy of paradise.” Joseph, playfully pulling the little child’s ear, put on a gruff voice and again told him to say as he did. But the child repeated the same sentence three times in a row. This particular struck the minds of those present, who as witnesses reported it in the judicial inquiry.

The humble brother was anxious to pass for what he said he was. He sought the meanest tasks, washed the dishes, scoured the plates, swept the dormitories, carried away the refuse. As the church was then being built, he carried the materials on his shoulders and said that he was Brother Ass. In winter and summer, in sun and rain, he went out, dressed in a poor tunic, legs bare and feet bare, to beg for the community. In church he was a priest; everywhere else he was only a poor brother, humbled and bowed under the weight of work.

He treated nature and the flesh as his most formidable enemies. Thirty years after his death the traces of his blood could still be seen on the walls of his cell and on the walls of the little chapel of St. Barbara. If a sensual image, a thought of vainglory or a distraction came to assail him, he chastised his body like a slave and would allow only the spirit to rule. The instruments of these unceasing penances were cords armed with hooks, which struck and furrowed the flesh and left it like a corpse.

He had still more cruel instruments of penance, until the superior thought it right to check this passion for suffering. To his bloody macerations Brother Joseph added almost continual fasts. He went five years without eating bread and fifteen without drinking a single drop of wine. Herbs, a few dried fruits and beans made up his whole diet. He seasoned these humble dishes with a bitter powder which was at first taken for pepper because of its colour. When some religious had the curiosity to taste this substance, the supposed pepper turned out to be a powder of the kind David would have called *pulverem mortis*, “the dust of death”. On Fridays he fed on a bitter, nauseating herb whose taste no one but he could bear. During the Lent of thirty-six days, called among the Franciscans the Blessed Lent, which begins on 6 January and ends on 10 February, he ate only once a week. During the six other Franciscan Lents he ate bitter herbs, a few beans or fruits on Sundays and Thursdays, and took nothing on the other five days of the week. What sustained him in this abstinence from material food was the eucharistic food; he fed on the holy sacrifice which he celebrated every day. It was noticed more than once that, exhausted, pale and almost dying before Mass, he appeared on leaving the altar nimble, lively and full of vigour. It was not by bread, then, that he lived; he had the secret of a better and more substantial food. Material foods, which sustain other men, seemed actually to have become harmful to him. Constrained one day by the superior to eat meat, he obeyed at once the superior, who willed him to eat it, and God, who did not; for when he had swallowed the meat, a sudden irritation of the stomach made him bring it up at once. In mastering his passions so courageously and submitting his will so constantly to God’s, he corresponded faithfully to prevenient grace. That grace, which in him never fell in vain, must have prepared him for the virtues of his youth and for the sublime contemplations to which he was later

raised. Cardinal de Lauria declares that in the period following his admission to the priesthood, “Joseph, as soon as he began to meditate, was rapt out of himself and raised by grace to contemplation.” The cardinal adds: “It was from him, I confess, that I learned what spiritual souls do, see and hear in contemplation, and I owe him all I have said of it in my *Treatise on Prayer*.”

The acts of the process of canonization establish that at the convent of the Grottella, where he lived sixteen years, the Saint was so habitually rapt in ecstasy that natural life and the ordinary occupations of the community took up the smallest part of his time. He entered into ecstasy easily and was drawn out of it only with difficulty. Holy obedience was the most effective means of distracting him. The superior ordered him to come back from the supernatural world to the real world, and he came back full of obedience — we should say, of confusion. His cheeks were covered with a devout blush and sometimes with tears. He felt confused at the thought of the effect that so extraordinary a phenomenon must have on those present — a man passing thus from heaven to earth and from death to life; for during ecstasy the action of the senses and the movement of the limbs ceased completely. The Saint remained invariably in the position in which ecstasy had surprised him and the divine light enveloped him, that is, with arms outstretched or in the form of a cross, eyes turned to heaven, sometimes seated, sometimes in the posture of a man walking; and nothing could wrench him from that position, neither skill nor force. They pricked the Saint with needles, struck him with iron, burned him with candles, and none of these things could tear him from the ecstatic life. After the ecstasy, seeing what had been done to bring him to himself, he felt the confusion we have spoken of. The humble servant of God used to attribute these high operations of God within him to a natural infirmity, and called them his “giddy fits”. It was in this spirit of humility that one day he said to Cardinal de Lauria: “Fellow-countryman, do you know what the brothers do to me when my giddy fits come on? They burn my hands and break my fingers.” And, showing him his thumb covered with blisters, he added: “That is their work,” and began to laugh. When Cardinal de Lauria asked him what ecstatics see in ecstasy, the servant of God answered: “Ecstatics feel as if carried into a gallery resplendent with new and beautiful things, before a mirror in which with one glance they take in the wonders that God is pleased to show them in that admirable vision.” His soul, eager to be united to the eternal beauty, flew off on the wings of divine love, detached the body itself from the earth and carried it into the air, to associate it with the happiness of the blessed. These raptures into the air were so prodigious and so frequent that it would take a book to describe them. They had begun immediately after Joseph’s promotion to the priesthood; they lasted until his death. During the sixteen years of his stay at the Grottella they were almost continual. In the church he is seen to spring with a bound onto the platform of the altar, and on Maundy Thursday to fly from the floor of the church to the sepulchre of Our Lord. On the feast of St. Francis he is seen to fly onto the altar of the holy patriarch, and on the feast of Our Lady of Mount Carmel onto the high altar of the Madonna. He has been seen in his cell, when some word set his devotion on fire, to fly into the air in a state of contemplation, and sometimes during this ascent to hold a burning coal without his hand being harmed. In the refectory, in the midst of his brethren frozen with holy awe, he has been seen to rise from his seat and fly into the air, carrying with him a sea-urchin. Finally, in the countryside near Copertino he has been seen to rise flying, once onto an olive tree and another time onto a great cross which he had miraculously set up in the place where it stood. A feeling of admiration for the almighty Creator of that sea-urchin, the beauty of the sky, the sight of the instruments of the Saviour’s Passion depicted on the cross, were enough to bring on these raptures.

The miracles he worked during his stay at the Grottella were the wonder of the whole country and the whole province; his name spread everywhere, and everywhere he was regarded as a miracle of holiness. In the territory of Copertino there were no longer any sick people to be seen, or, if one appeared, the Saint went to see him and with the sign of the cross cured him on the spot. As a result his person became the object of general eagerness. The faithful came from afar to ask him for graces and miracles; and the graces and miracles were dispensed by him as a physician dispenses his prescriptions. He would say to the faithful: “My children, trust in God!” To some he gave the blessing of St. Francis written in his own hand; others he

anointed with oil from the Saint's lamp, and all were cured. One day when he was visiting a sick man, a mother presented to him her daughter, who was crippled, helpless and stricken with smallpox. The Saint sat down, drew a crucifix from his breast and said to the girl: "Come, kiss this crucifix, and go and give it to your father and mother to kiss." The girl obeyed and was cured. Dom Pomponio Imbeni, afflicted with several ulcers, was confined to his bed. Brother Joseph went to visit him. "Trust," he said to the sick man; "how long is it since you went to the Grottella to visit your mother?" This word "mother" meant the most holy Virgin. "Brother Joseph," answered the sick man, "you can see that I cannot move." — "Trust in your mother," replied Joseph. At the same time the Saint touched the ulcers one by one, and they scarred over as though healing came out of his fingers. Onofrio Rizzo seemed to be in his last agony. His lips were so tightly closed that his mouth could not be opened. Joseph went up to the dying man, gently parted his lips, made him swallow we know not what substance, and, curing him instantly, said to him: "How do you feel?" — "Well," answered Onofrio. — "You will not speak of me," replied Joseph, "but you will say that the Blessed Virgin cured you." The pages of the process of canonization are full of such miracles.

His charity towards his brethren and his fellow-townsmen showed itself more than once in prodigies. One day, when a storm was shaking the convent of the Grottella and striking terror far and wide through the country, Brother Joseph knelt before the altar of the Madonna: "Faith! faith!" he cried. And, going out of the church, he rebuked the storm, which scattered as he passed. A drought was laying waste the countryside. "Let us have faith in God," said the Saint to his fellow-townsmen; "let us make a procession to the most holy Madonna, and before the procession is over you will have water." The procession was made, and the water did indeed come. As long as he lived there, the convent of the Grottella lacked nothing. When he went begging, miracles seemed to pursue him even more than he pursued alms. Provisions arrived in an abundance that could be attributed only to the Saint's intercession and to the boundless liberality of God. One day, by his order, a sister named Chiara had gone to the Giuli family to ask for a little honey for the convent. Joseph came in, touched the vessel, and under his miraculous hands the honey, growing in quantity and volume, overflowed and filled another basin. The next day Joseph, meeting Sister Chiara, said to her with a smile: "That honey our benefactors gave us, I have faithfully given back to them." A party of ten or so pilgrims from Narbo asked the convent for wine to refresh themselves; there was only enough left for the religious' supper, and excuses were being made; but, full of faith in divine Providence, Brother Joseph drew from the wineskin as much wine as the travellers could drink, and afterwards there was enough to supply the needs of the community for several days. His mother, Francesca Panara, still poor but always resigned in her poverty, lacked bread. She often asked her son for some and pleaded her title of mother with him. "Our mother," Joseph would answer, "is the Madonna; I have nothing, I am poor; commend yourself to the Madonna, and the Madonna will help you." In these words Joseph sent her away each time, and each time, on returning home, the poor woman found there the bread needed for that day.

It is quite true that nothing is impossible to prayer and faith, and that grace can give man an empire over nature even greater than the one he lost by Adam's fault. Our Saint displayed the effects of divine omnipotence with a kind of lavishness, if we may so speak. He was often called to the convent of the nuns of St. Clare at Copertino, either for his begging rounds or for the spiritual needs of that house. One day he told the nuns laughingly to recite the office well, and that he would send a little bird to stir up their zeal. At the nuns' next gathering there did indeed appear at the choir window a pretty blue rock thrush (*passereau solitaire*). The bird showed itself thus every day at the morning and evening offices. Its song went before that of the nuns, and with harmonies of extraordinary melody the bird seemed to invite the handmaids of God to sing the praises of their common Master. When the office was over, the bird disappeared.

The bird came back thus every day at the same hours, without ever failing, for five years. An insult offered it by one of the nuns made it go away. The sisters complained of this. "The bird has gone, and it did well," said Joseph; "why did you threaten and insult it?" The Saint nevertheless promised that the runaway would return,

and his word was an oracle. Whether the bird had forgotten the injury or forgiven it, it reappeared. Not only did it show itself in choir, but this time it made its home among the handmaids of God. It would perch now on a seat, now on a picture, and let itself be stroked. One of the sisters tied a little bell to its foot, and it stayed two more months in the convent trailing this bell; but on Maundy Thursday it disappeared, and showed itself neither on the Friday nor on the Saturday. Fresh complaints to Brother Joseph. The Saint answered: “I gave it to you as a musician; you should not have made a bell-ringer of it. It has gone to keep watch by the sepulchre of Our Lord; but I will make it come back.” The bird did indeed come back, resumed its habits, and did not leave the convent until the servant of God, himself leaving Copertino, carried the secret of his miracles elsewhere.

One day he miraculously saved two hares which, pursued by huntsmen, came and threw themselves, one into his arms and the other into the folds of his habit. After a violent storm some shepherds, in despair at seeing the plain covered with the carcasses of their sheep, came weeping to implore the help of his prayers. Our Saint consoled them, and, going to the scene of the disaster, raised all the sheep to life one by one, saying: “In the name of God, get up!” But here is a more surprising fact. Every Saturday Joseph recited the litanies in the little chapel of St. Barbara. The herdsmen and villagers of the neighbouring countryside attended this exercise. The gathering was usually very large. One Saturday Joseph came to the chapel and found no one there: the peasants were busy with the work of the harvest, which allows neither delay nor interruption. The Saint, who was not fully convinced of the validity of the excuse, began to lament inwardly the fickleness of men, who for some material interests so often neglect the far weightier interest of God’s service. At the same time he cast his eyes far over the plain; but on every side he saw only flocks and no shepherds. Seized with a holy transport, he addressed these scattered flocks: “Sheep of God,” he cried, “come here, come and honour the Mother of my God, who is yours too.” O prodigy of prodigies! O wonder of wonders! At these words, spoken from afar to creatures that could neither hear nor understand them, the sheep of these numerous flocks, leaping over the hurdles, leaving the rich pastures, leaving their lambs behind them, set off in bands like intelligent beings and ran towards the chapel, animated, it seemed, by a single spirit. In vain the little shepherd boys tried to hold back their sheep, called them back, threatened them with their sticks; they crossed the distance, bounded up to the foot of the chapel, gathered round Joseph, and answered the recitation of each verse of the litanies with a prolonged bleating. When the recitation was finished, the sheep, after receiving Joseph’s blessing, returned to their pastures, and the man of God went back into solitude.

The provincial of the Franciscans of the province of Otranto did not wish so rich a treasure to remain always shut up in the same convent; he conceived the generous design of displaying to the eyes of all the religious of the province this model, in which each would see as in a mirror what a true son of St. Francis of Assisi ought to be. He therefore ordered Joseph to visit all the convents of the province one after another and to stay three or four days in each house. That was very little to the liking of the houses that were to welcome such a guest; but the time was to suffice for practised eyes to appreciate the holiness of the illustrious religious.

Each of his steps on this journey was marked by miracles, ecstasies, raptures or acts of virtue. His humility was no less great than his supernatural gifts. One day a blind man begged him to restore his sight. “Go, go,” said the Saint; “with my sins I should only make you blinder still.” And, turning to his companion: “Me, miracles!” he cried. Sometimes, when questioned about facts in which the miracle was evident, he answered simply: “That is true; God did such a thing.” Applause being inseparable from miraculous deeds, Joseph, when he was praised, used to say: *Non nobis, Domine, non nobis, sed nomini tuo da gloriam*: “Not to us, O Lord, not to us, but to thy name give glory.”

He might throw the veil of humility over the brilliance of his renown, but eyes that were probably already diseased were troubled by it. A vicar general denounced St. Joseph as an impostor to the inquisitors of Naples. The Saint was obliged to appear; but the charges having been examined, he was declared innocent and dismissed. He celebrated Mass at Naples in the church of St. Gregory the Armenian, which belonged to a

monastery of nuns; when the sacrifice was ended he was rapt in ecstasy, as several eyewitnesses attested in the process of his canonization. The inquisitors sent him to Rome to his general, who at first received him harshly; but soon, filled with admiration for his virtues, he wished to take him with him to kiss the feet of Pope Urban VIII. The humble servant of God went to the papal audience and in a manner surpassed his own reputation; for at the moment when he was kissing His Holiness's feet, reflecting that he was before the Vicar of Jesus Christ, he went into ecstasy and was lifted up into the air in a rapture that lasted until the general thought fit to recall him to real life. Struck with religious awe, the Pontiff turned to the general and told him that "if Brother Joseph died during his pontificate, he would wish to testify to the prodigy he had just witnessed." At the same time the Pope ordered the general to place Joseph in a convent of the Observance. Heaven had already shown Joseph by very evident signs which that convent was to be. It was the one at Assisi, whither he had long been drawn by the sweet fragrance left in that sacred place by Our Lady of the Angels and the seraphic St. Francis. He was sent there by his general. The guardian of the convent treated him haughtily and disdainfully. The interior sufferings in which God willed to purify his servant more and more were crosses far harder to bear.

All divine consolations were gradually withdrawn from the Saint: no more ecstasies, no more raptures, none of the accustomed sweetness that had once consoled him in his troubles. Even the Mass lost its savour for him. When he celebrated, he seemed less to offer the holy Victim than to immolate himself, the victim of a dryness that no longer left him and of a dullness of mind he had never known. He asked for and obtained the Chronicle of the Order of St. Francis, to read in it the testimonies of God's favour to the Order in its cradle. The pages of these glorious annals slid beneath his eyes without his mind seeming to dwell on them or relish them. He had recourse to God; God left his groans unanswered. He called on the Lord; the Lord, who heard him, remained as if deaf to his prayers, so as to be called on again. A black melancholy then took hold of Joseph's heart. His grief brought on an ophthalmia that left him almost unable to raise his eyes. He seemed to live only by memory. He often declared that he had never suffered so much nor felt himself pursued by such terrible phantoms. With the sadness came the angel of Satan, who, buffeting the Saint day and night with palpable and hateful images, drew him towards the abyss into which he would infallibly have fallen had he not put up a vigorous defence. These were not merely illusions or dreams; they were bodily visions. The infernal spirits, taking an aerial body, made him see and hear, and set before his mind in a thousand different forms, horrible and detestable things. Cast down from the summit of divine contemplation into the abyss of persecutions, sadness, dryness and temptations, the poor brother shed abundant tears. He saw the ramparts of his mind as if overthrown; the citadel alone remained standing, upheld by a secret strength whose source he could not clearly discern, but which came from God. Often, while the enemy was attacking him, he turned to the crucifix, and the crucifix seemed to show him only an unknown God. In the midst of the darkness and dejection of his mind, Joseph from the depths of his heart called on and besought that divine Saviour to come to his help; but God, to try him further, answered his prayers and his tears only with a crushing silence.

The general, informed of Joseph's state, summoned him to Rome. On this journey he felt the heavenly consolations return, and God granted them to him more abundantly than ever. At the mere name of God, of Jesus or of Mary he was as if beside himself. He often cried out: "Deign, O my God, to fill and possess my whole heart. May my soul be freed from the bonds of the body and be united to Jesus Christ! Jesus, Jesus, draw me to you; I can no longer stay on earth!" He was often heard urging others to divine charity, saying to them: "Love God; he in whom this love reigns is rich, though he does not know it." His raptures were as frequent as they were extraordinary. He even had several in public, of which a great number of the most notable persons were eyewitnesses and later attested the truth on oath. Among these witnesses is counted John Frederick, Duke of Brunswick and Hanover. This prince, who was a Lutheran, was so struck by what he had seen that he abjured heresy and returned to the bosom of the Catholic Church. Joseph also had a singular gift for converting the most hardened sinners and calming souls troubled by interior sufferings. He used to say to scrupulous persons who came to him: "I want neither scruples nor melancholy; let your intention be

upright, and fear nothing." He explained the deepest mysteries of the faith with great clarity and made them, in a manner, palpable. He owed the sublime knowledge remarked in him to the intimate communications he had with God in prayer.

The prudence he showed in the direction of souls drew a great concourse of people to him, even cardinals and princes. He foretold to John Casimir, son of Sigismund III, King of Poland, that he would one day reign for the good of the peoples and the sanctification of souls. He advised him not to bind himself to any religious Order. This prince, having afterwards entered the Jesuits, took there the vows of the scholastics of the Society; but he was declared a cardinal by Pope Innocent X in 1646. Joseph dissuaded him from his resolution to receive holy orders. The Saint's prediction was fulfilled. Ladislaus, the eldest son of Sigismund, having died in 1648, John Casimir was elected King of Poland. He later abdicated the crown and withdrew to France, where he died in 1672. It was this prince himself who made known all the circumstances of the incident just related.

The Saint's miracles at Assisi were so numerous and so prodigious that one would hardly believe the story if it were not supported by the authority of a judicial inquiry sanctioned by the irrefragable decrees of the Apostolic See. Merely by embracing the sick the Saint cured them. His companion, Fra Ludovico Bracone, had happy experience of this; he was in the grip of a malignant fever. "Dear companion," he said to Joseph, "do not abandon me." Joseph embraced him and the fever vanished. Moreover, a simple prayer of Joseph's was enough to work great things, even at great distances. Ottavio Aromatario and Girolamo Ferri, both given up by the physicians, were delivered from fever at the moment when Joseph was celebrating the holy sacrifice of the Mass for them. A fight had broken out between the men-at-arms of Assisi and those of Bastia; blood had been shed; the fight ceased without any mediation and in the most unexpected way at the very hour when Joseph, told of the struggle, was beseeching the Lord to pacify the parties. A look from Joseph, accompanied by we know not what greeting, was enough to make a gardener break off an unlawful liaison and lead an exemplary life at Assisi. By his secret prayers the Saint delivered his fellow-countrymen from a terrible war and obtained for them a profound peace.

The more the just are favoured by God, the more the enemy of God persecutes them, either inwardly by temptation or outwardly by assaults that are sometimes terrible. The devil's harassments of Joseph are an example of this. One night, as the servant of God was praying in the church, he heard the door open violently and saw a man appear dragging what seemed to be iron sandals on his feet. Joseph looked at him and followed him with his eyes. The figure came nearer; as he advanced, the lamps hanging round the altar of St. Francis began to grow pale and went out one by one, down to the last. Left alone in the darkness with this iron-shod man, Joseph commended himself to St. Francis. The devil had already rushed upon him, thrown him down and was gripping him by the throat and choking him, when Joseph saw the seraphic Father come out of his tomb with a candle in his hand and relight the lamps; at their light the enemy vanished. Afterwards Joseph used to call St. Francis the lamplighter of the church. Another time, also at night, Joseph, at prayer in a confessional, saw a man come forward, kneel and pray. Taking this man for a good servant of God, he said to him devoutly: "Brother, pray for me." But the horrible brother sprang to his feet and, rushing at Joseph, cried: "Hypocrite, how long will you live in this house?" Only then did Joseph realize that he was dealing with the devil.

He was well consoled for these terrible apparitions by his continual communication with the angels and with the divine Majesty. On the day he made his entry into Assisi, a great servant of God saw two heavenly spirits accompanying him. It was revealed to another servant of God by her guardian angel that Joseph's guardian angel belonged to the first hierarchy of the blessed spirits. The Saint never crossed the threshold of his cell without greeting his guardian angel and inviting him to go in first. The same servant of God, Sister Cecilia de Nobili of Nocera, a lay sister, twice saw Joseph's soul in the sacred side of Our Lord. Another time, led in spirit onto a mountain which was pointed out to her as the mountain of perfection, she recognized, among

several souls that had reached the summit, that of our holy religious.

Meanwhile the tribunal of the Inquisition, which had established Joseph's holiness at Naples, and Pope Urban VIII, who had established it at Rome, had in their high wisdom judged it necessary to hide from people whom it might offend a light which God would know how to unveil if he saw fit. Brother Vincenzo Maria Pellegrini, inquisitor of Perugia, was ordered to take Brother Joseph at once, but honourably, to the convent of the Capuchins in the territory of Petra-Rubea, situated on the slopes of a steep mountain, and to hand him over to the father guardian, who was to keep him in absolute seclusion. At this news our Saint was troubled at first and turned pale: "Do they mean to take me to prison?" he said. But grace at once gaining the upper hand over nature, he bowed to kiss the inquisitor's feet and sprang into the carriage where the latter was waiting for him, obeying with joy on his brow and a smile on his lips.

When he had arrived at the convent of the Capuchins of Petra-Rubea, the Father Inquisitor handed him over to the Father Guardian, Giovanni Battista da Monte-Grimano.

By order of the supreme tribunal, the inquisitor forbade, under pain of excommunication, anyone to let Joseph speak to anyone at all except the religious of the convent; he was likewise forbidden to write letters, even to cardinals, to receive any, and to go outside the enclosure of the community. In a word, he was to remain deprived of all dealings with lay people. The servant of God heard these orders read and read them himself with imperturbable tranquillity of mind, and seemed to welcome the sufferings laid upon him. He never asked what the reason for such orders could be, nor why he had been taken from the Conventuals of St. Francis to be transferred to the Capuchins. Content with everything, praising God in all things, resigned, unmoved, he was like a reef in the sea, which, beaten by the waves, is not shaken by them. In our opinion this impassibility is beyond the natural strength of man. "Not to be moved by certain sufferings," says St. Jerome, "one must be either a rock or God, *Vel saxum, vel Deus*." Brother Joseph was neither rock nor God; but the man in him seemed to have disappeared. He had come to the point of no longer distinguishing the taste of food. Asked whether a dish was insipid or salty, sweet or sour, he would answer briskly: "It's good! it's good!" Never did he say: such a thing disagrees with me, this is tasteless, this displeases me. He hardly found time to eat; he swallowed rather than savoured a few vegetables or herbs, some nuts, a little water reddened with wine. He seemed to refuse what was necessary to that body whose weight tended towards the earth and held back there a soul impatient to soar towards heaven.

For the rest, his soul broke through the obstacles, and unceasing and marvellous raptures carried it towards the heavenly regions. The celebration of the holy sacrifice was for Joseph one long ecstasy which lasted no less than two hours. In the convent garden, where the superior required him to walk from time to time, he rose into the air and was rapt in ecstasy, either at the sight of a plant that spoke to him of the goodness and omnipotence of the Creator, or at the sight of a bird whose song reminded him of the concerts of the blessed. In his cell, if he stopped weeping over the sufferings of the Saviour, it was to fly into the air and soar towards heaven in ecstasies of love. So bright a light could not remain hidden. In vain was Joseph taken from Assisi to withdraw him from the eagerness of the crowds; in vain was he carefully transferred to a remote convent of Capuchins, set among precipices, crags and mountains, where he was to live hidden and unknown; soon an immense crowd was climbing up to the convent every day to witness Joseph's raptures and miracles and to attend his Mass. The concourse of strangers was so great that inns had to be built round the convent for the convenience of visitors. As there was no room to hold the crowd during Mass, the faithful climbed onto the roof and uncovered it, or else made openings in the walls of the church.

The tribunal of the Inquisition, charged with watching over every public movement of false or extraordinary devotion, thought it right to hide the servant of God once more. He was transferred, still with the same precautions, to the convent of the Capuchins of Fossombrone. But how can the sun be hidden? God alone could take away its brightness. On the journey, which was a long one, almost as many miracles were counted as miles, and more ecstasies and raptures than steps; and the miracles he had worked until then were nothing

beside those he worked during a stay of three years at Fossombrone. One day when he ardently wished to attend the Corpus Christi procession, he had a rapture and saw the procession in the streets of Fossombrone as though he had been following it. On Good Shepherd Sunday he was seen rapt into the air in the garden, and he remained kneeling in the air for more than two hours.

Raptures into God so continual produced in Joseph a kind of transformation into God, according to the word of the prophet Hosea: *Facti sunt sicut ea quæ dilexerunt*: "They became like the things they loved." Thus transformed into God, the Saint was bound to show a divine power in each of his acts. And as it is proper to God to know everything and to penetrate every secret thing, Joseph attained such a degree of clear sight that people were afraid to appear before him in a state of sin or fault. In each of his residences he revealed to people, to all without distinction, the secrets of their hearts. Fra Girolamo of Sinigaglia, a Capuchin, and Brother Joseph agreed one day to commend each other to God. Joseph kept the engagement; Fra Girolamo failed in it. After some months the latter said affectionately to the servant of God: "Brother Joseph, have you remembered to pray to God for me?" — "I have prayed for you," answered Joseph, "but you have neglected to pray for me." On Thursday, 7 January 1655, our holy religious came out of his cell at about three in the morning to celebrate Mass in the little chapel nearby. Seeing that they were looking for the vestments of the colour required by the rubrics, he said to the server: "Give me the vestments of the dead, for at this moment, in Rome, the Pope has just died." He spoke the truth. The news of the event soon confirmed Joseph's words; he thus foretold the death of two sovereign Pontiffs, of Urban VIII at Assisi and of Innocent X at Fossombrone.

On 10 July 1657 our Saint was transferred to the convent of Osimo, where the rest of his life was spent. There, as elsewhere, he was subjected to strict seclusion. He was relegated to a remote apartment. He was assigned a chapel and a garden of his own and a special companion. He was thus left wholly to God, entirely free of dealings and business. His way of life at that time is excellently described in the acts of the process of canonization. "At sunrise," says the witness, "Joseph left his pallet and went into his oratory, where he recited the canonical hour of Prime and other offices which I shall specify later, until the moment when his spiritual father came to hear his confession. After confessing and preparing for the holy sacrifice, he went down to the private chapel, where he was to say Mass alone. There he put on the priestly vestments, knelt before the altar and devoutly recited the litanies of the most holy Virgin; after which he celebrated the holy sacrifice with incomparable fervour. His Mass lasted about an hour, not counting the time of the ecstasies, sometimes more, sometimes less. When Mass was over he stayed a moment in the chapel, then went back to the oratory to recite the canonical hours and several other offices: these were the offices of the Madonna, of the Dead, of the Cross, of the Holy Spirit, the Penitential psalms followed by their prayers, and the rosary, if time allowed. These exercises occupied him until dinner time; his food was brought to him after the religious' meal. He stayed at table only a moment, went to give thanks in his oratory, and, if any religious then wished to talk with him, he listened to them willingly until he shut himself into his bedroom to sleep there for an hour or an hour and a half. After his sleep he resumed his prayers in the oratory until the ringing of the *Ave Maria*, and even stayed longer in the oratory if religious had to speak with him there of their spiritual needs. At the ringing of the *Ave Maria*, Joseph's companion lit a torch, and the servant of God gave several hours to spiritual reading. He read the Mass of the next day, the life of the Saint whose feast was being kept, and some book of sermons on the holy Scriptures. Immediately after the community's supper his companion brought him a little food. He ate and went back to the oratory, where he was sometimes accompanied by religious who came to confer on spiritual matters or to sing hymns with him to the glory of God. This recreation lasted an hour or an hour and a half. The visitors withdrew; he himself stayed alone in the oratory until midnight, which was the time for saying Matins. After Matins he went to rest until sunrise. Such was the rule of life of the servant of God from his arrival in our convent until his last illness. He departed from it only in case of indisposition. As regards his food, he used throughout the year only Lenten fare. He was sober, seemed to drink and eat only under constraint, and often, so abstracted was he, did not

know what he was eating or drinking. Next to his skin, by way of a shirt, he wore a woollen tunic, and never used linen. He went barefoot, in sandals. His tunic, like that of the other religious, was of Assisi serge. In winter he had a cloak. He slept in his clothes, without changing them, sitting rather than lying on three planks furnished with a bearskin and a bolster covered with linen. His apartment consisted of two rooms, namely an oratory and a cell. He kept himself withdrawn there the whole year. This kind of enclosure lasted until his death."

He had a tender and particular devotion to the mystery of the Nativity of Our Lord. He loved to picture Jesus Christ in the form of a little child and poured out before him the most intimate desires of his heart. The acts of the process of canonization establish that at Osimo the Child Jesus appeared to him several times; Joseph would take the divine Child in his arms, caress him and speak to him those burning words that are better imagined than expressed.

But the time was drawing near when he was to be united for ever to the object of his love, towards which he was so often rapt. He knew it by revelation. Scarcely had he arrived at the convent of Osimo when Joseph, with hands joined and eyes turned to heaven, had cried out: *Hæc requies mea*: "This is my rest." "Know, my brethren," he would say to the religious, "that on the day when it is impossible for me to receive the Lamb" (that is, the Holy Eucharist), "on that same day I shall pass to a better life." He spoke the truth. During his last illness he celebrated holy Mass or received Communion every day except the day on which he died.

On 10 August 1663 Joseph was attacked by a fever, intermittent at first and soon afterwards continuous. On his poor pallet he kept his serenity and his cheerfulness. He submitted to the physicians and surgeons, and left them, as well as the superiors, absolute power over his person. His only fear was of not abandoning himself completely enough to the sight and will of divine Providence. At that supreme moment he thought more of the Church than of himself. Sometimes he would say to those around him: "Pray to God for the Sovereign Pontiff, for the cardinals, for the union of Christian princes, for the religious Orders and their superiors, and in particular for our Order of St. Francis; pray for the souls in purgatory, for the sick, for the afflicted, for all who pray for us." As long as the fever was only intermittent, he rose every day and celebrated holy Mass in the oratory next to his cell, with ecstasies and raptures like those with which he had been favoured since the day of his promotion to the priesthood. The last time he celebrated was on the feast of the Assumption; "he had marvellous ecstasies and raptures," say the acts of the process of canonization, and his very person was lifted into the air. When the progress of the illness no longer allowed him to stand, he asked insistently to hear Mass and to receive Communion at it every day. At the moment when the sacred host approached his lips, he would cry out: "Here is joy, here is joy!" And as if the illness had instantly ceased, his cheeks took on colour and his eyes grew full of fire. After Communion he would close his eyes, grow pale again and remain without feeling and as if dead, absorbed in converse with God that has remained secret to us.

He received the holy Viaticum with deep piety, amid ecstasies and transports of love. It seemed that God penetrated his being and that he penetrated the being of God. He then asked for Extreme Unction. When the holy oil touched his limbs, he cried out in a strong, ringing voice that contrasted with the weakness of his person: "What songs, what melody of paradise, what fragrances, what perfumes, what delights of heaven, what happiness!" He then had the profession of faith read to him and asked all his brethren's pardon for his faults. At the same time he begged the episcopal vicar and the superior of the community to grant him a particular favour: that after his death his body should be buried without pomp in an out-of-the-way place, and that the world should never know the corner of earth where Brother Joseph lay. The episcopal vicar asked the sick man for his blessing. Joseph hastened to bless him, and with him blessed all the religious present. The vicar then read a letter from Cardinal Chigi directing him to give the dying man the papal blessing. Astonished that an earthworm like himself, the lowest of the religious, should be the object of such a distinction, Joseph cried out: "Such favours are not received in bed." In spite of his weakness, in spite of the

illness that overwhelmed him, he got up and had himself led into his oratory. The litanies of the Blessed Virgin were read there; he knelt and received the papal blessing. He then came back and lay down fully dressed, for he never took off either his tunic or his cord. He gazed at heaven and prepared himself peacefully for the last passage.

Little by little and slowly the agony came. With the agony the Saint's desire to die grew stronger. He repeated several times the beautiful words of St. Paul: *Cupio dissolvi et esse cum Christo*: "I desire to be dissolved and to be with Christ." When a religious said to him: "Father Joseph, this is the moment to fight and overthrow the devil," he answered in a joyful and very distinct voice: "Victory! victory!" Prayers of the Saints full of unction were recited to him; when he heard the words "love of God", he made signs as best he could for them to be repeated, and in a failing voice said: "Say it again, say it again!" At the same time he laid his hand on the left side of his breast, as though, his voice failing, he wished to make his heart speak. His dying lips murmured the sweet name of Jesus and stammered several times these broken words: "Praised be God! Blessed be God! God's will be done!"

He then gave himself up to very lively movements and transports. Asked whether these were effects of the love of God, he answered that they were and began to smile. His joy communicated itself to those present; an unwonted splendour lit up his face, and at that very moment he gave back his great soul to the Creator. It was a little before midnight on Tuesday, 18 September 1663. The Saint was sixty years and three months old.

His body was exposed in the church, and an immense crowd hastened from all sides to venerate it; it was then buried in the chapel of the Conception. The heroism of his virtues having been proved and the truth of his miracles established, he was beatified by Benedict XIV in 1753 and canonized by Clement XIII in 1767. Clement XIII had his office inserted in the Breviary.

He is represented: (1) lifted from the ground in public during an ecstasy; (2) before an image of the Blessed Virgin in the church of Assisi; (3) giving orders to little birds, having received from heaven the privilege of making himself obeyed by them.

This summary of his life is taken from the one composed in Italian by Domenico Bernini and lately translated into French by a religious of the Order of Friars Minor.

Saint Ferréol or Forget, Martyr near Vienne, in Dauphiné (about 304)[1]

St. Ferréol, who served as a tribune in the armies of the empire, lived at Vienne in Gaul and secretly professed the Christian religion. He gave lodging in his house to St. Julian of Brioude, who was born in the same town and openly declared himself a disciple of Jesus Christ. After the latter's martyrdom (28 August), Crispinus, governor of the part of Gaul in which Vienne lay, had Ferréol arrested on suspicion of his aversion to the religious ceremonies of his fathers. He soon saw that he had not been mistaken: the tribune steadfastly refused to sacrifice; and when Crispinus, to bring him to it, pointed to the honourable post he held and the supposed necessity he was under of giving others an example of obedience, he answered: "I do not value the honours and riches I enjoy as highly as you imagine. I ask only for life and the freedom to serve God. If they will not grant me both the things I ask, I will give up my life rather than abandon my religion." The governor had him beaten with rods in his presence and then sent him to prison loaded with chains.

On the third day of his imprisonment Ferréol found himself miraculously freed from his chains; and, seeing the guards asleep and the prison open, he fled and left the town by the gate that leads to Lyons. He swam across the Rhône and reached the river Gère, which falls into that river two leagues from Vienne. But those charged with pursuing him recaptured him, tied his hands behind his back and led him away with them. They did not, however, take him as far as Vienne; seized suddenly by a fit of fury, they cut off his head on the banks of the Rhône, about the year 304. The Christians of the town buried the holy martyr's body with great reverence, and several times felt plainly the effects of his protection with God. The church built over the

Saint's tomb outside the town having been razed, St. Mamertus had a new one built within the walls of Vienne and translated his relics to it about the year 474. The Ursuline nuns of Bar-sur-Aube possess some relics of this glorious confessor of the faith. In the parish of Bessens, canton of Grisolles, not far from Montauban, there is a famous pilgrimage in honour of St. Ferréol, called the Pilgrimage of La Peyrière. St. Ferréol is the patron of Fransu, in the diocese of Amiens.

Acta Sanctorum, and notes supplied by the Rev. Fr. Carles, of Toulouse.

Saint Walbert and Saint Bertilia or Bertille, His Wife, Confessors, in the Diocese of Cambrai (7th century)

St. Walbert, sprung from one of the most illustrious families of the kingdom of the Franks, long held an important office at court, where his virtue and his character won him everyone's affection. Pride never entered his soul, and amid greatness he kept that amiable simplicity which sets off even the most brilliant distinctions. A fearless and courageous warrior, he was at the same time full of tender compassion for the poor; he loved, consoled and relieved them as the suffering members of Jesus Christ.

Already commendable on so many counts, Walbert became still more so through his marriage with a princess of the royal blood named Bertilia or Bertille. In this union he found a reward for the virtues of his youth and a new means of sanctification in the midst of the world. The authors give hardly any details of the private life of these holy spouses, who are scarcely known except through the two children to whom they gave birth, St. Waltrude and St. Aldegund. These names, so popular and so revered, will always be their finest praise. Let us therefore confine ourselves to recalling here these few lines of an ancient hagiographer: "Walbert and Bertilia were both filled with an admirable fervour; they made themselves holily illustrious by the abundance of their alms and their devotion to every good work. Thus, in the bonds of married life, they led a spiritual and wholly heavenly life."

After their death their precious remains were laid in the church of St. Mary at Cousolre (Nord, arrondissement of Avesnes, canton of Solre-le-Château), in the diocese of Cambrai. The chapel in which the bodies of the two spouses were enclosed bore the name of Saint-Walbert; Mass was said there in his honour, and every year, on the day after Pentecost, many pilgrims came to Cousolre with their pastors and their banners to pay their respects to these holy patrons.

Acta Sanctorum Belgii, translated by the Abbé Destombes, canon of Cambrai.

Saint Richardis, Empress, Foundress of the Monastery of Andlau, in the Diocese of Strasbourg (893 or 894)

Richardis, most illustrious by birth (she was the daughter of Erchanger of the Nordgau, Count of Alsace), and more illustrious still by her virtues, was married to the Emperor Charles the Fat (832–888), and was crowned and anointed with her husband in 881 by the Sovereign Pontiff John VIII. As she was endowed with rare prudence, Charles associated her in the government; she used her power for the good of religion and the happiness of the empire. The Pope applied to this pious princess with the aim of obtaining from the emperor help for the defence of the city of Rome against the incursions of the Saracens. Calumny tried to blacken St. Richardis's virtue, but succeeded only in making it shine the more. She was accused of betraying her marriage vows. The emperor, too credulous, forced her to clear herself before all the great men of the empire assembled. The holy empress appeared fearlessly before this tribunal, saying in her heart: "Lord, I am innocent; do not deliver me to those who slander me." She offered to prove her innocence by the judgement of God. A great fire was lit all round her; St. Richardis stood motionless in the midst of the flames, then came out of them without receiving the slightest injury. After this event she left the court with the consent of the emperor, who even bore witness to her virginity. Having thus laid down her crown, the illustrious empress

and virgin withdrew to Andlau (Bas-Rhin), where she founded, endowed and established a monastery. She lived there several years. After her death, miracles attested her holiness. Pope Leo IX, passing through Alsace in 1049, raised the body of St. Richardis and placed it in a larger and finer tomb behind the high altar.

The parish church of Étival (formerly an abbey church of the Premonstratensian Order), in the diocese of Saint-Dié, has kept two notable relics of St. Richardis: (1) the robe she was wearing when she underwent the ordeal by fire in witness of her chastity; and (2) her head, divided into two parts. The rich reliquary that held these notable relics perished during the Revolution, but the relics were saved and are now enclosed in a poor worm-eaten wooden reliquary placed on top of a side altar.

From the Proper of Strasbourg, and from notes kindly supplied by the Abbé J.-F. de Blaye.

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[1] St. Methodius shed his blood for the faith at Chalcis, today Egripos, the capital of Euboea (an island of the Aegean Sea). His works were singularly esteemed by the ancients; we have considerable fragments of them in Photius, St. Epiphanius, St. Jerome and Theodoret. Those of which most remains to us are the book *On Free Will*, against the Valentinians (Gnostics), and *On the Resurrection of Bodies*, against Origen. We still have in full his *Banquet of the Virgins*, composed in imitation of Plato's *Banquet of Socrates*. It is a eulogy of virginity; the author introduces in it a lady named Gregorium, who gives an account to her friend Eubulus (that is, Methodius himself) of what had been said in an assembly of ten virgins at which she had been present: each of these virgins praises virginity. The style of St. Methodius is diffuse, inflated, loaded with epithets and too full of comparisons and allegories. His *Banquet of the Virgins* was published by Leo Allatius at Rome in 1656; by Father Poussines, a Jesuit, at Paris in 1657; and by Father Combefis, a Dominican, with notes, in 1672. Fabricius had it reprinted with notes at the end of the second volume of the works of St. Hippolytus, which appeared at Hamburg in 1718. — Godescard; Dom Ceillier, *Histoire des Auteurs sacrés et ecclésiastiques*; and Father Stilting, *Acta Sanctorum*, 18 September.

[2] We gave his life on 16 September.

[3] *Alias*: Désiré, *Desideratus*.

[4] *Alias*: Regnifrid, Reinfried, Regenfroid.

[5] A village near Saint-Dizier, canton of Delle (Haut-Rhin).

[6] Alias: Forgey, Fargeu, Forgeux.

19 September

Martyrologies

Nineteenth day of September

MARTYROLOGE ROMAIN.

Roman Martyrology.

At Pozzuoli, in Campania, the holy martyrs JANUARIUS, Bishop of Benevento; Festus, his deacon, and Desiderius, his lector; Sosius, deacon of the Church of Misenum; Proculus, deacon of Pozzuoli; Eutyches and Acutius, who, after suffering prison and chains, were beheaded under the Emperor Diocletian. The body of St. Januarius was carried to Naples and honourably buried in the great church, where to this day some of the blood of this holy martyr is kept in a glass phial; this blood is seen to liquefy and bubble as if it had just been drawn from the veins, when it is brought before his sacred head. 305. — At Nocera, the heavenly birthday of St. Felix and St. Constantia, martyred under Nero. 1st c. — In Palestine, the holy martyrs Peleus, Nilus and Elias, bishops of Egypt, who in the time of Diocletian's persecution suffered the punishment of fire for Jesus Christ with several of their clerics. 310. — On the same day, Saints Trophimus, Sabbatius and Dorymedon, martyred under the Emperor Probus: Sabbatius, being at Antioch, was scourged without respite by the prefect Atticus until he gave up the ghost; Trophimus, sent to Synnada to the governor Perennius, passed through many torments and consummated his martyrdom by the sword with Dorymedon, who was a senator. 278. — At Córdoba, St. Pomposa, virgin, martyred during the persecution of the Arabs. 853. — At Canterbury, St. Theodore, bishop, who, sent to England by Pope Vitalian, shone by his learning and his

holiness.[1] 690. — At Tours, St. Eustochius, bishop, a man of rare virtue.[2] 461. — In the diocese of Langres (now of Dijon), St. SEINE, priest and confessor. About 580. — At Barcelona, in Spain, Blessed MARY DE CERVELLIONE, virgin, of the Order of Mercy, who, for the generous help she gives those who invoke her, is commonly called Mary of Help. 1290.

MARTYROLOGE DE FRANCE, REVU ET AUGMENTÉ.

Martyrology of France, revised and enlarged.

In the dioceses of Autun and Dijon, St. Seine, abbot, mentioned in the Roman Martyrology of this day. — In the dioceses of Blois and Saint-Dié, St. Januarius, Bishop of Benevento and martyr, mentioned in the Roman Martyrology of this day. — In the diocese of Trier, St. Meletius or Milet, archbishop of that see and confessor, whose zeal for the glory of God caused him to be called the Elijah of his age. A model of piety and religion from his earliest years, he carried these early virtues to the archiepiscopal see of Tours, of which he was one of the glories. Between 472 and 480. — In the diocese of Metz, St. Guri or Goeric, bishop of that see and confessor. After spending some years in a chaste marriage, in which he was already a model of perfection, he was tried by the loss of his sight; having recovered it at Metz by touching a pebble stained with the precious blood of St. Stephen, he was raised to the priesthood and then to the episcopate by St. Arnulf, who laid this burden on him so as to withdraw to the wilderness of the Vosges. Raised to this post, he gave the example of all the virtues, above all of austerity and inward recollection for his own person, of charity and mercy towards the poor, and of magnificence in adorning oratories and altars. His two daughters, Precia and Victorina, nuns, for whom he built the convent of Épinal (*Spinalium*, Order of St. Benedict), of which the elder was abbess, have also deserved public veneration.[3] 647. — In the dioceses of Quimper and Léon, St. Sernis (*Serninus*), also called Seny and Senoux, bishop and confessor. Having laid down the burden of a bishopric he held in Ireland, he led the solitary life in Lower Brittany, where there is a parish bearing his name (Saint-Senoux, Ille-et-Vilaine, arrondissement of Redon, canton of Guichen). About 530. — In the diocese of Bourges, St. Marianus, confessor, of whom we spoke on 19 August (note 1 to the Roman Martyrology). 6th c. — At Sampigny (Meuse, arrondissement of Commercy), in the diocese of Verdun, St. LUCY OF SCOTLAND, virgin, solitary at Sampigny. 1090. — In the diocese of Gap, St. ARNOUX, bishop of that see and patron of the whole diocese. About 1070. — In the diocese of Grenoble, the APPARITION OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN AT LA SALETTE (canton of Corps). 1846. — In the diocese of Rodez, the Venerable Marie-Émilie-Guillemette de Rodat, foundress and first superior general of the Religious of the Holy Family of Villefranche-de-Rouergue.[4] 1852. — In the canton of Haguenau, diocese of Strasbourg, the anniversary of the crowning of Our Lady of Marienthal (Valley of Mary), a sanctuary dating from the 13th century and restored in 1803. The ceremony took place under the presidency of Cardinal Mathieu, Archbishop of Besançon, delegated by Pius IX for the purpose, in the presence of six prelates, a crowd of clergy and more than twenty thousand people, amid all the splendour that can be assembled. 1859.

MARTYROLOGES DES ORDRES RELIGIEUX.

Martyrologies of the Religious Orders.

Martyrology of the Order of St. Basil. — At Messina, Saints Nicander, abbot, Gregory, Peter, Demetrius, and Elizabeth, virgin, of the Order of St. Basil. 12th c.

Martyrology of the Order of St. Benedict. — At Pozzuoli, in Campania, the holy martyrs Januarius, Bishop of Benevento, Festus, his deacon, and Desiderius, lector; Sosius, deacon of the Church of Misenum; Proculus, deacon of that of Pozzuoli; Eutyches and Acutius, who, after suffering prison and chains, were beheaded under the Emperor Diocletian. The body of St. Januarius was carried to Naples and honourably buried in a church where a phial full of his blood is still kept, which, when brought near his head, is seen to liquefy and bubble as if it had just come from the veins. 305. — At Canterbury, St. Theodore, bishop, who,

sent to England by Pope Vitalian, shone no less by learning than by holiness. 690.

Martyrology of the Order of Camaldoli. — As among the Benedictines.

Martyrology of the Congregation of Vallombrosa. — As among the Benedictines.

ADDITIONS FAITES D'APRÈS LES BOLLANDISTES ET AUTRES HAGIOGRAPHES.

Additions made from the Bollandists and other hagiographers.

In the diocese of Naples, St. Januarius, Bishop of Benevento, and his companions, martyrs, mentioned in the Roman Martyrology of this day. 305. — At Spoleto, in Italy, on the Maroggia, St. John, bishop of that see and confessor. Brought up from his youth in the principles of the Christian religion, he made great progress in the study of divine and human letters and soon deserved to be enrolled among the clergy of the Church of Spoleto. He was its archdeacon when death came suddenly upon Meletius, bishop of that city. John was unanimously elected to succeed him. Having become the pastor of a great people, he strove always to remain equal to that dignity; the fame of his virtues crossed the borders of Umbria and spread through the whole of Italy. The poor had a father in him, the oppressed an advocate; his patrimony became that of the needy and of churches without resources. He won the esteem of Theodoric, King of the Ostrogoths, who helped him greatly with his liberality. Totila (541–552) threatened Spoleto with his fury, but John's prayers succeeded in appeasing his anger. Nevertheless he soon became the victim of these barbarians, who pierced him with their lances as he was on a journey to Rome. His body, gathered up by his clergy, was carried back and buried within the city of Spoleto. A hundred years later, when the Goths had been defeated and driven out by Narses, the holy bishop's body was miraculously discovered: a column of fire hovering over his tomb had alerted the people of Spoleto, who raised from the ground the bones of their lamented pastor and translated them to their cathedral church, where they have worked many wonders. About 550. — At Verona (Venetia), on the Adige, St. Theodore, bishop and confessor. He is believed to have succeeded St. Maurus and to have been the tenth bishop of that see. Adorned with all the episcopal virtues, he was long the glory of his Church. His body was laid in the basilica of Saint-Étienne of Spoleto; later it was translated to the church of Notre-Dame. After the 4th c.

Saint Januarius of Naples, Bishop of Benevento, and His Companions, Martyrs near Pozzuoli

305. — Pope: St. Marcellus. — Roman Emperor: Diocletian.

> *Que le Christ soit votre désir, votre gain, votre espérance et votre couronne.*
>
> *Let Christ be your desire, your gain, your hope and your crown.*
>
> *St. Bonaventure.*

The most probable opinion is that Naples was the birthplace of St. Januarius. He belonged to a noble Christian family. His piety and learning caused him to be chosen Bishop of Benevento, a stronghold of the kingdom of Italy, by the people of that city. However, as his modesty and humility persuaded him that he was unworthy of this charge, he could bring himself to accept it only after an express command of the Sovereign Pontiff. His charity towards the poor and the afflicted made him admired even by the idolaters, who took pleasure in talking with him and readily told him their needs. He knew how to take skilful advantage of these occasions to give them knowledge of the true God and of Our Lord Jesus Christ, so that many were converted and embraced Christianity.

As persecution was blazing throughout the empire against the Christians, Januarius had fine opportunities of showing his zeal, not only in his own diocese but also in the neighbouring cities, which he constantly went

through to help, console and strengthen the faithful and offer them the aid of his pastoral ministry. The danger was greater in the city of Misenum, where people flocked to visit the cave of a sibyl who gave her oracles close by. That is why Januarius often went there, to keep the servants of God to their duty by his frequent exhortations. There was in that church a deacon of rare merit named Sosius, thirty years old, with whom he formed a close friendship. They worked together for the salvation of souls, and whenever they saw each other they spurred each other on to sacrifice themselves for the name of Jesus Christ and to suffer martyrdom steadfastly when it came. One day, when the zealous deacon was reading the Gospel in an assembly of the faithful, our Saint saw flames of fire come out of his head, which were seen by him alone; and this vision gave him such joy that, throwing his arms round Sosius's neck in the presence of all, he embraced him and congratulated him on the illustrious victories he would soon win over the cruelty of the idolaters. The event bore out this prediction; for very shortly afterwards Sosius was arrested by Dracontius, governor of Campania. Proculus, deacon of the Church of Pozzuoli, with Eutyches and Acutius, noble citizens of the same city, almost at once became the companions of his imprisonment, because they loudly reproved the proconsul's injustice. They were all first condemned to be beaten by the executioners. But Dracontius was recalled and Timothy sent in his place, and he left them in prison without having been able to complete their martyrdom.

As soon as the new prefect arrived, he inquired into the state of the Christians in the province. He was told that Januarius was constantly exhorting them to stand firm in their religion and was particularly encouraging Sosius and the others whom Dracontius had left in the prison of Pozzuoli. He ordered him to be arrested and brought to Nola before his tribunal, to make him feel the penalty due to his rashness. He pressed him to stop his exhortations, forbidden by the edicts of the emperors, and to offer incense to the idols if he wished to escape torture. The holy bishop answered that he could not sacrifice victims to the devil, he who had the honour of sacrificing every day to the true God. He was at once thrown into a furnace that had been kept burning continuously for three days. He came out of it without any injury, without his clothes being damaged or his losing a single hair. The judge, after the manner of tyrants, attributing this miracle to the magic art of which they usually accused the Christians, had the sinews torn from every part of his body by an unheard-of torture, and then sent him back to prison. Meanwhile Festus, deacon, and Desiderius, lector of the Church of Benevento, having learned by public report that their holy pastor was in chains at Nola, hastened there to offer him every service in their power; but no sooner was Timothy told of their arrival than he had them brought before him, and, as they confessed that they were servants of Jesus Christ and would be delighted to die for his glory, he had them put in prison with their bishop. Some days later all three were chained in front of the chariot of the proconsul, who was going to Pozzuoli to have Sosius and his companions, whom he had condemned to the beasts, put to death there.

This torment was very severe for St. Januarius, who could now walk only by a miracle. On entering the prison he embraced the holy martyrs, and, kissing the head of the blessed Levite Sosius, he said: "Here is that holy and venerable head which the divine Spirit prepared for martyrdom by a heavenly flame, a figure of the crown of glory it is soon to receive." Then, speaking to the whole band of holy confessors: "Courage, my brothers," he said to them; "let us fight generously against the devil and his minister Timothy. Our Lord has sent me here so that the shepherd may not be separated from his flock, nor the flock from its shepherd. Let neither promises nor threats make any impression on our hearts. Let us keep inviolable faith with our divine Master. Let us put all our trust in him, and we shall surely triumph over the malice of our adversaries." The next day they were led into the middle of the amphitheatre to be devoured by wild beasts in the presence of all the people. Then the holy martyrs armed themselves with the sign of the cross; and, with eyes and hands raised to heaven, sweetly singing the praises of God, they awaited with wonderful fearlessness the happy moment of their death. The beasts were let loose at the same time and ran at them with their natural fury to make their prey of their sacred bodies. But when they were about to devour them, the divine mercy changed their ferocity into gentleness, so that instead of setting their teeth in them they lay down like lambs at their

feet and used their tongues to caress them.

Timothy, seeing that this spectacle was making the people murmur and fearing a riot against himself, had them taken out of the amphitheatre to be beheaded at once in the public square. As they were being led there, St. Januarius prayed God to take away the governor's sight, so that he might repent of his cruelty, and that those cowardly Christians who had renounced Jesus Christ for fear of torture might, through these prodigies, return to the ways of salvation and do penance for their unfaithfulness. The holy bishop had not yet finished his prayer when Timothy became blind. This punishment brought him somewhat to himself; he acknowledged the power of the servants of Jesus Christ. He stopped their execution, and, having the holy martyr brought to him, said: "Januarius, you who adore the almighty God, pray to him for me, and see that he gives me back the sight of which he has deprived me." The Saint, to show the power of the true God by a fresh miracle, made a second prayer, and at once the governor recovered the use of his eyes; and this brought about the conversion of five thousand persons. Nevertheless, as the reprobate grow worse through the graces they receive, so great a benefit, which had served for the salvation of so many souls, served only to harden this idolater further; for, fearing to incur the hatred of the emperors if he showed indulgence to the holy bishop, he condemned him to die with the others.

While he was being led to the Forum of Vulcan, the place appointed for his execution, an old Christian suddenly appeared, threw himself at his feet and begged him for some pieces of his clothing, to keep in his house as a precious relic. The Saint answered that he had only a handkerchief he could dispose of, and that he would gladly give it to him, but only after his martyrdom, because he needed it to bind his eyes. "And I shall not fail to do so," he added in the presence of the executioners; "Christians know how to keep their word, even after their death." On reaching the public square he prostrated himself to pray; he saw Jesus Christ stretching out his arms to receive him into heaven; then he bound his eyes himself with his handkerchief, encouraged the executioner to do his office, and, saying these words: "Lord Jesus Christ, Son of the living God, I commend my spirit to you and give it into your hands," he was beheaded with his holy companions, about the year 305, on 19 September. The executioner trampled underfoot the handkerchief, which was stained with his blood, telling him mockingly to take it and carry it to the Christian to whom he had promised it. But he was greatly astonished, on returning to the city, to see it in the hands of the old man, to whom St. Januarius had in fact appeared after his martyrdom to give it to him.

As for the emblem of St. Januarius, two translucent phials, in which his blood is kept, are usually seen in his hand or beneath his bust.

CULTE ET RELIQUES.

Cult and relics.

The place where the seven martyrs received the crown was called in Latin *Forum Vulcani*. It is now called Salphutaria, and in Italian Solfataria. It is a broad valley that produces nothing but sulphur, from which whirlwinds of smoke and flame can be seen rising in certain places. On a neighbouring hill a church was built under the invocation of St. Januarius. It was probably there that the relics of the holy martyrs were first laid. The translation of their relics took place about the year 400. The bodies of St. Proculus, St. Eutyches and St. Acutius were carried to Pozzuoli; those of St. Festus and St. Desiderius to Benevento; that of St. Sosius to Misenum, where it was later placed in a magnificent church. The city of Naples was enriched with the relics of St. Januarius before they were carried to Benevento. This first translation seems to have taken place shortly after Constantine had given peace to the Christians. At least it is certain that the holy bishop's body was in a church of his name at Naples in the 8th and 9th centuries. That city attributed to the intercession of this Saint its good fortune in being delivered from a violent eruption of Mount Vesuvius, and from the arms of the various enemies who had sworn its ruin in those same centuries.

Sico, Prince of Benevento, having besieged Naples at the beginning of the 9th century, reduced its inhabitants to such straits that they could save their lives and liberty only by giving up the body of St. Januarius, their patron. The victor carried it off in triumph and laid it reverently at Benevento about the year 825. The church where it rested falling into ruin, it was moved to another church of that city in 1129. Later a secret translation was made to the abbey of Monte-Vergine, on the road from Benevento to Nola. It was hidden there under the high altar in the 12th or 13th century, and was not discovered until 1480, when work was being done to repair and beautify that altar. Ferdinand, King of Naples, wishing to have this precious treasure, obtained from Pope Alexander VI that it should be given back to the city that had first possessed it. The translation was made with great solemnity, and it was laid in the cathedral of Naples on 13 January 1497. That very day the plague, which had long afflicted the city, ceased its ravages. The bones and ashes of St. Januarius's body are in a magnificent chapel of his name built beneath the high altar. In the same church there is another chapel, called the Treasury, in which the head and blood of the holy martyr are kept, with several other relics. The city had it built in thanksgiving for having been delivered from the plague in 1529 through the intercession of our Saint. Everyone knows the terrible eruptions of Mount Vesuvius, which is eight miles from Naples. It has sometimes been seen to vomit a prodigious quantity of sand, ashes and burning stones, which fell again much farther away than the city. At other times a kind of torrent of sulphur, nitre, calcined stones and other combustible matter has come out of the volcano, which, like a liquid fire, dug itself a channel, crossed the valley to the sea, destroyed everything in its path, and often passed very close to Naples. In the 5th and 7th centuries the whirlwinds of ash produced by these eruptions darkened the sky as far as Constantinople, and the inhabitants of that capital of the East were seized with terror. On these various occasions the Neapolitans addressed their prayers to their holy patron, and never in vain. They felt the effects of his protection above all in 685, under the pontificate of Benedict II and the reign of the Emperor Justinian the Younger. To preserve the memory of it the Greeks instituted a feast in honour of the Saint, with two solemn processions a year. The city of Naples was again especially indebted to him for its safety in the eruptions of 1631, 1698 and 1707. In the last of these years the reliquary of St. Januarius was carried in procession to a chapel at the foot of Vesuvius, and at once the eruption ceased, the darkness that followed it cleared, and in the evening the stars were seen shining in the sky. We shall now relate, on the authority of several weighty authors, the famous miracle of the liquefaction and boiling of the blood of St. Januarius. In the Treasury chapel of the cathedral of Naples the head of this Saint is kept, with his blood enclosed in two very ancient glass phials. It is not known when the holy bishop's head was taken out of the reliquary in which his bones were enclosed. The most likely opinion is that it was about the 8th or 9th century. The bust in which the head now is was given in 1036 by King Charles II, Duke of Anjou. The blood is congealed and blackish in colour. This is how the miracle takes place. The head is placed on the altar on the Gospel side, and the phials on the Epistle side. The blood has sometimes been found liquid, but in general it is solid. When the phials are opposite the head, the blood liquefies, either at that very moment or within a few minutes. This liquefaction is followed by a boiling. When the blood has been taken away and is no longer in the presence of the head, it becomes solid again. Although there are several candles on the altar, the phials are found on touching them to be almost entirely cold. On certain occasions they are given to the people to kiss. Sometimes the blood has liquefied in the hands of those holding the phials; sometimes too it has become solid again, from being liquid, as soon as it was touched. The liquefaction also takes place when the phials are in the presence of a bone or some other part of the body of St. Januarius. It has sometimes happened that the liquefaction has not taken place, which has been regarded as a mark of heaven's anger. The two phials are put together on the altar, and the blood liquefies in both at the same time and to the same degree, although there is little in the smaller one and it clings to the sides of the glass.

This miracle takes place in every season of the year, but usually on the feast of St. Januarius, which is kept on 17 September; on that of the translation of his relics from Pozzuoli to Naples, the first Sunday in May; on 16 December, the day on which is commemorated the deliverance from an eruption of Vesuvius obtained by

his intercession in 1631; and lastly on some other extraordinary occasions. Cardinal Æneas Sylvius, afterwards pope under the name of Pius II, speaks of the liquefaction and boiling of the blood of St. Januarius in the reign of Alfonso I of Aragon, in 1450. Angelo Catone, a famous physician of Salerno who flourished in 1474, and other authors of that century also mention it. Historians writing two hundred years earlier relate that when Charles I of Anjou came to Naples, the archbishop of that city exposed the head and blood of the holy martyr. According to the continuator of the chronicle of Maraldus, King Roger venerated these relics in 1140. The same thing is related by Falco of Benevento. Finally, it is said that the miracle in question has so far taken place regularly on the feast of St. Januarius and on that of the translation of his relics, which is placed about the year 400. Many people have tried to explain this fact naturally instead of regarding it as a miracle; but no one has ever disputed the reality and the circumstances of the phenomenon.

Acta Sanctorum; Godescard.

Saint Arnoux of Vendôme, Bishop of Gap and Patron of the Diocese

About 1070. — Pope: Alexander II. — King of France: Philip I.

> *Sedibus, Præsul, superis recepte, Nos, licet vectus super astra, serves; Et tuam, nostræ bone tutor urbis, Respice gentem.*
>
> *Du haut du trône que vous occupez aujourd'hui dans les célestes parvis, vous protégerez vos enfants, vénéré Pasteur ! bien que vous n'apparteniez plus à la terre ; et pour la ville dont vous êtes le défenseur, vous aurez encore un regard d'amour.*
>
> *From the height of the throne you now occupy in the courts of heaven, you will protect your children, revered Shepherd, although you belong no more to the earth; and for the city whose defender you are, you will still have a look of love.*
>
> *Hymn of St. Arnoux.*

In the first years of the eleventh century there was born at Vendôme, then in the diocese of Chartres and today in the diocese of Blois, a child of blessing and grace. This child had received at the baptismal font the name of Arnoux (*Arnulphus*). His parents, remarkable for nobility of blood and still more for nobility of heart, carefully cultivated the happy dispositions he showed from his earliest years. Sweetness of character, innocence of morals, precocity of mind, frankness of manner, comeliness of face — everything combined to make this child his mother's joy, his family's hope and the admiration of all who came near him; everything promised him success, glory and honours — in a word, a brilliant and gilded career. But God, who in the marvellous designs of his Providence had reserved this chosen soul to himself alone, had caused Arnoux to be born near the famous monastery of the Holy Trinity, founded at Vendôme in 1042 by Geoffrey Martel, Count of Anjou, and Agnes his wife. This apparently trivial circumstance was nevertheless to decide his future. Thus forestalled by heavenly blessings and docile to the tender care that surrounded his early years, Arnoux could say happily with the royal prophet: "Lord, from my mother's womb I cast myself into the arms of your love; it is to you, O God of my heart, that I have consecrated the first-fruits of my existence." Indeed, in those years of childhood when one lives almost only for amusement and trifles, his thoughts and affections already rose towards heaven. He left to children of his age the games in the public square, the amusements and the noisy fun; a secret sympathy and an irresistible attraction drew him towards the walls of the holy refuge of which he was one day to be the ornament and the glory. He loved to wander under the arches of the cloisters of the Trinity; he loved the vast naves, the soaring vaults and the resplendent windows of the abbey church. These marvels of Christian art stirred in the depths of his soul a devout enthusiasm and ardent longings for the heaven they made so beautiful to him. Drawn by the odour of holiness that breathed from this fervent community of the sons of St. Benedict, he never tired of seeing, hearing, admiring and studying these religious of such pure life and gentle ways. One of the happiest qualities of our young Saint, and the one that contributed most to his intellectual development and his progress in virtue, was his eagerness to seek

the company and conversation of wise persons, from whom he could learn and be edified. He bore out in his own person this passage of the book of Tobias: “When he was a child, he did nothing childish.” His thoughts, his tastes, his words, his actions, everything showed in him a maturity and wisdom far beyond his years.

To protect Arnoux’s budding virtue from the contagion of the world and prepare him for the high and sublime perfection that entered into the designs of eternal wisdom, God inspired his parents to entrust the education of their beloved son to the devout and learned religious of the Holy Trinity. Who could tell his joy when the longed-for door of the famous monastery opened to him? Admitted among these Fathers, henceforth his masters and his models, he was seen, like the divine Saviour, to grow wonderfully in knowledge and wisdom before God and men. He was that tree planted by the waters, which grows vigorously and will bear fruit in abundance in its season. Each day brought out in him some new quality of heart and mind; each day this precious stone shone more brightly; each day grace added a marvel to the marvels of the day before; and so the blessed child soon found himself the object of the tenderest friendship and of an esteem that soon reached veneration. Delighted with the order, peace and happiness that reigned around him, a thousand times since entering that holy house he had cried out like Peter on Tabor: “Oh, how good it is to be here! If only I could make my home here!” In the liveliness of his faith and love he had very often said with the Psalmist: “I leave to others the honours, pleasures and goods of the earth; I ask of God only one favour, that of dwelling all my life in the blessed refuge to which his grace has led me.”

This pious desire of Arnoux was in part granted. Struck by the high virtue and astonishing maturity of the holy youth, Oderic, the first abbot of the monastery, had become attached to him with a wholly fatherly affection. Enlightened by a heavenly inspiration, he had thought he could depart from the ordinary rules in favour of this favourite child: the venerable old man had therefore clothed him with the monastic habit, and in receiving him among his religious he had tightened the sweet bonds that held the fervent novice in the sacred shade of the cloister. Happy to see a wall of separation between the world and himself, delighted with the large portion the Lord had chosen for him in his inheritance, Arnoux threw himself with all the generosity of a noble soul into the sublime career open before him. Fired with ardour at the sight of the models around him, he laboured by unceasing efforts to reproduce the form of Jesus Christ and to steep himself in those great and noble sentiments that mark the true Christian and the good religious. In this silent retreat, which was his delight, he applied himself with tireless zeal to acquiring the treasures of knowledge and wisdom with which he was one day to enrich the Church of God. And so it could soon be recognized in him that just man who in the house of the Lord flourishes like the palm and grows like the cedar of Lebanon. He could serve as a model to the devout and fervent community.

So many merits and perfections drew still more precious favours upon our Saint. He is the faithful servant who, in reward for his good stewardship, receives new talents. Indeed, the superior of the monastery, seeing such great virtues and so pure a life in this young religious, judged him worthy to be raised to the priesthood. How he answered this call of the Lord, what heavenly things took place in this angel of earth, what transports of love burst forth in this ardent soul at the moment when the bishop, by the laying on of hands, conferred on him the eminent dignity of the priesthood and initiated him into all the secrets of the charity of Jesus for men — no human mouth could tell. And so the grace of the priesthood produced in Arnoux a marked increase of zeal and fervour. Before long new marvels of holiness were to be admired in him: deep humility, incomparable prudence, angelic purity, total self-denial, unalterable patience, love of penance and poverty carried to heroism, prompt and blind obedience, a spirit of faith and prayer that made his whole life one continuous act of union with God, burning fervour in all his religious duties, and finally a tender and generous charity towards his superiors and his brethren: such were the virtues that shone most brightly in the new priest and made of him that man beloved of God and of his fellows whose memory shall be in everlasting blessing.

The union of all these rare and precious qualities with which nature and grace had enriched our Saint made him so dear to his venerable abbot that he constantly regarded and loved him as his son, lived with him in the greatest intimacy and submitted everything to his insight and counsel. This boundless confidence, this honourable goodwill of a superior, never served Arnoux to raise himself to posts of favour or to push himself into less humble offices. He used it solely for his spiritual progress and the general good of the monastery. A faithful observer of the holy rules of the community, instead of softening them he added still more to their severity, always fearing to advance too slowly on the paths of religious perfection and constantly afraid of hearing, despite his life wholly given to sacrifice and good works, the master's reproaches to the unprofitable servant.

Meanwhile Geoffrey Martel died, and the abbey of the Trinity which he had founded and richly endowed soon had to suffer the unjust violence of Fulk, Count of Vendôme, in spite of the solemn promises of that lord, who had sworn to defend and protect it. Abbot Oderic, having vainly exhausted the ways of gentleness to stop the noble count's countless harassments, resolved to make the journey to Rome and carry his complaints to the very tribunal of the Sovereign Pontiff; the abbey had been given to the Holy See and was therefore subject to the Pope. Oderic set out in 1063, taking with him Arnoux, his beloved disciple.

Alexander II then occupied the Apostolic See. He received the two pilgrims with great distinction and showed the liveliest indignation on hearing of the persecutions directed against a monastery that was the property of the Holy See. Several bulls were dispatched to maintain and increase its prerogatives, and the venerable Oderic saw all his claims granted. At the same time Alexander II, who had come to appreciate Arnoux, wished to keep him in Rome. Arnoux submitted with resignation to the honourable exile to which his superior's order condemned him. The Pontiff, charmed by the young religious's amiable spirit, the soundness of his judgement and the depth of his views, felt his esteem and affection for him grow every day. For nearly four years our blessed one had been in Rome, occupied solely with the sanctification of souls and above all of his own; but the moment was coming when God, who delights to exalt the humble, was at last to take this shining light from under the bushel and set it on the candlestick of the Church.

The diocese of Gap was then a prey to the greatest disorders. Deprived of a pastor after having had a bad one, the heritage of the Demetriuses, the Constantines and the Areys, once so flourishing, was cruelly ravaged and offered nothing but ruins. Faith was being lost and morals depraved; this flock, without guide or shepherd, strayed far from its accustomed pastures and slaked its thirst at the poisoned cisterns of which the Prophet speaks. In these dire straits the clergy and people of Gap sent trusted men to Rome to inform the Sovereign Pontiff of the deplorable state of their diocese and to beg him to apply a prompt and effective remedy. This humble prayer of the deputies from Gap, the last cry of a dying Church, was favourably received. The Pope for his part had measured in his mind the extent of the evil. He saw that, to stop its alarming progress, an apostle was needed, a man mighty in word and deed, and he cast his eyes on Blessed Arnoux, to whom he offered the bishopric of Gap. At this proposal from his father and friend, Arnoux's humble soul was troubled. The loftiness of this glorious but heavy dignity terrified him; but the Vicar of Jesus Christ, using his supreme authority, enjoined him to prepare for the dread sacrifice. The only word of consolation with which he accompanied this stern order was the promise to consecrate the bishop-elect with his own hands, so that he might truly load him with all his blessings before sending him to occupy the see of Gap and console that poor Church in its deplorable widowhood.

This choice, come from heaven, was for the deputies, and soon for all the people who had sent them, a cause of great joy and holy gladness. The blessed bishop knows that eager prayers are calling him, that new children await him, that their needs are urgent; so he makes no delay but sets out at once. It was on this journey that God displayed the wonders of his omnipotence by restoring, through Arnoux's intercession, a poor child to life and to his mother. It was near Vendôme: he was walking along the banks of the Loir when cries struck his ears; he drew near; a large crowd surrounded the body of an unfortunate child who had just

been taken lifeless from the water. At this sight Arnoux was moved with compassion; prompted by an inspiration from on high and trusting in the divine power, he covered the body with his cloak. At that very moment the body seemed to come alive, and the child stood up before everyone's eyes, full of health and life. The Saint gave the miraculous cloak to the convent of the Trinity, which made a cope of it. After a few days spent among his brethren in Jesus Christ, the holy and revered pastor arrived among his flock, preceded by the report of this prodigy. He was received as an angel sent from heaven; an enthusiasm hard to describe showed itself on every side; everywhere along his way the people flocked eagerly; everyone wanted to see this astonishing man whom death obeyed; people vied in recalling what fame had published of his virtues; they thought themselves happy to know him, happier still to possess him. His gentle and amiable manners, the irresistible unction of his words and the odour of holiness he spread about him completed his winning of everyone's love and admiration.

Arnoux, wishing to take advantage of these happy dispositions, set to work at once. Like the kindly cloud that pours its gentle showers on the earth, refreshing and fertilizing it, he spread the dew of grace over the parched field of the Lord. Under his life-giving action abuses were reformed, unjust prejudices fell away, faith and piety reawakened, and the most unexpected and striking conversions took place. Like the divine Master, going through towns and countryside, he left everywhere along his way the marks of his inexhaustible and compelling charity, and soon, through the efforts of this admirable zeal, the Church of Gap became one of the most fervent Churches in the Catholic world.

One of the most characteristic features of our Saint's episcopal life was an ardent zeal and fearless courage in defending the rights and discipline of the Church against the enemies of God. He knew well that he was thereby exposing himself to great dangers and making himself a target for the insults of the wicked; but, sustained by help from on high and inaccessible to all human fears, whenever the sacred interests of religion required it he armed himself with the sword of anathema and struck the rebels with it. Now a lord of Charence named Leydet, a declared unbeliever, made a show on every occasion of sovereign contempt for the authority of the Church and openly persecuted believing and religious men; one day he even went so far as to ill-treat a venerable canon of the cathedral. Arnoux, after vainly using every gentle means to bring this unhappy man back, found himself under the hard necessity of launching the censures of the Church against him: Leydet was excommunicated. In his resentment he broke out in threats and committed outrageous violence against the Saint himself; but heaven took it upon itself to avenge its bishop's honour openly: Leydet died shortly afterwards, horribly crushed by a falling beam.

Another day, when, like a new Stephen, Arnoux was triumphantly defending the cause of the Gospel and his ardent words were confounding the wicked and laying the sinner low, one of those unbelievers who recognized himself in his moving reproaches, driven by the devil, dared to draw his sword against his bishop and wounded him deeply in the arm. This sacrilegious audacity did not long go unpunished; the following night the wretch who had thus raised a parricidal hand against the holy bishop was struck dead. These terrible judgements of God filled every heart with religious respect for the person of the blessed bishop and for the acts of his episcopal administration.

A nun who had lost sight of the holiness of her state found herself possessed by the devil; she became so violent that she had to be bound with iron chains. This unhappy woman was brought to the holy bishop, who prostrated himself before the Lord, drove out the spirit of darkness with a sign of the cross, and obtained for this poor sinner, together with the deliverance of her body, the conversion of her soul and the pardon of her faults. On a solemn occasion Arnoux, surrounded by a great crowd, was consecrating a church of his diocese (Valernes, Basses-Alpes). One of those present, who had rashly placed himself on a high spot to see the ceremony better, fell, and in his fall broke several limbs. Told of this unfortunate accident, the Saint hastened to the poor man; deeply moved at the sight of his dreadful state, he threw himself on his knees, and in the ardour of his charity and faith addressed a fervent prayer to God, and at once the unfortunate man was

restored to perfect health.

Another day, as Arnoux was washing his hands before going to celebrate the sacred mysteries, a poor blind man was brought to him who, prostrating himself at his feet, asked him, as the blind man of Jericho once asked our divine Saviour, to make him see and to call down on him the God of mercies. The blessed one, touched by his infirmities and still more by his devout sentiments, poured the water he had in his hands over the blind man's eyes, and he at once recovered his sight completely. The clergy and people who witnessed this miraculous deliverance gave lively and resounding thanks to the Lord, who was so visibly pleased to show forth the glory of their holy bishop.

Thus, by the splendour of his wonders, the holiness of his life, the fervour of his prayers and the unction of his words, Arnoux was the apostle, the father, the model and the delight of his flock. Thus he restored among our forefathers, to whom heaven had sent him, the purity of the faith and the fervour of piety, and sowed in our lands those precious seeds which have never ceased to this day to bear fruits of salvation and immortality. But it was not only the spiritual temple that Arnoux strove to build up, resplendent with virtues and fragrant with the good odour of Jesus Christ: under his fruitful hand the material temple too was rebuilt, and the cathedral of Gap, an ancient monument restored by our Saint, was long the pride of the city and the province.

At last came the moment when so many precious services were to receive their just wages, the moment when the watchful shepherd was to rest from all his labours. Arnoux had generously run his course; like the Apostle, he had fought the great battles of the Lord; in the cloister and on the episcopal throne he had inviolably kept the faith; he had been a perfect model of the priestly virtues and a faithful imitator of the divine Master; now the sovereign Judge was to bind his brow with the crown of justice. Oh, how precious in the sight of God was the death of the beloved bishop! That moment, so full of terror for the worldly, was for our Saint a day of feasting and triumph. Full of joy and confidence, says the author of his life, he gently gave back his body to the earth and his soul to heaven, whither it rose in the arms of the angels to be put in possession of eternal glory. It was 19 September 1070, according to some, and 1074 according to others.

CULTE ET RELIQUES. — CONFRÉRIE DE SAINT-ARNOUX.

Cult and relics. — Confraternity of St. Arnoux.

The holy remains of the blessed one, watered with the tears of his mourning clergy and people, were buried with all the pomp of religion in the church of Saint-Jean-le-Rond, now destroyed. In the years following St. Arnoux's death there was an extraordinary concourse to that church, and God was pleased to glorify his servant by multiplying wonders at his tomb. From every side and every day a great crowd of the infirm and sick could be seen pressing round the holy relics, and their trust and faith were never disappointed. From the body of the servant of God there breathed a healing power to which the most stubborn and violent ills gave way. At his invocation and through his merits, a cruel sickness that was laying the region waste ceased its dreadful ravages. Finally, pious legends and the history of St. Arnoux mention several dead persons restored to life, to the great admiration of the whole city.

Struck by all these wonders which he had seen or learned of by public report, and pressed by the entreaties made to him on every side, Armand, who occupied the see of Gap thirty years after the holy bishop's death, thought it right to exhume the body, translate the relics and expose them to the veneration of the people. On 13 June 1104, then, he went at the head of all his clergy to the tomb of Blessed Arnoux; after a fervent prayer before that glorious tomb, the gravestone was lifted with religious respect; but — O prodigy that filled all present with fear and wonder! — the holy body and the vestments covering it appeared as intact and fresh as on the day of burial. It was then that, with devout astonishment, they noticed on one of the arms, still bleeding, the wound inflicted on him by the wretch whose sacrilegious attack we have related. These holy relics, as the feast of their translation still kept on 13 June shows, were from that day exposed to the

veneration of all the faithful in the principal church of Gap.

In 1692 the allies, guided by the Waldensians, crossed the mountains under the command of the Duke of Savoy, and their first blows fell on the city of Gap, which that prince entered without resistance. The duke's soldiers, abusing the rights of war, pillaged the city and set fire to it as they withdrew. The fire destroyed the cathedral and left of the ancient city only a few scattered houses. At the news of the invasion the relics of St. Arnoux, St. Arey, St. Demetrius and several others, carefully kept in reliquaries, were buried under the pavement of the sanctuary behind the high altar, and thus preserved from profanation, pillage and fire. The following year Mgr Charles Bénigne d'Hervé, Bishop and Count of Gap, took up the holy relics, recognized them as those that had been hidden underground, and exposed them once more to the devotion of his beloved flock. The devout generosity of the people of Gap soon replaced the silver bust, which the allies had seized, with another reliquary of equally rich material and precious workmanship. For their part Mgr d'Hervé, and after him Mgr de Malissoles, also carried out great repairs to the cathedral.

But a century had not passed before, under the reign of the Terror which then weighed on France, the relics of St. Arnoux had once again to be hidden from triumphant impiety. They were placed in the chapter archives, and the silver bust shared the fate of the crosses, chalices and monstrances of the cathedral: it was sent to the mint in Paris. When later, thanks to the sword of Napoleon, calmer days dawned for France, the sacred deposit reappeared, to receive once more the homage of public veneration and to protect the city and the region by its presence.

Gregory XVI, by a brief of 19 February 1845, deigned to grant a plenary indulgence, applicable to the souls in Purgatory, to all the faithful of both sexes who, being contrite, having confessed and received Communion, visit the church of Saint-Arnoux and pray there for a moment for the intention of the Sovereign Pontiff, on the Saint's feast or on one of the days of the octave; and also an indulgence of three hundred days to the faithful each time that, with contrite heart, they attend the exercises of the novena that serves as preparation for the feast of St. Arnoux. Having been informed of Mgr Depéry's plan to establish in the city of Gap a confraternity under the patronage of St. Arnoux, in order to secure, by more faithful frequenting of the sacraments, the perseverance of children who have made their First Communion, and to offer them a kind of noviciate to initiate them into the exercises of the great confraternity of White Penitents, the same Pope, by another brief also dated 19 February 1845, grants in perpetuity, under the usual conditions, to all who become members of the new confraternity, a plenary indulgence on the day of their reception, at the point of death, and on the Sunday on which the feast of St. Arnoux is solemnized at Gap. An indulgence of seven years and seven quarantines is also granted to the same members who, on four solemnities irrevocably appointed by the Ordinary, namely Easter, Corpus Christi, the Assumption and Christmas, visit the church of Saint-Arnoux and pray there for a moment for the intention of the Sovereign Pontiff, after confessing and receiving Communion. Finally, the same members shall share in an indulgence of sixty days for all the acts of piety they perform devoutly and with contrite heart. A third brief, of the same date, declares that all Masses said at any altar of the cathedral of Saint-Arnoux for the repose of the souls of deceased members shall enjoy in perpetuity all the favours attached to a privileged altar.

After obtaining all these privileges, Mgr Jean-Irénée Depéry published on 28 June 1845 the ordinance erecting the confraternity of Saint-Arnoux, and by an article of the rule the members were appointed to form the guard of honour of their glorious patron on his feast day. That is why they attend the solemn procession of St. Arnoux under a special banner and walk before his bust, in the middle of the ranks.

Extracted from the *Histoire hagiologique du diocèse de Gap*, by Mgr Depéry.

Saint Lucy, Princess of Scotland, Solitary at Sampigny, in the Diocese of Verdun

1090.[1] *— Pope: Urban II. — King of France: Philip I.*

C'est une grande grâce de Dieu d'avoir renoncé aux délices de ce monde.

It is a great grace of God to have renounced the delights of this world.

St. Bonaventure.

It is said that this Saint was the daughter of a king of Scotland and that from her earliest youth, in the very midst of the court and in her father's palace, she led the life of a nun rather than of a king's daughter. Indeed, she kept strict solitude in her own room, where, detached from all creatures, she thought only of heavenly things. Fasts, vigils and prayer were the whole delight of her soul. If she was seen in public, it was only to give alms and to go to church, where she assisted at the divine mysteries with angelic modesty and heard the word of God with a sincere intention of practising the maxims of the Gospel in an eminent degree.

One day when she was at a sermon, the preacher quoted the words Our Lord speaks in St. Matthew: "If you will be perfect, go, sell all that you have and give the price to the poor, and you shall have treasure in heaven; and everyone that has left house, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands for my name's sake, shall receive a hundredfold and shall possess life everlasting." Then she felt so convinced of the vanity of earthly greatness and of the danger of riches to salvation that, as though these words had been addressed to her alone, she conceived in her heart the plan of leaving her father's house and her country, to live unknown on earth and follow Jesus Christ, whom she had already taken for her Spouse. She made no delay in carrying out this plan; having disguised herself, she slipped cleverly out of the palace, crossed the whole of Scotland, passed over the sea and landed in France; and, continuing her way, she went as far as Austrasia, which is now Lorraine. She would have gone farther, so eager was she to get far from her homeland; but on reaching the banks of the Meuse, the waters, which had lately overflowed, stopped her and obliged her to make for a neighbouring hill to seek a refuge there. There she met a husbandman named Thibault, who, noticing something above the common in her, received her very charitably into his house and kindly offered to keep her as long as she wished to stay. She accepted the offer, but on condition that she should be there as a servant, and even that she should be put to the lowest and hardest tasks of the house.

She spent several years in this humble condition, now keeping the flocks, now doing all the housework, which is known to be very hard in the country and was certainly beyond the strength of a girl brought up at court; but grace sustained her, and the joy she felt at seeing herself the servant of a villager, she who ought to have been served by the greatest lords of Scotland, made her find nothing difficult. She thought herself a thousand times happier in this obscure and humbling state, which made her like her Saviour, than if she had still been in the palace of the king her father, honoured as a princess. These tasks, laborious as they were, did not prevent her from performing all her spiritual exercises. She often spent part of the night spinning, and this work pleased her greatly, because while doing it she could easily converse with God.

Her services were so pleasing to Thibault that, finding himself without wife or children, since divine Providence had taken them from him, he made her the sole heir of all his goods. She found herself mistress of them at once on his death; but, having left immense riches for love of her heavenly Spouse and renounced all the claims she could lawfully have had to the kingdom of

Scotland, she took care not to attach herself to a little estate such as a villager's, though he was the richest in his district. She sold everything and distributed the money to the poor, except the house, which she turned into a fine church in honour of the most Holy Trinity, the Queen of Angels and the Apostles St. Peter and St. Paul. She had a grotto made there in the form of a vault, where, like a moaning dove in the clefts of the rocks, she spent the rest of her days in tears, vigils, prayers and austerities. There can still be seen a hollow cut in the rock in the shape of a chair, where she rested when she could no longer resist sleep. She died on 19 September, at about forty years of age. The century is not known; but it is conjectured that it was the 5th or 6th of the Incarnation; others say in 1090.

CULTE ET RELIQUES.

Cult and relics.

Her body was buried in the middle of that same church, which is near the village of Sampigny and now bears her name. Her mausoleum can be seen there, raised from the ground and supported by four stone pillars. It is a great marble tomb on which is her figure in the round, showing her dressed as a princess, with sheep at her feet. The local tradition holds that her head was carried to Scotland through the care of the king her father, to console himself for the loss of so dear a daughter, so worthy of veneration. It is even said that this prince came to Lorraine to carry off her whole body, but that, having had it put on a wagon, he found it impossible to make it move, which obliged him to be content with the head alone and to leave the rest at the place of her burial. In 1332 these sacred relics were raised from the ground and placed in a reliquary by Henri d'Apremont, Bishop of Verdun, and about a hundred years later they were transferred to another, more precious reliquary by Guillaume d'Haraucourt, bishop of the same city, as appears from their own attestations, which were found in this last reliquary in 1618, when Charles of Lorraine, one of their successors, visited and opened it. The Minim friars became the custodians of this rich treasure, the church in which it rests having been given to them in 1625 for the foundation of a convent of their Order by Louis of Lorraine, Prince of Phalsbourg, and Henriette of Lorraine, his wife.

The church of Sainte-Lucie-du-Mont, founded by the Saint herself on the site of the house of the generous Thibault, is entirely destroyed; of the whole Minim convent there remains only one block of buildings, in the middle of a walled garden that has become private property.

After '93, the owner, a former Lazarist brother, had a little chapel built, now in ruins, on the site of the old church. This chapel contains the ancient grotto cut in the rock, where the Saint used to withdraw to pray. One goes down to it by a dozen much-worn steps. The grotto has no other opening than the door, which is closed by a trapdoor. In a kind of niche there can still be seen the seat called *St. Lucy's Armchair*, where the Saint used to rest and in which Marguerite de Gonzague, Duchess of Lorraine, sat in 1609, and Anne of Austria in 1638, and where to this day all the women who come to implore her intercession sit.

There was also, on the hill where St. Lucy used to pasture her sheep, an ancient chapel which has just been raised from its ruins through the care of the mayor and municipal council of Sampigny. The new building is in a Gothic style of fairly good taste. It was on this hill that the Saint one day planted the distaff or spindle she used for spinning while keeping her flock. The spindle took root and produced the variety of tree that still bears the name of St. Lucy's Cherry or St. Lucy's Wood. It is a very fragrant wood, smooth and close-grained, capable of taking a very fine polish, and reddish when dry. It was formerly much sought after, and the sculptors of Lorraine made excellent use of it. Among them are named the Foulons, who made a quantity of small works in St. Lucy's wood for the Dauphin, son of Louis XIV, and Jean-François Lupot of Mirecourt (1684–1749), who worked this wood for the violin-makers of that town.

St. Lucy's cherry is now very widespread, but it is claimed to be more fragrant at Sampigny than anywhere else. Near the chapel there stands a very old one which popular belief regards as the one the Saint planted; if it is not the parent stock, it is at least one of its most ancient offshoots.

St. Lucy must have lived before the 11th century; in 1046 there was a village of that name in the diocese of Verdun.

She is thought to have been placed among the Saints by Henri de Blois, Bishop of Verdun from 1117 to 1129. Her office was celebrated on 19 September throughout the diocese. It was removed from the Breviary printed at Verdun in 1560 under Bishop Psaulme by Nicolas Bacquenois. When the Revolution broke out, the relics of St. Lucy were kept in a very finely decorated reliquary, which was carried in procession on solemn feasts and remained exposed to the veneration of the faithful for six months of the year in the church of Sampigny and for the other six months in the church of Sainte-Lucie, which was the mother church and

near which the cemetery still lies. On certain fixed days the sacred mysteries and the offices were celebrated in that church.

On 12 Frimaire of the Year II (2 December 1793), a revolutionary who was living in St. Lucy's house, which had been sold as national property, assembled the municipal council and led all its members but one into that church; then, having shut himself in there and harangued his companions once more, he took down St. Lucy's reliquary, which rested under a canopy, and broke it open with a blow of his sabre. All present then saw a packet wrapped in very fine linen, under which was another covering of red damask enclosing the holy relics. With the bones were six authentications, three of them on parchment. One member, Nicolas Barbier, seized the relics in order to preserve them and, with the consent of the council, went and put them in a corner of the covered charnel-house where the bones of the dead were kept; but he took care to take a certain quantity of them, which he afterwards distributed to devout persons of the place. The next day the faithful, learning where the treasure had been put, hastened to gather it up and share it among the inhabitants who wished for it. After the restoration of Catholic worship, M. Pierrot, parish priest of Sampigny, collected the Saint's relics, thus saved during the Revolution by devout inhabitants, and placed them in a gilded wooden case that serves as the pedestal of a statue of the Saint, also of gilded wood, about a metre high.

These relics are carried in procession several times a year, chiefly on her feast, the Assumption and the Rogation days, with the authorization of the Bishop of Verdun; the concourse of the faithful is always considerable when these ceremonies take place.

Acta Sanctorum; Camerarius; *Recueil des saints d'Écosse*; the Rev. Fr. François de la Noue, *Chronique de l'Ordre des Minimes*; *Life of the Saint*, or *Luciades*, by the Rev. Fr. Pierre Philippe, of the Order of Friars Minor; *Local notes* supplied by the Abbé Manget, parish priest of Sampigny; and *Mémoires de la Société philomatique de Verdun*, by the Abbé Clouet.

The Apparition of the Most Blessed Virgin on the Mountain of La Salette, in the Diocese of Grenoble

1846. — Pope: Pius IX. — King of France: Louis-Philippe I.

> *O montagne de la Salette ! 2000 mètres mesurent la hauteur de ta cime au-dessus de la terre ; mais ce n'est là qu'une hauteur médiocre : ton élévation véritable est celle qu'a donnée à ton sommet, en le touchant, le pied virginal de Marie.*
>
> *O mountain of La Salette! Two thousand metres measure the height of your summit above the earth; but that is only a middling height: your true elevation is the one given to your summit by the virginal foot of Mary when it touched it.*
>
> *The Abbé Boissin, Mois de Marie de la Salette.*

It was 19 September 1846, the last day of the Ember Days, a Saturday, which that year was the eve of the feast of Our Lady of the Seven Sorrows, and at the hour of First Vespers — that is, at the very moment when the Church was singing in her office the words: "Oh, with what flood of tears is the Virgin Mother overwhelmed! What anguish, what sorrow!" After an interval of eighteen centuries, Mary, come down from the summit of Calvary, appeared on that of La Salette, a small parish in the canton of Corps (Isère) and the diocese of Grenoble, to two children of twelve and thirteen, Maximin Giraud and Mélanie Mathieu, who had seen each other the day before for the first time and were arriving together, following their herds, on the southern slope of the mountain of La Salette.

It is remarkable that the most important events of religion take place on mountains. After the flood the ark comes to rest on a mountain of Armenia. Jehovah dictates his laws to Moses on Mount Sinai. The prophet Elijah must climb Horeb to hear the voice of the Lord. God sets the seat of David's kingship on the mountain of Zion. When Jesus Christ begins his apostolic life, it is from the top of a mountain that he speaks to the

crowd for the first time. He leads his three best-loved disciples onto Tabor, and there he is transfigured; he prepares for his Passion by watching and praying on the Mount of Olives; he dies on Calvary; and finally, when he is about to return to the bosom of his Father, he sees his Apostles for the last time on a mountain of Galilee, and from there he rises to heaven.

Here is how M. Maximin Giraud relates[1] the apparition of which he was the happy witness:

"It is noon. Seated on the summit of the holy mountain, on stones placed one on another to form a kind of bench, near a dried-up spring — which flowed that very day, has flowed ever since, and bears the name of the Miraculous Spring — Mélanie[2] and I are eating our frugal meal. Our cows drink and scatter. Tired, I stretch out on the grass and sleep. A few moments later I hear Mélanie's voice calling me: 'Mémin' (short for Maximin), 'Mémin, come quick, let's go and see where our cows are.' I wake with a start, seize my stick and follow Mélanie, who was acting as my guide. We cross the Sezia and climb quickly up the slope of a hillock, and on the other side we see our cattle lying quietly. We were coming back towards the stone bench where we had left our wallets a few moments before, when all at once Mélanie stops… her stick falls from her hands… Frightened, she turns to me and says: 'Do you see that great light over there?' — 'Yes, I see it,' I answered; 'but come on, pick up your stick.' And then, brandishing mine threateningly: 'If it touches me,' I added, 'I'll give it a good whack.'

"This light, before which that of the sun seems to grow pale, appears to open, and within it we make out the form of a lady still more brilliant. She wore a white headdress, shining, silvery, shot with gold, high and rounded at the top and leaning slightly forward. Above it and all round was placed a crown of white, red and blue roses; on every side rose little flowers of gold, from the midst of which flames of light sprang up; between each spray of flowers there was a spray of brilliants; these sprays formed stems, the others spangles or stars, and all these ornaments were resplendent. The Virgin's headdress came down over her neck and entirely hid her hair and ears; Mary's features were long, and her heavenly face, of admirable whiteness and beauty, expressed gentleness and goodness and shone with a marvellous brightness. She had a white kerchief crossed over her breast, whose two ends, tied in a simple knot, crossed on her back; this kerchief and the dress Mary wore came up very high and almost entirely hid her neck; a garland of roses like those of the crown bordered the whole kerchief; a broad chain of plain gold, without pattern or links, lay along this garland; a similar but smaller chain held a gold crucifix with a very brilliant figure of Christ; on the right side of this crucifix hung pincers, and on the left a hammer, so many instruments of the Passion. The Virgin's dress was of virginal whiteness, sown with gold spangles of great brilliance; her shoes were white too, topped with a gold buckle and surrounded with roses, smaller than those of the crown but of the same colours; and from the midst of all the roses the Virgin wore came flames of light and of the finest gold, which rose like incense and mingled with the light that surrounded her. Lastly, a plain apron, almost as long as the dress, of a light and wholly brilliant fabric, completed her costume. Though we were about twenty metres away, we hear a gentle voice, as if it came from a mouth close to our ears, saying: 'Come forward, my children, do not be afraid; I am here to tell you great news.'

"The reverent fear that had held us still vanishes; we run to her as to a good and most excellent mother. The beautiful Lady comes forward too, and, suspended ten centimetres above the ground in front of us, begins her discourse thus: 'If my people will not submit, I am forced to let go the arm of my Son; it is so heavy and so weighty that I can no longer hold it back. How long have I suffered for you! If I want my Son not to abandon you, I am charged to pray to him without ceasing, and for you all; and you take no notice of it. I have given six days for work, I have reserved the seventh for myself, and they will not grant it to me;[3] that is what makes the arm of my Son so heavy. And those who drive the carts cannot swear without bringing in the name of my Son: these are the two things that make his arm so heavy. If the harvest is spoiled, it is only on your account; I showed it to you last year with the potatoes, and you took no notice; on the contrary, when you found them spoiled you swore and brought in the name of my Son. They will go on, so that at Christmas

there will be none left.'

"'Oh, no, madam, that is not true!' answered Mélanie. 'Yes, my child, you will see it. Let him who has wheat not sow it; the beasts will eat it; and if a few plants still come up, when it is threshed it will all fall to dust. A great famine is coming. Before the famine comes, little children under seven will be seized with trembling and will die in the arms of those holding them, and the grown-ups will do their penance by hunger. The grapes will rot and the walnuts will go bad.'

"It was at this point that the beautiful Lady gave us her secret. Though she kept the same tone of voice, when she spoke to Mélanie I heard nothing; and when she was confiding my secret to me, Mélanie became completely deaf. This deafness of the moment disappeared, and she resumed her discourse with these words: 'If they are converted, the stones and rocks will turn into wheat, and the potatoes will be found sown in the ground.' Then she asked us: 'Do you say your prayers well, my children?' We both answered: 'No, madam, not much.'

"'Ah, my children, you must say them well, night and morning. When you have no time, say only a *Pater* and an *Ave Maria*; and when you have time, you must say more. Only a few rather elderly women go to Mass; the others work all summer, and then in winter they go to Mass only to mock religion. In Lent they go to the butcher's like dogs.' Then she asked us: 'Have you not seen spoiled wheat, my children?' I answered: 'No, madam, I have not seen any.' Then the beautiful Lady went on: 'But you, my child, you must surely have seen it once, near Le Coin, with your father, when the man of the field said to your father: Come and see how my wheat is spoiling! You went there; then your father took two or three ears in his hands and rubbed them, and they fell all to dust; then, on your way back, when you were no more than half an hour from Corps, your father gave you a piece of bread, saying: Here, my child, eat this year, for I do not know who will eat next year if the wheat spoils like this.' I answered: 'That's quite true, madam, but I didn't remember it.'

"She ended her discourse with these words: 'Well, my children, you will make this known to all my people.'

"The beautiful Lady crossed the Sesia, brushing past me on the right, and went on her way without turning back towards us; and, as a last farewell, she repeated these words once more: 'Well, my children, you will make this known to all my people.'

"Motionless as statues, our eyes fixed on the beautiful Lady, we see her, her feet together like a skater, glide over the tops of the grass without bending it. Coming out of our rapture, we run after her; we soon catch up with her; Mélanie goes in front and I behind, a little to the right. There, in our presence, the beautiful Lady rose imperceptibly, remained for some minutes between heaven and earth at a height of about two metres; then her head, body, legs and feet melted into the light that framed her. We saw nothing more than a globe of fire rising and entering the firmament. In our simple language we called this globe the second sun. Our eyes stayed fixed for a long time on the spot where the luminous globe had disappeared. I cannot describe here the ecstasy in which we found ourselves. I speak only of myself: I know very well that my whole being was annihilated, that the whole organism in me was stopped. When we came to ourselves, Mélanie and I looked at each other without being able to utter a single word, now raising our eyes to heaven, now looking at our feet and around us, now questioning with our eyes everything about us. We seemed to be looking for the resplendent person whom I have not seen again. My companion was the first to break the silence and said: 'It must be, Mémin, the good God or my father's Blessed Virgin, or perhaps some great saint.' — 'Ah!' I answered her, 'if I had known, I would certainly have asked her to take me with her to heaven!'

"The sun was going down; Mélanie and I gathered our cows, which had hardly moved. Beside my beasts, which were going one by one along a narrow path, I went back, dreamy and thoughtful, to the hamlet of Les Ablandins. I was the first to speak of the beautiful Lady, to Mélanie's mistress. The words 'lady on fire' and 'second sun' made her think I had lost my head. She asked me to tell her what I had seen and heard on the

holy mountain, which surprised her greatly; and I myself was quite astonished that she had not seen, as I had, that dazzling light placed on the top of the mountain and therefore visible from a very great distance. I could not imagine that I had received a special grace. The next day I went home to my father at Corps; Mélanie went on minding her herd. We were thus providentially separated for about three months, each of us on our own side relating what we had seen and heard and answering all the objections put to us — and that in French, we who did not know it on the very morning of 19 September 1846. Such was that memorable day."

Let us add to this account a brief indication of the many proofs that demonstrate its truth. We borrow from M. Similien, licentiate in letters, these closing lines of a scientific report he made on the Miraculous Spring, which since this apparition has never ceased to flow on the plateau of the holy mountain: "A spring, until then intermittent, began to flow on 20 September 1846, a time of year at which from time immemorial it had always been dry; this spring has become continuous and remains permanent day by day. Its water, without containing any ingredient that acts on the human body, has cured many sick people, even several to whom this liquid was harmful in certain cases. One is therefore forced to admit that this spring has ceased to be subject to purely physical laws and that its water has a supernatural efficacy…; and as its flowing coincided with the moment when the two children, incapable of lying, attested that they had had an apparition of the Blessed Virgin, these two facts stand together and are inadmissible one without the other."

That is to say, this miracle alone is a sufficient demonstration. Many others, however, have been added to it and are still being added every day: miracles in the order of grace, or wonderful conversions; miracles in the order of nature, or cures naturally impossible, several of which have been canonically established; and finally the fulfilment of the Blessed Virgin's predictions, if not wholly, at least in great part: the grape disease (1850 and above all 1851), the potato disease (1846, 1847), the walnut disease (1851), cholera (1849, 1854, 1865), the mortality of children (the sweating sickness of 1854), scarcity (1854, 1855). Besides, if the Sovereign Pontiff, while believing in this apparition, has not yet pronounced formally, two bishops of Grenoble, Mgr de Bruillard and his successor Mgr de Ginoulhiac, have both given a judgement on this apparition that establishes its truth and allows no doubt. This miracle is therefore incontestable. And so for twenty years countless pilgrims have gone every year from the most distant countries to offer Our Lady of La Salette the homage of their faith and love.

Thanks to their generous offerings it has been possible to build a magnificent church, with two vast hostels for travellers and a house for the missionaries, who put their ministry at the disposal of the devout faithful. There every year sees thousands of pilgrims arrive; the blind recover their sight, paralytics regain the use of their limbs, the sick of every kind are cured and carry away the water that is to cure others.

Struck by these facts, the missionaries established a confraternity of Our Lady of La Salette, and Pius IX raised it to an archconfraternity under the title of Our Lady Reconciler of La Salette, with the aim of appeasing the anger of God through Mary, of having prayers said for the conversion of sinners, and of making each member work for his own sanctification. To attain this aim Pius IX seemed to wish to gather here all the favours and indulgences in his power. Indeed, by various briefs he declares the high altar of the church privileged in perpetuity; he authorizes the Mass *De Beata* for every day of the year except doubles of the first and second class and privileged ferias; he grants a plenary indulgence to the members of the confraternity on the day of their reception, at the point of death, and every year on the principal feast of the confraternity; he grants an indulgence of seven days and seven quarantines four times a year on appointed days, and sixty days' indulgence for each work of piety or charity. Further, he grants a plenary indulgence once a year to whoever visits the church of La Salette, as much to whoever attends at least three exercises of the retreat preached by the missionaries, and two hundred days each time one attends one of these exercises. By another brief the missionaries are authorized to indulgence rosaries, crosses and medals, to give the scapular, and to solemnize every year, in all the churches of the diocese, 19 September, the anniversary of the day of the apparition, or the following Sunday. Finally the Sovereign Pontiff even authorizes all the priests of

the diocese to celebrate the memory of this apparition by reciting the office and celebrating the Mass of the Patronage of the Blessed Virgin, which according to the Roman rite is celebrated on the fourth Sunday of October.

We have gathered these documents from various sources, particularly from the pamphlet of M. Maximin Giraud; from the *Mois de Marie de la Salette* by the Abbé Boissin; from *Notre-Dame de France* by the parish priest of Saint-Sulpice; and from the address of the Bishop of Grenoble (September 1872).

Saint Seine or Sequanus, Monk of Réome, then Founder of the Abbey of Saint-Seine, in the Diocese of Dijon (580)

Sequanus, commonly called St. Seine, was born about the year 514 in the town of Mémont (*Magnus Mons*), which is today no more than a very small village in the department of Doubs, and from childhood he gave great signs of his future holiness. He left his parents, whose only child he was, and withdrew into the solitude of Verrey-sous-Drée (*Valeriacus*). With the branches of trees he built a cell and an oratory and led a very hard life, always in prayer and inflicting on his still tender body a perpetual fast, which he broke only after reciting the whole Psalter. He was afterwards admitted to the clergy, and, after spending five years in the diaconate, he was ordained priest while still young in age, but mature in his conduct and in the holiness of his life. Being exposed to the jealousy of the clerics of his native town, he thought of embracing the monastic life and went to Réome to place himself under the discipline of the celebrated abbot St. John. On returning to his own country (536), he looked among his father's estates for a place suitable for founding a monastery; for this he chose a very thick forest, until then inaccessible and uninhabited, and there he built cells and an oratory in honour of the most holy Virgin. He was helped in his labours by the inhabitants of the neighbourhood, who had formerly been fierce and whom he had made as gentle as doves. Such was the origin of the Benedictine abbey of Saint-Seine (*Segestrense monasterium*), in the diocese of Dijon. A multitude of disciples gathered under his direction in a very short time. The diligence and perseverance with which they gave glory to God by singing his praises and by the work of their hands fulfilled all the holy founder's wishes. He departed this world full of days, about the year 580, and his death, like his life, was marked by miracles. His body was buried in the church of the abbey, which was laid waste in 677 by Ebroin, in 732 by the Saracens and in 888 by the Normans. In 1347 the head was set apart in a silver bust; on 8 June 1620 it was carried with the shrine to Saint-Bénigne at Dijon to obtain rain. At the request of Louis de Bourbon-Condé, the monks gave his mother, in 1639, the jawbone of St. Seine. During the summer of 1791 all the riches of the abbey were sent to the chief town of the district, and the ashes of St. Seine, mingled with those of the other blessed ones kept in the treasury. Perhaps they are today in the two urns placed at the east end of the choir. The church of Corbigny (Nièvre) possesses a frontal bone of the Saint.

Taken from the *Proper of Dijon*, and completed with the *Vie des Saints de Dijon* by the Abbé Duplus, and the *Hagiologie Nivernaise* by Mgr Crosnier.

Saint Mary de Cervellione, Virgin, of the Order of Mercy (1290)

St. Mary de Cervellione was born in 1230 at Barcelona. Her birth was owed to the prayers of St. Peter Nolasco, for Doña Maria, her mother, had until then been barren. The family's joy was great at the coming of this little girl, whose face shone with a marvellous brightness. From her early years she showed an extraordinary purity of soul, weeping over the slightest faults as if they had been grave offences against God. She sought solitude and showed a remarkable taste for reading the Lives of the Saints, whose deeds she strove to imitate. She never went out except in her mother's company, and then only to go to church or to the hospitals. She shunned idleness and worked at preparing vestments for the church or at making clothes for the poor. She led a hard and crucified life, fasting courageously, wearing a rough hair shirt and often taking the discipline.

Several times sought in marriage by rich suitors, she constantly refused, for she had chosen Jesus Christ for her Spouse; and to obtain from heaven fidelity to her resolution she redoubled her prayers, her austerities and her works of charity. The jealous devil raised up yet another suitor for her, of illustrious birth, to whom her parents would gladly have given her. But nothing could overcome her resistance. Leaning on the help of heaven, she remained unshakable. From that day she stripped herself of all the ornaments of the world and wore nothing but garments of coarse wool; and some time afterwards, on the advice of her director and with the consent of her family, she took the habit of Our Lady of Mercy. There were as yet no nuns of this Order, and she became the foundress of the first convent, which was soon filled with holy women of the richest families of Barcelona, eager to consecrate themselves to God and to give themselves to works of piety and mercy. Appointed superior, she began by doing herself what she recommended to her nuns, thus making obedience easy for them. God heaped favours upon her: he granted her the gift of prophecy and the gift of miracles. After a life full of merits and good works, she gave up her soul to God on 19 September 1290 and was buried, amid an immense concourse, in the church of Our Lady of Mercy. Ninety years after her death, Peter IV of Aragon had her tomb opened in order to give her a burial more worthy of her. Her body was found incorrupt; one would have said that life had only just left it. As the miracles never ceased to multiply at her tomb, Innocent III approved the cult paid to her.

Acta Sanctorum.

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[1] Adrian, Abbot of Niridan, near Naples, had been proposed to fill the see of Canterbury (county of Kent); but he did not dare accept this charge and named in his place Theodore of Tarsus (Cilicia), a Greek monk known for the holiness of his life, who lived at Rome. He wore the philosopher's mantle, was sixty-six years old, and joined to a perfect understanding of the Latin and Greek tongues an uncommon knowledge of the human and divine sciences. Pope Vitalian consecrated him on 26 May 663; Theodore took possession of his see on 27 May 669. The new archbishop restored purity and morals everywhere, and confirmed the discipline of the Catholic Church concerning the day for celebrating Easter. He introduced the Gregorian chant, which was hardly known except in the kingdom of Kent. Having founded a school at Canterbury, he taught there the Scriptures as well as the various sciences, above all astronomy and arithmetic; the Greek and Latin tongues began to be cultivated, and a great number of famous men were formed in the new school. In 673 St. Theodore held a national Council at Héorutfort, at which several disciplinary canons were made. In 680 he held that of Hetfield against the Eutychians and Monothelites. To St. Theodore we owe a *Penitential*, or Collection of Canons regulating how long public penance was to last according to the kind and enormity of the sin. The holy bishop died in 690, in the eighty-eighth year of his age and the twenty-second of his episcopate. He was buried in the church of the monastery of St. Peter, which afterwards took the name of St. Augustine. — *Acta Sanctorum*, Dom Ceillier, Godescard.

[2] According to St. Gregory of Tours, St. Eustochius was a man of eminent virtue. He belonged to a rich family of Auvergne and was appointed Bishop of Tours in 444. The laws of Valentinian III were attacking the privileges of the Church; he defended them at the Council of Angers and took a large part in the rules of discipline promulgated on that occasion. After increasing the number of parishes in his diocese, he worked at building a church to receive the relics of St. Gervase and St. Protase, which had been given to St. Martin. His body was buried in a church built by St. Brice, his predecessor, over the tomb of St. Martin. — Godescard and Baillet.

[3] He was buried outside Metz in the abbey of the Holy Innocents, known later as Saint-Symphorien, in which his head was kept until the Revolution. The rest of his body was translated in the 10th century by Blessed Theodoric, Bishop of Metz, to the Benedictine monastery of the town of Épinal, which owes its origin to him. St. Goeric founded at Metz, near the cathedral, the collegiate church of Saint-Pierre, called the Greater, to distinguish this church from other less important ones likewise dedicated to the Prince of the Apostles. The church was destroyed in 1755, with the whole cloister of the cathedral, when the parade ground was being enlarged; but the chapter of Saint-Pierre survived until the end of the last century. — Note owed to the kindness of the Abbé Noël, parish priest and archpriest of Bricy (Moselle).

[4] We shall give her life in the volume devoted to the Venerables.

[5] This date is not universally accepted, as will be seen further on.

[6] In his very interesting pamphlet *Ma profession de foi sur l'apparition de Notre-Dame de la Salette* (Douniol, 29 rue de Tournon).

[7] Today Sister Marie de la Croix, professed Carmelite at Darlington, in England.

[8] The Blessed Virgin speaks here as if she were God himself. The Prophets often used this turn of speech.

20 September

Martyrologies

Twentieth day of September

MARTYROLOGE ROMAIN.

Roman Martyrology.

The Vigil of St. Matthew, Apostle and Evangelist. — At Rome, the holy martyrs EUSTACE, Theopista, his wife, with two of their children, Agapitus and Theopistus, who, having been condemned to the beasts under the Emperor Hadrian and having received no wound from them, by the help of God, were shut up in a burning brazen ox, where they consummated their martyrdom. 118. — At Cyzicus, on the Propontis, the heavenly birthday of St. Fausta, virgin, and of St. Evilasius, martyred under the Emperor Maximian. Evilasius was a priest of the idols who, having had the head of this holy maiden shaved to cover her with shame, had her hung up in the air and tormented in various ways; then, when he wished to have her sawn through the middle of the body and saw that the executioners could not succeed, he was utterly terrified at this wonder, believed in Jesus Christ, and was himself put to the torture by order of the Emperor. As for Fausta, her head was pierced, her whole body was driven through with nails, and in that state she was put into a burning pan; then, having heard a miraculous voice inviting her, she flew to heaven with the same Evilasius, there to enjoy the sight of God.[1] 308. — In Phrygia, the holy martyrs Dionysius and Privatus. — Also St. Priscus, martyr, who was beheaded after having been pricked all over his body with the point of a dagger.[2] — At Perga, in Pamphylia, St. Theodore, and St. Philippa, his mother, martyred with others under the Emperor Antoninus. 2nd c. — At Carthage, St. Candida, virgin, who, in the time of the Emperor Maximian, having had her whole body torn, received the crown of martyrdom. — Also St. Susanna, martyr, daughter of Artemius, a priest of the idols, and of Martha.[3] About 362. — On the same day, St. AGAPETUS, Pope, to whose holiness St. Gregory the Great bears witness. 536. — At Milan, St. Glycerius or Clicerius, bishop and confessor. 432.

MARTYROLOGE DE FRANCE, REVU ET AUGMENTÉ.

Martyrology of France, revised and enlarged.

In the diocese of Angers, St. Eustace and his companions, martyrs, mentioned in the Roman Martyrology of this day. — In the same diocese, commemoration of the Octave of St. Maurilius, bishop of that see and confessor, whose life we gave on 13 September. 426. — In the diocese of Rodez, commemoration of St. Fausta, virgin and martyr at Cyzicus, mentioned in the Roman Martyrology of this day. — In the diocese of Carcassonne, St. Agapetus, pope and confessor, mentioned today in the same martyrology. — At Liège, a city of Belgium, St. Navitus, bishop of that see and confessor. Date uncertain. — In the dioceses of Clermont-Ferrand and Saint-Flour, St. Avitus the Elder, bishop of the former see and confessor, whose life we gave on 21 August. 594. — At Rennes, the Venerable YVES MAHYEUC, bishop of that see and religious of the Order of St. Dominic. 1541. — At Saint-Amand-les-Eaux (Nord, arrondissement of Valenciennes), in the diocese of Cambrai, the feast of the elevation of the body of St. Amandus, Bishop of Maastricht, missionary and founder of abbeys, whose life we gave on 6 February. 684. — At Soignies, a town of Belgium (Hainaut), on the Senne, the feast of the translation of the relics of St. Vincent Madelgarius, Abbot of Hautmont (diocese of Cambrai) and of Soignies, whose life we gave on 14 July. About 677. — In the diocese of Namur (Belgium), Blessed JEAN EUSTACHE, first abbot of the Cistercian monastery of Le Jardinet. 1441. — At Abbeville (Somme), in the diocese of Amiens, St. Montanus or Montain, solitary. Of royal race, say some authors, he came from Champagne (440) to preach the Gospel on the banks of the Chiers (a river which rises at the town of Esch, in Belgium, flows past Longwy, Longuyon, Montmédy and Carignan, and falls into the Meuse near Sedan). He set up his cell near Iré-les-Prés, under the rock of Mad (Montmédy), which was then consecrated to the sacrifice of pagan victims. He raised two little chapels, one at Le Valendon and the other at Iré-les-Prés. The latter, long called Notre-Dame d'Iré, is said to be the mother church of Montmédy. He is also credited with founding at Juvigny an oratory dedicated in honour of

St. Denis, Apostle of the Gauls, and built on the site of a temple of Jupiter, a fairly probable origin of the name of Juvigny (*Joviniacum*). The courageous anchorite, pursued by the idolaters, took refuge in the depths of the woods with some disciples. Several hagiographers say that he suffered martyrdom. 470. — In the diocese of Quimper, St. Maurice or Moriz, abbot of the Cistercian monasteries of Langonet and Carnoët, whose life we shall give on 5 October, the day of his death. 1191. — At Donzy (Nièvre, arrondissement of Cosne), in the diocese of Nevers, eleven Catholic priests are massacred by the Protestants: Jean Mignard, prior of L'Épeau; Pierre Chevau, parish priest of Colmery; Clément Collien, Edme Guérin, Mathieu Grégoire, Charles Grégoire, Julien Grangier and Jacques Delaveine, canons of Saint-Caradeuc; Grégoire Coustureau, parish priest of Saint-Malo; Nicolas Bouet, administrator of the hospice of Donzy; and Robert Drouet, former parish priest of Bagneau. Some hagiographers give them the title of Blessed. The Protestants buried them alive up to the shoulders and put them to death amid the most frightful torments. On 23 April 1578 the bodies of these generous Martyrs were exhumed to be translated solemnly by all the clergy of Donzy into the church of Notre-Dame du Pré. 1569.

MARTYROLOGES DES ORDRES RELIGIEUX.

Martyrologies of the Religious Orders.

Martyrology of the Order of Friars Preachers. — At Córdoba, in Andalusia, Blessed FRANCIS DE POSADAS, of the Order of Friars Preachers, who was renowned for his apostolic preaching, for his ministry of the sacrament of Penance, for his austerity and for the innocence of his life. 1713. — The Vigil of St. Matthew, Apostle and Evangelist.

ADDITIONS FAITES D'APRÈS LES BOLLANDISTES ET AUTRES HAGIOGRAPHES.

Additions made from the Bollandists and other hagiographers.

At Perga, now Karahissar, a city of Pamphylia on the Cestrus, the holy martyrs Socrates and Dionysius, companions of St. Theodore and St. Philippa, mentioned in the Roman Martyrology of this day. The same martyrology names Socrates and Dionysius on 19 April and has them die pierced with lances. They were the two executioners of Theodore and Philippa: the sight of their martyrdom and a heavenly vision converted them to the faith of Jesus Christ, for whom they generously shed their blood. 2nd c. — At Cyzicus, a city of Moesia (part of present-day Bosnia, Serbia and Bulgaria), with St. Evilasius and St. Fausta, mentioned in the Roman Martyrology of this day, St. Maximinus or Maximus, martyr. Under the reign of Maximian Herculius (286–305) he held the office of propraetor and had in that capacity been charged with tormenting Fausta and Evilasius; he did in fact plunge them into a cauldron of boiling oil; but, astonished to see that the fire spared their bodies and did them no harm, he was himself converted to Jesus Christ, threw himself into the cauldron and gathered the palm of martyrdom. 303. — In Palestine, St. John the Egyptian, martyr, whom Eusebius of Caesarea (270–338) praises thus: "John had had his limbs cut off for the faith of Jesus Christ and, moreover, had long since lost the eyes of the body; but heaven had known how to make it up to him by giving him in exchange those of the understanding. You would have heard him recite and explain to his hearers whole passages of Holy Scripture: he possessed thoroughly not only the spirit of it but the letter as well. I myself witnessed this astonishing spectacle more than once, which forced me to reflect that the true man, the essential man, is the inner man, the spiritual man, since, though the material man no longer existed, the other possessed none the less all its activity." 310. — At Constantinople, the holy martyrs Artemidorus and Thales or Thalelaeus, who perished by the sword.

Saint Eustace or Eustathius and His Companions, Martyrs at Rome

About 118. — Pope: St. Sixtus I. — Roman Emperor: Hadrian.

Au milieu de cet océan du monde, nous sommes sans cesse ballottés par la tempête.

In the midst of this ocean of the world, we are ceaselessly tossed by the storm.

St. Augustine.

Under the reign of Trajan (98–117), while the worship of demons still prevailed, there was a master of the soldiery named Placidus, of illustrious birth, invested with honours, and possessing immense riches in gold, silver, slaves and goods of every kind; but he was sunk in the errors of idolatry. Nevertheless he gave himself to good works and applied himself to the practice of every virtue: he loved to give clothing or food to those in want; he came to the help of the oppressed; he made himself the advocate of the accused, and by his gifts he consoled those who had been unjustly condemned. He had made himself famous by his great deeds. His name alone struck terror into the barbarians, and he had the reputation of a valiant captain who knew how to use prosperity with moderation. He was passionately fond of hunting, and his greatest recreation was to attack and pursue wild beasts.

He had a wife who was sunk like him in the darkness of idolatry, but whose life was in perfect harmony with his own. She bore him two sons, to whom they vied with each other in giving an excellent education. But God, who in his goodness always and everywhere calls those who are worthy of him, did not reject the good works of this virtuous man; he did not want so beneficent a soul to lose its reward by remaining buried in the darkness of polytheism; but, according to what is written, that “in every nation he that works justice is acceptable to him”, he made Placidus feel the effects of his fatherly mercy, and resolved to save him in the way we shall now relate. Having gone out one day with men of war, in great array as was his custom, to hunt in the mountains, Placidus caught sight of a herd of deer grazing. At once he assigned each of his companions his post, and they began to run down the deer. In the thick of the chase, one of these animals, the largest and finest of all, broke away from the herd and dashed into a thicket of the neighbouring forest. Placidus, having noticed it, sprang after it with some of his men. But these soon dropped from weariness and could follow him no farther. As for him, by a special disposition of divine Providence, he felt no fatigue, nor did the horse he was riding; and, stopped neither by the steep roughness of the ground nor by the brushwood or the branches of the forest trees, he ran a long time in pursuit of the stag, which at last halted on the summit of a rock.

While Placidus stood still to look at it and admire its great size, and was seeking in vain some means of mastering it, God made him see, between the stag’s antlers, the figure of the holy cross, more resplendent than the light of the sun, and on it the image of our Saviour Jesus Christ. At the same time he gave the stag a human voice, which called Placidus and said to him: “O Placidus, why do you pursue me? It is for your sake that I have come to appear upon this animal. I am the Christ whom you honour without knowing it: the alms you give to the needy have gone up to me.”

On hearing these words the captain was seized with great fear and fell from his horse. After an hour he came to himself and got up; then, trying to account for this apparition, he said within himself: “What is this voice I have just heard? You who speak to me, make yourself known to me, so that I may believe in you.” And the Lord said to him: “Listen, Placidus, I am Jesus Christ, who created heaven and earth out of nothing, who separated and shaped formless matter; it is I who created the light and separated it from the darkness; it is I who made the sun to light the earth by day, and the moon with the stars to give it light by night; it is I who ordered the seasons, the days and the years; it is I who formed man from the slime of the earth; it is I who, to save the human race, appeared in the flesh upon earth, was crucified and buried, and rose again on the third day.” At these words Placidus fell to the ground once more, crying out: “I believe, Lord, that it is you who have made all these things, who bring back those who go astray, raise up those who have fallen and give life to the dead.” The Lord said to him: “If you believe, go into the city, seek out the priest of the Christians and ask him for the baptism of grace.” Placidus answered: “Lord, would you bid me tell my wife and children what I have just learned, so that they too may believe in you?” The Lord said to him: “Go and tell them; all of

you receive baptism and cleanse yourselves of the defilements of idolatry; then come back here; I will appear to you again, and I will reveal to you what is to befall you and make known to you the mysteries of salvation." Placidus came down from the mountain when it was already night and told his wife all that had happened to him; and when he had made known to her the vision he had had and the words he had heard, she cried out: "My lord, you have seen my Lord crucified, whom the Christians adore? Yes, truly, he is the only true God, he who by such wonders calls to himself those who believe." Then, raising her voice, she said: "Lord Jesus Christ, have pity on me and on my two children." She next said to her husband: "Last night I too saw him, and he said to me: Tomorrow you, your husband and your children will come to me, and you will know that I am Jesus Christ. No doubt he willed to appear to you in this stag in so miraculous a form so that, admiring his power, you might have faith in him. Come, then, this very night; let us go together and try to obtain the holy baptism of the Christians, for it is by this washing that those who believe in Jesus Christ truly belong to him." Placidus answered her: "That is what he who appeared to me told me too." So, towards the middle of the night, they secretly took with them their two children and a few servants and went to find the chief priest of the Christians.

On reaching his dwelling, they left their servants outside and went in alone and told him all that had happened and the words they had heard. Adding at once that they believed in the Lord Jesus Christ, they begged him to confer on them the sacrament of baptism. The priest, filled with the liveliest joy and glorifying the Lord God, who wills all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth, catechized them; and after explaining to them the mysteries of the faith, he baptized them in the name of the most holy Trinity. He gave Placidus the name of Eustace, and his wife that of Theopista; as for the children, he named the elder Agapitus and the other Theopistus. He then gave them the holy sacrament of Our Lord Jesus Christ and dismissed them, saying: "May the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, be with you, and may he give you his eternal kingdom; for I see that the hand of the Lord is with you. And when you enjoy the paradise of delights, remember my soul; I, John, beseech you."

When morning came, Eustace took a few horsemen with him and went to the mountain; and as he drew near the place where he had had the vision, he dismissed the soldiers who were with him, as though inviting them to look for game. Then, approaching the rock alone, he again saw the same human form that had appeared to him before; and, falling prostrate with his face to the ground, he cried out: "I adore you, Lord, for you are Jesus Christ, the Son of the living God, and I believe in the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost; and now I have come to beseech your spotless divinity to make known to me what you announced to me."

The Lord said to him: "Blessed are you, Eustace, for having received the washing of my grace and having been clothed with immortality. You have just overcome the devil and trampled underfoot him who had deceived you; you have put off the corruptible man to put on the incorruptible, who abides for ever and ever. But now the time is coming when the works of your faith are to be shown forth: for the envy of the devil will declare relentless war on you, because you have forsaken him; already he is laying all his plans to ruin you. You will therefore have much to suffer before receiving the crown of victory. You possess great temporal riches, and until now you have enjoyed the highest dignities of this world. Now you must be humbled for all these vanities and grow rich in spiritual goods. Let not your courage fail you, then, and think no more of the glory you enjoyed; but, just as in fighting men you desired the honours of victory and eagerly sought to please a mortal emperor, so now set yourself to fight valiantly against the devil and to keep the faith you have given to me, the immortal Emperor. For it is needful to me that in these times you should be another Job by the trials you will have to undergo, and that your patience should make you victorious over the devil. Take care, then, that no thought of blasphemy rise in your heart; for when you have been humbled I will come back to you and restore your former glory." Having spoken thus, the Lord went up to heaven, saying to Eustace: "Do you wish to suffer the trials that await you now, or would you rather keep them for your last days?" Eustace answered: "If it is not possible to escape the tribulations you have in store for us, I beseech

you, Lord Jesus, to command that they come upon us now; only give us strength to bear what you announce to me, lest the enemy, finding in us some word of iniquity, make us fall away from our faith." And the Lord said to him: "Fight courageously, Eustace; my grace is with you, and it will keep your souls." Eustace came down from the mountain, returned to his house and told his wife all that the Lord had said to him. At once they fell on their knees and prayed to the Lord, saying: "Lord Jesus Christ, may your will be done."

A few days later, the plague ravaged the household and carried off all the menservants and maidservants. Eustace, seeing from this scourge that the trial foretold to him was beginning, received it with gratitude, at the same time begging his wife not to lose heart in these sufferings. Shortly afterwards his horses and all his cattle were attacked by deadly exhalations, which made them all perish. He received this new trial with thanksgiving. But he left that house without a stir, and, accompanied by his wife and children, they withdrew to a place not far away, taking only the clothes they wore. Some greedy men, noticing that they had gone, entered their house by night, plundered all the gold, silver and clothing they found there, and left absolutely nothing. Thus, through the malice of the demons, all their riches and all their goods were brought to nothing.

In those days the people were celebrating with the emperor a great feast for a victory won over the Persians; and Placidus was to be there in the first rank, for he was the chief of the soldiery and one of the prince's counsellors. So he was sought; but he could not be found. Everyone was stupefied on learning that, as in the twinkling of an eye, all he possessed had been plundered and laid waste, so that nothing of it was left. The emperor and all the courtiers were overwhelmed with sadness at it, and no one could wonder enough at so great a disaster. Eustace's wife then said to him: "What are we waiting for here? Come, let us take our two children, for they are all we have left, and leave this country: we have become the reproach of all who know us." When night had fallen, they took the road to Egypt with their children. Having walked thus for two days, as they drew near the sea they saw a ship moored at the shore and resolved to embark in it. Now the master of the vessel was a barbarous and coarse man. After they had set sail, this man, seeing the great beauty of Eustace's wife, conceived criminal desires for her. When they had landed, he asked them for the price of the passage; and, as they had nothing to give him, he kept back Eustace's wife as a pledge for the sum owed him. He had formed this wicked design as soon as he had seen her, at the moment of embarking. Eustace resisted this violence with all his strength, but in vain; the master of the vessel even ordered his sailors to throw him into the sea.

So he saw himself violently parted from his wife, and went off with his two children, groaning and saying: "Woe to me and to you, poor children! Your mother is given over to a strange husband." And continuing on his way in sighs and tears, he came to a river. As the waters were in flood, he did not dare cross it with both children at once; but, leaving one on the bank, he took the other on his shoulders and carried him to the opposite bank; then he went back into the water to fetch his other son. When he was in the middle of the river, looking towards the other bank, he saw a lion seize the child and carry him off into the forest. Despairing then of recovering him, but without losing patience, he was going back towards the other bank, in the hope of finding some consolation with the child who remained to him, when before his eyes a wolf carried that one off, without his being able to pursue it. And as he was still in the middle of the river, he tore his hair, lamented, cried aloud, and was tempted to end his life by drowning himself in the river; but divine Providence, which reserved other destinies for him, restored his constancy and firmness, and after this first onset of his grief he came out of the water.

Now the same Providence allowed the lion to do the child no harm; for some shepherds, seeing it carry off this innocent creature, gave chase with their dogs and forced it to let him go. The Lord likewise came to the help of the other child: for some ploughmen, seeing him between the wolf's teeth, also pursued the animal, which dropped its prey and fled. The shepherds and ploughmen, who belonged to the same village, wondering at the way divine Providence had rescued these children, took them into their homes and brought them up.

Eustace, who knew nothing of these things, went on his way groaning and weeping; now he addressed bitter complaints to God, now he submitted to his holy will; always he hoped in his providence and prayed to him. He came thus to a village named Badyssus, where he stayed for some time, working with his hands to get something to live on. Some time afterwards he applied to the inhabitants of the village, who entrusted him with the guarding of their fields, and he lived thus for fifteen years as a hired man. As for his children, they were brought up, as we have said, in another village, but without being able to recognize each other. The master of the ship they had boarded took Eustace's wife away to his own country; but the grace of the Lord protected her, so that during all that time no stranger came near her. And this too was what she had asked of God, praying him to preserve her from all defilement. The captain of the ship having died, she recovered her freedom. A few days later the country where she was living was invaded by enemy armies, which from there spread over the lands of the Romans. Amid this tumult of men of war, the emperor, resisting the invasion of the enemy troops with all his power, remembered Placidus, who had won several victories over these same enemies. He spoke of him often and never ceased to grieve over the misfortunes he had suffered. Having assembled his army, he reviewed the soldiers and asked them whether they knew what had become of the former master of the soldiery, whether he was dead or still alive; and on their answering no, he gave orders to search for him. So he sent into every city and all the lands of his empire to discover the place of his retreat, promising great rewards and great honours to whoever should find him and bring him to him.

Two soldiers who had formerly been under Placidus's command, named Antiochus and Achacius, set out in search of him. After travelling through the whole land under Roman rule, they came to the village where Eustace lived. As they passed near the place where he carried out his work as a watchman, it came into their minds to question him. Eustace, watching them from a distance, recognized them by their gait, and, remembering his former life, he was troubled. But at once he had recourse to prayer. "Lord our God," he cried, "who know how to deliver from all tribulation those who hope in you, as beyond all hope I have seen those who were once with me, grant that I may also see your handmaid, my wife; for as for my children, I know that for my iniquities they have been devoured by the beasts. Grant then, O Lord Jesus Christ, merciful God, who alone are the true God, grant that I may at least see my sons on the day of the resurrection." As he was speaking thus, he heard a voice from heaven saying to him: "Take courage, Eustace; the time has come when you are to return to your former state; you are going to see your wife and your children again. After the resurrection you will see far greater things, for you will enter into the enjoyment of eternal goods: your name will be glorified from generation to generation." These words struck him with fear.

Then, seeing the soldiers coming towards him, he came down from the place where he was sitting and went to meet them at the roadside. As he drew near them he recognized them still better, but they did not recognize him. Coming up to him, they said: "Greetings, brother." He answered them: "Peace be with you, brothers." They added at once: "Tell us whether you know here a stranger named Placidus, who has a wife and two children. If you make him known to us, we will give you money." He said to them: "For what reason are you looking for him?" They answered: "He is an old friend; we should be very glad to see him after so many years apart." Eustace said to them: "I know no man here such as you describe to me. However, come to the place where I live, for I too am a stranger in this country." And he took them to his house; then he went and bought wine, which he gave them, for the heat was overcoming them. And he said to the master of the house where he lodged: "These men are perfectly well known to me, and it is for my sake that they have come here; so serve them wine and food, that they may make good cheer; I will pay you in time out of my wages." The host provided them with everything they needed.

While they were taking their meal, Eustace, remembering the life he used to lead, could hardly contain himself; and when he felt the tears flooding his face he went out, and, after washing his eyes, came back in and waited on his guests. They, looking at him more closely, began little by little and confusedly to recognize him, and said to each other: "How like he is to the man we are looking for!" One of them added: "Yes, truly,

he is like him. Besides, I know that Placidus bears on his head the scar of a wound he received in war: let us watch this man; if he has this mark on his head, he is certainly the one we are looking for." So, having looked at his head, they at once saw the scar. And rising from the table, they threw their arms round his neck, weeping and asking him whether he was not their former master of the soldiery. Eustace, weeping in his turn, answered them: "No, it is not I." But they showed him the scar on his head and declared that he was himself Placidus, the former master of the soldiery. At the same time they asked him for news of his wife and children and reminded him of several events of former days. At last he admitted to them who he was, adding that his wife and his sons were dead.

While they were talking thus, all the inhabitants of the village came running as if to a spectacle. The soldiers, calling for silence, told them of Eustace's virtue and of the honours he had once enjoyed; on hearing this, these men shed tears and cried out: "So great a man! He who served us as a hired man!" The soldiers then told him of the emperor's orders, and, after clothing him in sumptuous garments, they took him away. All the inhabitants wanted to follow him; but, after embracing them, he sent them away. During the journey he explained to the soldiers how Christ had appeared to him and how he had been given the name of Eustace at baptism; then he told them all that had happened to him.

After fifteen days' march they reached the emperor and told him how they had found Placidus. At this news the monarch went out to meet him, embraced him with tears and asked him for what reasons he had left his service. Eustace related in detail to the emperor and the nobles of his court the whole story of his life since he had left the command of the troops; he told them how his wife had been kept back on a ship, how his sons had become the prey of wild beasts, and what deep sorrow he had felt at it. Eustace's return caused great joy to the whole army. The emperor consoled him and gave him back his rank of master of the soldiery. Eustace, having examined the army rolls, saw that it was not numerous enough to face the incursions of the enemy. He ordered new levies of soldiers to be made, and sent tribunes into the towns and villages of the Roman empire to enrol them.

Now it happened that the village where Eustace's sons had been brought up had to furnish two soldiers. The inhabitants handed these over to the tribunes as being strangers to the district. These young men were tall and very handsome. The new recruits, then, having been assembled and presented to the master of the soldiery, he examined them all and assigned each his rank in the army. But these two young men caught his attention because of their great stature and their beauty, which set them apart from all the others; so he gave them the first ranks about his own person. And as he observed much nobility and uprightness in them, he loved them with a quite special affection and admitted them to his table.

After drawing up his army according to the rules of the military art, he took the field and in a short time freed the provinces the Barbarians had occupied. He then crossed the river Hydaspes with his army, and, advancing by the direct road into the interior of their country, he won a great victory over the enemy, laid waste their lands and formed the plan of destroying these peoples. Meanwhile, by a singular disposition of Providence, he came to the very place where his wife was living, who, as we have said, had been preserved by God's protection from the tyranny of the ship's captain. After his death she had withdrawn alone to a cottage standing on a small garden belonging to an inhabitant of the village, which she looked after. The master of the soldiery, then, having come to this place, pitched his camp there and stayed three days to rest his army, especially as he found all the comforts of life there. Now the soldiers, in setting out the tents, placed their chief's near the little garden entrusted to this woman's keeping; the two young men lodged in the cottage, without suspecting that it was their mother's dwelling. Towards midday, having sat down, they began to talk of their childhood, for they still had a confused memory of what had happened to them. Their mother, who was sitting in front of them, followed their conversation very attentively.

The elder said to the younger: "For the moment I remember nothing else of my childhood except that my father was master of the soldiery and my mother was very beautiful; they had two sons, myself and another,

younger, fair-haired and of rare beauty. One night they took us both and embarked on a ship; but I do not know where they meant to go. When we had landed, our mother was no longer with us, and I do not know how she remained at sea. Our father took us both and walked on weeping. Coming to the bank of a river, he crossed it with my young brother and left me on the bank. As he was coming back to take me in my turn, a wolf came and carried off my brother, and before my father could get near me, a lion, coming suddenly out of a thicket, took me between its teeth and dragged me into the forest. Happily some shepherds ran to my help and snatched me from the lion's jaws. I was afterwards brought up in their house, as you know; but I have never been able to learn what became of my father or his other child." The younger, hearing this, suddenly rose and said, shedding tears: "By the God of the Christians, from what I see, you are my brother! For those who brought me up used to tell me that they had rescued me from the jaws of a wolf." And falling into each other's arms, they embraced tenderly. Their mother, reflecting on what she had just heard, particularly on the story of their childhood up to their leaving the vessel, and having no doubt at all of the truth of their account from that time on, felt herself moved and stirred to the depths of her soul; and these feelings redoubled on seeing them clinging to each other and exchanging brotherly kisses mingled with sweet tears. Yet she wished to consider the matter more maturely within herself and make sure that they were indeed her sons; but there kept coming back to her mind what they had said, that their father was master of the soldiery and that their mother had been left at sea.

The next day she went to the commander of the army and said to him: "Forgive me, my lord, if I dare to present myself before you; I was born in the lands of the Roman empire and was brought here a captive. Oh, if you would but take me back to my own country!" And as she said this, looking at the man, she saw the scar her husband bore; she recognized him at once, but she was afraid to question him. Nevertheless she could contain herself no longer, and, throwing herself at his feet, she said to him: "I beg you, my lord, do not be angry with your handmaid, but deign to listen to me kindly, and be good enough to tell me what you were in former days; for it seems to me that you are the master of the soldiery named Placidus, who received the name of Eustace at baptism, and whom the Lord himself deigned to call to himself by means of a stag, so that he might believe in him. He afterwards suffered many tribulations; and one day, taking with him his wife, that is to say myself, and his two sons Agapitus and Theopistus, he took the road to Egypt. But while we were at sea he lost me, because the master of the ship, who was a barbarian, kept me back against my will; and it is he who brought me to this country. Christ is my witness that neither this man nor any other has come near me, for the Lord has kept my honour safe to this day. These are the reasons that lead me to believe that you are my husband: tell me, am I mistaken?" Eustace, hearing her speak thus and considering her great beauty, recognized her; and, bursting into tears, he said to her with the liveliest joy: "Yes, I am he whom you think." And rising at once, he threw his arms round her neck and lavished the tenderest caresses on her. And they gave glory to the Saviour Jesus Christ, who uses every means to help his servants, who delivers them from their tribulations and knows how to reward them superabundantly.

Theopista then said to him: "My lord, where are our sons?" "They have been devoured by wild beasts," he answered her; and he told her how he had lost them. And his wife said to him: "Let us give thanks to Christ; for I believe that, as God has granted us the grace of meeting again, he has at the same time procured us the joy of seeing our children again safe and sound." "But I have told you," Eustace replied, "that they became the prey of savage beasts." Theopista answered him: "Yesterday, sitting in the garden, I heard two young men talking together and speaking of the memories of their childhood, and I know that they are our children; as for them, they did not know that they were brothers, and only yesterday did they discover it, after the elder had told his own story. Now therefore, you who until now have known nothing of these things, acknowledge how great is the goodness of Christ, who has procured us the happiness of finding one another again after so long an absence." The master of the soldiery therefore had the two young men called and asked them who they were and what had happened to them. When they had given him the account, as we have related it above, he at once recognized that they were truly his own sons, and he embraced them, as did their mother;

then, both of them together throwing their arms round their children's necks, they bathed them with their tears, blessing the all-good God for having reunited them after so cruel a separation.

From the second hour until the sixth the whole camp rang with the news of what had just happened, and the soldiers, having gathered, gave themselves up to the joy that so happy a meeting caused them, far more than they had done after triumphing over the barbarians. At the same time Eustace had the happiness of thus recovering all his family celebrated with great rejoicings. The next day he offered prayers of thanksgiving to God, and he never ceased to bless the Lord Jesus Christ for his ineffable goodness and his boundless clemency. After he had subdued the whole country of the barbarians, he returned with his army, glorious from so great a victory, bringing with him many captives and immense booty.

While Eustace was engaged in this war, the Emperor Trajan died, and he was succeeded by a pagan named Hadrian, who surpassed in impiety all who had gone before him on the imperial throne. As Eustace drew near the city, the emperor went out to meet him, according to the custom of the Romans, and had this victory celebrated with great solemnity. He questioned Eustace on the success of his arms and on the circumstances that had led him to recognize his wife and sons, and he prolonged the banquet far into the night. The following day he went to the temple to offer a sacrifice to the idols in thanksgiving for the victory. And as he was entering the temple of Apollo, Eustace, instead of following him, left him and remained outside.

The emperor, noticing this, called him and asked him why he did not sacrifice to the gods for the victory he had just won. "You ought," he added, "to offer victims to our gods for such brilliant successes, and above all for having recovered your wife and children." Eustace answered the emperor: "I address my vows to Christ our Lord, and I offer him my prayers without ceasing, he who has had pity on my lowliness, who has delivered me from captivity and has let me see my wife and children again; I know no other God than him, I adore only the God of heaven, who has worked so many wonders." At these words the emperor, carried away with anger, ordered his military belt to be taken from him and had him brought before his tribunal as a breaker of the laws, with his wife and children. But after questioning him for a long time and seeing that his faith in Christ was unshakable, he had him led into the arena with his wife and sons and gave the order to loose a lion against them. The lion, running up at once and stopping before the blessed ones, bowed its head as if to do them honour, then withdrew and left the arena. The emperor, at the sight of so novel a spectacle, was not moved by it; but he ordered a brazen bull to be heated red-hot and the Saints to be thrown into it. At this news the whole multitude of the people, faithful and pagans, gathered to see how they would be put into this frightful machine.

When the martyrs had come near it, they asked the executioners to leave them a moment to pray, and, holding their hands raised towards heaven, they addressed this prayer to God: "Lord, God of hosts, who, being invisible to mortals, have deigned to appear to us, hear our humble supplication: here we are at last at the height of our desires; you deign to receive us all together, and we are about to merit entering into a share of the inheritance of the Saints. As the three children, tried by the fire of the furnace of Babylon, did not deny you, grant that we too may by this fire holily finish our course, and that, wholly consumed by this blaze, we may become in your eyes a victim of sweet savour. Deign further, Lord, to impart a power to our remains, so that whoever shall remember us may have part with us in the kingdom of heaven and meanwhile enjoy the goods of this life; likewise, if anyone is in danger on the sea or on a river and calls upon you in our name, may he be delivered from the peril. And if others fall into sin and have recourse to you through the intercession of our weakness, grant them pardon for their offences; finally, help and protect all who shall remember us and glorify you in us. This fire that threatens us, grant that it may change for us into a gentle dew and put an end to our life. Lastly we ask you that our bodies be not separated, but that they be buried in one tomb." As they were speaking thus, a voice from heaven was heard, saying: "It shall be as you have asked, and I will do even more than you desire. Since you have fought well by living holily and have courageously borne great and many trials, come to the abode of peace, come and receive the crown of the

victorious, and, in reward for the temporal ills you have endured, come and enjoy for ever and ever the happiness prepared for the Saints." On hearing these words, the blessed ones gave themselves up joyfully into the hands of the executioners, who at once threw them into the bronze machine and closed its opening to heighten the heat of the fire. And the martyrs, glorifying the most holy and ineffable Trinity and singing hymns in its honour, peacefully gave up their souls to their Creator. But the fire respected their bodies, and not a hair of their heads felt the flame.

Three days later the impious Hadrian came to the place of execution and had the brazen machine opened, to see for himself what remained of their bodies. They were found entire; it was even thought that they were still alive; then they were drawn out of the bull and laid on the ground. All present could not get over their wonder at seeing that the fire had in no way damaged their hair and that their bodies were whiter than snow. The emperor went back to his palace seized with terror. The crowd of onlookers then cried out: "Great is the God of the Christians, Jesus Christ, the one and only true God; there is no other, for he has preserved his Saints, so that not one of their hairs has been consumed." The Christians afterwards secretly took away the bodies of the Saints and laid them in a place that has become very famous. And after the persecution had abated, they built an oratory there in which they buried them; they celebrated the memory of their relics on the calends of November.

Such is the life of these holy and illustrious Martyrs, and thus did they end their glorious combats. All who have the devotion to celebrate their memory and to implore their protection obtain the fulfilment of the promises made to these Saints, by the grace of Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

St. Eustace is represented: (1) in the middle of a stream, between two wild beasts that each carry off in their jaws one of the Saint's children, while he was busy carrying them across the river; (2) clad in the armour of the Roman generals; (3) standing, sunk up to the waist in the bronze bull that was the instrument of his execution; (4) in a hunter's dress; (5) kneeling at the foot of a mountain on top of which is a stag with a cross between its two antlers: from the cross comes a ray of light containing the words Christ addresses to the Saint and those the Saint answers him; near the Saint, on the ground, is placed the plan of a church that St. Eustace had built in memory of this miracle, which won him his conversion.

CULTE ET RELIQUES.

Cult and relics.

The bodies of the holy martyrs were religiously gathered up and carried to the place where, in the time of Constantine, a church was raised over their tombs, with the title of a deaconry. It is still today a cardinal's title, Sant'Eustachio *in Thermis*. It is in an elegant and noble style.

Pope Celestine III had it repaired and placed their relics in a magnificent porphyry urn set uncovered beneath the high altar, with those of several other Saints who had likewise given their lives for Jesus Christ. This he declared in an inscription that Kirker published. It is said in a charter of Philip Augustus of the year 1194 that the body of St. Eustace is at Saint-Denis in France, in a chapel of his name, which must be understood only of a part of his relics. Some bones were taken from them and deposited at Paris in the parish church of Sainte-Agnès, now called Saint-Eustache. The Saint's shrine, which was at Saint-Denis, was plundered by the Huguenots in 1567; but the portion of his relics that was at Paris is still kept there with veneration.

Taken from the *Acta Sanctorum*, translated by the Benedictines of France; from Godescard.

Blessed Francis de Posadas, of the Order of Friars Preachers

1713. — Pope: Clement XI. — King of Spain: Philip V.

> *Nous avançons plus rapidement dans l'amour de Dieu, quand nous suçons d'abord, au sein de cette charité, le lait de l'amour du prochain.*

We advance more swiftly in the love of God when we first suck, at the breast of this charity, the milk of the love of our neighbour.

St. Gregory the Great.

Blessed Francis was born at Córdoba on 25 November 1644. His father was called Esteban Martín Losada, and his mother María Fernández y Posadas: both were of an old and noble family of Lama de Arcos, in the kingdom of Castile; but they had been ruined and forced to flee their country during the war the Portuguese waged to separate themselves from Spain, under Philip IV. A few days after his birth his mother carried him to the chapel of Our Lady of the Rosary in the royal convent of St. Paul and offered him to the Blessed Virgin.

It was seen from then on what this little child would one day be, for on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays he took the breast only once, towards evening. The first word he spoke was the name of Mary, and his first words the Angelic Salutation. At the age of five he began to go to confession with an attention and judgement that greatly astonished his confessors; at seven he was admitted to the Holy Table. Every day he served several Masses in the Dominican church of St. Paul. He fasted during Lent, and on Fridays on bread and water. He was full of compassion for the poor, giving them all he could put aside for them in his poor home. He had obtained from his mother two pictures, one of Our Lord, the other of the most holy Virgin; he set them on a kind of altar, and every day he went there to recite the Rosary. Sometimes he gathered the children of his own age and, going in procession through the streets of the city, sang the Rosary with them, after the recitation of which Francis would give them a little sermon and some advice. To some he would say: “Why do you offend God, who gives us our being and keeps us in it?” “Take care of your words,” he said to others, “because you will both be the devil’s prey, the one for having spoken and the other for having listened.” If he met a cross on his way, he knelt and made his little companions kneel, saying: “O cross, on which my God died, it is you who part me from the accursed company of the devil.” When he went to play with his comrades at the foot of the Sierra Morena, while they amused themselves he would withdraw into one of the caves of the mountain to pray and do penance. Our Lord showed even then how dear he was to him by saving him from several dangers of death in which he found himself. Having caught the plague, he recovered against all hope. Once, when he was falling into a deep well while trying to pick a flower, he remained miraculously suspended in the air and was drawn out without knowing how this help had come to him. Another time, bathing in the river, he was being carried away by the water and was about to drown when, having called on the Mother of mercy, he suddenly found himself on the bank. The most holy Virgin, who protected him, appeared to him in a dream holding several rosaries in her hand and invited him to take one, no doubt to reward him for his constancy in reciting this prayer. His guardian angel also showed himself to him in the form of a very beautiful child dressed in the habit of St. Dominic.

The Blessed knew of his mother’s vow, and his keenest desire was one day to enter the Order of Friars Preachers; but, his father having long been dead, his mother had married again, to a man of an odd character, who would not allow him to learn Latin and placed him with a workman to serve his apprenticeship. This man, urged on by the devil, often ill-treated him. The Blessed, beaten by his master and afflicted by his stepfather, set his affection and his hopes on God, which redoubled the rage of hell. Seeing that the habit of reciting the Rosary had won him the heart of the most holy Virgin and drew many graces upon him, the devil appeared to him in the form of a negro and tried to tear from him the rosary he wore round his neck. The holy young man held it fast with one hand while with the other he made the sign of the cross and said to the devil: “Look at the cross”; and this put him to flight. After that, seeing that the Rosary was so dreadful to the devil, he always had two, one round his neck and the other in his hand. The devil took his revenge by beating him several times. God allowed it so, in order to exercise his servant’s patience and humility and to give him the means of following his vocation. And indeed, some persons having noticed the devil’s persecutions and fearing that Francis was possessed, he was made to be questioned by a learned priest, who, after mature

examination, answered: “Let his parents know that he must be put to study, so that he may become a religious, and that then all this will stop.”

His mother consented readily, but his stepfather refused to take him in. A good religious of the convent of St. Paul, touched by his wretchedness, offered him shelter in his cell. The Blessed was seventeen years old. He learned grammar with the children, rejoicing in the mockery and insults heaped upon him. He shunned useless conversation, worked and prayed. It was soon recognized that he had a great facility for study and a very fine intelligence. Quickly outstripping all his fellow pupils, he learned to speak Latin perfectly.

His mother having become a widow a second time, her son was able to live with her; he nursed and served her with such attentiveness and tenderness that his mother said to everyone she knew: “My son is a saint; he washes and kisses my feet; he makes my bed, he obeys me in everything and gives me all kinds of marks of love.” In his old age the Blessed himself would say: “If God shows mercy to me, it is because of the good will with which I always obeyed my mother.” When he had several times been named a bishop, he would say again: “I attribute these honours only to God, who perhaps wished in this way to reward the ardent desire I always had to honour my mother.”

Meanwhile, the time to fulfil his vow having come, his mother proposed to him to take the necessary steps to enter the royal convent of St. Paul; but the religious of that noble house refused him, not because of his family, which was old, but because of his mother’s trade as a second-hand dealer. This was a great grief to the poor woman, who urged her son to apply to a convent of another Order, where he was welcomed with joy. On the day fixed for his clothing, the Blessed went to take leave of Our Lady of the Rosary and remained a long time in the chapel, unable to tear himself away. On his return his mother, seeing him so sad, asked him the reason for his tears. “I am weeping,” he said to her, “and I shall weep all my life, because, wishing to be a son of St. Dominic, you are obliging me to enter another religious order.” She then ran to consult the Dominican who had once received him into his cell. This good religious, finding the young man so firm in his vocation, gave him a pretext to be absent from Córdoba that day, so as to avoid the clothing ceremony and to be able to withdraw his word. He then recommended him to the prior of the convent of Scala Coeli, which was only a league from Córdoba, on the first slopes of the Sierra Morena. There, after inquiries which turned out excellent, he was received unanimously; and, having given him the habit, the prior sent him to the convent of St. Catherine at Jaén to make his novitiate.

When the prior of St. Paul’s learned that Francis de Posadas had applied to Scala Coeli, he wrote at once to oppose his admission; but it was too late, and the Provincial, to whom he appealed, seeing the inquiries, confirmed what had been done. The Blessed, after his year of novitiate, was therefore admitted to profession on 25 November in the year 1663; he then came back to the convent of Scala Coeli, where the prior of St. Paul’s had him ordered never to appear at Córdoba, even to visit his poor mother. It was very hard and very humiliating. God, who was trying him in this way, wished to give him early on a humility so deep and so solid that it could bear all the favours with which he was to load him for the rest of his life.

The Blessed was thus living in seclusion at the convent of Scala Coeli, awaiting the Provincial’s orders to begin his studies of philosophy and theology, when he was sent to Sanlúcar de Barrameda. There he made himself noticed by his intelligence, and soon by his holiness; for, having heard Father Gonzalez of the Society of Jesus preach, he felt himself all on fire with the love of God. From then on he redoubled his fasts and penances, gave himself to the service of the poor and wished to become a perfect religious in everything. When he had been ordained priest, he went at once to Córdoba to say his first Mass at the altar of Our Lady of the Holy Fountain, in fulfilment of his mother’s vow; then he returned to Sanlúcar, where he was employed in preaching. He converted many persons there. One woman among others, renouncing all the vanities of the world, said: “One cannot do otherwise after hearing this Saint.”

Having been recalled to his convent of Scala Coeli, the Blessed passed through Córdoba. The prior of St. Paul's, who had been told of his virtues, asked him to preach in his church; he willingly agreed, but the religious, too faithful to their dislikes, refused to hear him. He bore this affront with patience, and it was the last; for, when he had occasion to preach in the other churches of the city, the religious of St. Paul's, seeing all the good he was doing, gave up their prejudices and ended by glorying in this man whom they had so despised. One of them, and it was the very one who had shown him the most antipathy, wished to make public amends for his wrongs. Coming out from one of his sermons, his heart deeply moved, he went and embraced him with great tenderness in the presence of a very great number of people, and, taking his hand, he humbly kissed it; afterwards he accompanied him on several missions.

The convent of Scala Coeli had at Córdoba, close to one of the city gates, a hospice to which some religious came to preach and hear confessions and to receive alms. The Blessed was sent there, and he remained there until his death, apart from the time he gave to missions. On the first day he arrived there he saw an angel who gave him to understand that it was there he would carry his cross. In the evening he rang the bell to call the faithful to the recitation of the Rosary. The next day he sat down in the confessional, where sinners flocked in crowds, so that he spent almost the whole day there and part of the night. He sometimes underwent great temptations there, for God brought him poor souls all soiled with impure sins; but the Lord made him as though dead, these are his own words, "and I learned," he said, "how generous God is towards those whom his goodness exposes to danger."

To this gift the Lord added a prophetic light that made known to him the inner state of his penitents. "Ah, traitor," he said to one, "why do you hide such and such sins from me?" and he told him their number and kind. "You must still confess this fault," he said to another, "since you committed it and have not accused yourself of it." And to a woman who was keeping silent: "There is the sin you are so ashamed to admit." He reminded a man of two faults he had committed twelve years before and thought well hidden. While giving a mission, he said to another person: "How can you come to confession without laying aside the hatred you bear your daughter?"

Sometimes the most holy Virgin sent him sinners to convert. This good Mother appeared one day to a woman who was leading a criminal life. "Go and confess," she said to her, "to Father Posadas." She did so and became a model of penance. The holy angels also helped the Blessed in the exercise of his ministry. One evening when he was going in rainy weather to hear the confession of a woman in danger of death, his lantern went out; but at once a torch was seen lighting him to the house and accompanying him back to the hospice. Another time, when he was sitting beside his confessional, he saw two women come into the church, and he said to one of them: "Come here, my daughter; the Lord is calling you; come and make your confession." The woman, raising her eyes to him, saw that he was surrounded by a heavenly light. Then, though in coming to the church she had had no intention of being reconciled with God, she knelt down and spent the whole of that morning making a general confession. She went away so sincerely repentant that she made amends for all the scandals she had given.

The Blessed touched the most hardened hearts without difficulty, because his own heart was filled with lively sorrow for his sins. One day he said to a person who found him all in tears and asked him what was the matter: "What would you have the matter be, except that I am the vilest, the most wretched, the most infamous, the most ungrateful man on earth?" And in the last years of his life he said again to his confessor: "Father, I should like to have so great a regret for my faults that every morning, at the holy Sacrifice, I ask Our Lord to grant me contrition for them in his infinite mercy."

And indeed he wept almost continually during Mass. He thought himself so unworthy to touch his Lord that he could be heard repeating: "Oh, what a fate, a God to come down into these hands!" At the Elevation his body would begin to tremble all over, and he could not manage to stifle his sobs. One day when Our Lord had deigned to appear to him in the sacred Host, his agitation redoubled, and those present feared that the

sacred Host would break in his hands. At other times he was rapt in ecstasy, and his feet rose from the ground without his noticing it; for he said to his confessor: “I do not know whether it is the ground that fails me, but I do not understand what is happening to me. Please God I may be grateful to him for all his graces!” While he was pronouncing the words of Consecration, Our Lord said to him tenderly: “My son, it is I who am He who is.” He remained for some moments beside himself; then, as he raised the sacred Host, his body followed his soul as it rose to God and remained suspended in the air. When he came down, a great number of persons saw him all surrounded with light. This brightness, moreover, often appeared while he was celebrating the holy Mysteries: the wrinkles of his face disappeared; his forehead became as transparent as crystal; his cheeks, usually pale, were red as fire. At the Gospel a ray of light was seen to come from his mouth and light up the missal; and twice, on the feast of Pentecost, so brilliant a light came from his body that the whole altar was lit up by it.

The most holy Virgin also appeared to him during Mass when he celebrated it in her honour. On the day of the Nativity, for example, she showed herself to him as she was in her cradle, and at the Compassion as she was at the foot of the cross. The Apostles St. Peter and St. Paul, the great martyr St. Catherine, to whom he was very devoted, and many other Saints also showed themselves to him during the holy Sacrifice on the occasion of their feasts. The angels themselves assisted him, holding up his arms at the elevation or holding lighted candles. Nor is this to be wondered at, for the angels and archangels, who are our guardians on earth, assist with great reverence at the holy Sacrifice of the Mass, adoring Our Lord with deep humility in the sacrament of his love. Our eyes are not worthy to see them, and most of the time we do not even think of them, though they pray constantly for us, needing nothing for themselves. But, finding in the Blessed a pure soul and a devoted servant of their Master, they were glad to make him a witness of the marks of reverence they gave to their common Lord. Many persons recovered the health of the soul, and others that of the body, by hearing the holy religious’s Mass. When he came down from the altar, the sick begged him to recite the Gospel over them, to lay his hands on them or to make the sign of the cross over them, and they were healed. In this way he gave sight to a blind man, which everyone in Córdoba knew perfectly well. A woman whom the doctors had warned to prepare for death asked him, after she had made her confession, to wash his fingers and give her some of the water to drink. “What good can there be in my fingers?” said the Blessed. “Father,” the sick woman replied, “has not your reverence just said holy Mass? And what greater honour could there be for your hands than to have carried a God?” “You are right,” he said; “may your faith help you.” He washed his hands and gave her some of the water, and as soon as she had drunk it she was healed. As he knew the hour when he was to leave this world, and the kind of death God had in store for him, he said several times: “I shall die suddenly, and it will be soon.” On 20 September in the year 1713, having said his Mass with the tenderest devotion, he sat down in the confessional. There were many people in the church, and it was noticed that he looked very joyful. He gave each of his penitents salutary advice, giving them to understand that it would be the last. “It is necessary,” he said to one of them, “that I give you a rule of life, for my infirmities are increasing, and later I do not know whether I could do it.”

On returning to the hospice, a religious begged him to relieve him of an anxiety that was distressing him. They sat down on a bench, and the Blessed, having listened to him with affectionate attention, gave him back his peace. At noon a religious called him to dinner. As he was sitting down to table he had an attack of apoplexy and lost consciousness. He was carried to his bed, where he had a profuse sweat. The doctors having lost all hope, he was given absolution and Extreme Unction, with the indulgences of his Order and of the Confraternity of the Rosary. The religious, thinking he was about to pass away, sang the Creed for him: the last act of faith of a soul about to appear before its Creator, its Redeemer and its Judge. As it was seen that he was still breathing, pious ejaculatory prayers were suggested to him, which he heard and understood. At five o’clock, his head sinking, the Creed was sung for him again, after which he seemed to rest a little. At seven o’clock the religious, seeing that he was about to die and hardly able to hold back their tears, sang the Creed for him a third time, during which he gently expired, on 20 September 1713; he was in his sixty-ninth

year.

He was buried in a separate tomb that had been made in the religious' burial place. As the Blessed was working many miracles, steps were taken for his canonization, and Pope Pius VII beatified him in 1818.

Extracted from the *Année Dominicaine*. — Cf. *Les Saints et les Bienheureux du XVIII■ siècle*, by the Abbé Daras.

Saint Agapetus or Agapitus I, Pope and Confessor (536)

The successor of John II (532–535) was St. Agapitus or Agapetus, a Roman by birth, the son of Gordianus and archdeacon of the Roman Church. Elected unanimously by the clergy and the people, he showed in his short pontificate the learning, wisdom and firmness he had shown before attaining that supreme dignity.

The Emperor Justinian I (527–565) was threatening Theodahad, King of the Goths. To turn aside the storm, the latter forced the Pope to go to the court of Constantinople and did not even supply him with the money needed for the journey; the Pontiff was obliged to pledge the sacred vessels of the church of St. Peter for a certain sum of money lent him by the prince's treasurers. Agapitus crossed Greece, where he miraculously healed a man who was dumb and crippled, who could neither utter a word nor rise from the ground, and he made his entry into Constantinople on 2 February 536. This journey changed nothing in the political affairs of Italy, which Belisarius was about to conquer; but it contributed powerfully to the good of the Church in the East. Yielding to the entreaties of the Empress Theodora, who was wholly devoted to the Eutychians, Justinian had consented to the translation of Anthimus, the Eutychian bishop of Trebizond (Turkey in Asia), to the very see of Constantinople. Agapitus, asked to communicate with the intruding and heretical patriarch, refused; the importunities of the emperor and empress found him inflexible. The Pope would consent to receive Anthimus into the communion of the Church only if he renounced his error and returned to Trebizond. At last, urged on by Theodora, Justinian said to him: "Come to terms with us, or I will send you into exile." The Pope, casting on the prince a look full of angelic serenity, answered: "I came to Constantinople in the hope of meeting a most Christian emperor; but it is a Diocletian that I find. Your threats do not make me tremble. I will, however, show you that your bishop is not worthy to be one; have him come and confess the two natures in Jesus Christ." Anthimus was called, but he refused to make an orthodox profession of faith. Justinian, who had been deceived about Anthimus, recognized his error. The Pope solemnly deposed this Eutychian bishop and ordained Mennas in his place, thus performing, in the very capital of the Eastern empire, an act of supreme authority.

St. Agapitus had just convoked a Council to settle all the affairs that were troubling the Church of the East when he fell suddenly ill at Constantinople and died there (April 536). He had reigned eleven months and eighteen days. His body, enclosed in a lead coffin, was brought back to Rome and buried in the church of St. Peter in the Vatican (20 September 536).

Extracted from the *Proper of Rome*; from the *Histoire populaire des Papes* by J. Chantrel; and from the *Liber Pontificalis.*

Blessed Jean Eustache, First Abbot of Le Jardinet, in the Diocese of Namur (1441)

From his youth Jean withdrew into the house of the Canons Regular of St. Augustine at Mons, in Hainaut. Having learned that in the neighbourhood of Namur the Rule of Cîteaux had been brought back to its first severity and was observed in a manner worthy of all praise, he left, with the consent of his superiors, for the monastery of Moulin, on the Meuse between Namur and Dinant. He had been there some years and had led an exemplary life when the abbot of Aulne sent him to Le Jardinet (*Hortulus Beatae Mariae*) to restore the convent of nuns of the Order of Cîteaux there. He found three nuns there, whom the irregularity of their

conduct forced him to place in other convents; and, having brought in some monks from Moulin, whose number was increased by three young clerics who came under his direction out of the desire to lead a truly monastic life, he spent his days there in simplicity and the greatest poverty. His conduct greatly pleased Philip the Good, Duke of Burgundy and Brabant, and his wife Isabella; this prince, having come one day to Le Jardinet, gave him a thousand gold ducats to build a new oratory. He lived there with such great temperance that in the space of seven years he had drunk neither wine nor cider, which moved some other houses to follow his example. It is said that God honoured him with the gift of prophecy, which he used to help his neighbour, whom besides he constantly sought to assist by all kinds of works of mercy.

After being abbot for thirty-nine years he was, at his repeated request, relieved of this burden by his superiors, so as to be better able to prepare for death, which came to deliver him from this valley of tears four years later (1441), at the age of seventy-eight. His body was buried before the high altar in the convent church.

Taken from the *Continuators of Godescard*, Brussels edition, 1854.

The Venerable Yves Mahyeuc, Dominican Religious and Bishop of Rennes (1541)

Yves Mahyeuc was born in 1462 in the territory of Plouvorn, a parish of the diocese of Quimper, four leagues from Morlaix. His parents, who were rich merchants, taught him early to fear God and sent him to Saint-Pol to be instructed in letters and philosophy. He carefully avoided the company of unruly scholars and, assiduous in prayer, often poured out his heart before God at the foot of the altars. When he had finished his philosophy, his inclination led him to ask for the habit of St. Dominic: he received it in 1483 in the monastery of Morlaix, where he spent his novitiate in the practice of prayer, in the exercise of penance, in obedience and mortification. Shortly afterwards he was sent to Nantes to study theology, after which his superiors assigned him to the convent of Rennes (1489), where he was employed in hearing confessions.

It was in the exercise of this office that he had occasion to become known to the young Duchess of Brittany, Anne, eldest daughter of the last duke, Francis II: he became her confessor and that of Charles VIII, her husband. The queen, valuing more and more the high qualities of the humble religious, put him forward to the chapter of Rennes to be elected bishop of that city, which had been widowed of its pastor. As soon as he had been informed of Anne of Brittany's intentions, Brother Yves went and threw himself at her feet to beg her to give up her undertaking. The queen nevertheless pursued his election, which was carried unanimously, to the great satisfaction of the whole city. The religious's tears and resistance had been useless, and he was consecrated Bishop of Rennes (1507). The new prelate showed forth in his life all the virtues that make a true bishop. His tender charity towards the poor of his diocese has made his name immortal. His zeal for the house of God knew no bounds, and the unceasing labours he undertook for the greater glory of God during the course of an episcopate of thirty-five years have shown well enough that he saw in this dignity only a painful burden, a heavy yoke, which he had consented to take on only to further the spiritual advancement of souls.

Beloved of God and men, full of days, virtues and merits, after fighting the good fight and running a long and useful course, Blessed Yves fell gently asleep in the Lord on 20 September 1541, in the seventy-ninth year of his age. He was buried in his cathedral church. His tomb was opened on 15 January 1596, and his body was found incorrupt. Since the demolition of the basilica of Rennes (1755), no one knows what has become of it.

Extracted from the *Vies des Saints de Bretagne* by Dom Lobineau.

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[1] St. Fausta and St. Evilasius are represented with the instruments of their martyrdom, the cauldron of boiling water, the nails and the saw; they are also seen in a group, to show that they suffered at the same time. — Father Cahier, *Caractéristiques des Saints*.

[2] The Bollandists give Constantinople as the scene of his martyrdom.

[3] Susanna was born about the year 310 at Eleutheropolis, in Palestine. Death having taken her parents from her, she was instructed in the Christian religion and received Baptism. Though still young, she gave all her goods to the poor and went to serve God in solitude, on the advice of Philip, one of the most celebrated archimandrites of Palestine, to whom Rufinus gives great praise. Having been accused, under Julian the Apostate, of overturning idols, she was condemned to death by the governor of Eleutheropolis about the year 362. — Father Stilting, in the *Acta Sanctorum*.

21 September

Martyrologies

Twenty-first day of September

MARTYROLOGE ROMAIN.

Roman Martyrology.

The heavenly birthday of St. MATTHEW, Apostle and Evangelist, who preached in Ethiopia and suffered martyrdom there. His Gospel, written in the Hebrew tongue, was found, through a warning that he himself gave in a revelation, with the body of the Apostle St. Barnabas, in the time of the Emperor Zeno. 1st c. — In the land of Saar, the holy prophet JONAH, who was buried at Geth. About 761 before Jesus Christ. — At Rome, St. Pamphilus, martyr. — Twenty miles from Rome, on the Via Claudia, the martyrdom of St. Alexander, bishop, who, after suffering for the Christian faith chains, blows of the cudgel, the rack, burning torches, iron hooks, the beasts and the flames of a furnace, at last attained the glorious life by the edge of the sword. Pope St. Damasus afterwards had his body translated to Rome on 26 November, the day on which he ordered his feast to be celebrated. 2nd c. — In Phoenicia, St. Eusebius, martyr, who went of his own accord to the prefect and declared to him that he was a Christian; after many torments he was beheaded. — In Cyprus, St. Isaac, bishop and martyr. — In the same place, St. Meletius, bishop and confessor. — In Ethiopia, St. Iphigenia, virgin, who, having been baptized and consecrated to God by the Apostle St. Matthew, died a holy death.

MARTYROLOGE DE FRANCE, REVU ET AUGMENTÉ.

Martyrology of France, revised and enlarged.

In the dioceses of Meaux, Pamiers, Paris and Verdun, St. Matthew, Apostle and Evangelist, mentioned in the Roman Martyrology of this day. — In the former abbey of Tronchiennes or Drongen (*Truncinium*), in the diocese of Ghent, St. Gérou of Merendree (*Gerulphus*), martyr. Wishing to receive the sacrament of Confirmation, he had gone for that purpose to Ghent, to the monastery of Mont-Blandin, where Elisée, Bishop of Noyon and Tournai, then was. The man who acted as his sponsor in this ceremony, jealous of the piety his godson showed while receiving the sacrament, suddenly conceived a violent hatred for him, and at the moment when St. Gérou, after the ceremony, was praying in the church of Tronchiennes, he struck him with a knife and left him for dead. He did in fact die some time afterwards and was buried at Merendree; in 915 his body was translated to Tronchiennes. About 750. — At Besançon, St. Hilary, bishop of that see and confessor, whose life we gave on 22 July. About 330. — In the diocese of Nîmes, and at Apt (Vaucluse) in the diocese of Avignon, St. CASTOR, bishop of the former see of Apt and confessor. About 420. — In the diocese of Troyes, St. MAURA, virgin. 850. — At Saint-Denis (Seine), in the diocese of Paris, the translation of the relics of St. Pèlerin or Peregrinus, apostle of the dioceses of Auxerre and Nevers, whose life we gave on 16 May. 303 or 304. — At Cléré (Maine-et-Loire, arrondissement of Saumur, canton of Vihiers), in the diocese of Angers, the translation (1862) of the relics of St. FRANCAIRE, confessor, father of St. Hilary of Poitiers. About 350. — At Coutances (Manche), St. Lô, bishop of that see and confessor. He came of an illustrious family of the very diocese of which he became the first pastor (528). Lô enriched his Church with his rich patrimony and gave it the lands of Briovère (today Saint-Lô), Courcy and Trelly. It is

said that the castle of Briovère was the place where his family lived, and that this is why, at the fifth Council of Orléans, which he attended, he signed not “Lô of Coutances” but “Lô of Briovère”. After governing his diocese with as much zeal as virtue, he went to receive the crown of his labours. The incursions of the Normans (9th century) caused his relics to be translated to Thouars (Deux-Sèvres). There is a town in Normandy that bears the holy bishop’s name, and at Rouen a parish church dedicated under his invocation. 575. — At Tallard (Hautes-Alpes), in the diocese of Gap, St. GREGORY, Bishop of Amnice, in Greater Armenia, and patron of Tallard. 404. — In the diocese of Vannes, St. CADOC or CAZOUT, martyr at Weedon, in the county of Northampton, after leading the solitary life in the diocese of Vannes. 490.

ADDITIONS FAITES D’APRÈS LES BOLLANDISTES ET AUTRES HAGIOGRAPHES.

Additions made from the Bollandists and other hagiographers.

At Cracow (*Carrodunum*), a city of the former Poland, now belonging to Austria (Galicia), Blessed John Prandota, bishop of that see and confessor. He is believed to have been a native of Bolezlaw or Bialaczow, a small Polish village, and of the famous family of Odrow■■. When he had finished his studies, Wis■aw, Bishop of Cracow (1229–1242), conferred holy orders on him and even raised him to the dignity of archdeacon of his Church and canon of Sandomierz. On Wis■aw’s death John was unanimously elected to succeed him and was consecrated by Fulko, Archbishop of Gniezno (Posnania); as soon as he had taken possession of his see, he worked ardently for the canonization of Stanislaus, Bishop of Cracow and martyr. Innocent IV did in fact issue the decree of that canonization in 1253. John then busied himself with the growth of the kingdom of God in his diocese; above all he sought to preserve his flock from the poison of error. When the Flagellants[1] tried to settle in Poland, the vigilant pastor was the first to work to have this fanatical sect expelled. After governing his Church for twenty-four years he fell asleep in the Lord and went to receive the crown of the elect. 1266. — At Pesaro (*Pisaurum*), a fortified town of the kingdom of Italy, Blessed Mark of Modena, of the Order of Friars Preachers. He possessed all the qualities that make a truly apostolic man: it was with the liveliest joy that he received the mission to go and proclaim the word of God, and he carried it out fruitfully in several towns of Italy. Surrounded by the prestige of holiness and learning, his word, more divine than human and upheld besides by a pure and blameless life, brought back a multitude of sinners to the practice of the Christian life and stirred in the hearts of good people the desire for perfection. After immense labours accomplished for the greater glory of God and the Church and the salvation of souls, laden with merits and good works, worn out by age and illness, he died pressing to his breast the crucifix for which he had had so lively a love during his life. His body received a humble burial; but it was soon carried to the chapel of the Holy Rosary at Modena and placed under the altar. His cult has continued to our own day, and Pius IX has approved it and allowed the Friars Preachers and the diocese of Modena to celebrate the feast of Blessed Mark with the office and holy Mass. 1498. — In the diocese of Venice, St. Matthew, Apostle and Evangelist, mentioned in the Roman Martyrology of this day. — At the monastery of St. Sabas, in Palestine, St. Jonas, priest and wonder-worker. Beginning of the 9th century.

Saint Jonah of Gath-hepher, One of the Twelve Minor Prophets

61 before Jesus Christ. — King of Israel: Shallum.

> *De même qu’il fut d’abord enjoint à Jonas de prêcher aux Ninivites, et que néanmoins sa prédication ne fut entendue par eux qu’après sa sortie du ventre de la baleine ; de même, bien que la prophétie eût été d’abord envoyée aux gentils, elle ne leur parvint qu’après la résurrection de Jésus-Christ.*
>
> *Just as Jonah was first commanded to preach to the Ninevites, and yet his preaching was heard by them only after he had come out of the whale’s belly, so, although prophecy was first sent to the Gentiles, it reached them only after the resurrection of Jesus Christ.*
>
> *St. Augustine, Ep. ad Deogratias.*

The Assyrian empire, with its two ever-hostile capitals, Babylon, founded by the oppressor Nimrod, and Nineveh, founded by the outlaw Asshur, had embodied since the flood the ideal of universal dominion, at least as it could be conceived in an age when modern centralization was unknown. All the groups of Asiatic nations gravitated around this empire, not as subjects depending directly on a king, but through a system of intermediate vassalages, which went down by successive gradations to the lowest rungs, to rise again to the common centre.

According to the ancients, Nineveh, built on the Tigris, was of enormous size; it was like a whole region enclosed by walls. These walls, a hundred feet high, were so thick that three chariots could easily be driven along them abreast; they were flanked besides by fifteen hundred towers two hundred feet high. The interior of this enclosure was not wholly taken up by houses; besides great squares there were immense gardens, groves and temples. In Jonah's time it took three days' journey to go through the whole city.

Proud of its extent, glutted with the riches of Asia, of which it was mistress, Nineveh had given itself up to the corruption that is all too common in great cities. The cry of its disorders had gone up to Him who from the height of heaven looks upon all the children of men. Vengeance was near; mercy forestalled it and sent a missionary to Nineveh to preach penance there.

Never until then had a prophetic mission borne such a character. Elijah and Elisha had visited Damascus to carry Jehovah's command there. But Damascus was only a vassal city in the immense system of the Assyrian empire, and besides, the two prophets had been called there for purely international concerns, which particularly concerned the people of Israel. Jonah is sent to Nineveh for a higher purpose. He is to speak to that idolatrous capital in the name of a God unknown to it: it is Jehovah's taking possession of human empires.

His word, then, made itself heard to Jonah, son of Amittai and a native of Gath-hepher, which is believed to be the same town as Jotapata, in Palestine, in the tribe of Naphtali. "Arise," the Lord said to him, "and go to Nineveh, the great city. Preach penance to it, because its crimes have come up to me." Terrified at such a mission, Jonah arose, hurried to Joppa, found a Phoenician ship sailing for Tarshish, paid his fare and embarked for that distant destination, thus fleeing from the divine command which he had not the courage to carry out. When the vessel had left the shore, the Lord let loose a furious wind upon the waves; the storm broke in all its violence, and the ship was in danger of being swamped. The sailors in their terror called on their gods and threw the whole cargo of the ship into the sea to lighten it. Meanwhile Jonah, who had gone down into the hold as soon as he embarked, suspected nothing and was fast asleep. The pilot came up to him. "What," he said, "you are sleeping in the midst of this storm! Get up and call down upon us the mercy of the God you worship. Perhaps he will deign to remember us, for we are going to perish." Meanwhile the danger grew from minute to minute. At that time, and in memory of Cain, the first murderer, men believed that a great peril was the sign of the presence of a great criminal. So the sailors said to one another: "Let us cast lots to find out which criminal is bringing this calamity on our heads!" The lot was cast, and it fell on Jonah. "Who are you?" the sailors asked him; "what is your country? where are you going? and what have you done to provoke the wrath of heaven?" "I am a Hebrew," Jonah answered. "Jehovah, the God I worship, is he who created the earth and the waves, and I have deserved his anger." He then told them of the mission with which the Lord had charged him, and of his disobedience. "Why have you acted so?" they said to him; "what shall we do now to calm the raging waves?" For the sea kept rising and the waves were sweeping over the ship. "Take me," Jonah said to them, "and throw me into the sea; it will then grow calm, for I know that this frightful storm has been let loose against me." But the sailors could not bring themselves to this cruel extremity; they bent to their oars and strove to steer the ship towards the coast. But it was in vain; the sea redoubled its fury and the hurricane lifted the waves to the sky. Then the sailors made this prayer to the Lord: "Jehovah, we beseech you, do not make us perish because of this guilty man, and do not lay the responsibility for his death upon us! It is you who have willed it." Then they took Jonah and cast him into the

waves. At that very instant the wind dropped and the sea became calm. In their fear these men offered a sacrifice to Jehovah and made vows to him, which they were to fulfil when they reached land.

Now the Lord had arranged for an enormous fish to be near the ship, which, at the moment Jonah fell into the sea, opened its gigantic jaws and swallowed him alive. For three days and three nights Jonah remained in this moving prison. In the belly of the sea monster he implored the mercy of the God he had offended. “Lord,” he said, “the depths of the abyss have opened to receive me; you have plunged me into the heart of the ocean, and the gulfs of the waters surround me. I have deserved to be blotted out from the number of the living, and yet, I keep the hope of it, I shall see your holy Temple again. The water wraps me round like a cloak, the abyss above my head, the abyss beneath me, everywhere the avenging water. I have gone down deeper than the roots of the mountains; impassable barriers part me from the abode of the living; and yet, O my God, you will draw me out of this foul dungeon and give me back salvation and life!” So Jonah prayed, and the Lord commanded the sea monster to approach the land, and the obedient fish cast Jonah up on the shore.

Then the voice of the Lord made itself heard again. “Arise,” Jehovah repeated, “take the road to Nineveh, the great city, and carry out among its inhabitants the mission with which I have charged you.” So Jonah arose, and, obeying the divine command this time, he came to Nineveh. Now, as we have said, this capital was an immense city of three days’ journey. The Prophet entered it and went through a third of it on the first day, crying out as he passed: “Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be destroyed!” The inhabitants believed the word of God and resolved to appease his anger. The king of Nineveh wished to hear Jonah. Moved by his warnings and threats, he rose from his throne, laid aside the insignia of his rank, clothed himself in the sackcloth of penance and sat down in ashes. By his orders the princes of his court proclaimed a solemn fast throughout the city. “Let neither men nor beasts take any food during this day,” they said; “let the flocks be led neither to pasture nor to the springs. Let men put on the sackcloth of penance; let them implore the divine mercy with all their heart; let them forsake the path of crime; let them cleanse their hands of all works of iniquity! Who knows whether God will not deign to pardon our repentance, forget his severity and leave us our lives?” And God saw their penance and accepted this sincere conversion; his clemency prevailed over his justice, and he would not inflict on the penitents the punishments he had announced to the guilty.

But the Prophet’s soul was a prey to the deepest grief. He saw that his prediction would not be fulfilled, and in his despair he said to the Lord: “Great God! Was not this what made me resist your command when I was still in Judaea, my own country? It was for this reason that I tried to flee to Tarshish, for I know that you are the God of clemency and mercy. Patience and goodness triumph in your counsels, and the malice of men serves only to procure you the joy of forgiving. Now, therefore, Lord, I pray you, call my soul back to yourself; death has become sweeter to me than a dishonoured life.” Jehovah said to his servant: “Do you think your complaint is just?” And he added nothing to this answer. Then Jonah went out of the city and came to rest on a height from which he meant to watch what the fate of Nineveh would be. He sat in the shade of a shrub whose leaves, provided by the goodness of God, protected him from the heat of the sun. Now God allowed a worm to sting the root of the shrub in the morning, and the leaves withered. The burning south wind and the devouring rays of the sun soon overwhelmed Jonah. He complained of this unbearable heat and regretted the kindly shade he had enjoyed the day before. The Lord then said to him: “You would have wished to save the life of this shrub, which you neither watered nor planted, which one night saw born and one night saw die; and should I not have spared Nineveh, the great city, in which there now breathe more than a hundred and twenty thousand children who cannot yet tell their right hand from their left, not to count countless flocks, innocent creatures, which hold their life from me?”

No other circumstances of the life of the prophet Jonah are known. Apparently God in his goodness deigned to hear his prayer, unjust as it was, and soon afterwards withdrew him from this world, which had become wearisome to him. In any case his mission was ended, and it was right that the faithful Servant should promptly receive his wages. It is believed that Jonah died about the year 761 before Jesus Christ.

There is no class of monuments in Christian antiquity in which the story of Jonah is not reproduced. It is found in the bas-reliefs of sarcophagi, on gravestones, in the frescoes of the catacombs, on metal medallions, on lamps, on engraved stones, on the bottoms of glass cups and on diptychs.

Jonah is represented now being put by one of the crew into the monster's jaws, now cast up by the monster on the beach, now lying or sitting in the shade from which he awaits the fate reserved for Nineveh, now finally resting sadly, either under the withered shrub or without any shelter. Quite often these four phases of his story are brought together in the same picture, as in a fresco of the cemetery of St. Callistus, where they are seen distributed in four separate compartments.

In all the paintings, sculptures and engravings Jonah is entirely naked, except perhaps in a curious fresco of the cemetery of St. Callistus, where he is clothed in a tunic and elegantly draped in a cloak or pallium. He is lying down, raised a little on his elbow, beneath the rays of the sun, shown as a radiate head, according to the sacred text: "The sun beat upon the head of Jonah, and he sweated." Elsewhere he is seen putting his hand to his head to protect himself from the heat, by which he is sorely distressed. We have a fine sarcophagus, taken from the cemetery of the Vatican, on which the storm that was the cause of the Prophet's misfortune is represented by a winged half-figure emerging from a cleft in a mountain and blowing furiously on the ship. One bas-relief shows, at the prow, beside this scene, a young man who seems to be shedding tears. Perhaps it is Jonah himself, seen at the moment when his sentence has just been pronounced. On a gravestone of the catacombs Jonah is seen in the form of a very young child, alone, standing before the monster with its gaping jaws; he puts his hand to his eyes, he is weeping, and he has the attitude of a frightened little child.

CULTE ET RELIQUES. — ÉCRITS.

Cult and relics. — Writings.

The Roman Martyrology gives the town of Geth or Gath, in Palestine (tribe of Dan), as the place where the prophet Jonah was buried. Indeed St. Jerome tells us that in his time this tomb was still shown in the city of Geth. The Turks confirm St. Jerome's opinion, for they have built a mosque on the spot, beneath which the Prophet's mausoleum is shown. According to the testimony of Adrichomius, Quaresmius, Eugène Roger and others, several cities of Europe believed they had relics of Jonah; we are in no way obliged to defend or attack the authenticity of these beliefs. At Nineveh the present-day Orientals also claim to possess the tomb of Jonah, but the probabilities are in favour of the tomb in Palestine. If the Church has at all times paid a special cult to this holy Prophet, it is because she has always regarded him as one of the most striking figures of Jesus Christ. His story is frequently cited by the holy Fathers as figuring the resurrection of the Saviour (and with every reason, since the Saviour had applied it to himself), and also the general resurrection, essential truths on which it was important to insist, because they were violently attacked by the enemies of the Christian faith, as we learn from St. Augustine. Jonah began to prophesy in the year of the world 3179, under the reign of Jeroboam, the second son of Joash and king of Israel. He is the only one of the Prophets who was sent to the Gentiles. His book is chiefly historical, and in the judgement of St. Augustine this Prophet announced the Saviour not so much by his words as by his labours. Some authors have doubted whether Jonah composed the work that bears his name, because he is never spoken of in it except in the third person; but this reason is not enough to take from this Prophet the account of an event that no one could have written better than he, and which has been attributed to him for so many centuries.

In composing this biography we have made use of the *Histoire générale de l'Église* by the Abbé Darras; the *Vie des Saints* by the Abbé Rhorbacher; Baillet's *Saints de l'Ancien Testament*; the *Dictionnaire des Antiquités chrétiennes* by the Abbé Martigny; Dom Ceillier's *Histoire des Auteurs sacrés et ecclésiastiques*; Mgr Mislin's *Saints Lieux*; and the *Bible sans la Bible* by the Abbé Gainet.

Saint Matthew, Apostle and Evangelist, Martyr in Ethiopia

1st century.

> *Sanctitas beati Matthæi agnoscitur in omnium desertione, in veloci obedientia, in Christi imitatione, in hospitalitatis exhibitione, in peccatorum suorum manifestatione.*
>
> *Je reconnais la sainteté du bienheureux Matthieu dans l'abandon qu'il fait de tous ses biens, dans sa prompte obéissance à Jésus, dans son zèle à imiter son maître, dans l'hospitalité qu'il exerce envers lui, et dans la confession qu'il lui fait de ses fautes.*
>
> *I recognize the holiness of blessed Matthew in his leaving all his goods, in his prompt obedience to Jesus, in his zeal to imitate his Master, in the hospitality he shows him, and in the confession he makes to him of his faults.*
>
> *St. Thomas Aquinas, Sermons.*

St. Matthew is called Levi by two evangelists. He probably bore the latter name before his conversion and the other afterwards. He is believed to have been a native of Galilee. He was a publican, or collector of taxes for the Romans, a profession very odious to the Jews, since it reminded them of their subjection.

One day when he was sitting in his office on the shore of the Sea of Gennesaret, Our Lord, passing in front of him, had pity on him and, looking at him with an eye of mercy, said to him: "Follow me." At these words Matthew was filled with a heavenly light that showed him in an instant the vanity of all earthly things; he saw that his happiness lay in following Jesus Christ. So he rose at once, left his employment and set out after that great Master.

This teaches us how promptly we must obey the voice of God when he knocks at the door of our heart and calls us to his service. St. Matthew did not deliberate, consulted no one, asked for no time, demanded no miracles, did not propose to try himself first to see whether he could follow him who called him; the presence of those with whom he was did not embarrass him; nor did his riches hold him back; in a word, neither human respect, nor attachment to his fortune, nor any of the considerations that usually hold people back in the world, could make him put off for one moment giving himself wholly and unreservedly to Jesus Christ. That is how we ought to respond to grace. The Gospel further tells us that after his conversion he gave a feast in his house, to which he invited Jesus Christ and many publicans with him. In his ardent zeal he wished to make Our Lord known and to procure for others the same grace that he himself had received.

In his own Gospel too we find a fine example of his humility: in listing the twelve Apostles whom Jesus Christ chose from among his disciples, he confesses that he had been only a publican, so as to show the more clearly the excellence of the grace by which he had been called to the apostolate. That is all the sacred Text tells us of our holy Evangelist.

After Our Lord's Ascension into heaven and the descent of the Holy Ghost upon the Apostles, he began to preach the Mysteries of a crucified God with the others; and when they scattered over the whole earth and left Judaea, which they had tried to enlighten and convert first, Ethiopia fell to his share. It is believed that by then he had already written his Gospel: he composed it in Hebrew, or rather in Syriac, which was the common language of the Hebrews, in order to confirm those of that nation who had already received the faith. St. Epiphanius says that he wrote it by order of the other Apostles.

The provinces having been allotted, St. Matthew at once took the road to Ethiopia to carry the faith there. He passed through Egypt, where his ardour in proclaiming the law of grace made him overcome countless obstacles that arose there. He showed those peoples the way to heaven as much by the holiness of his life as by the power of his teaching and the splendour of his miracles. Clement of Alexandria says that he was much given to contemplation, that he led a very austere life, that he ate no meat and lived only on herbs, roots and wild fruits. From Egypt he went on into Ethiopia, to the city of Naddaver, a city considerable for its population and the capital of the Ethiopian kingdom, where he was received by that eunuch of Queen Candace whom St. Philip the deacon had baptized, as is related in the Acts of the Apostles. In this city he found two magicians named Zaroës and Arfaxat, who by their sorceries deceived these poor idolaters,

causing them diseases and then curing them, so as to make them pay them, through these false miracles, honours that were not their due. When they saw that the Apostle was exposing their witchcraft and undeceiving the people, they brought up by their diabolical art two frightful dragons to strike terror into the whole city; but St. Matthew, having made the sign of the cross, made these animals as gentle as lambs and forced them to go back to their caves. This wonder began to reassure the inhabitants against the spells of these impostors and gave the holy Apostle the means of proclaiming to them the Saviour, by whose power he had worked this prodigy; so that many were converted by his preaching and embraced the Christian religion. But another miracle, far more striking than the first, made him advance still further and completed the ruin of the two magicians' credit. Death had carried off the king's son, named Euphranor, and St. Matthew, having invoked the name of Jesus Christ over the dead body, at once restored him to life.

This wonder brought about the conversion of the king, the queen, the royal household and the whole province, who all received holy baptism. What wonderfully consoled our Apostle was that the princess Iphigenia, the daughter of this same king, who was a marvel of beauty and wisdom, having heard him speak of the happiness of the Virgins who choose Jesus Christ for their Spouse, resolved to keep her virginity and to consecrate all the inclinations of her heart to God alone. Her example having moved many other young girls to do the same, the Saint advised them to withdraw all together into a house of their own, there to live under the princess's direction as the faithful Spouses of the Son of God. Some writers have inferred from this that St. Matthew is the author of the Veil and of the Consecration of virgins. But this illustrious conquest that he made for the Saviour of the world at last cost him his life; for after the death of Eglippus, Hirtacus, his brother, having seized the kingdom, wished to marry Iphigenia, either for her beauty or to make the crown surer for himself by marrying the heiress. To succeed in his design, as he knew the influence the Apostle had over the princess's mind, he begged him to dispose her to consent to this marriage; the Saint answered that he could attend a discourse he was to give to the community of virgins, and that he would hear for himself the advice he would give Iphigenia. Hirtacus did not fail to be there. But St. Matthew, far from urging her to marry, spoke only of the excellence of virginity, of the blessings of heaven that always accompany it and of the great rewards due to its merit. Hirtacus, blinded by passion, flew into such a rage at this discourse that he resolved on the spot to take revenge; and, leaving the church, he sent executioners there almost at once to put the holy Apostle to death. They found him at the end of the sacrifice of the Mass that he was celebrating; and, without respecting the holiness of the place or the sacred mysteries he held in his hands, they dealt him several blows, from which he fell stone dead at the foot of the altar, which was stained with his blood. St. Hippolytus calls him the Host and victim of Virginity, because he was martyred for the defence and glory of that angelic virtue. He had stayed twenty-three years in Ethiopia, during which he had won thousands of souls to the true God, overthrown the temples of the idols, set up churches in their place, ordained priests and consecrated bishops for the full establishment of the Christian religion. That is what the best authors of ecclesiastical history tell us of St. Matthew, and the lessons of the Roman Breviary are entirely in agreement with it.

We find in the *Constitutions* of St. Clement, pope, book VIII, chapter XXV, that St. Matthew is the institutor of holy water, and he even gives the prayer that he used in making this blessing. He adds that it was also he who ordered that the faithful should offer to Our Lord the first fruits and the tithe of their income for the support of the ministers of the Church and the relief of the poor.

On the oldest monuments St. Matthew is usually represented standing, without any attribute to distinguish him from the other Apostles. At St. Paul's Outside the Walls, at Rome, he is seen standing with his arms folded. A window in Chartres cathedral shows him mounted on the back of a Prophet: this representation has a high symbolic meaning. It is, they say, a figure of the fulfilment of the prophecies of the Old Testament by the figures of the New. He is also represented with an ox's head, to recall the animal given him as an attribute. In the print room at Paris he is seen represented: (1) killed at the altar while saying Mass; (2)

putting out a fire and killing two dragons; (3) leaving his tax office at the voice of Jesus Christ, who orders him to follow him; (4) seeing the tree of Jesse in the sky; (5) holding a bag, to recall his office as tax collector; (6) holding a sword as the instrument of his martyrdom. He is also seen holding an open book and sometimes a scroll on which is written: *Liber generationis Jesu Christi*, etc.

CULTE ET RELIQUES. — ÉCRITS.

Cult and relics. — Writings.

A great number of places and churches have from time immemorial been consecrated to God under the name of St. Matthew. Among the most famous churches dedicated to him may be mentioned that of the Monastery called St. Matthew's, in Mesopotamia, now called Diarbekir, situated near Mosul, or new Nineveh; and at Rome, the church of St. Matthew (*in Merulana*), which possesses an arm of the Saint.

The body of this holy Apostle was always kept with great veneration in the city of Naddaver, in Ethiopia, where he suffered martyrdom, until it was translated to Salerno, in the kingdom of Naples, in 954. As people were then often in the perils of war, and it was feared that someone might come and seize the relics by stealth, they were hidden, and the secret place where they were laid was known to only a few persons; this is why the body of St. Matthew remained hidden for about a hundred and twenty years in a secret vault, which was discovered at Salerno in 1080, under the pontificate of St. Gregory VII, as is seen from a letter of that Pope written to Alfanus, Bishop of Salerno. From there his sacred head was carried to France and laid in the cathedral of Beauvais, except for a part which is still religiously kept in the monastery of the Visitation of Holy Mary at Chartres. As for the head of St. Matthew kept in the cathedral of Beauvais before the Revolution, it disappeared in 1793.

St. Matthew wrote his Gospel at the request of the converted Jews of Palestine. He goes into the detailed circumstances of the Saviour's actions. From the fifth chapter to the fourteenth he differs from the other evangelists in the way he arranges the facts; he disregards the order of time in order to bring together the instructions of Jesus Christ and show more perfectly the connexion between them. He insists chiefly on the moral precepts, and gives the genealogy of the Saviour, to show the fulfilment of the promises by which the Messiah was to spring from the race of Abraham and David.

All the ancient Fathers state in the most positive way that his Gospel was originally written in modern Hebrew, or Syro-Chaldaic, which was the language the Jews spoke after the captivity. It was translated into Greek in the time of the Apostles. St. Jerome says that the Hebrew text was at Caesarea in the library of St. Pamphilus, and that he himself had a copy of it taken from the exemplar used by the Nazarenes of the city of Beroea. The Gospel of St. Matthew was found by divine revelation in the island of Cyprus, with the body of St. Barnabas, under the reign of Zeno.

To complete this biography we have made use of the *Histoire des Apôtres* by the Abbé Maistre, and of Notes supplied by the Vicar General of Beauvais and by M. Paquest, Vicar General of Chartres.

Saint Gregory, Bishop of Amnice, in Greater Armenia, and Patron of Tallard, in the Diocese of Gap

404. — Pope: St. Innocent I. — Emperor of the West: Honorius.

> *Prædicator doctrinam veram signat, quando non solum docet, sed quod docet operando exercet.*
>
> *Un prédicateur met le sceau à la véritable doctrine lorsqu'il ne se contente pas d'enseigner, mais réduit en pratique ce qu'il apprend aux autres.*
>
> *A preacher sets the seal on true doctrine when he is not content to teach, but puts into practice what he teaches others.*

St. Gregory the Great.

St. Gregory of Tallard was born about the beginning of the fourth century at Amnice, an episcopal city of Greater Armenia situated on the banks of the Euphrates. Constantine, his father, and his mother Zozienne gloried more in their faith than in their nobility. Like Tobias and Sara his wife, they spurred each other on to virtue by the picture of the innocent ways of the patriarchs, and in the sweet transports of their pious enthusiasm they would exclaim: “We are the children of the Saints; we await that life which God will give to those who never change the faith they have sworn to him.” And so the Lord blessed the marriage of these virtuous spouses by giving them four children, who were the joy of their lives by their inviolable attachment to the law of God. The first, of whom history has handed down to us only the name, was called Stephen. After him came Gregory, whom we are about to make known. The two others were daughters: one sanctified herself in a monastery, the other amid the cares and troubles of married life. Contrary to the general practice of the Church at that time, Gregory was reborn in the waters of baptism immediately after his birth. A pious hermit named Luke held him at the sacred font. The care and example of this godfather had a great influence on the child’s ways. For their part, Constantine and Zozienne were the first teachers of their young family, which showed itself worthy of their affection and of their religious teaching. Gregory in particular proved to them, by his docility to their lessons and his exactness in putting them into practice, that the grace of God was working wonderfully in him.

As soon as he was old enough to give himself to the study of letters, his education was entrusted to skilled tutors. Endowed with rare talents, he made such rapid progress in the schools that while still young he deserved to be ranked among the remarkable philosophers and theologians of that time. In spite of his deep humility, Gregory’s brilliant qualities very soon drew upon him the eyes and the admiration of his fellow citizens. And so, when the Bishop of Amnice died, they believed him visibly raised up to be the successor of the one whose loss they were mourning, and the voice of the people called him to the episcopal see of that city.

The holy young man had only a low opinion of himself: he is astonished, he is frightened, he refuses this sublime dignity; he fears to sink under the weight of the obligations imposed by the fullness of the priesthood. The Apostle St. Paul said that to hold the pastoral staff one must be the living image of Jesus Christ. This oracle fills Gregory with holy dread and decides him to take flight, to escape the honourable violence that alarms his weakness. But God had spoken through the mouth of the clergy and the faithful; Gregory’s refusal was useless; it only increased the confidence placed in him. His fellow countrymen pursued him into his retreat, brought him back among them and forced him to yield to their ardent wishes. No sooner had he declared, in a voice broken with sobs, that, since heaven willed it, he would be their bishop, than cries of joy rang out on every side. The Christians solemnly thanked the Lord for having given them so enlightened a guide; they began to pray for the bishop-elect; and the Bishop of Caesarea laid hands on him at Erivan, the see of St. Gregory, martyred under the reign of Diocletian.

Abundant blessings rewarded the new bishop for the immense sacrifice he had imposed on himself and at the same time justified the people’s choice. At his voice the empire of the devil was seen to crumble, and on its ruins the empire of Jesus Christ arose. The Church of Amnice shone with a bright splendour; the number of its children grew rapidly, and, as in the first centuries of Christianity, they had but one heart and one soul. After carrying out the most sublime functions of the Apostle, he would visit the hospitals and prisons as a father and a friend; he lightened the chains of the captive and eased the infirmities of the sick; he never left the dwelling of the unfortunate without leaving there joy, peace and the alms that relieves poverty. He found such happiness in being among the poor that he had made his palace their refuge. After the example of the divine Master, he distributed food to them, which more than once was miraculously multiplied under his hand.

But this calm prosperity of the Church of Amnice did not last long. A sudden irruption of the Romans and the barbarians, who tried at all costs, says the historian Eusebius, to re-establish the worship of idols throughout Armenia, brought trouble and desolation into that city. Angered by the resistance of the Christians, who had taken up arms to defend their homes and their faith, the pagans put the whole region to fire and sword. During this storm Gregory did not hesitate: he always knew how to face danger to strengthen his people against apostasy. Heaven blessed his efforts, and not one of those committed to his charge had the misfortune to deny his faith. But his beloved episcopal city was given over to plunder and turned into a heap of ashes. His courage, rising above these deplorable events, did not weaken for a single instant. The holy bishop continued to keep in touch with the remnants of his scattered flock until, his zeal having roused the hatred of the enemies of religion against him personally, he was earnestly implored to flee this scene of carnage and horror. So he leaves his retreat, followed by a few priests exposed with him to the greatest dangers. But he does not go far; like the good shepherd, he runs after the straying sheep to bring them back to the fold; he goes from rock to rock to evangelize the poor; he urges, he implores, he brings to all the good news of salvation; and the pagans, yielding to the power of grace, come to his feet to abjure their errors and give glory to the Most High. Gregory's charity had smoothed away the obstacles that had kept these people separated from the faithful of Amnice, their brethren. Thus new conversions crowned his unceasing labours. The apostle was thinking of carrying his steps and his powerful word further when his many conversions marked him out for the fury of the barbarians, masters of Amnice. A price was set on his head, and his companions, John, Paul, Mark and Polycarp, were actively sought. They then took counsel together about where they should go to seek refuge, since it was no longer possible to undertake anything without harming the mission in the mountains. With hearts broken with grief, they resolved to entrust themselves to the waters of the great river and then go down to the Indies. Their intention was to go and weep at the tomb of the glorious Apostle St. Thomas and to place their unhappy country, thus given over to the most terrible assaults of the infernal spirit, under his mighty protection.

Hardly were they at sea when they were struck by a furious storm; but God, who had saved them from the rage of the barbarians, did not mean to swallow them up in the deep. His thoughts are not our thoughts; he turns these heroes from their course only to offer a new field to their untiring zeal and new tribulations to their sublime constancy. Cast upon an unknown land, our pilgrims boldly set out along a winding path whose end they did not know, and, contrary to their expectation, they came to an idolatrous tribe not far from the place where they had landed. Convinced that heaven had driven him in a direction opposite to the goal of his journey to procure the salvation of these unbelievers, St. Gregory at once set to work for their conversion. The gentleness of his voice, the calm of his features and his resignation amid misfortune won all hearts for him and disposed them to embrace the doctrine he taught. In a short time the converts became numerous, and the holy Pontiff was able to baptize them; they trampled underfoot their old divinities, adoring the holy Trinity in whose name they had just been reborn. Gregory did not leave them until they were thoroughly instructed in Christian doctrine and he had made them perfect men in the science of salvation. Before his departure he dedicated a temple to the Most High and offered, with thanksgiving, on that purified land the only victim of sweet savour.

After three months' stay so well employed, the Bishop of Amnice and his companions went on with their pilgrimage. God sent his angels to keep them in their ways; it was given them to walk upon the asp and the basilisk and to trample underfoot the lion and the dragon; evil did not come near them, and they arrived safe and sound at Nobie. Our five travellers found in this place a tribe already converted, which received them with a truly hospitable charity, well able to make them forget the hardships of the road. With unspeakable happiness they breathed the pure air of this Christian country: it was a foretaste of the charms and delights that awaited them at Meliapur, the goal of their desires. Somewhat recovered from their extreme fatigue, they took up their march again with new courage, hoping that God, so good to those who serve him, would grant them what they had come so far to seek: the happiness of venerating the relics of the first Apostle of the

Indies.

Arriving at last at Meliapur or Cœléminès, on this side of the Ganges, they hurried to prostrate themselves before the sacred bones of the glorious St. Thomas; they bathed them with their tears, pressed their lips with reverence and love to the precious shrine, and fervently implored the help of the famous wonder-worker for themselves and for their unhappy fellow citizens. Thus strengthened anew in priestly vigour by the sight of the body of this generous martyr, struck by a lance at the door of the holy place whose entrance he was defending against the priests of the idols, and encouraged by his great examples, they thought of taking the road back to Amnice; they hoped to ease the ills of their beloved country by announcing to it the powerful help they had just secured for it by their long and laborious pilgrimage. Alas! heaven had disposed otherwise. Delivered from the monsters, our zealous pilgrims fell into the hands of the emissaries of a barbarous king, who loaded them with chains and led them to their master, more inhuman still than his servants. This chief ordered them to be shut up in a dark dungeon, made them suffer all kinds of tortures, and ended by condemning them to death.

Neither these torments nor the sight of the final punishment shook the firmness of the generous captives. They knew that the kingdom of heaven suffers violence and can be won only at this price; that tribulations are the usual lot of the Saints here below, and that martyrdom is the shortest road that leads surely to true glory. These pious thoughts filled them with joy; like St. Thomas, they told themselves, they would have the happiness of shedding their blood for the faith; so they prayed him to obtain for them the heroism that triumphs over death. But God, content with the sacrifice they had made in their hearts, wished to see in them only martyrs of charity; not only did he deliver them, but he glorified them in the presence of the man who, in the eyes of the people, had covered them with shame.

While the tyrant was dictating the fatal sentence, his son, the heir presumptive to the crown, was suddenly struck by an unknown illness; his death seemed inevitable. The queen, persuaded that the gods were punishing the father’s cruelty in the person of the son, implored her husband to revoke the sentence; she herself ran to the dungeon to announce the happy news to the innocent prisoners; she begged Gregory to accept his freedom and to ask of the God he adored the cure of this son, her only consolation and all her joy. The holy confessor, still more eager to procure for this child the life of the soul than the life of the body, asked heaven for a miracle and was heard. He then made known to the mother and the young prince him who holds the destinies of mortals in his hands; he instructed them in the doctrine of the Gospel, and before leaving them he regenerated them in the waters of baptism.

The new danger from which Gregory and his companions had just escaped increased still further their confidence in God, who protected them so visibly, and under the safeguard of his providence they set out without fear. The Pontiff never tired of preaching the Gospel wherever he passed. One day his zeal led him to the palace of an idolatrous tribal chief who wished to hear him. Convinced that this man, mighty in work and in word, was teaching divine doctrines, the chief was converted and his subjects followed his example. He even recommended his benefactor to five other kings, who, following his example, embraced the Christian faith, drawing after them the provinces subject to their rule.

These princes had found in the knowledge of the truths of the faith and in sharing in our holy Mysteries a happiness far above all the delights of their courts. It was therefore to show their gratitude to the Lord that they resolved to leave their States for a time and go, in the humble dress of pilgrims, to visit the places sanctified by the life and death of the Son of God.

Gregory, to whom no sacrifice seemed impossible where the glory of his God and the salvation of souls were concerned, and who was delighted besides to find such holy dispositions in his spiritual sons, consented to prolong his exile in order to lead these newborn children of the Church to the places where she herself was born. The journey, though long, was a happy one; they reached Jerusalem without mishap. At the sight of this

queen of the nations, widowed of her glory, covered with ruins, subject to foreign rule and trampled underfoot by the Roman legions, Gregory and all his noble following wept over the strange blindness of the Jews, who had dared to put to death the author of life and by deicide to bring such great misfortunes upon themselves. In recollection and sorrow they visited all the places sanctified by the Passion of the Saviour God: the garden of Gethsemane, witness of his sweat of blood; the house of Pilate, where he appeared crowned with thorns and with a reed in his hand; that sorrowful way by which, worn out with suffering and fatigue, he climbed Calvary, sinking under the burden of his heavy cross. Then, after satisfying their devotion in these places of sorrowful memory, they went on to Bethlehem, to Tabor and to the famous valley of Josaphat, and, full of joy at having fulfilled their vow, they thought of returning. The princes, recalled to their States by the needs of their peoples, could not delay their departure any longer; but Gregory, who had fallen ill at Jerusalem as a result of the great fatigues he had endured on his long journeys, could not set out with them. During their stay in the holy city Gregory and his companions had received sad and distressing news of the state of the Church of Amnice. Armenia was still in the power of the idolaters, and the edicts of proscription issued against the ministers of Jesus Christ had not been withdrawn. The grief Gregory felt at this increased his illness, and he was soon brought to the point of death. Seeing him in this desperate state, his clerics redoubled their prayers and promised to go on pilgrimage to Rome if God would restore that health so dear to them and give them back their guide and father. The Lord accepted this vow of filial affection. Some time afterwards the holy Pontiff recovered his health, and at once they set out for Rome, where the glory of ancient Jerusalem seemed to have taken refuge. The Eternal City was edified by our pious travellers' long visits to the tombs of the Apostles, to whom it owes its new splendour. Pope Anastasius, whose virtues St. Jerome extols, then occupied the chair of Peter; he received Gregory with the distinction his virtues and his misfortunes deserved.

At that time the Church of the West was no longer confined to Rome; it stretched far into the Gauls, where a great number of bishops heightened its splendour by their learning and the holiness of their lives. Among them shone the illustrious Martin of Tours, whose labours and wonders were known to the whole world even before his death. Filled with wonder at all that fame proclaimed of this holy Pontiff and of the flourishing Churches of the Gauls, Gregory yielded to the desire to visit them. But hardly had he left Italy when he learned that Martin, sinking under the weight of age, of his long labours and of his austere penances, was at his last hour. This sad news did not, however, make him change his plan. Determined to pay the tribute of his veneration to the remains of the wonder-worker, if he should not have the joy of finding him alive, he continued on his way, and he was able to reach Tours still in time to see the illustrious sick man.

St. Gregory had with St. Martin some pious conversations that greatly eased the sorrow he felt at being so long away from the Church of Amnice, his spouse, given over to the fury and ravages of the Romans and the Barbarians. Thus consoled and strengthened by the wise counsels of the holy old man, he took the road back to Italy, crossed the Gauls preaching the Gospel, and arrived in the Alps about the year 402.

The diocese of Gap was then governed by a bishop who was a confessor of the faith. Gregory stayed with him for some time and was one of the holy procession that accompanied him at the consecration of a church built by the Catholics in Allabon, today Tallard. The inhabitants of Allabon did not all live under the laws of Christ: several of them were still given over to the superstitions of idolatry, and so were the surrounding populations. The Bishop of Gap, full of consideration for the exiles and knowing their apostolic zeal, urged Gregory and his companions to continue the work of conversion in these mountains, and he never ceased to honour them with the most cordial friendship. For two years the Saint carried out, to the admiration of all, the duties of pastor or apostle at Tallard and in the neighbourhood, working ardently, in spite of his great age and the austerities of his life, for the spread of the Christian faith. Here, as everywhere, the Lord made his labours fruitful, and idolatry disappeared entirely from that valley. For people readily believed a white-haired bishop whose bearing, conduct and words showed that he sought not his own glory but the glory of him who sent

him; they yielded without difficulty to one who came without any motive of self-interest and exposed himself to every kind of danger to teach the straight road that leads to eternal happiness.

Sometimes Gregory would sit, like Jesus, among the children to instruct them and prepare them to shed their blood for the faith at the moment of trial, in spite of the weakness of their age. Sometimes he would go to care for the unfortunate, breathing the foul air of their dark hovels, not afraid to dress their ulcers, not ashamed to beg the help of the rich for them; God alone was the motive of this charitable conduct; God alone strengthened him in his troubles; God alone made him radiant with joy amid his hardest labours; an immense love made him suffer everything for the glory of the sovereign Master. The faithful, at the sight of such heroism, raised their suppliant hands to heaven to implore it to prolong the days of a pastor who had become their father and made life so sweet and salvation so easy for them.

But that was the end God had set to his extraordinary mission, after which he meant to crown him and put him in possession of supreme beatitude. He called him to himself on 21 September in the year 404. Gregory died at the altar, struck by apoplexy, at the very moment when he had just completed the holy sacrifice; it is on that day that his feast is kept at Tallard, and that there is a great concourse from all the neighbouring parishes to the tomb of the Blessed.

CULTE ET RELIQUES.

Cult and relics.

The pious Bishop of Gap, who two years before had consecrated the church of Tallard, came himself to give burial to this deeply mourned pastor. He consoled the faithful by showing them how happy they were to possess so rich a treasure in the mortal remains of the holy prelate. The voice of the people and the clergy, as was then the practice, acclaimed Gregory by the name of Blessed, and people came from afar to pray at his tomb. The Lord was not slow to justify this cult by allowing several miracles to take place there: the lame were made straight there, the dumb found speech and the blind sight; more than once corpses laid on this sacred tomb were called back to life.

The town of Tallard, grateful to its benefactor, built a chapel in his honour, in which his glorious remains were laid, enclosed in a fine silver shrine. The heretics of the 16th century, who ravaged this region so furiously in order to overthrow Catholic worship there, did not fail to attack those who had established it. They profaned the parish church and the chapel of St. Gregory built on the same site, carried off the shrine and the Saint’s relics, and, as though they feared the power of those lifeless bones, they resolved to destroy them. To carry out this sacrilegious plan they lit a fire in the public square and threw them into it, before the eyes of the faithful, who were horrified at this frightful outrage and cried aloud for vengeance for such an insult to their piety. God, jealous of the glory of his Saints as of his own, heard this prayer: the sky, flashing with lightning, was covered with thick clouds; a heavy rain came and put out the fire of the pyre; it fell so abundantly that the streets of Tallard were turned into torrents. Yet the waters, while sweeping along in their flood everything they met, respected the bones of the Blessed and left them dry. This wonder covered the impious profaners with confusion; fearing that the thunderbolt would burst on their heads to punish their crime on the spot, they hastened to flee. A pious woman gathered up the holy relics and handed them over, in the church, to the parish priest.

From century to century down to our own day, astonishing wonders have made the tomb of Blessed Gregory illustrious. The deep reverence that all the devout inhabitants of the region bore him, the crowd that thronged there every year, with the consolation of being frequently heard, and the spirit of fervour that animated most of the pilgrims, who came to pay their duty to the zealous apostle to whom their fathers had owed their conversion, led to a request to Innocent X for the beatification of St. Gregory. The Pope, after canonical examination, allowed the honours due to the Blessed to be paid to this illustrious pontiff. Later Clement XIII, by a brief dated 5 September 1768, approved at Gap by the Ordinary on 11 May 1770, granted for seven

years a plenary indulgence on the feast of St. Gregory, and also on another day appointed by the bishop of the diocese (this day was the first Sunday after 21 September), to all the faithful of either sex who, being truly penitent, having confessed and received Communion, should devoutly visit during the Octave of the feast the parish church of St. Gregory at Tallard, in the diocese of Gap, and should pray there for peace among Christian princes, the extirpation of heresies and the exaltation of holy Church, our mother. The bishops of Gap, for their part, favoured this cult of St. Gregory and encouraged it not only by their words but also by the authority of their example. Among them all, Mgr Arthur de Lionne and Mgr de Pérouse, prelates of glorious memory, were remarkable for surrounding the holy relics of the blessed patron of Tallard with great veneration and entire confidence.

Extracted from the *Histoire hagiologique du diocèse de Gap* by Mgr Depéry.

Saint Maura of Troyes, Virgin, Patroness of Laundresses

850. — Pope: Leo IV. — King of France: Charles II, the Bald.

> *Une dévotion vive et tendre est la nourriture de l'âme.*
>
> *A lively and tender devotion is the food of the soul.*
>
> *St. Gregory the Great.*

St. Maura was born at Troyes or in its outskirts in the year 827 of Jesus Christ. Her father, named Marianus, and her mother Sedulia were among the richest and most powerful people of the district. They soon noticed the pious inclinations and precocious holiness of their child. Instructed in the Christian faith and baptized by Leo or Lyé II, Abbot of Mantenay, eight kilometres from Troyes, Maura bore the sweet yoke of the Lord from childhood, and, a diligent labourer, was sent early in the morning into the vineyard of the householder. O Jesus! If it is true, to speak with the Song of Songs, that "the young maidens have given you the generous affections of their whole heart", it is above all in the young Maura that we see this word of Holy Writ fulfilled. Indeed, while she was still at the tenderest age she was to be seen every day in the church of the Apostles, which was the cathedral, from the morning office until the hour of Sext. There were then in the cathedral three statues of Our Lord, one of which represented him as a child at his mother's breast, the second as a young man nailed to the cross, and the third as a mighty king seated on his judgement seat. These different states of Our Saviour were the object of a special devotion for the young virgin. She prostrated herself before each of these images, and nothing in the world could have kept her from thus offering her adoration to the Lord every day and turning towards him her looks of delight and holy love. Shortly before her death, the bishop St. Prudentius, who was attending her, wished to know the reason for a devotion she had never given up and to which she seemed very ardently attached. Maura could not bring herself to reveal the heavenly favours with which the Son of God filled her through these pious practices. At last, pressed hard to answer:

"Happy," she exclaimed, "happy the church of the Apostles, where I have often heard the sweet wailing of Jesus in his mother's arms, his sorrowful sighs on the tree of the cross, and the terrible words that came from his mouth when, seated on a majestic throne, he judged the nations! But for me, with what a look of delight he held out his golden sceptre to me!"

The bishop insisted on learning more, but Maura, pressing his hand, went on: "We must not attribute these sounds to the power of a dead piece of wood, but to the power of God, who uses inanimate things to call up in our minds the holiest and most hidden objects of our faith."

Her piety grew with age, and nothing could lessen its fervour. She had a boundless confidence in St. Gervase and St. Protase, and although the monastery raised under their patronage was eight kilometres from the town,[1] she nevertheless went there on pilgrimage every Wednesday and Friday, walking barefoot and fasting

on bread and water. She likewise felt a tender devotion for St. Mathie, and after the morning office she could be seen embracing with all her strength and bathing with her tears the altar where the body of that Saint rested.

So extraordinary a grace of devotion could not be reconciled with attachment to the world and its vanities. And so she hated it profoundly, because of the countless sins of which it is the guilty stage. Being unable to flee it altogether, she lived in it as though not living in it, according to the counsel of St. Paul; she despised what it esteems and esteemed what it despises.

Like the fire that burns and the flame that consumes, she set her family alight with the sacred fire that devoured her, and by her prayers as much as by her exhortations she contributed powerfully to the conversion of her elder brother and her father. Her brother Eutropius consecrated himself to God and became provost of the chapter of the cathedral church. He gave up his goods to his sister, to procure her a more advantageous marriage in the world. But his views were not Maura's. This pious virgin thought only of heavenly things and wished for no other spouse than Jesus Christ, whose grace was dearer to her than all temporal riches. Marianus, her father, was a rich and powerful man; he followed the examples of the world and conformed to its dangerous maxims. For all his zeal and influence, St. Prudentius had not been able to make him leave the broad way that leads man to perdition. Maura succeeded, and she begot to Jesus Christ him who had begotten her to the earth. She stirred him to a lively contrition for his faults and led him to the feet of the Pontiff, who heard his confession and restored him to grace with God. He became so devout that he seemed to be wholly in the Lord. He left the cathedral church heir to his goods and wished to be buried there; he died some time before his holy daughter.

The time Maura did not spend in prayer she employed in manual work, the proceeds of which she devoted to the churches and the poor; all her income went the same way. It was she who kept the sanctuary lamp supplied with oil and provided the wax for the divine offices, she who embroidered the vestments and albs, who gave the surplices and priestly garments. St. Prudentius relates the miraculous power attached to St. Maura's handiwork, the effects of which he himself had experienced in celebrating the august mysteries. "I value more than gold and precious stones," he says with a truly admirable humility and a moving simplicity, "a linen alb that she gave me, after spinning, making and bleaching it with her own hands, and which she begged me to use when I offered the holy sacrifice… I was like a barren fig tree, ready to be thrown into the fire; I was like dry straw about to be put into the oven to be burned; my soul, like a land without water, bore no fruit. But let us speak more plainly; why put off any longer revealing my wretchedness? I rarely consecrated the sacrament of Our Lord's body with a piety worthy of so great a mystery; I ate the Bread of Angels without the bread of tears, when she gave me this garment. What more shall I say?… I will no longer hide, Lord, the effects of your mercy; I will tell the wonders you have done through Maura, your servant. This garment has had on my heart the same power that the rod of Aaron once had on the rock in the desert; for, though I was harder than stone, it has nevertheless drawn torrents of tears from my eyes. And how many times have several among us too felt its power and efficacy when they put it on to celebrate?"

The Saint's generosity was not confined to the church of St. Peter or to St. Prudentius; it extended likewise to the religious of Mantenay. Maura provided abundantly for their needs; she gave them clothing and linen both for their church and for the needs of the community.

St. Maura's virtues won her the esteem, respect and veneration of her fellow citizens, and particularly of St. Prudentius, her bishop. God worked a multitude of miracles through her: the mere touch of the linen she had given healed the sick. She had made a present of one of these articles to Abbot Leo or Lyé II, superior of

Mantenay. Two religious of that abbey, named Melanius and Paulinus, tormented by a pernicious fever, had no sooner touched the linen than they were healed, as they solemnly attested. A canon named Maurice had a

film over his eyes that put him in danger of losing his sight; he was inspired by God to wash himself with the tears that Maura shed abundantly on the tomb of St. Mathie. His confidence was not in vain: he was healed at once. These miracles were so public that St. Prudentius did not fear to recall them in his discourse on the life of St. Maura.

Let us not forget another very wonderful fact. A deacon of the church of Troyes, who bore the same name as the canon of whom we have just spoken, had so weak a voice that he could hardly be heard at the far end of the church when he chanted the Gospel. One day (it was Good Friday) St. Prudentius was preaching in the church of Saint-Aventin, near the walls of the town, and Maura was among the hearers. Suddenly she rose and made the sign of the cross on herself. St. Prudentius, breaking off, asked her why, when all the hearers were seated, she alone was standing. Maura answered modestly: "Ought one to sit, Father, when the holy Gospel is read? The deacon Maurice is beginning to read the Passion of Our Lord in the church of the Apostles; if it please the assembly, we may stop for a while to listen to it."

St. Prudentius then asked those present whether they heard anything; but no sound, no murmur reached their ears. Convinced that there was some wonder here, the bishop went with all the people to the church of the Apostles to make sure of the truth. "We stopped a little while at the door," says St. Prudentius, "and we could only just make out the voice of Maurice, who was indeed reading the Passion of the Saviour. When the Gospel was over we praised the holy name of God and proclaimed in his temple the glory he shows forth in his Saints. As for Maura, she was prostrate at my feet, and while everyone was rejoicing she beat her breast and accused herself with sorrow of having interrupted the word of God."

Maura had reached her twenty-third year, and the day had come when she was to be united to her divine Spouse. The Church was celebrating the feast of St. Matthew, and Maura, who had been ill for some time, was about to give back her soul to her Creator. While Sedulia, her mother, lamented and wept bitterly over the loss she was about to suffer, Maura rejoiced to leave the world, to be delivered from its temptations and miseries, and to go at last to enjoy in the abode of the blessed the rewards for which she had sighed so ardently.

St. Prudentius wished to attend her himself in her last moments. He was at the foot of her deathbed, and Abbot Leo was reciting the psalms of David softly and with recollection. Eutropius, Maura's brother, the deacon Maurice and a great number of the faithful had come to be edified by the moving spectacle of so Christian an end. But let St. Prudentius himself tell us what is so able to touch every heart. "We were all in the deepest silence," he says, "when suddenly a heavenly voice was heard, and these words were clearly made out: 'Come, my beloved, I will set up my throne in you, because the King has conceived an ardent love for your beauty.' Our ears as well as our hearts were filled with an inexpressible sweetness and charm. We looked very carefully to see whether there was anyone inside or outside who was the author of so pleasant a harmony; but we recognized with certainty, by the fragrance and sweetness that accompanied it, that the Lord, 'who had gone up to heaven amid acclamations', had then come down amid songs of rejoicing, and that, like a bridegroom coming forth from his bridal chamber, he did not disdain to go before her who was coming to meet him and who had long been betrothed to him; he was singing songs of joy as he met her, to lead her afterwards into another life, unite himself to her by indissoluble bonds, and consecrate her to his glory for all eternity. Then we saw her raise her head with great difficulty and bow it towards four different sides, as if to greet someone. When Abbot Leo asked her why she was doing so, she answered: 'St. Peter and St. Paul, St. Gervase and St. Protase, whom I have honoured as well as I could during my life, are at the four sides of my bed, driving away cruel beasts from it.' She then turned to me and said: 'The last favour I ask of you, my Father and my Bishop, is that you give me, in the presence of all who are here, the sacraments of the Eucharist and Extreme Unction.' I gave them to her at once, and she died in peace, pronouncing these words of the Lord's Prayer: 'Thy kingdom come!' It was 21 September 850."

Her death was accompanied by a great number of miracles. Thecia, a kinswoman of Maura's, had been born with a mark on her face that made her unpleasing in her husband's eyes; she touched Maura's hair shirt and the mark disappeared. The monk Veranus recovered the sense of smell, which he had long lost, and he smelt the fragrance that perfumed all who stood round the Saint's body.

St. Maura is represented in Troyes cathedral with her name written in letters of gold; she stands out against a worked blue ground. Her cloak is violet and her gown pink; she holds a palm and an open book; her fair hair hangs in long tresses on her shoulders, and her nimbus is green. She is also painted in her cell, working at making church vestments.

CULTE ET RELIQUES.

Cult and relics.

St. Maura was buried with honour in the church of the village that bears her name, four kilometres from Troyes, and one can still see today, in a side chapel, the stone tomb raised on four pillars in which her body long rested. In 1415 the parish of Sainte-Maure shared its patroness's relics with the abbey of Saint-Martin-ès-Aires, which a century later, in 1549, translated them into a precious shrine given by the prior Villain. In 1655 the remains kept in the church of Sainte-Maure were visited by Mgr François Malier du Houssay and found in good condition; the same was true when, in 1789, Mgr Louis-Mathias-Joseph II de Barral, Bishop of Isaura and coadjutor of Troyes, made a new visitation. Finally, on 16 May 1828, Mgr Jacques-Louis-David de Séguin des Hons delegated M. Lejeune and M. Roisard, who had the shrine opened and found in it the precious relics, with the seals and the inscriptions on ancient parchments.

The present reliquary, containing among other bones the femur, is exposed to the veneration of the faithful during the octave of the feast of St. Maura. The rest of the year it is raised between the pointed arches of the sanctuary arcade and supported by two gigantic angels of gilded wood. It is the work of a native of Troyes, Boulland, architect of Notre-Dame de Paris, who supplied the design in 1776.

St. Maura is the patroness of laundresses; her feast is celebrated every year on 21 September, amid an immense concourse of people, in the parish church that has chosen this Saint for its patroness.

Taken from the *Vie des Saints de Troyes* by the Abbé Defer.

Saint Francaire or Fragaire, Confessor, in the Diocese of Angers (about 350)

According to St. Fortunatus of Poitiers, Francaire was one of the richest lords of Aquitaine; his generosity surpassed even the distinction of his birth. Few circumstances of his life are known, but it is enough for his glory to have given life to a son who was one day to shed a great lustre on the Church of Poitiers: we mean St. Hilary.[1] The 13th of January 368 received the last breath of the great bishop and opened to him the gates of immortality; on 28 April 350 his father had gone down to the tomb, in his old manor of Le

Mureau, in the territory of Cléré (*Villa clara*), in the diocese of Angers. He was buried in the cemetery near the château which today bears the name of Bas-Mureau. His precious remains were surrounded there by the veneration of the people until the 9th century, the disastrous time of the Norman invasion. They were then hidden in a cave in the neighbourhood, to keep them from the outrages of the pagans; they were miraculously discovered in 1470. Jean du Bellay, then Bishop of Poitiers, recognized their authenticity on 21 September of the same year, and they were exposed to the veneration of the faithful in the church of Cléré until the Revolution of '93. At that time of sad memory the shrine containing them was broken and the holy relics scattered. But heaven did not allow them to disappear entirely: it was possible to gather them up, at least in part, and in 1825 they were exposed, enclosed in a casket, on a new altar dedicated to St. Francaire. On 21 September 1862 they were solemnly translated into a fine reliquary, where they are still to be seen today.

Urban VIII had granted (1623) a plenary indulgence for seven years to all the faithful who should come on Easter Tuesday to invoke

St. Francaire in the church of Cléré. Later (1642) he granted in perpetuity a plenary indulgence to all who, on 28 April or 22 May of each year, should visit the church of Cléré and pray before the Saint's relics.

Extracted from the Archives of the parish of Cléré. — Cf. the *Vies des Saints personnages de l'Anjou* by the Rev. Fr. Dom François Chamard, Benedictine of the Congregation of France.

Saint Castor of Nîmes, Founder and Abbot of Mananque, then Bishop of the Former See of Apt (about 420)

Castor, a native of Nîmes and of an illustrious family, was first an advocate, and in that profession he distinguished himself as much by his integrity as by his talent. Afterwards invested with the office of judge, he was the support of the oppressed, and the cause of the orphan and the widow was always well received by him. He married the daughter of a widow of the city of Arles, and in marriage he lived as he would have done in the monastic life. His mother-in-law having died and his wife having shown the desire to lead a more perfect life than that of marriage, and feeling himself drawn to a higher perfection, he founded the monastery for men of Mananque (*Manancha*, in the territory of the present town of Ménerbes, arrondissement of Apt, canton of Bonnieux), and dedicated the church under the title of St. Faustinus. However much he was urged, he would not accept its direction, preferring for himself the lowliest tasks to the charge of governing his brethren. A miracle made his holiness shine out before the eyes of all: he drew his woollen robe out of a burning oven without being harmed by the fire. When the abbot of his monastery died, he succeeded him out of obedience. Eager to give his monks the most perfect rule of life, he consulted Blessed John Cassian, Abbot of Saint-Victor at Marseilles, who had carefully studied the monasteries of Egypt and the East. There exist books of Cassian on the *Monastic Institutes* addressed to Castor.

After the death of Quintinus or Quentin, Bishop of Apt, Castor was unanimously chosen to replace him. At this news he fled from his monastery and hid in a cave near the Lubéron. Shortly afterwards he was discovered by hunters, and he was forced to ascend the see of Apt, whose church he governed very holily in difficult times. He made himself admirable above all by his charity towards the poor and the prisoners. He often visited his monastery, the government of which he had kept. Once he was going there on foot, at night, with a single companion, in frightful weather, and the storm raging everywhere spared him so completely that the torch his deacon carried was not even put out by the wind. He subscribed, with thirteen other bishops, to the council held by order of Boniface I against Maximin Valentin, the corrupter of his flock. He turned the prison of Apt into a chapel, which he consecrated to Christ the Saviour. Feeling death approach, he called together the neighbouring prelates and the monks and joyfully announced to them his coming departure for the life of bliss. He died a holy death on 21 September 420 and was buried in the chapel of the Saviour. After that building fell into ruin he was translated to the cathedral church of Apt, where his body is held in great veneration.

In representations of St. Castor of Nîmes a wild boar is usually seen near him; this recalls that one day, as he was returning to his episcopal city, one of these animals, pursued by dogs, took refuge beside the man of God, and he obtained that its life be spared.

Proper of Avignon.

Saint Cadoc or Cazout,[1] Solitary in the Diocese of Vannes, and Martyr at Weedon in Great Britain (490)

Gundliew or Guen-Liou, surnamed the Warrior, one of the petty kings of southern Cambria, was the father of St. Cadoc, who was baptized by a pious Irish solitary, who took charge of his education. After spending twelve years with him, the young prince, preferring the solitary life to his father's throne, went to train himself in it for three years at Lismore, an already famous monastic school, then returned to Cambria to continue his studies under a celebrated British rhetorician. Soon resolved to embrace the monastic life, Cadoc went deep into a forest, where he founded the famous abbey of Llancarfan (*Ecclesia Cervorum*), which takes its name from the well-known legend according to which two stags from the neighbouring forest came one day to take the place of two lazy and unruly monks who had refused to go to the work required for building the monastery.

Meanwhile the invasion of the idolatrous Saxons, with all the horrors and all the profanations that went with it, reached in turn the banks of the Severn and the Usk, which bounded Cadoc's monastic domains. He thought himself obliged to leave Cambria and sail for Armorica, where so many illustrious refugees had gone before him, who had become the apostles and legendary patrons of that glorious land. There he founded a new monastery on a small desert island of the Morbihan archipelago, which is still shown near the peninsula of Rhuys; there he trained many disciples. This island is in the present parish of Belz (arrondissement of Lorient); it is still called the Île de Saint-Cadoc, and its chapel is the goal of a pilgrimage.

After a stay of several years in Armorica, Cadoc left his new community flourishing under the government of another pastor and returned to Great Britain to console the many Christians who had survived the massacres of the conquest and were living under the yoke of a pagan race. He settled at Weedon (county of Northampton); martyrdom awaited him there. One morning when he was celebrating the divine sacrifice, a furious band of mounted Saxon warriors entered the church and rushed towards the altar. The Saint went on with the sacrifice; a Saxon chief, spurring his horse and brandishing his lance, went straight at him and struck him to the heart. Cadoc fell to his knees, and his last wish and his last thought were still for his dear fellow countrymen. He is honoured as a Martyr at Vannes on 21 September.

He is represented: (1) driving away the serpents that infested the coasts of the Morbihan and disturbed his solitude; (2) pierced with a lance by a Saxon soldier at the moment when he was offering the holy sacrifice of the Mass.

Extracted from the *Moines d'Occident* by the Comte de Montalembert, and from local notes.

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[1] They were penitents who went in procession through the towns, naked to the waist and armed with a whip with which they scourged themselves publicly while singing hymns, to expiate their sins. They were also called *Blancs-Battus* (White Penitents), because they wore a kind of white cloak. The first Flagellants appeared in the 9th century. In 1268 they formed a real sect, and Reinier, a Dominican of Perugia, was declared their head. The plague that ravaged Germany in 1348 redoubled their fervour, and they multiplied in spite of the censures of the clergy. In 1574 the King of France, Henry III, enrolled himself in this Order with his whole court. Less than a century ago such fanatics were still to be found in Italy and the south of France.

[2] It was at Mantenay, now Saint-Lyé.

[3] See his life on 13 January, vol. I, p. 292.

[4] Alias: Kadoc, Cado, Kadok, Cadout, Cadog, Catrog-Doeth, Cadvot.

22 September

Martyrologies

Twenty-second day of September

MARTYROLOGE ROMAIN.

Roman Martyrology.

At Valencia, in Spain, St. Thomas of Villanova, archbishop and confessor, whose death is mentioned on the 8th of this month.[1] 1555. — At Agaunum (today Saint-Maurice), near Sion, in the Valais, the holy martyrs MAURICE, Exuperius, Candidus, Victor, Innocent, Vitalis and their companions, soldiers of the Theban Legion, who, massacred for Jesus Christ under Maximian, filled the whole world with the glory of their martyrdom. 286. — At Rome, the holy virgins Digna and Emerita, martyred under Valerian and Gallienus. Their relics rest in the church of St. Marcellus. 3rd c. — At Châtres (today Arpajon, in the diocese of Paris), St. Yon, priest and martyr, who, having come into Gaul with St. Denis, was beaten with rods by order of the prefect Julian and consummated his martyrdom by the sword.[2] 3rd c. — At Ratisbon (Bavaria), St. EMMERAN, bishop and martyr, who, in the design of saving others, patiently suffered a most cruel death for Jesus Christ. 652. — At Antinoë, in Egypt, St. Iraïs or Irais, virgin of Alexandria, and her companions, martyrs. Having gone out to draw water at a spring not far off, she saw a ship laden with confessors of Jesus Christ; she at once left her pitcher to join them, and when they had entered the city she was beheaded first, after enduring several torments. The priests, the deacons, the virgins and all the others also perished by the same kind of death. — At Meaux, St. Saintin, disciple of St. Denis the Areopagite, who, having been consecrated bishop of that city by that Saint, was the first to preach the Gospel there.[3] — In the Cotentin, St. Lô, Bishop of Coutances. 575. — In Poitou, St. FLORENT, priest. 440. — In Berry, St. SYLVIN, confessor. — At Laon, St. SALABERGE, abbess. 654.

MARTYROLOGE DE FRANCE, REVU ET AUGMENTÉ.

Martyrology of France, revised and enlarged.

In the dioceses of Angers, Auch, Chambéry, Chartres, Mainz, Montpellier, Nantes, Pamiers, Paris, Poitiers, Rodez, Tarbes and Viviers, St. Maurice and his companions, martyrs, mentioned in the Roman Martyrology of this day. — In the dioceses of Blois and Limoges, St. Thomas of Villanova, Archbishop of Valencia, in Spain, and confessor, mentioned today in the same martyrology. — At Meaux, with St. Saintin, whose life we shall give on the following day, St. Antoninus, priest, companion of St. Saintin and his helper in the apostolic mission. — At Tonnerre (Yonne), in the diocese of Sens, St. John of Réome, one of the chief founders of the monastic life in France, with St. Benedict, and whose life we gave on 28 January. 539 or 545. — At Châlons-sur-Marne, St. Lintrude (Lutrude, Lindru), virgin, daughter of Sigmar, Count of Perthes, and sister of Saints Hoïlde (30 April), Amée, Pussinne, Francule, Libérie and Menehould or Manégilde. Lintrude received the veil of virgins from the hands of St. Alpin, and from then on gave herself wholly to religious exercises, first in her father’s house and then, when her parents had died, on a small estate she held by inheritance, where she lived in solitude. She made the journey to Rome to visit the tombs of the Apostles St. Peter and St. Paul. As soon as she had returned from this pious pilgrimage, she built in her solitude a chapel under the invocation of St. Maurice, whose relics she had brought back. She spent the rest of her life near this sanctuary in continual prayers, vigils and fasts, and was buried there after her death. 5th c. — At Levroux (Indre), in the diocese of Bourges, St. Sylvester and St. Rodène, companions of St. Sylvin, whose life we give on this day. — At Sens, St. Serotinus, deacon and martyr, whose relics were kept in the abbey church of Saint-Pierre-le-Vif-lès-Sens (*S. Petrus Senonensis*), a former Benedictine monastery founded about 505, which still survived in the last century with considerable splendour. — At Troyes, St. Maura, virgin, patroness of washerwomen, whose life we gave on the preceding day. 850. — In the diocese of Strasbourg, St. LENDELIN OF SCOTLAND (some say of Ireland), martyr. 7th c. — At Champlemy (Nièvre, arrondissement of Cosne, canton of Prémery), in the diocese of Nevers, the anniversary of the consecration by Mgr Arnaud Sorbin of the new parish church, due to the generosity of François de la Rivière, lord of the place. 1595. — In the former Cistercian abbey of Villers-en-Brabant (*Villarium*), in the diocese of Namur (Belgium), the Venerable Gérard or Gérald, second Abbot of Villers and Bishop of Tournai. He died at a very advanced age at the abbey of Mont-Saint-Éloi (*Mons S. Eligii*), in the diocese of Arras, where he had gone for reasons of piety. 1166.

MARTYROLOGES DES ORDRES RELIGIEUX.

Martyrologies of the religious orders.

Martyrology of the Order of St. Basil. — At Rome, St. Sergius I, pope and confessor, of the Order of St. Basil. His heavenly birthday is mentioned on 9 September.[4] 701.

Martyrology of the Order of St. Benedict. — The feast of the sacred Stigmata of St. Francis, which is mentioned on 17 September.[5] 1224.

Martyrology of the Order of the Camaldolese. — The same as among the Benedictines.

Martyrology of the Congregation of Vallombrosa. — St. Columba, virgin and martyr, who is mentioned on 17 September.[6] 853.

Martyrology of the three Orders of St. Francis. — At Valencia, in Spain, St. Thomas of Villanova, archbishop and confessor, who is mentioned on 10 September.[7] 1555.

Martyrology of the Order of the Blessed Virgin Mary of Mount Carmel. — At Agaunum (today Saint-Maurice), near Sion, in the Valais, St. Maurice and his companions, soldiers of the Theban Legion, whose generous martyrdom astonished the whole world. 286.

Martyrology of the Order of the Hermits of St. Augustine. — St. Joseph of Cupertino, confessor, who is mentioned on 18 September. 1662.

ADDITIONS FAITES D'APRÈS LES BOLLANDISTES ET AUTRES HAGIOGRAPHES.

Additions made from the Bollandists and other hagiographers.

At Sinope, a city and port of Paphlagonia on the Black Sea, St. PHOCAS THE GARDENER, martyr, famous for the generous hospitality he showed to the lictors sent to put him to death. 303. — At Antioch in Syria, today Antakya, a city of Asiatic Turkey on the Orontes, St. Drosis, virgin and martyr, whom St. John Chrysostom praises thus in his Homilies: "The tyrant had a pyre lit; for he did not have her thrown into a pit, nor did he have her head cut off, not wishing to make the struggle easier for her by the shortness of the torment; on the contrary, he wished to dismay her spirit and, by the sight of the pyre, to overcome that indomitable soul. When he had cast his victim into the middle of the arena, the furnace was lit and the flame rose to a great height. At this sight the blessed Martyr was herself inflamed with great zeal; she was consumed by the fire of the love of Jesus Christ, and, remembering the three young Hebrews, she reflected that she was about to share in the same trials, in order afterwards to win the same crowns. Having from then on passed into heaven and carried her soul there, she laughed at all the cruelties, and the fire no longer seemed fire to her, but a pleasant dew. Her flesh was consumed, her bones were burnt to ashes, her sinews took fire, but the faith of her soul grew firmer and more radiant: those who saw her thought she was perishing, but she was only being purified the more." — At Iesi (*Æsium*), a city of Italy in the former States of the Church, St. Septimius, bishop and martyr, patron of Iesi. A native of the Roman colonies established among the Germans, he was born of idolatrous parents who took care to bring him up in the principles of their false religion. But grace touched the heart of Septimius, who from then on applied himself to studying the most sweet doctrine of Jesus Christ, and asked for Baptism. One day when he was speaking to his countrymen of the beauties of the Christian religion, the temple of Jupiter collapsed of itself and the idol worshipped in it was reduced to dust. The fury of the inhabitants then forced Septimius to leave his country; he made his way to Italy with three travelling companions, Christians like himself, Emilius, Germanus and Valentine. As they openly proclaimed the Gospel and worked a great number of wonders, the idolaters compelled them to leave the country. The missionaries continued on their way and soon reached Rome, the centre of paganism. After visiting the tombs of the Apostles they resumed their preaching and made many

conversions. Pope St. Marcellus (308–310) heard of the virtues and zeal of Septimius: he conferred holy orders on him and promoted him to the bishopric of Iesi. It was there that martyrdom awaited him. The proconsul Florentius having given him the choice between apostasy and death, Septimius refused to betray his faith, and a stroke of the axe struck off his head. His body, gathered up by the Christians, was buried inside the city; later it was translated into the cathedral church of Iesi. Beginning of the 4th century. — At Piberbach or Biberbach, in the diocese of Eichstätt (Bavaria), St. Gunthilde, servant and virgin, whose tomb still draws a great number of pilgrims. 10th c. — At Whitehern or White-Horn, in Scotland (district of Galloway), St. Lolan, bishop of that see and confessor. Thomas Dempster (1579–1625) ascribes to him several religious treatises, such as Commentaries on the Bible and sacred Hymns, and says that they perished with the library of Scotland burned by the heretics. 11th c.

Saint Sylvin, First Apostle of Levroux, and Confessor

1st century.

Hic est per quem crediderunt Veteremque rejecerunt Errorem increduli.

A la parole de Sylvin, les incrédules croient et rejettent leurs anciennes erreurs.

At the word of Sylvin, unbelievers believe and cast off their old errors.

Prose of St. Sylvin.

Levroux is today a small town of the department of the Indre and of the diocese of Bourges.[1] It is above all commendable in the eyes of the faithful for the relics of St. Sylvin, its first Apostle. According to a pious tradition dear to the country, St. Sylvin would be the Zacchaeus of the Gospel, converted by the Saviour in the streets of Jericho.[2] Here is what the legend relates of him:

“After Jesus Christ had by His death raised up again human nature, which the sin of our first parents had made fall from its first greatness, He established a priesthood to labour for the salvation of souls in the different countries of the earth. Rome above all was plunged in the abominations of idolatry: the Saviour sent blessed Peter there to make the Christian faith triumph. But the holy Apostle, remembering the lessons of the divine Master, took with him two disciples, Sylvin and Sylvester, and assigned them the whole Roman province in which to exercise their zeal and gather an ample harvest of souls won for God.

“St. Peter soon learned that idolatry held sway in Gaul: he therefore resolved to break the sceptre that the devil stretched over those provinces, and he said to Sylvin and Sylvester: ‘My dearest brethren, go into the land of the Gauls; direct your steps towards a village of Berry called *Gabatum*. With the grace of God, save there the souls that the ancient enemy holds in his nets.’ Sylvin and Sylvester, having received the Apostle’s blessing, obeyed his voice. While they were on their journey and staying at Bethany, a village not far from Rome, it happened that Sylvester fell ill and died. St. Sylvin paid him the last duties as was fitting, and went back to Rome to inform St. Peter of what had happened. The blessed Apostle handed Sylvin his pastoral staff and said to him: ‘Retrace your steps; go to Sylvester’s tomb and, in the name of Jesus Christ, command him to rise again.’ Sylvin set out once more with St. Peter’s pastoral staff, and, having come to the place where Sylvester’s body lay, he overturned the tomb, made the holy body touch the Apostle’s staff, and said, as he had been ordered: ‘My brother, in the name of the Father, and of the Son who raised Lazarus, and of the Holy Ghost, return to life. It is in the name of Jesus Christ that I speak: return to life, and let us fulfil together the ministry that obedience has entrusted to us.’ Scarcely had he spoken when Sylvester, like a man coming out of a deep sleep, opened his eyes and returned to life. The two Saints set out again so as not to delay spreading far and wide the words of salvation they had received from the Master.

“Sylvin and Sylvester raised a church which they dedicated to the Lord and to Peter, prince of the Apostles, where Jesus Christ was blessed and adored. The lame, the blind, the paralysed, all the sick who came to pray there were healed, and Sylvin, by the mere laying on of hands, delivered those possessed by the devil. The

report of the miracles that the Lord worked in that place through the ministry of His servants spread far and wide. But soon Sylvin himself fell ill, and, full of contempt for the things of this world, he spoke with enthusiasm of the happiness he would soon enjoy in heaven as a servant of Jesus Christ. His disciples and the virgin Rodène[3] were sunk in sadness and said to him: 'Father so dearly loved, why do you leave us so soon?' Sylvin, who had no more than a breath of life left, gathered his strength and answered them: 'Ah! I beseech you, do not give yourselves up to grief.'

"At that same moment the Christians who stood round his bed heard melodious voices singing in heaven; the air was perfumed with sweet odours, and the soul of the blessed confessor, parting from his body, flew away into the bosom of God. The Christians celebrated his funeral, and two hours later St. Sylvester and blessed Rodène themselves breathed their last, and so passed with Sylvin into the kingdom of heaven, where they enjoy eternal happiness with the Saints and the elect of God."[4]

Let us say a word about the posthumous glory of St. Sylvin of Levroux. A powerful lord of the court of King Clotaire put no curb on himself and led the most disorderly life. God in His goodness struck the body of this hardened courtier in order to save his soul. He was seized with such a trembling that he could not even raise his hand to his forehead; at last he recognized the hand of God chastising him, and had himself carried several days in succession to the church of Saint-Martin at Tours, spending long hours praying the blessed bishop to intercede for him and obtain mercy for him. He felt no relief; but one night, while he slept, St. Martin appeared to him and told him to have himself carried to Levroux, before the relics of St. Sylvin. As soon as he woke, this lord gave orders; he set out, and after praying in the church of Levroux for about two hours his infirmity vanished, and he went home praising the power of St. Sylvin, to whom he owed his cure. A cleric of the city of Toulouse, named Hugon, of illustrious birth, was so covered with leprosy that, unable to bear the disgust he inspired in his friends and even in his family, he resolved to leave his country and go from pilgrimage to pilgrimage until God, taking pity on his lot, should restore him to health. Hugon had already visited many churches and prayed before the relics of a great number of Saints, and he felt no easing. He came to Levroux: he spent several days and several nights in prayer before the tomb of St. Sylvin, and recovered so perfect a health that not the slightest trace of his frightful disease remained. Hugon would not go back to Toulouse; but, full of gratitude to the Saint to whom he owed his cure, he devoted the rest of his days to the service of the church of Levroux, where until his death he filled the office of deacon.

CULTE ET RELIQUES. — PÈLERINAGE.

Cult and relics. — Pilgrimage.

We know neither the date nor any detail of the first translation of the relics of St. Sylvin; we know only that the chapter of Levroux celebrated its anniversary on 1 May, and the feast of St. Philip was put off to the following day. The second translation was presided over by St. William, Archbishop of Bourges; it is believed to have taken place at the beginning of the 13th century, after the building of the present church.

The relics of Saints Sylvin and Sylvester were several times visited and recognized by the archbishops of Bourges. In 1439 some persons were maliciously spreading the rumour that the head venerated at Levroux was not that of St. Sylvin; the canons were troubled by this and begged Mgr Henri d'Avaugour to have the state of the holy relics verified. The prelate commissioned Guillaume Grasset and Pierre Durand, priests and apostolic notaries, to inspect the shrines. They found three chests of moderate size. On one was this inscription, in very ancient characters: *Shrine of St. Sylvin*; on the second, *Shrine of St. Sylvester*; and on the third, *Shrine of St. Rodène*. In the first were enclosed all the bones of St. Sylvin, except the head and an arm, which remained exposed in the church to the veneration of the faithful in separate shrines. This chest also contained the Acts and legends of these three Saints, several church books of great antiquity, and the letters of Philippe Berruyer attesting that the head and arm of St. Sylvin had been taken out and placed by him in other reliquaries. On this occasion the archbishop granted forty days' indulgence to all who, being truly

contrite, should visit the church of Levroux, give some alms and pray there for peace. Some time before, Pope Eugene IV had granted a hundred days' indulgence to all who should visit the same church on the days of Christmas, the Circumcision, Easter and Pentecost, on the feasts of the Virgin, and on those of Saints Sylvin, Sylvester and Rodène. In 1444 the shrine of St. Sylvin was opened again, and the official of the diocese authorized Guillaume Vaquelin, canon of Saint-Agnan, to detach from it a bone four fingers long, to have it venerated in the province. In 1505 the holy relics were recognized again by Mgr Guillaume de Cambrai, who in his letters patent inserted those that his predecessor Henri d'Avaugour had issued in 1439. The holy bodies of St. Sylvin, St. Sylvester and St. Rodène were profaned by the Huguenots in 1562. The heretics pillaged the church of Levroux and burned the holy relics. But the heads of the two holy confessors were rescued from their sacrilegious fury, as is established by the letters of Mgr Michel Phelippaux, who in 1685 recognized the state of these precious relics and of the authentic letters accompanying them.

The Revolution of '93 did not entirely strip Levroux of its pious treasure. The head of St. Sylvin was saved during those disastrous days by one Gaugry, who later returned it to the church. The Abbé Villeret, then parish priest of Levroux, drew up an official report of this restitution in the presence of several clergy, the local authorities, the most notable persons of the parish and two physicians. This report was submitted to Mgr de Merct, Archbishop of Bourges, who after serious examination recognized the authenticity of the relics and allowed them to be exposed publicly to the veneration of the faithful. These two letters patent are carefully kept in the shrine of St. Sylvin.

The feast of St. Sylvin and St. Sylvester is marked on 22 September in the Roman Martyrology. The fifth Sunday after Easter and 15 August are the times of the great concourse; but not a day passes without several persons coming to Levroux to commend themselves to the protection of the holy confessor. They come from the most distant regions, but above all from the arrondissements of La Châtre and Le Blanc, from the Limousin, Poitou, Touraine and the Blésois.

Extracted from the *Pieux pèlerinage de Saint-Sylvin de Levroux* by the Rev. Fr. Possoz, of the Society of Jesus. Nantes, 1854.

Saint Maurice, Patron of Soldiers, and His Companions, Martyrs at Agaunum (Saint-Maurice), in the Valais

286. — Pope: St. Caius. — Roman Emperors: Diocletian and Maximian.

> *Cæditur ergo phalanx invicta, jubente tyranno, Et cruor effusus fluminis instar iit. Prodigium Alpino natura in culmine vidit, Spectavit rubeas nam stupefacta nives.*
>
> *Sur l'ordre du tyran, la phalange invincible tombe foudroyée, et des fleuves de sang courent annoncer au monde son héroïque martyre. Stupéfaite, la nature contemple un spectacle inouï : des neiges rouges au sommet des Alpes !*
>
> *At the tyrant's order the invincible phalanx falls as if struck by lightning, and rivers of blood run to proclaim its heroic martyrdom to the world. Nature in amazement beholds an unheard-of sight: red snows on the summit of the Alps!*
>
> *Fr. Hugues Vaillant, Fasti Sacri.*

Under Maximian, who shared with Diocletian, as his colleague, the empire of the Roman republic, almost every province saw whole peoples of martyrs torn and massacred. For not only did this prince give himself up with a kind of fury to avarice, debauchery and cruelty, in a word to every vice, but he was also passionately attached to the abominable rites of the Gentiles, and in the rage of his impiety against the King of heaven he had armed himself to destroy the Christian name. All who dared to profess the religion of the true God were carried off by bodies of troops that he sent everywhere in search of them, to be dragged to torture and death. One would have said that he had made a truce with the barbarian peoples in order to turn

all his forces against religion. There was then in the Roman armies a legion of soldiers who were called the Thebans. The legion was a body of six thousand six hundred men under arms. They had been brought from the depths of the East to reinforce the army of Maximian. They were warriors fearless in battle, of great courage and of a faith greater still; with noble emulation they showed themselves full of generosity towards the emperor and of devotion to Christ; for they had not forgotten in the camps the precept of the Gospel, faithfully rendering to God the things that are God's, and to Caesar the things that are Caesar's. Like the other soldiers of the army, they received the mission of pursuing the Christians and bringing them before the emperor. They alone dared to refuse to lend their arms to this ministry of cruelty, and answered that they would not obey such orders. Maximian was not far off; tired from the journey, he had halted at Octodurum, today Martigny, at the entrance of the Entremont, on the Dranse. When news was brought to him in that town that a legion rebellious to his orders had broken off its march and halted at Tarnade, later called Agaunum, and finally Saint-Maurice in the Valais, he suddenly flew into a violent fit of fury. But before going on with our account, we think it useful to give here an exact description of the place.

The spot where they were is about sixty miles from the city of Geneva, but only fourteen miles from the head of its lake, Lake Leman, through which the Rhône flows. The place lies in a valley between the ranges of the Alps that stretch as far as that. To reach it the way is difficult, by steep and narrow paths; for the Rhône in its impetuous course scarcely leaves the traveller a road along its bank at the foot of the mountain. But once, in spite of all these obstacles, one has passed the narrow gorges of all these defiles, suddenly a vast plain is seen to open, which the Alps surround with their wild rocks. It was in this place that the holy legion had halted.

On learning that it refused to obey, Maximian, boiling with anger, as we have said, ordered it to be decimated. He hoped that the others, under the blow of terror, would more easily yield to the will of their master. Therefore, immediately after this first execution, he renewed his orders to compel those who remained to pursue the Christians. As soon as this new decree had been notified to the Thebans, and they had learned that it was intended to force them to carry out sacrilegious persecutions, a great tumult arose in the camp; all cried out that they would never lend themselves to this impious ministry; that they held and would always hold in abomination the idols and their infamous worship; that they would always remain faithful to their holy and divine religion; in short, that they adored only the one eternal God, resolved to suffer everything rather than betray the Christian faith. Informed of this answer, Maximian, more cruel in his outbursts than a wild beast, gave rein again to the instincts of his fury; he ordered that they be decimated a second time and that those who remained be compelled to submit to the law they had scorned. This bloody order was therefore carried to the camp a second time; at once lots were cast, and every tenth man of what remained of the legion was struck down. Meanwhile the other soldiers whom the sword had spared exhorted one another to persevere in their generous resolution.

Their faith found a powerful spur in the courage of St. Maurice, whom tradition names as their leader, of St. Exuperius, quartermaster of the camp, and of Candidus, provost of the soldiers. Maurice exhorted them all and stirred up their faith by showing them the example of the martyrs, their comrades in arms; he made them all aspire to the honour of dying, if need be, out of respect for the divine laws and for their oath to Christ; they must follow, he told them, the brethren who had just gone before them to heaven. Thus a glorious passion for martyrdom was kindled in these blessed warriors. Encouraged therefore by their leaders, they sent a deputation to Maximian, who was still shaken by fits of senseless fury. Their answer, full at once of piety and courage, ran thus:

"Emperor, we are your soldiers, but at the same time, and we glory in confessing it openly, we are the servants of God. To you we owe military service; to Him the homage of an innocent life. From you we receive the pay of our labours and fatigues; from Him we hold the gift of life. Therefore, O emperor, we cannot obey you so far as to deny God, the Creator of all things, our Master and our Creator, who is yours also, whether you will or not. Do not reduce us to the sad necessity of offending Him, and you will find us, as

we have always been, ready to follow all your orders. Otherwise, know that we shall obey Him rather than you. We offer you our arms against any enemy you wish to strike, whoever he may be, but we hold it a crime to steep them in the blood of the innocent. These hands know how to fight against enemies and against the impious; they do not know how to slaughter friends of God and brethren. We have not forgotten that it was to protect our fellow citizens, and not to strike them, that we took up arms. We have always fought for justice, for piety, for the safety of the innocent. Until now, amid the dangers we have faced, we have sought no other reward. We have fought out of respect for the faith we promised you; but how could we keep it if we refused our God the faith we have given Him? Our first oaths we made to God; and only in the second place did we swear to be faithful to you. Do not count on our faithfulness to these second oaths if we were to break the first. It is Christians whom you order to be sought out for punishment; but we are Christians, we, and here we are; your wishes are satisfied, and you have no need to look for others; you have in us men who confess God the Father, the author of all things, and who believe in Jesus Christ His Son as God. We have seen the companions of our labours and dangers fall beneath the sword, and their blood has splashed even upon us. Yet we have not wept for the death, the cruel massacre of these blessed brethren; we have not even pitied their lot; on the contrary, we congratulated them on their happiness, we accompanied their sacrifice with transports of joy, because they were found worthy to suffer for their Lord and their God. As for us, we are not rebels whom the imperious need to live has driven into revolt; we are not armed against you by despair, always so powerful in danger. We have arms in our hands, and we do not resist. We would rather die than kill, perish innocent than live guilty. If you make further laws against us, if you have new orders to give, new sentences to pronounce, fire, torture and the sword do not frighten us; we are ready to die. We openly confess that we are Christians and that we cannot persecute Christians.”

On receiving this answer, Maximian understood that he had to contend with hearts inflexible in the faith of Christ. Therefore, despairing of overcoming their generous constancy, he resolved to have the whole legion put to death at a single stroke. Numerous battalions of soldiers received the order to surround it and massacre it. Arriving before the blessed legion, the impious men sent by the emperor drew their swords against these thousands of Saints whom the love of life had not made flee from death. The sword mowed them down in every rank, and not a complaint, not a murmur escaped them.

They had laid down their arms; some stretched out their necks, others offered their throats to their persecutors; all presented to the executioners a defenceless body. In spite of their numbers and their powerful armour they did not let themselves be carried away by the desire to make the justice of their cause triumph by the sword. A single thought animated them: the God whom they confessed had let Himself be dragged to death without a murmur; like a lamb, He had not opened His mouth. So they likewise, the sheep of the Lord, let themselves be torn by raging wolves. The earth was covered with the bodies of these holy victims, and their noble blood flowed over it in long streams. Did the rage of a barbarian ever, outside of battle, heap up so many human remains? Did cruelty ever strike so many victims at once by a single sentence, even in punishing criminals? They, for their part, were punished in spite of their innocence and their multitude, although crimes are often left unavenged because of the great number of the guilty. Thus the odious cruelty of a tyrant sacrificed a whole people of Saints, who scorned the goods of this present life in the hope of future happiness. Thus perished this legion, truly worthy of the angels. That is why our faith shows them to us today united with the legions of angels and singing eternally with them in heaven the Lord, the God of hosts.

As for the martyr Victor, he did not belong to this legion; indeed he was no longer a soldier, having obtained his discharge as a veteran after long service. But on a journey he was making he fell, without knowing it, among the executioners, who, rejoicing in their booty, were giving themselves up to the orgies of a great feast. They invited him to share the joys of the feast with them. When he had learned from these wretches, in the excitement of drunkenness, the reason for their gathering, he refused with horror and scorned the feast

and the guests. He was then asked whether he was a Christian; scarcely had he answered that he was and always would be, when at once they threw themselves on him and massacred him. Thus struck down in the same place as the other martyrs, he shared with them both their death and their honours. Of this great number of Saints, only four names are known to us: Maurice, Exuperius, Candidus and Victor.

A window of Strasbourg cathedral represents St. Maurice dressed as a knight. He is painted holding a banner bearing a cross, a great sword and the crown of thorns. In the collection of Saints in the Cabinet des Estampes at Paris he is seen now on horseback, now at the head of the officers of his legion, now with his comrades in arms refusing to sacrifice to the idols, and then massacred by order of the emperor.

CULTE ET RELIQUES.

Cult and relics.

The bodies of the blessed martyrs of Agaunum were discovered by revelation to St. Theodore, Bishop of Sion in the Valais. He had a basilica built in their honour, backed on one side against an enormous rock. Now, while it was being built, a miracle occurred which we cannot pass over in silence. Among the workmen who had gathered for this great work at the bishop's summons there was one who was still a pagan. One Sunday, when the others had left their work because of the solemnity of the day, he had stayed alone to go on with his work. Suddenly, in the solitude where he was, the Saints, surrounded with light, seized him and stretched him on the ground to subject him to the punishment of his impiety. He saw with his own eyes the crowd of Martyrs; he felt the blows with which they struck him and heard their reproaches, because he alone had been missing from church on the Lord's day and had moreover dared, although a Gentile, to work on the building of a sacred edifice. These punishments and reproaches were on the Saints' part a merciful kindness; for the workman, trembling and dismayed, at once asked that the saving Name be invoked over him, and became a Christian.

Among the miracles of the holy Martyrs we must not forget one that made a stir and that everyone knew of. A lady, the wife of Quincius, a person of distinguished rank, was stricken with a paralysis that had taken from her the use of her feet. She begged her husband to have her taken to Agaunum, although the distance was considerable. On her arrival servants carried her in their arms to the basilica of the holy Martyrs; she walked back to her inn. And today, in those same limbs that death had already struck, she bears everywhere the witness of the miracle that healed her.

To the miracles related by St. Eucherius we shall add the one that happened to St. Martin. This great prelate, who had a singular devotion to our glorious martyrs, went to Agaunum to try to obtain some of their relics; but, having been unable to obtain any from the monks who held the place, he went to the spot where they had suffered death. And there, after a most fervent prayer, he took a knife and cut out a piece of earth in the form of a crown, and at once — O wonderful prodigy! — blood flowed from it in abundance. He received it in a vessel brought for the purpose, and left part of it at Agaunum together with the knife itself; the rest he carried to Tours and afterwards distributed to several churches, especially to his own cathedral and to that of Angers. He kept for himself only a small phial, which from then on he always wore out of devotion and with which he wished to be buried.

The memory of St. Maurice and his companions has always been most celebrated in the Church. The faithful are accustomed, in wars against the enemies of the faith, to invoke him with St. George, to obtain victory by the power of their intercession.

The Greeks also had a martyr named St. Maurice, who suffered at Apamea on 4 July, and whose combat Metaphrastes described. Several have confused him with the one of whom we are speaking, and Cardinal Baronius confesses that he had followed that opinion; but he retracted it in his Notes on the Roman Martyrology, at 22 September.

The cult of St. Maurice and his companions, born in the Valais under the eyes of the witnesses of their martyrdom, passed into Gaul towards the end of the 4th century; later it spread into Italy; today it is known and spread throughout the Catholic world. As early as about the year 390, St. Theodore, Bishop of Sion, sent bones of the Thebans to St. Victricius, Bishop of Rouen. St. Germanus, Bishop of Auxerre, built in 420, in his episcopal city, a church in honour of St. Maurice and his companions.

The parish churches raised under the title of St. Maurice and his illustrious brothers in arms, whether in the neighbouring dioceses or abroad, are innumerable; in Switzerland there are few churches where the statue of Maurice, or the sign that recalls him, is not to be seen somewhere; the trefoil cross that bears his name appears everywhere; it is seen painted on the vaults of sanctuaries and on old flags, engraved on the arms of towns, and even on the coins, old and modern, that remained in use until recent times.

The present church of the abbey of Saint-Maurice in the Valais, into which the relics of the Theban martyrs were solemnly translated amid an immense concourse of people, possesses: (1) a large shrine plated with silver and adorned with many precious stones, containing several parts of the body of St. Maurice; (2) two busts, one of silver containing the head of St. Candidus, one of St. Maurice's lieutenants, the other of silver-gilt, surmounted by the arms of the house of Savoy, containing the head of St. Victor, the Roman veteran martyred with the Thebans; (3) an equestrian statue of St. Maurice in silver, fifty centimetres high; (4) two silver arms enriched with precious stones, one of which contains a rib and a bone of St. Bernard of Menthon, the other the relics of St. Innocent, a Theban martyr; (5) two silver-plated shrines, smaller than that of St. Maurice, one containing bones of the Theban martyrs, the other the relics of the children of St. Sigismund, patron of the parish; (6) two silver cups containing relics of St. Severinus, first Abbot of Saint-Maurice (478), of the Thebans, of St. Francis de Sales, etc.; (7) an agate vase of a single piece, a gift of Charlemagne, Greek work of the pagan era, much admired by connoisseurs, containing earth soaked in the blood of the Theban martyrs; (8) a ewer, Arab work no less precious than the agate, also a present of the Emperor Charlemagne; it is enamel on gold, adorned with superb sapphires; it too contains blood of our Martyrs; (9) the ring of St. Maurice, a genuine ring of the Roman knights of the 3rd to 4th century; it is an uncut sapphire set in gold; (10) a reliquary containing a hundred and twenty-seven teeth of the Theban martyrs, and another containing relics of the head of the legion.

The relics of these glorious martyrs were distributed to various places in Christendom. The diocese of Troyes possesses a part of them. The church of the abbey of Larrivour had a shrine containing remains of St. Maurice and his companions. This shrine is now in the church of Lusigny, on the wall of the chapel of St. Nicholas, on the Gospel side. A relic of St. Maurice is likewise in one of the shrines that came from the abbey of Montiéramey and are exposed in the parish church.

St. Maurice is the patron of several parishes in the diocese of Nevers. The Visitation monastery of Nevers possesses the body of St. Ours, one of the companions of St. Maurice.

In 1857 a military society under the name of Saint-Maurice was founded at Le Mans by retired officers. Its purpose was to help those of its members who through illness found themselves in difficult circumstances, to have the last rites paid to them in a fitting manner, and to assist their widows and orphans; but it no longer exists.

This authentic history of the martyrdom of St. Maurice and his companions was written a hundred and fifty years after their death by St. Eucherius, Bishop of Lyons, who cites their acts and the account of Isaac, Bishop of Geneva; Isaac had been informed by Theodore, Bishop of Octodurum. We have reproduced this monument, one of the finest of Christian antiquity, in full, as it is found in the *Actes des Martyrs* translated and published by the Benedictine Fathers of the Congregation of France, vol. III, p. 20. To complete this biography we have used a *Notice sur la ville de Saint-Maurice et son abbaye* by Canon Beck, the *Hagiologie Nivernaise* by Mgr Crosnier, and the *Saints de Troyes* by the Abbé Defer.

Saint Phocas the Gardener, Martyr at Sinope, in Paphlagonia

303. — Pope: St. Marcellinus. — Roman Emperor: Maximian Herculius.

Non alienum effundere sanguinem, sed se paratum suum effundere præstare debet Christianus.

Un chrétien ne doit point verser le sang des autres, mais il doit se montrer toujours prêt à répandre le sien.

A Christian must not shed the blood of others, but must show himself always ready to shed his own.

St. John Chrysostom, Hom. LXVII.

Since Our Lord, coming into the world, chose the poor above all to make them heirs of His kingdom, it is very reasonable that we should give them a place in this collection, as we place emperors and princes in it, so that by this means the Scripture may be fulfilled which says: “The rich and the poor have met together; the Lord is the Maker of them both.”

Phocas cultivated a garden at the gate of the city of Sinope, at the mouth of the isthmus, and in this little corner of land he found the means to feed himself and to help the needy of the district. Although his house was poor and inconvenient, he joyfully welcomed into it all travellers without shelter and provided for their needs as best he could. He was at Sinope what Abraham had been at Sodom. His charity received a reward worthy of it and won him the most glorious of deaths. After the Gospel had been proclaimed to the world, the kings rose up and armed themselves against the Lord and against His Christ; the peoples sunk in error repelled the truth with all their strength. The Christians were hunted down and severely punished; those who fell into the hands of the persecutors were handed over to torture, and those who hid were carefully sought out. The obscure life of Phocas could not hide him from the fury of the tyrants. He was denounced as a fervent disciple of Jesus Christ, and orders were given to seize him and strike him down without any form of trial, without questioning, for his actions spoke loudly enough, and to question him would be to give him the opportunity of glorifying his faith. One evening two belated travellers came and knocked at his door; he welcomed them with his usual cordiality, seated them at his table and surrounded them with the most attentive care. As the meal and the conversation bred a mutual familiarity among the guests, the gardener asked his visitors the reason that brought them to the city, and they, although bound to secrecy, confessed to him that they had come to put to death, wherever they should find him, a Christian named Phocas. “Help us,” they added, “to find his dwelling.”

“Gladly,” he answered without surprise; “I shall be at your service tomorrow morning; meanwhile rest and sleep in peace in my poor dwelling.” He himself spent the night digging his grave and making everything ready for his funeral. At daybreak, his task finished, he went to wake the soldiers and said to them: “I have looked for Phocas, and I have found him; you are living in his house, and here he is before you. Carry out your commission.” The executioners hesitated: how could they raise their hands against such a man, and under the very roof of hospitality? He encouraged them. “Strike,” he said to them; “fear nothing. Let the crime fall on those who ordered it!” And his head rolled beneath the sword.[1] The tomb of St. Phocas was the pride and the palladium of his country. From the midst of the seas the sailors saluted it from afar as a sacred beacon. “Those who cross the Black Sea,” adds St. Asterius, “and those also who sail the Adriatic, the Aegean, and the eastern and western Ocean, soften the tedium of the voyage with hymns to the glory of the holy Martyr; they have the name of Phocas constantly on their lips, and he often gives them particular marks of his powerful protection. At night, when a great storm threatens the ship, he goes and wakes the pilot sleeping by the helm, tightens the ropes himself, directs the sail, and stands upright on the prow to point out and steer round the reefs. It is a custom observed among sailors to invite St. Phocas to their table; but, because he has no body and does not actually eat, they have devised an ingenious means of satisfying their piety: they set aside the Martyr’s portion, which is bought by one of those present; another buys it the next day, and so on, so that each takes it and pays for it in turn. Then, when the ship has entered port, the proceeds of these sales are distributed to the poor, whom Phocas feeds after his death as he did during his life. Princes

have no less veneration than the people for his memory. The humble house he lived in on earth is enriched with magnificent gifts. The young delight to visit it as much as the old. The barbarians themselves vie with us in paying their duty to the poor gardener. One of them gave his golden crown laden with precious stones and his breastplate of a precious material, for the barbarians have a taste for fine arms; he gave them to God through the Martyr, whom he prayed to make them acceptable to the Lord, wishing to acknowledge by this kind of tribute that he owed Him his courage and his power."[2]

Byzantium envied Sinope its treasure; it obtained that part of the holy remains should be translated within its walls. John presided over the translation, which was celebrated two days in succession. First the precious relics were carried in triumph through the streets and squares of the queen city amid a moved crowd. The whole court, the emperor himself, followed on foot. The next day they crossed the Bosphorus, all covered with richly decked and illuminated boats. The whole city had gone out upon the waves to accompany its new protector to the solemn dwelling assigned to him on the Asian shore, in a place which has since borne his name.

St. Phocas is represented: (1) cultivating his little garden; (2) giving hospitality to the soldiers sent by Maximian Herculius to put him to death; (3) digging his grave while the lictors sleep in his house.

DEUX AUTRES SAINTS DU NOM DE PHOCAS.

Two other saints of the name of Phocas.

This is the place to point out, with the Bollandists, that there are three different Saints of the name of Phocas: (1) St. Phocas, martyr of Antioch, marked on 5 March in the martyrology, who is invoked in the East against snake-bite (about 320); (2) St. Phocas, Bishop of Sinope, in Pontus, martyred under Trajan at the beginning of the 2nd century. His acts, given by the Bollandists on 14 July, relate that, when he had been summoned before the governor of the province, named Africanus, an earthquake was felt which overthrew his judge's tribunal and buried him under the ruins. St. Phocas raised the unbeliever to life; but this miracle, far from opening his eyes, only angered him the more: he had the holy bishop plunged into boiling pitch, and after undergoing various other tortures he was beheaded; (3) St. Phocas the Gardener, whose edifying martyrdom we have just given.

Father Giry therefore fell into confusion when he mixed the Acts of Phocas the Gardener with those of Phocas, martyr of Antioch. We have struck out the life he gives of the former on 5 March and moved that life to 22 September, in agreement in this with the learned authors of the *Acta Sanctorum* and with all the critics.

Extracted from the *Œuvres complètes de saint Jean Chrysostome*, translated into French for the first time under the direction of M. Jeannin. Bar-le-Duc, Typographie des Célestins, formerly the house of L. Guérin, publisher.

Saint Florent of Bavaria, Priest and Confessor, Patron of Roye, in the Diocese of Amiens

440. — Pope: St. Sixtus III. — Roman Emperor: Valentinian III.

> *Le soldat du Christ n'appartient ni à la chair, ni au monde, ni au démon ; mais il combat contre ces trois ennemis pour posséder le Christ.*
>
> *The soldier of Christ belongs neither to the flesh, nor to the world, nor to the devil; but he fights against these three enemies in order to possess Christ.*
>
> *Hugo card.*

Florent lived with his brother Florian in the land of Bavaria, in Germany. History tells us nothing of their parents or of their childhood. It says only that, when the two brothers, whom grace united no less closely than

nature, were of an age to choose a career, they took up arms, and in that profession gave so many proofs of their courage and fidelity that, in recognition of their services and valour, they were honoured with the highest military posts in the imperial armies. We know in particular of St. Florian that he was a tribune. But God, who had other designs for them, soon called them to another warfare, engaging them in the hard combats of martyrdom, in which by their constancy they upheld the glory of the Christian name and the holiness of the faith in Jesus Christ that they had professed from their youth.

A governor having been sent into their country to make a thorough search for the Christians and oblige them to sacrifice to the gods, or, if they refused, to condemn them to every torment that cruelty could suggest, he took up residence and set up his tribunal in the city of Lorch, an ancient and famous Roman colony, which has since been ruined by the Huns, so that its bishopric was transferred to Salzburg. Scarcely had he arrived there when, having discovered forty soldiers who professed the Christian religion, he had them arrested and imprisoned. As soon as the holy brothers had word of this persecution, they took the road to that city, to help these innocent victims of Jesus Christ with all their power. As they drew near it they met a troop of soldiers marching with such ardour that one would have said they were going on some important expedition. They asked them where they were hurrying so fast; learning from their own mouths that they had no other order than to search for Christians, they said to them: “If you wish, dear friends, your journey will not be long; we are both of us among those you are looking for. We adore Jesus Christ, and we detest the worship of your gods, who are nothing but idols or demons. You have only to take us and lead us to your governor; he will certainly praise you for it, since you will not go back empty-handed and without a capture.” The soldiers could not help admiring the courage of these two brothers. However, so as not to fail in their commission, they seized them and led them to their chief. The tyrant questioned them about their religion, and, having recognized from their answers that they were resolved to die a thousand times rather than renounce Jesus Christ, he ordered first that they be beaten with cudgels, the usual punishment of soldiers. Then he had their shoulders pierced and cut with sharp instruments; finally he condemned them to be drowned in the river Anise, which flows near Lorch, if they did not change their minds at once.

The executioners therefore loaded them with chains, and, broken and covered with wounds as they were, dragged them towards the river to carry out the sentence of condemnation as quickly as possible. But divine Providence was content to take St. Florian, and kept St. Florent for the consolation of the land of Gaul; for, halfway along the road, the executioners, finding themselves so weary that they could walk no farther, lay down in the shade of a great tree and fell asleep there. While they slept an angel appeared to St. Florent and told him that he was not to die on this occasion, but was destined to a longer martyrdom, which, without being bloody, would nevertheless win him immortal glory; that he should therefore withdraw as soon as possible into Gaul, where Our Lord was preparing great labours for him for the advancement of His worship and the salvation of countless persons. At the same moment his bonds and fetters broke of themselves, so that he found himself free and able to escape. He told his vision to St. Florian, who, seeing it confirmed by this miracle, did not doubt that it was from God; and so his counsel was that, to obey the voice of heaven, Florent should take the opportunity of the executioners’ deep sleep to withdraw. St. Florent, who ardently desired martyrdom, resolved on it only with difficulty; but, knowing well that the greatest service we can render God is to do His will, he set out after embracing his dear brother, who was about to be crowned in heaven as a generous soldier of Jesus Christ. The executioners, on waking and finding only Florian, discharged all their fury on him and at last threw him into the river, which served him as a road into blessed eternity. His victory is marked on 4 May in the Roman Martyrology, and it is celebrated in Bavaria with great solemnity.

Meanwhile St. Florent left his country as quickly as possible, and, having entered Gaul, arrived safely on the banks of the Rhône near the city of Lyons. It was a Sunday, and he greatly wished to be present at the celebration of the holy mysteries; but on the bank of this great and rapid river, which he had to cross, he found only an old and broken skiff that no one could use without exposing himself to certain shipwreck. The

desire not to miss Mass on so holy a day then made him have recourse to prayer: he invoked the help of heaven and was at once heard; for an angel, having made him get into the skiff, made himself its pilot and brought it safely to the other bank, without its letting in water or any of its planks coming apart. On entering Lyons he met a man possessed by the devil, who was kept bound and tied with several chains for fear he should throw himself on passers-by and do them some harm. He took pity on his misery, and, after imploring God's help by a fervent prayer, delivered him from so pernicious a guest by the power of the sign of the cross.

Having left Lyons, he followed the course of the Loire and, on the advice of the angel who guided him, came to a place called Glonne, at the edge of Anjou on the side of Brittany. This spot was extremely solitary and fitter to be the lair of wild beasts than the dwelling of men. Indeed he found no shelter but a cave full of serpents, which he had to drive out with the sign of the cross in order to lodge there. He built there a chapel in honour of St. Peter, prince of the Apostles, and later a famous abbey was built there, called Saint-Florent-le-Vieil to distinguish it from Saint-Florent-lès-Saumur, which was called Saint-Florent-le-Jeune. After some years the same angel, who did not fail to instruct him from time to time in what he should do for his greater perfection, advised him to enter holy orders and to go to Tours to receive them from the hands of St. Martin. He obeyed this voice, and, after staying in that city for the time needed for his ordination, he returned to his cave to go on enjoying the delights of solitude. On the way he met a poor blind woman who showed plainly enough by her cries and tears the greatness of the disaster that had befallen her: an only son, who led her by the hand, earned her living and was her only support, had been drowned three days before in the Loire, and his body could not be found to give it burial. The grief of this unhappy woman touched him so deeply that he resolved to help her by his prayers. He therefore implored God's mercy for her; at once the angel appeared to him and told him where the child's body was. It was fished out, and by a prodigy of the divine omnipotence it was found to be fully alive. The Saint gave him back to his mother in perfect health; but, so as not to console her by halves, he also healed her blindness, so that she had not only the satisfaction of embracing her son raised to life, but also of seeing him and of being able to walk without his help. There was near the castle of Saumur a horrible dragon: not only did it infect and lay waste the whole country, but sometimes it also threw itself on the inhabitants and devoured them. They had recourse to our Saint, who went to the place, prayed, and by the saving sign of our redemption delivered them from so horrible a scourge.

St. Florent spent the rest of his life in the solitude of Glonne, cut off from the commerce of the world but visited and consoled by the angels. Fasting, prayer, tears, psalmody and the struggle against the passions were his ordinary exercises. Sometimes too he went into the places round about to work for the salvation of his neighbour, and he did not refuse his counsel to those who came into his desert to receive some instruction in their doubts or some relief in their troubles. Moreover, charity often obliged him to work miracles to help the poor and afflicted who had recourse to him. He gave light to the blind, delivered the possessed, made the lame walk straight, and restored health to all the sick. At last, after living a hundred and twenty-three years in a most pure and innocent life and in incredible austerities, he died on 22 September about the year 440. His acts make known the merit of this death in these few words: *Post sacram communionem, inter verba orationis emisit animam*: "After receiving holy communion, he gave up his soul in the very act of prayer."

He is usually painted in a boat steered by an angel.

CULTE ET RELIQUES.

Cult and relics.

His body was buried in the hermitage he had sanctified by so many penances and prayers, in the very chapel of St. Peter he had built there, where he usually celebrated the divine mysteries. This hermitage was afterwards inhabited by very holy hermits until towards the end of the 7th century, when an abbey of the

Order of St. Benedict was founded there, which took the name of Saint-Florent, and of which St. Mauront was the first abbot. Charlemagne, emperor and King of France, took such a liking to the place that he enlarged and enriched it considerably, and that is why the great Alcuin, his tutor, counts it among the twenty-three abbeys which he says were founded by that generous monarch, according to the order of the letters of the alphabet. It could not, however, escape the fury first of the Bretons and then of the Swedes and Danes called Normans, who sacked and ruined it without leaving a single building for the monks to live in. It was in this last invasion that the venerable body of St. Florent was carried to the monastery of Tournus, in the diocese of Autun, on the Saône, where it remained for several years, the monks of that house, who were only its custodians, refusing to give it back to those who had entrusted it to them. But it was carried off secretly by a monk of Glonne named Absalom, who brought it back to Anjou. And then Thibault, Count of Blois, instead of repairing the abbey of Glonne, built another, more stately, of the same name of Saint-Florent, on the hill then called the Tronc (*Truncus*), where the castle of Saumur now stands, and the sacred remains were placed there with wonderful joy and solemnity (950). Amalbert, abbot of this monastery, translated the body of St. Florent to a special altar (21 May 973) and had a bronze shrine made to hold the holy relics. Later, in 1025, this abbey was destroyed with the castle by Fulk, Count of Anjou, and the body of St. Florent was again carried off from it to save it from the fire; but the boat carrying it on the Loire being unable to make headway, by a secret guidance of the power of God, it had to be left in a church of St. Hilary in a village called Trèves, until the new abbey of Saint-Florent-lès-Saumur should be built. This holy relic remained in that abbey from 1030 to 1035; then Hugh, Count of Vermandois, having carried his arms into Anjou, seized it by force and took it to Roye, in Picardy, to the collegiate church of Saint-Georges. Afterwards the great church of Saint-Florent was built in that town, and the college of canons and his sacred bones were transferred to it; and, as the shrine was too old, the inhabitants of Roye in 1152, full of devotion to their new patron, had two others made, very rich, in which his head and his body were placed separately by Theodoric, Bishop of Amiens, and by Baldwin, Bishop of Noyon.

Things remained in this state until the year 1495; King Louis XI, having taken the town of Roye, which was held by Charles, Duke of Burgundy, had these two great treasures carried off. They were taken first to the church of Mortemer, then to Cressonsacq (Oise), and then to the Charterhouse near Noyon; from there they were taken back to Saint-Florent-lès-Saumur. He also gave two other shrines, far more magnificent than the earlier ones, to enclose them. After his death a great lawsuit broke out between the chapter of Roye and the monks of Saumur; it could not be ended either by a sentence of the Requêtes du Palais or by a decree of the Court given in favour of the chapter; the parties at last came to a settlement by which they agreed that the body of St. Florent should be returned whole to the church of Roye with the shrines that had been taken from it, but that his head, with the new shrines given by King Louis XI, should remain at the abbey of Saint-Florent-lès-Saumur; and so the body of St. Florent was brought to Roye, where it worked new miracles and was received with incredible joy and solemnity. This gave rise to the feast of the return of this holy relic, which is kept there every year on the Sunday within the octave of the Assumption with as much magnificence as the principal feast of 22 September.

In the 16th century the abbey was invaded and profaned by the sectaries, who broke the shrines; but the relics were happily saved from profanation and put in a safe place. In 1790 they were taken to the parish church, where they remained completely unknown until 1825. They were recognized as authentic in 1828 by Mgr Montault, and the translation took place on 15 September of the following year.

In 1858 the relics were examined again and divided between the parishes of Saint-Florent-le-Vieil and Saint-Florent-le-Jeune. The first received: (1) a fragment of the left temporal bone; (2) a fragment of the right upper jaw; (3) the glenoid cavity of a shoulder-blade; (4) one cervical vertebra, two dorsal and one lumbar; (5) both collar-bones; (6) one right rib, one left, and three other fragments of rib; (7) the whole sternum; (8) the left hip-bone (a fragment) and the crest of the other; (9) an ischium; (10) a fragment of the sacrum; (11)

the upper two-thirds of the left femur; (12) small fragments of long bones and flat bones: two of these small fragments are now enclosed in a portable reliquary in the form of a monstrance; the others have been entrusted by the Bishop to the Carmelite nuns of Angers. The second received: (1) the head of the left femur; (2) a lower fragment of the right femur; (3) a piece of the right iliac bone; (4) one lumbar vertebra, one dorsal and three cervical; (5) five fragments of rib; (6) a portion of the left collar-bone; (7) half of the lower jaw, left side; (8) a piece of the iliac crest; (9) a piece of a condyle of one of the femurs; (10) thirty-two fragments that cannot be classified; (11) a piece detached from one of the femurs.

The village of Saint-Floris, in Artois, has placed itself under his patronage. In the 18th century a bone of the arm and a bone of the head of the Saint were venerated there. His cult was spread not only in France and Belgium but as far as Hungary. The Roman Martyrology mentions him on this day, and Baronius in his Notes.

The Rev. Fr. de la Vacquerie wrote his life. We have taken what we have said of him from the lessons of the various breviaries, from the *Revue de l'Anjou* of 1859, and from several memoirs furnished to us by the monks of Saint-Florent-lès-Saumur and the canons of Roye. — Cf. *Acta Sanctorum*; *Vies des Saints d'Anjou* by the Rev. Fr. Dom Chamard.

Saint Salaberge, Widow, Abbess of the Monastery of Saint-Jean-Baptiste at Laon

654. — Pope: St. Eugene I. — King of France: Clovis II.

> *La véritable obéissance s'attache toujours à ne pas suivre sa propre volonté, mais bien à accomplir avec respect celle d'autrui.*
>
> *True obedience always strives not to follow its own will, but to carry out with respect the will of another.*
>
> *St. Eusebius of Caesarea.*

St. Salaberge was born at the beginning of the 7th century, in the territory of Orney, in the diocese of Langres, of noble and virtuous parents. St. Eustasius, on his return from Bavaria, received hospitality in their house and gave their children his blessing. The young Salaberge was then blind and afflicted with a flow of blood. The Saint, after a fast of three days and much prayer, healed her of her infirmities by putting blessed oil on her eyes. Out of gratitude Salaberge had promised the Saint to consecrate her virginity to the Lord; but her parents had other views, and against her inclination they married her to Richramme, a noble lord, whom she lost two months later. Restored to her freedom, the young widow made use of it to live in retirement and give herself more fully to the practices of piety. She even formed the design of entering the monastery of Remiremont, but her father, supported by King Dagobert, compelled her to marry a second time, Count Bason, also called Blandin. Salaberge submitted, hoping that the Lord, who knew the depths of her heart, would sustain her by His grace and reward her deference to her father's authority. This marriage was very happy; the two spouses lived in perfect union and in the practice of the Christian virtues, spurring each other on to serve their Master, giving abundant alms and practising hospitality with the greatest generosity. Yet something was lacking to Salaberge's temporal happiness. After several years of marriage she remained childless. In the desire to obtain children, and so to give her God new worshippers, she went to prostrate herself before the tomb of St. Remigius; there, like the mother of Samuel, she shed abundant tears and redoubled her prayers and supplications. It was not in vain. God granted her wishes, and she became in turn the mother of five children: Sartrude, Ébane, Anstrude, Eustasius and Baudoin.

Full of gratitude to the Lord, Salaberge, on the advice of St. Walbert, Abbot of Luxeuil, wished to found a new monastery at Laon. Bishop Attole gave his consent, and on the appointed day he went out to meet her with his clergy and all the people; he received her with the singing of hymns and psalms. An old painting representing this solemn entry of Salaberge and her community is still to be seen today in the cathedral of

Laon.

Salaberge used part of her patrimony to build a vast monastery. As many as seven churches were counted in it. The first and principal one was under the invocation of the Blessed Virgin; the second was dedicated to St. Michael and all the angels; the third to St. John the Baptist and all the patriarchs and prophets; the fourth to St. Peter and all the Apostles; the fifth was built in honour of the Holy Cross; the sixth had as its patron St. Evre, Bishop of Toul; the seventh, finally, was under the invocation of St. Mary Magdalen. One of these last three, built at the entrance of the house, was probably intended for monks, who, under the direction of the priest Itale, lived apart from the nuns. In this monastery three hundred maidens, relieving one another day and night, sang the praises of the Lord without interruption: this was what was called the *Laus perennis*.

St. Odile and her husband St. Bodon (*Leudvinus- Bodo*) renounced the world, distributed their goods to the poor and to religious houses, and came to Laon to place themselves under the direction of St. Salaberge. Bodon stayed there only a short time, having soon afterwards been chosen Bishop of Toul.

St. Salaberge was always a model of virtue to her daughters. Charity, prudence and great confidence in God guided her in the government of her community. She knew how to join a modest gaiety to recollection and the tenderest piety. This is what made her especially dear to her sisters and made her company very pleasant to all who had any dealings with her. Taciturnity and gloom have nothing in common with true devotion.

The Bishop of Soissons, St. Ansery, sometimes visited the holy abbess and consoled her in her troubles. He appeared to her after his death and showed her the place that the just Judge of merits was reserving for her in heaven.

But before calling her to the eternal rewards, the Lord willed to perfect her virtue by exercising her in patience. For two whole years He tried her with cruel illnesses that left her not a moment of calm and rest. This state of continual suffering made her cut down nothing of her austerities, her vigils and her prayers. At last, feeling that the moment of her death was near, she called all her sisters round her bed and commended to them fidelity to the rule, silence and recollection, and the greatest charity towards one another. With the consent of all her sisters she gave them as abbess her daughter Anstrude, aged twenty, and passed to a better life in the year of Jesus Christ 654. She was buried in her abbey, where her body was kept in a shrine of copper and silver, with that of St. Anstrude, one of her daughters. The monastery of St. Salaberge has undergone many vicissitudes since her death.

The troubles that followed the death of St. Anstrude; still more the abuse by which several queens of the second race of our kings, such as Otgive, wife of Charles the Simple, and Gerberga, wife of Louis d'Outremer, claimed possession of the abbey; and finally the misfortunes the city of Laon suffered at the beginning of the 12th century, brought this important house into serious decline. The disorder seemed beyond remedy; and Bartholomew, Bishop of Laon, supported by the authority of the Pope and the King, obliged the nuns to withdraw to Crandelain, to a dependency of the house; then he called in Benedictine monks in their place, who, amid many vicissitudes, held this ancient monastery, which then took the name of Saint-Jean de Laon. The Congregation of Saint-Maur was introduced there in 1648; in the last century it had opened public courses there and kept a college for the instruction of youth.

Acta Sanctorum; Dom Lelong; *Notes* furnished by M. Lequeux, Vicar General of Paris; *Histoire du diocèse de Toul et de celui de Nancy*, by the Abbé Guillaume.

Saint Emmeran of Poitiers, Regionary Bishop, Martyr at Heldendorf (Bavaria), Patron of Ratisbon (652)

St. Emmeran was born at Poitiers in the first years of the 7th century, of a rich family distinguished by its nobility. From his youth he renounced all the advantages he could hope for in the world, to consecrate

himself to the ministry of the altar. His learning and holiness had him raised to the episcopate: some hagiographers have written that he was Bishop of Poitiers; but that is not possible: from 626 to 673 the see of St. Hilary was occupied by Dido, and Emmeran's episcopate falls between those two dates. Without knowing exactly to which diocese he belonged, one may regard it as beyond doubt that he was set over one of the many Churches which already then made up the ecclesiastical division of Aquitaine; we even regard it as very probable that he exercised his high functions in that very Church of Poitiers, as regionary bishop: the vast extent of that diocese at that period warrants this conjecture. However that may be, Emmeran preached the Gospel with tireless zeal in every place of his diocese, teaching in public and in private; he went to seek hardened sinners even in their houses, and, by an eloquence as moving as it was persuasive, drew them from their disorders and made true penitents of them. His charity to the poor was likewise boundless.

After labouring in this way for several years, he resolved to instruct a great number of unbelievers and idolaters who were in Bavaria. The Bavarians had embraced Christianity seventy years before; but many of them were still given up to the superstitions of idolatry, and others were infected with grave errors against the faith. Duke Theodo IV, who ruled the country under the authority of King Sigebert III, kept the holy missionary at Ratisbon a long time and made every effort to settle him there. Emmeran refused all the duke's offers, saying that he must preach only Jesus crucified. It has been believed that he was Bishop of Ratisbon, or at least associated in the government of that diocese. His apostolic labours were followed by countless conversions. Three years having passed in this way, he set out for Rome, with the intention of venerating the relics of the Apostles and Martyrs and of consulting the Pope on certain difficulties.

Meanwhile a daughter of Duke Theodo, having let herself be seduced by Sigebaud, a young man of the highest nobility of the country, confessed her sin to the holy bishop, asking his advice on how she and her lover might escape her father's vengeance. The Saint advised her to flee to Italy and wait until the duke's anger should be calmed by time; stopped in her flight, she revealed the advice the man of God had given her, and, seeing him absent, to shield her lover from Theodo's anger, she accused Emmeran of having seduced her. Lautbert, the girl's brother, flew into a great fury; he took soldiers with him, set off on the Saint's track, and at the end of three days surprised him at Heldendorf while he was praying with his companions. Lautbert had Emmeran tied to a ladder and ordered his feet, hands and ears to be cut off and his eyes torn out. The holy martyr suffered this cruel torture with admirable patience and soon breathed his last. His soul was seen rising to heaven amid a bright light (22 September 652).

Seven days after this horrible murder the executioners were possessed by the devil; they ran like madmen into the woods and died miserably. Lautbert was banished and never obtained the principality of the country. The Saint's body was buried at Aschaim, a little below Munich, on the Iser. Duke Theodo afterwards had it solemnly translated to Ratisbon and laid in the church of St. George, today St. Emmeram.

He is represented: (1) bound to a ladder, on which his limbs are cut off one after another; (2) holding a lily in his hand, to show that he was the victim of another's impurity, and a lance, to indicate the way he was finished off after his limbs had been cut off. — Sometimes he is not shown stretched on the ladder, but only with his arms and legs cut off.

Taken from the *Proper of Mainz*, from Godescard, and from the *Saints de Poitiers* by the Abbé Auber.

Saint Landelin of Scotland, Solitary and Martyr in the Ortenau, in the Diocese of Freiburg (7th century)

Landelin was born, it is believed, in Scotland, of parents who held a distinguished rank in that country, since, according to the history and tradition of Ettenheimmünster, they traced their descent from the ancient kings of the land. Carried away by a holy zeal, he came into Alsace, then, crossing the Rhine, went to settle in that part of the diocese of Strasbourg which then lay on the borders of the Breisgau, called the Ortenau, and

which today belongs to the diocese of Freiburg. This region was then only a frightful wilderness, inhabited by robbers and murderers.

Landelin stayed for some time with a poor man named Edulphe, who had settled in this unhappy country and was clearing some uncultivated land. The desire to live in a more profound retreat inspired him with the plan of going farther, and he went deeper and deeper into the forests; at last he found a little valley watered by a stream, and he settled there to praise the Lord. History does not tell us how long he lived in this wilderness, nor the virtues he practised there; it appears, however, that his life was very holy, since God, who was its only witness, Himself afterwards glorified His worthy servant.

Landelin was discovered by the huntsman of a lord of the neighbourhood: the man took him for one of the malefactors who then infested the region, and, unmoved by the candour and innocence painted on the holy man's features, he murdered him in cowardly fashion and left his body without burial.

Edulphe's wife, anxious about the fate of the blessed servant of God, set out to look for him in the forest, and what was her surprise to find only his lifeless body! She buried him half a league from the place where the murder had been committed. Near that spot there later grew up the village of Münchweier, where the tomb of St. Landelin is still to be seen today behind the high altar of the parish church. The place of the Saint's retreat and martyrdom has become a pilgrimage, where a church has been built. God made Landelin's tomb illustrious by miracles, and from then on crowds of people flocked there to ask graces of the Lord through the intercession of His servant. Several solitaries settled round about, and this region, once so dreaded for the crimes committed in it, became a refuge where religion shed its sweetest favours. To foster these happy beginnings, Bishop Widegerne founded near the tomb of St. Landelin a small monastery, which he placed under the Order of St. Benedict and to which he assigned revenues from the property of his cathedral. This monastery, whose church was dedicated in honour of the Blessed Virgin, St. John the Baptist and the Apostle St. Peter, took the name of *Cella monachorum*, which it passed on to the village; but, having been neglected by Widegerne's successors, it was restored by Bishop Heddo, who gave it the name of Ettenheimmünster and moved it from Münchweier to the place where it remained until its suppression. This monastery formed part of the territory of the principality of the Bishops of Strasbourg.

Extracted from the *Histoire des Saints d'Alsace* by the Abbé Hunckler.

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[1] We gave his life on 18 September, the day on which he is especially honoured in the Order of the Hermits of St. Augustine.

[2] See the Martyrology of France for 5 August.

[3] See 23 September.

[4] We gave his life on 9 September.

[5] We spoke of it on 17 September.

[6] See 17 September, vol. XI, page 161, note 2.

[7] We gave his life on 18 September.

[8] Levroux, formerly *Gabatum*, four leagues from Châteauroux, takes its new name, according to some, from Raoul, lord of Déols, by whom the town is said to have been built (*Locus Radulphi*, Lovraould, and by corruption Levroux); according to others, from the multitude of lepers who lived there in the 12th century, or from a leper-house said to have been founded there at that time; according to others again, from a miracle that St. Martin of Tours worked there through the intercession of St. Sylvin. That holy bishop healed the lord of the place, who was stricken with leprosy, and the grateful inhabitants, to perpetuate the memory of this favour, changed the name of their town, *Gabatum*, to that of *Leprosum*, Levroux.

[9] St. Roc-Amadour, as we said in his life (26 August), is also regarded, by another tradition, as the Zacchaeus of the Gospel.

[10] St. Rodène was a young virgin who had hastened from the depths of Italy to Levroux to lead the eremitical life there under the direction of Sylvin and Sylvester. She was betrothed to a young man to whom the legend gives the name of Corusculus. As soon as he learned of Rodène's departure, he went to Levroux to force her to return to Italy. The blessed maiden, before appearing before him, taking counsel only of her ardent love of virginity, horribly mutilated her face; but Sylvin made the sign of the cross over her, and the frightful scars disappeared. Corusculus, touched by grace, asked for baptism, which he received from the hands of St. Sylvin, and spent the rest of his days at Levroux in the practice of the Christian virtues.

[11] This legend was read in the breviary of the chapter of Levroux for the feast of St. Sylvin, after the reform of it made by the pious Archbishop of Bourges, Roland Hébert, according to the prescriptions of the Council of Trent and the bull of the holy Pope Pius V.

[12] St. Asterius, *Hom.* IX.

[13] *Ibid.*

23 September

Martyrologies

Twenty-third day of September

MARTYROLOGE ROMAIN.

Roman Martyrology.

At Rome, St. Linus, pope and martyr, who governed the Roman Church first after the Apostle St. Peter; having received the crown of martyrdom, he was buried in the Vatican beside the same Apostle. 67. — At Iconium, in Lycaonia, St. THECLA, virgin and martyr, who, having been converted to the faith by the Apostle St. Paul, overcame the fire and the beasts to which she had been exposed for confessing Jesus Christ under the Emperor Nero; after being victorious in several combats, for the instruction of the faithful, she came to Seleucia and died there. The holy Fathers have given her great praise. 1st c. — In Campania, the memory of St. Sosius, deacon of the Church of Misenum, whose martyrdom the holy Bishop Januarius had foretold because he had seen a flaming halo round his head while he was reading the Gospel in church. A few days later, in fact, this holy deacon, then thirty years old, was beheaded together with the same bishop. 303. — In Africa, the holy martyrs Andrew, John, Peter and Antony. About 900. — In the Cotentin, St. Paternus, bishop and martyr.[1] — At Ancona, St. Constantius, mansionary of the church of St. Stephen, illustrious for his miracles.[2] — In Spain, the holy women Xanthippe and Polyxena, instructed by the Apostles.

MARTYROLOGE DE FRANCE, REVU ET AUGMENTÉ.

Martyrology of France, revised and enlarged.

In the dioceses of Châlons, Clermont, Cologne and Viviers, St. Linus, pope and martyr, mentioned in the Roman Martyrology of this day. — In the dioceses of Paris and Perpignan, St. Thecla, virgin and martyr, mentioned today in the same martyrology. — In the former Cistercian abbey of Notre-Dame de Cherlieu (*Carus Locus*), in the diocese of Besançon, Blessed Guy, first abbot of that monastery. About 1157. — Among the Nervii (an ancient people whose country corresponds today to the east of the department of the Nord and to part of the Belgian provinces of Flanders, Hainaut and Brabant), St. Superior, regionary bishop, who is believed to have attended the councils of Cologne and Sardica (247). 4th c. — At Verdun (Meuse), St. SAINTIN (*Sanctinus*), first bishop of that see and confessor. — At Paris, St. Paxent or Paissent, martyr, who is believed to have been a disciple of St. Denis. His relics were kept by the Benedictines of Saint-Martin-des-Champs at Paris. His cult became especially celebrated in that city from the beginning of the 14th century, when his bones were enclosed in a silver shrine together with those of St. Albine, virgin. In the processions held on the occasion of public calamities his shrine was carried with that of St. Genevieve.[3] Probably 1st century. — Also at Paris, St. Albine, virgin and martyr, sister of the same St. Paxent or Paissent. Probably 1st century. — In Auvergne, St. Thecla, virgin, famous for her tender devotion to the Mother of God. She founded the collegiate church of Chamalières (Puy-de-Dôme, arrondissement and canton of Clermont-Ferrand), where she wished to be buried. Her relics remained there for some time, then were translated to the abbey church of Sainte-Marie de Royat (*Rubiacum*), not far away. About the 9th c. — In the former Benedictine abbey of Chelles (*Calensis abbatia*), in the original diocese of Paris, now the diocese of Meaux, St. Herwide or Héreswide (*Heresvitha*), nun, widow of a king of the East Angles. — At Esmery-Hallon (Somme, arrondissement of Péronne, canton of Ham), in the diocese of Amiens, the

translation (1696) of a relic of St. Waneng, founder of the abbey of Fécamp and patron of Ham, in Picardy. We gave his life on 15 February. 686.

MARTYROLOGES DES ORDRES RELIGIEUX.

Martyrologies of the religious orders.

Martyrology of the Cistercian Order. — At Rome, St. Linus, pope and martyr, who governed the Roman Church first after the Apostle St. Peter; having received the crown of martyrdom, he was buried in the Vatican near the same Apostle. 67. — On the same day, the solemn anniversary of the deceased brethren, relatives and benefactors of the Cistercian Order.

Martyrology of the Order of Friars Preachers. — At Iconium, St. Thecla, virgin and martyr, who was converted by St. Paul and overcame the fire and the beasts to which she had been exposed under the Emperor Nero; after being victorious in several combats, for the instruction of the faithful, she came to Seleucia, where she died. 1st c. — At Rome, St. Linus, pope and martyr, etc. 67. — In Campania, the memory of St. Sosius, etc. 303.

Martyrology of the three Orders of St. Francis. — At Assisi, in Umbria, in the time of Pope Pius IX, the finding of the body of St. Clare, virgin, the first daughter of our Father St. Francis, the leader of the poor. 19th c.

ADDITIONS FAITES D'APRÈS LES BOLLANDISTES ET AUTRES HAGIOGRAPHES.

Additions made from the Bollandists and other hagiographers.

At Bologna (*Bononia*), a fortified city of Italy (Romagna), Blessed Helen Duglioli (*Helena ab Oleo*), widow.[4] 1520. — In Spain, St. Thecla, virgin and martyr, mentioned in the Roman Martyrology of this day. — Also in Spain, Our Lady of Valvanera. This image was found in an oak, on the very spot where today stands the magnificent church that Alfonso VI, King of Castile (1072–1109), had rebuilt. — At Sortino, on the Anapo, a small town of the Val di Noto in the kingdom of Sicily, St. Sophia, virgin and martyr, patroness of that town. Near the church of Sortino there is a well that bears the Saint's name, whose healing water has cured many infirmities. The inhabitants of the town pride themselves on having been preserved at all times from the scourge of the plague by the intercession of their illustrious patroness. At their request Pope Paul III (1534–1550), by a rescript dated 11 March 1538, authorized them to carry the statue of their patroness in procession through the streets of the town. — At Rome, St. LIBERIUS, pope and confessor. 366. — At Imola (*Forum Cornelii*), a fortified city of Italy in the province of Ravenna, St. Projet or Project (*Projectus*), bishop of that see and confessor. St. Peter Chrysologus, who delivered his funeral oration, praises him as a man adorned with every virtue. His body, laid in the old cathedral of Imola, remained there until 903: the invasion of the Huns at that time obliged the inhabitants of Imola to remove it from their profanations. In 1032 these precious remains were raised from the ground and hidden again, and it was only in 1174 that they were solemnly translated into the new cathedral, the building of which had begun the year before. The relics of St. Project were then united with those of St. Maurelius (6 May) and laid on a special altar dedicated under their invocation. In 1464 and in 1616 they were transferred to special chapels; in 1702 the common shrine was opened, the relics authenticated and laid in a new chapel, in the middle of which a magnificent marble tomb was raised. 5th c. — In the island of Iona or Icolmkill, one of the Hebrides, south of the island of Mull, St. Adamnan or Adomnan, priest and Abbot of Hy (a famous monastery founded about 565 by St. Columba). Sent in 701 by the Picts to Aldfrith, King of the Northumbrians, he learned from the Churches of England during this mission the true way of fixing the day of the feast of Easter. On returning to Ireland, his native land, he established there the regular celebration of that feast. He then went back to his monastery of Hy, where he ended his days. We have from him a *Treatise on the True Time of Celebrating the Feast of Easter*,

a *Collection of Canons*, a *Life of St. Columba* and a *Description of the Holy Land*. 703 or 704. — At Nepi (*Nepetum*), a town of the States of the Church, St. Ptolemy, bishop, disciple of the Apostle St. Peter, by whom he was sent into Tuscany to preach the Gospel: he died in that town as a glorious martyr of Jesus Christ, and his death is noted in the Roman Martyrology for 24 August. 1st c. — At Venice, a city and port of the kingdom of Italy, Blessed Peter Acotanto, confessor, whose chastity and charity to the poor the hagiographers praise. Long after his death his tomb was discovered; his body was found without any mark of corruption, and many miracles on that solemn day attested his holiness. About 1180.

Saint Thecla of Iconium, Virgin, the First of Women Martyrs

1st century.

> *Une gloire spéciale à la vierge sainte Thècle est d'avoir, la première d'entre les personnes de son sexe, remporté la palme du martyre.*
>
> *It is a special glory of the virgin St. Thecla to have been the first of her sex to win the palm of martyrdom.*
>
> *Office of the Saint.*

When the Apostle St. Paul was preaching the Gospel in the city of Iconium, which is in the province of Lycaonia, he lodged with a Christian named Onesiphorus, and found there holy gatherings attended by many persons desirous of their salvation. Thecla was one of them; she was a girl of eighteen, of one of the noblest and richest families of the city. Her mother Theoclia had betrothed her to a young lord named Thamyris, and was only waiting for the time to celebrate this marriage, which she thought very advantageous. During this interval Thecla heard so many wonders told of the holy Apostle, and was given so favourable an account of what took place at these religious conferences, that she used every kind of contrivance to gain admittance to them. This was not easy, because her mother never let her out of her sight; but divine Providence found her the means: touched by the words of this heavenly preacher, she not only became a Christian but also renounced marriage and took Jesus Christ for her eternal Spouse. Her eagerness to hear the holy Apostle, says St. John Chrysostom, was so great that, when he was put in prison, she sold her rings and her other jewels to have the means of winning over the gaoler so that he would let her in: "Thecla gave her jewels to see St. Paul; and you, who glory in the name of Christian, have not the courage to give an obol to see Jesus Christ."

Our Saint's mother was not long in noticing the change that had taken place in her; her aversion to marriage, her contempt for all the vanities of the world, and the humility, modesty, love of retirement and devotion that shone in her face made it plain enough that she was no longer a daughter of the world but a soul won for the Saviour. She asked her the reason for this novelty; and, learning from her own lips that Our Lord had enlightened her to recognize the impiety of paganism, the necessity of the Christian religion and the inestimable worth of virginity, she flew into such a fury that she was ready to kill her with her own hands. After this first outburst she went on to a far more horrible excess of inhumanity: she herself accused her daughter before the judge as a Christian and as refusing to keep the promise of marriage she had given, and begged him to have her burned alive if she did not change her resolution, so as to strike terror into other girls who might be tempted to imitate her conduct. The judge granted this request, summoned Thecla before his tribunal, and, finding her unshakable in her resolve to remain a Christian and keep her virginity, ordered a great fire to be lit and her to be thrown into it alive. The generous virgin then armed herself with the sign of the cross, and, without waiting for the executioners to lay hands on her, moved by an extraordinary impulse of the Holy Ghost, she walked boldly into the midst of the flames, to make there the sacrifice of her body to the glory of her Spouse. But God suspended their force, and at that very hour there fell so great an abundance of rain that the fire was entirely put out and the idolatrous people were obliged to flee to find shelter. Thecla therefore came out of the fire without having suffered any harm, without even her clothes being burned, and left her native city without anyone thinking of opposing her flight.

Having thus miraculously escaped certain death, Thecla, for whom the Lord alone was henceforth to take the place of family and inheritance, hastened in search of the great Apostle. He for his part, foreseeing the fate his enemies were preparing for his spiritual daughter, had not gone far from the city of Iconium. Some fervent Christians, also begotten by him to the faith, had arranged a safe retreat for him in a solitary place. Thecla was told of it by them and was able to see again the man whose divine exhortations had inspired her with so much energy and greatness of soul. Their meeting was as moving as could be: the master found his disciple crowned with the halo of martyrdom; the disciple saw her master again bearing the marks of persecution. The one glorified the Lord for having judged him worthy to beget this daughter to the faith; the other blessed God for having provided her with so illustrious a teacher in the darkness of her ignorance. Both, in short, thought themselves happy and were full of joy at having suffered for the name and glory of Jesus Christ, their divine Master.

When they had poured out their hearts to each other before the Lord, Thecla earnestly asked to be allowed to accompany the holy Apostle on his apostolic journeys, in order to form herself to perfection under so accomplished a model. Animated by the same spirit as her master, she would gladly, in the ardour of her zeal, have shared his labours and sufferings, won souls for Jesus Christ and spread the glory of His holy name everywhere. The Apostle answered this request with a picture of all the fatigues of his apostolate and of his life, which was nothing but a continual combat and pilgrimage. He reminded her that, being devoted to the conversion of the whole world, he had to travel through the most distant countries and among nations most divided in customs and language. Yet, not wishing to grieve this faithful servant of his God, and desiring to strengthen still further, by more frequent instruction, the sentiments of piety and sacrifice that grace had brought to birth in her heart, St. Paul consented that Thecla should accompany him on some of his journeys, until she could settle in the midst of some newborn Christian community, where she would be at once safe from her family's persecution and like an apostle among the neophytes. Thecla received the holy Apostle's decision with respect and gratitude. She strove as far as lay in her to profit by the precious moments that remained to her to spend near this great teacher; and it is easy to imagine how much fruit the holy word must have produced in a heart so well disposed to receive it.

After following the great Apostle in this way for some time, our Saint came to Antioch, the capital of Syria. It was in this city that she was to settle, and it was in this city that God was calling her to new combats and new triumphs.

One of the leading inhabitants of the city, Alexander, conceived a violent passion for Thecla. Taking advantage of the influence his position gave him, he dared to insult her in the open street. But the Christian virgin, listening only to her courage, tore her assailant's tunic, snatched from his head the crown he was wearing, and covered him with confusion before all the people. Far from swallowing in silence the affront his brutality had earned him, Alexander led the heroic girl before the governor, who condemned her to be devoured by the beasts. This unjust sentence roused part of the people. Whether the number of Christians was already great at Antioch, or Alexander's conduct seemed too infamous not to revolt even the pagan conscience, the women, taking up the heroine's cause, began to cry out around the tribunal: "The decree is unjust, the sentence is iniquitous!" But Thecla, anxious only for her virtue, asked one favour alone: to be kept pure until her death. She was therefore placed in the hands of a lady of high rank named Tryphaena, who had just lost her only daughter. When the hour of the torture came, the executioners let loose against the young virgin a furious lioness, which, instead of doing her any harm, lay down before her and licked her feet. The next morning Alexander's henchmen had difficulty in taking Thecla from the arms of Tryphaena, who already loved her as her own daughter. Dragged to the amphitheatre, the virgin stood with her hands raised to heaven in the midst of the wild beasts let loose against her; but none of them touched her. God had wrapped her in a cloud of fire, so that the spectators should not see that she was without clothing.

This last touch is of charming delicacy, and St. Ambrose has brought it out thus in one of his finest pages: “Let Thecla teach you sacrifice. As she was fleeing marriage, she found herself condemned through the fury of her betrothed; but she was able to inspire the wild beasts with respect for virginity. She had been destined to perish by the teeth of the animals; there she stood, exposed to the gaze she sought to avoid; she taught modesty to eyes that did not know it. How fine it was to see the animal lie down on the ground, lick her feet, and show by this mute language that it dared not attack the sacred body of the virgin! Thus the wild beast venerated its prey: it had stripped off its nature and become humane, since men were so no longer. At that moment you would have seen the roles reversed: men turned into wild animals were commanding the beasts to be cruel, and the beasts came to kiss the virgin’s feet, teaching men their duty. So admirable a thing is virginity, since it commands respect even from lions! Instinct of hunger, shouts, goading, bloodthirsty habits, savage nature, they heeded none of it. In venerating the martyr they taught religion, they taught chastity; for, approaching the virgin, they kissed only the soles of her feet, their eyes lowered to the ground, as if they dared not raise their gaze to the naked virgin!”[1]

At the sight of so extraordinary a prodigy a gloomy silence took hold of the hearts of all the spectators. Some, recognizing by this sign the visible protection of heaven and Thecla’s innocence, wished life and liberty to be restored to the Saint. Others, hardened by the very miracle, wished another kind of torture to be prepared for her. At last a thousand confused cries rose together and roused the governor himself from the torpor into which he had fallen. The feeling of vengeance awoke more violent than ever: he therefore ordered Thecla to be taken back to her prison.

The next day, all the people being assembled again, the holy martyr was brought into the amphitheatre. As she still persevered in confessing the faith, the magistrate ordered her to be tied to untamed bulls to be torn to pieces. At once the executioners bound her delicate body with thick, strong cords. The bulls were harnessed to these same cords in opposite directions; then they were goaded, pricked and driven on. Vain efforts! The cords broke, the executioners were wounded, and Thecla was full of life.

This new prodigy seemed to stir up the persecutors’ hatred still more violently. The Saint was then thrown into a deep pit full of serpents and other venomous reptiles whose bite was always fatal to the wretches condemned to this kind of torture. Thecla, in the midst of these dangerous enemies, raised her heart to God and begged Him to accept the sacrifice of her life. She awaited death with a holy impatience, in the hope of soon being united for ever with the divine Spouse of her soul. The God who had protected her against the violence of the flames, who had delivered her from the teeth of the lions, who had also upheld her against the onslaught of the bulls, was to defend her yet again against the bite of the serpents. These venomous creatures drew back at the sight of her, not daring to defile with their foul slime that sacred body, the living temple of the Divinity and doubly consecrated to the Lord by virginity and martyrdom. A deep numbness took hold of all their limbs, and the Saint could move about in this horrible prison without provoking their attacks.

Without yet reporting here the testimonies of the various Fathers of the Church who have handed down to us the memory of these prodigies, let us listen only to St. Zeno, Bishop of Verona and martyr, in his book *On Fear*: “A relentless accuser rises up against Thecla. The laws of the land and their inhuman ministers support the accuser’s words. The ferocity of the cruel animals is goaded in every way, and yet it proves easier to tame than the ferocity of men. But so that nothing might seem lacking to this inhuman spectacle, sea monsters are added as well. The young virgin is stripped of all her clothing; she is surrounded by flames: in the midst of so many instruments of death and of the anguish of the spectators, she survives and tramples underfoot every kind of terror. Safe and sound, and as if she had subdued the whole universe, she comes up out of the depths of that dismal pit, not as a person worthy of pity, but as a heroine worthy of admiration, bearing the trophies of the conquered world, while everyone expected to see her perish and succumb to so many torments.”

The miraculous deliverance of the virgin of Iconium had stirred the whole people of Antioch. The governor sent for her and said to her: “Who are you, whom the beasts dare not touch?” “I am,” Thecla answered him,

“the servant of the living God. If the wild animals have spared me, it is because I have put all my trust in Jesus Christ, the Son of God, in whom the Father delights. He alone is the way that leads to salvation, the refuge of those who have been beaten by the storm, the consolation of the afflicted, the hope of those who have no more hope. Whoever does not believe in Him shall not live, but shall have eternal death for his portion.” On hearing this the governor issued a decree in these terms: “Thecla, the servant of God, is free.” The crowd’s cries of joy accompanied the virgin to the house of Tryphaena, where she stayed several days, instructing the girls in the true faith. Learning that St. Paul was at Myra, in Libya, she went to join him there to tell him of the graces with which God had filled her. From there she went back to Iconium to preach the Gospel. Arriving in her native city, she found her mother there, but her betrothed was dead. In vain did she use every means that a lively faith can inspire in filial love: Theoclia remained deaf to her daughter’s prayers and was not converted. Then Thecla, leaving her father’s house, went to the tomb where she had once found St. Paul with Onesiphorus, and, falling on her knees, shed abundant tears before the Lord. Going on from there, she went to Seleucia, where she converted several persons to the Gospel. Withdrawn into a cave on Mount Calamon, she instructed by word and example the women who came to her, drawn by the fame of her virtues. One last assault came to trouble the virgin in the solitary place she had chosen. Some physicians of Seleucia, angered that the sick were taking the road to Calamon instead of coming to them, set on some vicious men, who made their way into the cave to carry out their infamous plan. But at that very moment the rock opened and closed again over the Saint, protecting her against the violence of the wretches. Thecla had reached the age of ninety when the Lord called her soul to Himself.

Few women Saints have had as many panegyrists and admirers as this illustrious virgin. Her memory was held in such high veneration in the first centuries of the Church that, when one wished to give someone the highest degree of praise, one said that she was a Thecla; the word included every possible praise. Thus St. Jerome calls the famous Melania, and St. Gregory

Nazianzen the illustrious Macrina, sister of St. Basil the Great and of St. Gregory of Nyssa. After the august Mother of God, Thecla is the model and example that the holy Doctors propose to virgins and to women martyrs. They honour her with the title of apostle and evangelist of her sex, and place her immediately after the Apostles of Jesus Christ. They call her the first spiritual daughter of St. Paul, his faithful disciple and his companion in his evangelical labours. They extol her faith, her love of purity, her fearlessness in suffering, and show her to us surviving various kinds of torture to die of a slower and still more painful martyrdom, that is, consumed by the love she bore her God. “It seems to me today,” cries St. John Chrysostom in his homily, “it seems to me that I see the blessed virgin Thecla holding in one hand a crown won over the passions and in the other a second crown won over dangers, and offering to the sovereign Master of all things these trophies of her virginity and her martyrdom. Was not virginity for her an anticipated martyrdom more painful than martyrdom itself?”

St. Isidore of Damietta, writing to a convent of women of the city of Alexandria, said: “After the example of Judith, of Susanna and of Jephthah’s daughter, you can no longer plead the weakness of your nature. Add to these generous first-fruits of all women martyrs that generous heroine who, first of her sex, raised so many trophies to victorious chastity, I mean Thecla, so famous and renowned throughout the world. Her life is like an unshakable column on the earth, which will be an eternal monument of her virtue, and which, serving virgins as a second lighthouse during the dark night of this world, will show them the way they must follow, so as not to suffer shipwreck on the stormy sea of the burning affections of the flesh, but to reach that desired harbour which she has so happily attained.”

St. Principius, Bishop of Soissons and younger brother of St. Remigius, honoured on 25 September, had so lively a devotion to our Saint that he wished to be buried outside the walls of the city in a chapel dedicated to this illustrious martyr.

If one then goes through, age after age, the writers who came after the Fathers of the first centuries of the Church, one everywhere finds the most magnificent praises and eulogies given to this same Saint. The learned Baronius, in his Annals and his annotations on the martyrology, and after him Spondanus and others, have worthily extolled the holiness of Thecla.

St. Thecla is represented: (1) standing, holding a small Greek cross; (2) with a lion's head placed before her, to indicate that she was given to the beasts; (3) amid various instruments of torture; (4) seated in the arena, surrounded by wild beasts sleeping or resting near her; (5) preaching to prisoners; (6) appearing before the magistrates; (7) passing through a rock that opens; (8) mounting the pyre; (9) tied to the tails of two bulls, the cords breaking; (10) placed in the middle of a pond; (11) surrounded by flames and kneeling in the middle of the circus.

CULTE ET RELIQUES.

Cult and relics.

The cult paid to our holy Martyr is very ancient and very illustrious in the Church. St. Gregory Nazianzen went out of devotion to Seleucia to visit her tomb, as did St. Marana and St. Cyra; people flocked there from all sides because of the great miracles God worked there through her intercession. These pilgrimages were so frequent and so famous that they are even spoken of in the Acts of the Seventh Ecumenical Council: "What I affirm as most certain," says the holy Bishop of Seleucia, "is that no one has ever been deprived there of the fruit of his requests, whether he desired health or sought deliverance from his ills. It has never yet been heard that anyone went away complaining that he had not obtained the effect of his prayers. On the contrary, it is seen every day that all who visit her tomb return singing the praises of the Saint, declaring that they have obtained far more than they had dared to hope, and that her fame falls far short of the wonders worked there."

It is a common thing to implore her help in great trials and to beseech God's mercy to be as favourable to us as it was to this incomparable Virgin. Some Martyrs under torture prayed God to deliver them, as He had preserved St. Thecla from the fire, the beasts and the other torments: this may be seen in the Acts of St. Terence and his companions. St. Cyprian, in a prayer he addresses to God, uses these words: "Help us, Lord, and be with us as You were with St. Paul in his chains and with St. Thecla in the midst of the flames." And, praying for himself on the very day of his martyrdom, he says to Jesus Christ: "Deliver me, Lord, from the miseries of this world, as You delivered St. Thecla from the midst of the amphitheatre." Finally the Church, in the prayers she has composed to commend the souls of the dying to the divine mercy, addresses these words to God: "We beseech You, Lord, that, as You delivered blessed Thecla, virgin and martyr, from three cruel torments, so You may in Your goodness deliver this soul and grant it to enjoy with You the good things of heaven." These testimonies are so many authentic proofs of our Saint's great merit. The Emperor Zeno built a superb temple in her honour at Seleucia, in gratitude for having recovered the empire through her help. Justinian also had a most sumptuous one built for her in the city of Nicaea, in Bithynia.

Her body, first buried at Seleucia, now rests in the metropolitan church of Tarragona, which is dedicated under her name. According to the tradition of the country, Peter V, King of Aragon, wishing to annex to his domain by force of arms certain fiefs of that church which he claimed belonged to him, received a blow on the cheek from the Saint's hand; he fell ill of it and died. Before his death, however, he acknowledged that this punishment came from God, and in that conviction he had the property he had usurped restored and made good all the damage he had done to the Church.

But although the Catalans pride themselves on possessing the body of St. Thecla, other churches nevertheless have relics of her. The cathedral of Chartres keeps some bones of hers with great veneration. They are enclosed in a shrine of gilded wood, with relics of St. Cosmas and pieces of a large ivory box on which the martyrdom of St. Thecla is represented. These fragments of ivory were found again at the exhumation of St. Piat. At the Revolution, the shrine that contained her relics having been pillaged, these precious remains

were buried in the earth and mixed up with others; that is why, since they could not be identified at their exhumation, they were placed in the shrine of gilded wood that is seen today in the cathedral.

The church of Notre-Dame of Vernon-sur-Seine still possesses an arm-bone of the Saint, which the church of Riez had given it in 1223. This relic, saved from the Revolution by a former sacristan of that collegiate church, was recognized in July 1836 by Mgr du Chatellier, Bishop of Évreux, and placed in a fine Gothic shrine together with the relics of St. Maur, patron of the town of Vernon.

The church of Riez was in 1223 in possession of the head and an arm. The Bishop of Riez, Fulque de Caille, enclosed that precious head in a silver shrine. The shrine disappeared in the revolutionary storm, but part of the holy bones was preserved. Today the church of Riez possesses only the lower jaw of St. Thecla; it is enclosed in a reliquary.

The cathedrals of Milan, Tarragona and Riez and the collegiate church of Vernon-sur-Seine venerate this Saint as their special patroness and celebrate her feast with an octave. The feast of this illustrious virgin is marked in all the martyrologies on 23 September.

To compose this summary we have used Baronius's *Remarks* on the martyrology; the lessons of the Roman Breviary and the martyrology of Ado; the *Saints de l'Église de Riez* by the Abbé Feraud; and *Les Pères apostoliques et leur époque* by Mgr Freppel.

Saint Linus of Volterra, Pope and Martyr

67. — Roman Emperor: Nero.

> *Il y a beaucoup plus de mérite à supporter l'adversité qu'à faire des actes de vertu.*
>
> *There is much more merit in bearing adversity than in performing acts of virtue.*
>
> *Thomas à Kempis.*

St. Linus was the son of Herculanus, a noble and very important man of the city of Volterra (*Volaterræ*), in Tuscany (province of Pisa). Having been converted at Rome, where St. Peter was preaching the Gospel, he left his father and renounced all his goods in order to practise more perfectly the doctrine of Our Lord Jesus Christ. Shortly after his conversion he gave such great proofs of his zeal, learning and prudence that the holy Apostle employed him in preaching the word of God and administering the Sacraments. He was first sent into Gaul to carry the torch of the faith there, and the city of Besançon had the happiness of receiving him and having him as its first bishop. Onasius, its tribune, lodged him in his house, and, in reward for this hospitality, God granted him the grace of being converted to the Christian religion by the exhortations of our Saint, who turned this house into a small church consecrated in honour of the Resurrection of the Saviour, of the Blessed Virgin and of St. Stephen, the first martyr. The number of the faithful was already increasing day by day through the conversion of many idolaters, who came out of the darkness of their errors into the wonderful light of the Gospel; but this happy progress was suddenly halted by the malice of the devil. The pagans held a solemn feast in honour of their gods, at which they were to offer them many sacrifices. The Saint, whose heart burned with zeal for the glory of God and the salvation of souls, undertook to turn them from this abominable worship, and, having gone to the square, he said to them boldly: "What are you doing, my dear children? What mark of divinity do you see in these images that you adore? They are only statues that have neither mind nor feeling, and represent only men whose incontinence and impiety were entirely public. These idols of stone and bronze in no way deserve your respect; it is to God alone, Creator of heaven and earth, that you must offer victims. Leave this sacrilegious worship, then, and assent to the truths I preach to you." These words, which he spoke with apostolic fervour, were like a thunderbolt that threw down one of the columns of the temple and ground to dust the idol it supported. So great a prodigy should surely have opened the eyes of these people and made them recognize the true religion that the Saint was proclaiming to

them; but instead of profiting by it they hardened themselves the more, and, throwing themselves in a tumult on their apostle, drove him out of the city that very hour. Such is the tradition of Besançon, which honours St. Linus as its first bishop and as the one through whose ministry it received the first rays of the faith.

When he had returned to Rome, St. Peter made good use of him in the government of the Church, and he carried out all the functions entrusted to him with such distinction that after the death of the prince of the Apostles he was judged worthy to fill his place, in which he gave excellent proof of his zeal and pastoral vigilance. In two ordinations he held in the month of December, he created fifteen bishops and eighteen priests. He forbade women to enter the church without having their heads covered with a veil, as St. Peter had also forbidden. And St. Paul judged this so necessary for the edification of the faithful that he made it an express law, as is seen in the eleventh chapter of his First Epistle to the Corinthians. It is also to St. Linus that we owe the account of the dispute between the prince of the Apostles and Simon Magus, although the original has disappeared. He also wrote two books on the martyrdom of St. Peter and St. Paul, which are in the seventh volume of the *Bibliotheca Patrum*; but the errors with which they are filled in certain places show plainly enough that we do not have them in their purity, and one may see what Cardinal Bellarmine says of them in his *Treatise on Ecclesiastical Writers*.

The Roman Breviary says that the faith and holiness of this blessed Pope were so great that he raised the dead and drove the devils out of the bodies of many possessed persons. At last, after governing the Church for one year, three months and twelve days, he shed his blood to serve as seed for new faithful.

The body of this blessed Pontiff was buried in the Vatican, beside that of St. Peter, on the ninth of the calends of October. The Apostle St. Paul mentions him in the fourth chapter of his Second Epistle to Timothy, and places him among the first and chief Christians of the city of Rome; and the Roman Martyrology, with those of Usuard and Ado, and the book of the Sovereign Pontiffs, also speak of him most honourably.

In 1630, when Pope Urban VIII had the work on the Confession of St. Peter in the Vatican basilica completed, a tomb was discovered on which this inscription could be read: *Linus*. It was the first successor of St. Peter, whose burial place appeared after so many centuries beside that of his glorious master.

St. Linus is represented delivering the possessed and raising a dead man: it is related, in fact, that he delivered from the devil the daughter of the consul Saturninus.

Acta Sanctorum and *Liber Pontificalis*.

Saint Saintin, Disciple of Saint Denis, First Bishop of Meaux and of Verdun

1st century.

> *Quaque Sanctinus tonat ore Christum, Signa nec verbis manifesta desunt : Barbaram gentem docet, et salubri Abluit unda.*
>
> *Saintin fait retentir tous les échos du nom de Jésus-Christ, et les prodiges viennent confirmer sa parole apostolique. Païen et barbare la veille encore, son peuple aujourd'hui se laisse instruire et il courbe sa tête sous l'onction salutaire du baptême.*
>
> *Saintin makes every echo ring with the name of Jesus Christ, and wonders come to confirm his apostolic word. Pagan and barbarian only yesterday, his people today let themselves be taught and bow their heads beneath the saving anointing of baptism.*
>
> *Hymn of St. Saintin.*

The Church of Verdun venerates St. Saintin (*Sanctinus*) as its apostle and first bishop. Like most of the Churches founded in the north of Gaul in the first centuries, that of Verdun lost the written records of the wonders worked by its holy founders, during the great upheavals of the Roman empire and in consequence of the various barbarian invasions. But the memory of their virtues and benefits has been kept alive in the

gratitude of the people. According to these pious traditions, St. Saintin was a disciple of St. Denis, first Bishop of Paris. The Christian faith made such progress through his ministry in the regions of Gaul later called Beauce and Brie that St. Denis, who knew his zeal, his virtues and his gifts for preaching, consecrated him and made him Bishop of Meaux, where he is also recognized as one of the first founders of Christianity. After working there for several years to form ministers of Jesus Christ to help him in this great work, he went through other provinces to carry to them the light of the Gospel. He passed into the district of Belgica later called Picardy, and into Champagne. Laurence of Liège testifies that it was commonly believed in his time that this disciple of St. Denis of Paris, being already Bishop of Meaux, was inspired to come and proclaim the Gospel at Verdun, and that he received the order from heaven through an angel.

He came, then, as far as the borders of the lands that the author calls, by anticipation, Neustria and Austrasia, with the priest Antoninus, his companion, and they learned that the Gospel had not yet been preached at Verdun. Before entering that wholly pagan city they stopped on the hill, between south and west, at the spot where the hermitage of Saint-Barthélemy later stood. There they were deeply grieved to see the abominable sacrifices that the idolaters of the town and countryside offered to the demons under monstrous figures called Fauns and Satyrs. While their hearts, inflamed with apostolic zeal, rose to heaven to ask God for the conversion of so many souls abandoned as a prey to the demons, they saw three doves flying in the air, which came and perched on the branches of the trees with which the altars of those idols were covered; taking this as a sign of the success of their preaching, they began to proclaim the worship of the true God in that place. They lodged in a house nearby, situated towards the spot where the church of Saint-Vanne was built; St. Saintin built an altar there to celebrate the holy mysteries and obtain the conversion of the people of Verdun. Armed with a holy confidence in the almighty power of Jesus Christ, he stopped those who passed before that house on their way to adore the idols, asking them whether statues of stone and wood, which have neither life nor movement, could make them happy, and whether reason and good sense did not tell them that they should rather turn to the living God, Creator of heaven and earth, to obtain health and the other goods they desired. He alarmed them with the fear of the eternal punishments they deserved by paying divine honours to figures made by the hand of man and by committing many other sins against the laws of the great Master of the universe, who will infallibly punish those who have not obtained pardon for them by penance. Those whom he saw disposed to listen to him he urged to come to the instructions he gave every day; he visited them in their homes to maintain and strengthen their good dispositions, gradually winning his way into the families that showed less opposition to the truths he explained to them in a familiar manner. Then he preached before the people of the town assembled in the public squares. All admired the poverty of his clothing, the majesty of his countenance, the eloquence of his discourses and the power of the miracles he worked to confound those who contradicted the Gospel.

Some said that he was filled with a divine power that made him mighty in deed and word; but most of the others opposed the change of religion as much as they could, whether out of self-interest or out of attachment to their superstitious worship and to the vices and disorders of their passions. Those who made the idols of wood, marble, gold and silver that each family adored as its household gods did all they could to decry St. Saintin as a seducer and a madman who wished to abolish the ancient religion of the town in order to have a crucified man adored there; their partisans ridiculed all the holy truths. They used imposture, calumny and every kind of insult to stir up the people against the holy bishop when he appeared in the public squares. The magistrates, who were no less opposed to the change of religion, sanctioned the ill-treatment that the fury of the idolaters could devise to prevent the establishment of Christianity in that town: it does not appear, however, that they took any legal proceedings against the person of St. Saintin; our historians speak neither of imprisonment nor of torture; but vexations fit to prevent the preaching of the Gospel were allowed, and frequent popular riots were stirred up to ill-treat St. Saintin and load him with insults. Several times he was outrageously beaten, wounded and thrown half-dead out of the town.

This ill-treatment did not discourage him; he was ready to sacrifice his life and suffer the cruellest torments for the salvation of those who persecuted him; and, groaning over their blindness, he never ceased to pray God for their conversion. The more he was persecuted by the idolaters, the more his courage was roused and strengthened to overcome the opposition he met at Verdun to the establishment of the Christian religion. The divine love with which his heart was all aflame increased his constancy and made him invincible. He continued his public preaching when he could find the opportunity, or taught in secret in the houses that received him out of compassion as one of Christ's poor, stripped of all the goods of this world but filled with divine riches. His patience, candour and gentleness, and the joy of heart that shone through all his actions amid insults and outrages, touched those who were least opposed to the truths of the Gospel and who were prompted by the movements of grace. Many cried out that this man was moved by the Holy Ghost and that God spoke and acted in him, and asked for baptism. The fervour of these first faithful was all the greater as they were the more ill-treated by their relatives and friends, who deprived them of their company and of the other goods of civil life. This ill-treatment increased still further when pagan influence regained the upper hand under the reign of the apostate princes, and most of the faithful were forced to withdraw into the caves of the wilderness of Flabas, three leagues from the town, where they lived by the work of their hands and in the exercises of penance. The few faithful who remained in the town bore generously the contempt, the stinging mockery, the insults and the reproaches they received from the idolaters, their fellow citizens. They were strengthened by the example of the two apostolic men, who continually exhorted them to the practice of good works and trained them in prayer and in meditation on the holy Scriptures, which they explained to them, without slackening their efforts for the conversion of the idolaters. This labour was long and very painful. St. Saintin could only with great difficulty form men capable of helping him in his instructions, the lack of letters and learning, which were not taught at Verdun, making the people very rough and ignorant; and this was the principal reason why the Christian religion took root only slowly in that diocese.

St. Saintin made the journey to Rome with the priest Antoninus, who fell ill in Italy of a fever and died of it. But he was raised to life by the prayers of St. Saintin. After reporting to the Pope the martyrdom of St. Denis, first Bishop of Paris, they gave him an account of the establishment of the Christian religion at Verdun, to which they were sent back with three other evangelical labourers, of whom history names only St. Maur. On his return St. Saintin governed the Christians of Verdun, enriching his new Church with what he had been able to bring from the Confession of the tomb of St. Peter and St. Paul.

He continued his apostolic labours there for twenty-one years with tireless zeal. It was not without difficulty that he formed his clergy; he found few men of letters capable of helping him in the evangelical work he had begun. Moreover, the alms and offerings of a small number of faithful were not enough to support them; the rich of the town still opposed the preaching of the Gospel, which demanded detachment from the goods, honours and pleasures of the world. But the holy bishop, trusting in the almighty power of Jesus Christ, applied himself only to establishing His reign. He chose the most pious and docile among the faithful and instructed them in the knowledge of the holy Scriptures, to make them fit to receive ordination. St. Maur, who was his first disciple and the first priest ordained at Verdun, brought great lustre to this holy school. The austerity of his exemplary life led him to take charge of the solitaries who had withdrawn into the wilderness of Flabas. St. Saintin's other disciples showed no less fervour: they assisted him in the celebration of the holy Mysteries, in the psalmody of God's praises, in the administration of the sacraments and in the instructions he gave in town and country, together with the three missionaries he had brought from Rome. The zeal of our holy bishop was not confined to the diocese of Verdun. As he wished to secure the churches he had founded, he made several journeys into the provinces where he had planted the Christian faith. On these apostolic journeys he strengthened the people by his preaching, upheld the pastors by his wise and prudent counsel, and took precautions to keep from the churches the heresy of the Arians, which was then spreading in Gaul. Eufrates or Euphrates, Bishop of Cologne, having preached certain errors against the divinity of Jesus Christ, a council was held in that city at which his errors were condemned. St. Saintin's great occupations did not

allow him to attend this assembly in person. He sent his deputies, who gave their votes against Euphrates together with fourteen bishops present and nine others absent, whose names are recorded. A few years after this council, the Christians of Meaux wrote to St. Saintin of the pitiful state to which they had been reduced by the oppression and violence of the governor of the town.

Our holy bishop, moved by the calamities of his Church of Meaux and burning with an ardent desire to end his life by martyrdom, made a last journey there. Before leaving he chose from his clergy two priests capable of guiding his flock in his absence. As soon as he arrived at Meaux he went to the governor and spoke to him fearlessly, yet with the moderation, gentleness and gravity befitting a holy bishop; he showed him the injustice of his violence against an innocent people and reproached him for his vexations against the Church, threatening him with divine vengeance if he did not cease his persecutions. The tyrant could not bear these reproaches from the holy man; in his first impulse he was on the point of running him through with his sword. But then he contented himself with having him arrested and shut up in a prison, where he was deprived of everything necessary to life. While he was thus closely confined, he addressed to the clergy and faithful of Verdun a letter full of the inner joy he tasted in his chains; and, informing them of his approaching death, he exhorted them to thank God for the grace He had granted him of ending his life in suffering for the cause of Jesus Christ, to choose his disciple Maur to succeed him in the episcopal see, and to continue the work of converting the pagans in that diocese. The holy prisoner’s spirit grew stronger every day as his body, already worn out by the decrepitude of a very advanced age and by the fatigues of his long apostolic labours, weakened through hunger, thirst and the other hardships of the prison. These hardships at last brought him a death most precious in the sight of God, which he had merited by the holiness of his life and the practice of the most shining virtues, whose brightness had drawn the peoples he converted to the faith more effectively than the great number of miracles he worked during his life.

The news of St. Saintin’s death spread extreme sadness in the Church of Verdun, which mourned the loss of its pastor. Some, moved by feelings of gratitude towards the father who had begotten them in Jesus Christ, proclaimed his virtues, his benefits and the hardships he had endured for their salvation; others, recalling the words of life he had preached to them, showed their keen regret at being deprived of them for ever. The clergy and the faithful, who found themselves delivered to the fury of the pagans at this juncture so perilous to their religion, were seized with general consternation.

CULTE ET RELIQUES.

Cult and relics.

The Church of Meaux, which gave St. Saintin burial, honoured him as a Martyr, and that of Verdun paid him singular veneration as its apostle and an illustrious confessor of Jesus Christ. Since that time his feast has been instituted in these two churches, at first on 11 October: it was of solemn rite, with an octave, in the diocese of Verdun; since 1779 this feast has been moved to 23 September, as in the Roman Martyrology and that of France. In the diocese of Verdun his feast is now kept on the third Sunday of October.

It cannot be doubted that the Church of Meaux had the honour of giving burial to the body of St. Saintin, whose merits were so gloriously crowned in that city by a kind of martyrdom. It seems likely that he was buried at the spot where the church that then took his name now stands. These holy relics were later translated into a shrine in the cathedral church of the same city, where they were in 1302. At that latter date they were translated to Verdun.

The verification of this precious treasure was made by Richard, first of the name and fortieth Bishop of Verdun, who transferred it into a shrine in 1044. An inscription was placed in it containing a summary of the life of St. Saintin and of his death in the city of Meaux. In 1132 Albero, Bishop of Verdun, had a new shrine made for St. Saintin and transferred his bones into it on Ascension Day, the hundredth year since their transport to Verdun. The inscription found in the old shrine is a proof that the opinion of those who recorded

in it that Saintin had been a disciple of St. Denis the Areopagite was the common opinion at Verdun under the episcopate of Richard I, as Laurence of Liège says. In 1477 Matthew, Abbot of Saint-Vanne, had the present shrine of St. Saintin made, which is one of the most magnificent in the diocese. The ceremony of this last translation took place in Lent, on *Lætare* Sunday, in the presence of the clergy of the cathedral, Bishop Guillaume de Haraucourt being absent. The shrine was opened in the year 1622, with the permission of the lord Bishop of Verdun and the consent of the definitors of the Congregation of Saint-Vanne, at the earnest request of the Bishop of Meaux, to whom Canon Daugnon carried a rib of this holy body, which he received with great solemnity at the head of his clergy. The marks of piety and veneration paid to the memory of St. Saintin increased still more at Verdun on seeing the precious treasure of his holy relics in the church where he had preached the Christian faith, which has been preserved there in all its purity. The people of the diocese flocked there in crowds, hoping to obtain from God, through the merits and intercession of this great Saint, the graces they needed and the help suited to the goods of the earth.

The shrine containing the precious remains of St. Saintin is placed in a small edicule in the form of a temple, supported by twenty-eight columns. On each face the holy bishop is represented seated in a chair and clothed in pontifical vestments. The roof, covered with silver plates, is crowned with an elegant turret.

This shrine has been opened several times by their Lordships the bishops, and the verification of the inestimable treasure it contains has been made with solemnity and striking marks of confidence and devotion.

At the time of the Terror, pious faithful hastened to remove it from the destructive fury of the impious who were laying waste the Church of Verdun, entrusting them by night and in secret to the bosom of the earth.

When those deplorable days were over and peace had been restored to the Catholic religion, the holy relics were raised with great pomp, and a solemn verification of them was made on 30 October 1804, under the episcopate of Mgr Antoine-Eustache d'Osmond, who then governed the dioceses of Nancy and Verdun.

Mgr Letourneur in 1843 had these notable relics examined, and they were put back in the shrine under the prelate's seals. In 1858 Mgr Rossat, assisted by his chapter, made a last verification, and Mgr Letourneur's seals were affixed again to these holy relics, which were found in the state they were in in 1843. At each of these ceremonies the piety of the faithful has shown that confidence in the powerful intercession of our holy apostle is still as lively in the depths of their hearts.

This account is taken from the *Histoire ecclésiastique et civile de Verdun* by M. Roussel, canon of the collegiate church of Sainte-Marie-Madeleine at Verdun.

Saint Liberius, Pope, Founder and Patron of the Church of Santa Maria Maggiore at Rome

366. — Emperor of the East: Valens. — Emperor of the West: Valentinian I.

> *Sta firmius velut incus quæ verberatur : magni athletæ est feriri et vincere.*
>
> *Soyez ferme comme l'enclume que l'on frappe : un grand athlète doit recevoir les coups et vaincre.*
>
> *Be firm as the anvil that is struck: a great athlete must take the blows and conquer.*
>
> *St. Ignatius, martyr, Epist. XI ad Polycarp.*

The pontificate of St. Liberius, successor of St. Julius I (from 22 May 353 to 24 September 366), was one of the most troubled in the annals of the Church. Two great persecutions shook it in turn: the one stirred up by the Arians, which sent Liberius into exile and for a moment left the faith of the Apostolic See in doubt; the other stirred up by Julian the Apostate, a cunning and learned persecution, which would have done grievous damage had not God shortened the trial by soon cutting short the persecutor's reign. No kind of struggle was

to be wanting to the glory of the Church and of the sovereign Pontificate.

Liberius was a Roman; he had been ordained deacon by Pope St. Sylvester and had become noted for his virtues and humility in the functions of his order. When he was elected Pope, he resisted for a long time before accepting the formidable charge; but he was destined, alas, to bear its whole weight. Constantius II, second son of Constantine and sole master of the empire, was about to make Arianism triumph with him. In the very first year of Liberius's pontificate this prince, prejudiced against Athanasius, demanded his condemnation. The Pope assembled a council at Rome which recognized Athanasius's innocence, and Liberius wrote to the emperor accordingly. Constantius flew into a fury; the Pope sent to him as legate Vincent of Capua, who went to Arles, where he had the weakness to subscribe to the condemnation of the holy patriarch. Vincent's fall deeply grieved the Pope: "I had great hopes of his intervention," he wrote to Hosius of Cordova; "he was personally known to the emperor, to whom he had formerly carried the acts of the Council of Sardica; and not only has he obtained nothing, but he has let himself be drawn into a deplorable weakness. I am doubly grieved at it, and I ask God to let me die rather than lend myself to the triumph of injustice." He openly disowned the prevaricating legate and begged the emperor to consent to the meeting of a general council.

The council assembled at Milan, but tumultuous scenes and the conduct of Constantius deprived it of all freedom. Lucifer of Cagliari, the Pope's legate, showed great firmness: "Even if Constantius," he said, "were to arm all his soldiers against us, he will never force us to deny the faith of Nicaea and sign the blasphemies of Arius." "It is I," said Constantius to him, "who am personally the accuser of Athanasius; believe, then, in the truth of my assertions." "This is not," answered Lucifer with the Catholic bishops, "a temporal matter, in which the emperor's authority would be decisive, but an ecclesiastical judgment, in which one must act with equal impartiality towards accuser and accused. Athanasius is absent; he cannot be condemned without being heard. The rule of the Church forbids it." "But what I will," said Constantius, "must serve as the rule. The bishops of Syria acknowledge it. Obey, or you will be exiled." The Pope's three legates, Lucifer of Cagliari, Eusebius of Vercelli and the deacon Hilary, were in fact exiled; Hilary, whose firmness had displeased the more, was even scourged in the public square before leaving for the place of his exile. The persecution spread throughout the empire; St. Athanasius took refuge in the desert; the Christian women and virgins of Alexandria were shamefully outraged; forty-six bishops of Egypt were banished from their sees; all defenders of the *consubstantial* were declared guilty of high treason, and a great number of faithful Catholics won the glory of martyrdom (356).

Pope Liberius wrote the exiled bishops a letter full of tenderness and charity. "What praise can I give you," he said to them, "divided as I am between grief at your absence and joy at your glory? The best consolation I can offer you is that you should be willing to believe me exiled with you. I should have wished, my dearly beloved brethren, to be the first sacrificed for you all, and to give you the example of the glory you have won; but this privilege has been the reward of your merits." The storm that Liberius lamented reached him in his turn. He was asked directly to condemn Athanasius; he refused; then he was taken to Milan, where Constantius was, and the emperor himself tried to bend the holy Pontiff's courage. The account of this interview forms one of the finest pages in the history of the Popes; we borrow it from Theodoret, Bishop of Tyre, who lived at the beginning of the following century:

THE EMPEROR. As you are a Christian and bishop of our city, we have thought fit to send for you to exhort you to renounce this accursed folly, the communion of the impious Athanasius. The whole world has judged so, and he has been cut off from the communion of the Church by the judgment of the Council of Milan. — LIBERIUS. Sire, ecclesiastical judgments must be made with great justice. Order, then, that a tribunal be set up, and if Athanasius is found guilty, his sentence will be pronounced according to ecclesiastical procedure; for we cannot condemn a man whom we have not judged. — THE EMPEROR. The whole world has condemned his impiety; he seeks only to gain time, as he has always done. — LIBERIUS. All those who

have subscribed to his condemnation did not see with their own eyes all that took place; they were moved by desire for the glory you promised them or by fear of the infamy with which you threatened them. — THE EMPEROR. What do you mean by glory, fear and infamy? — LIBERIUS. All those who do not love the glory of God, preferring your favours, have condemned without judging him a man they have not seen; that does not befit Christians. — THE EMPEROR. He was judged at the Council of Tyre, where he was present, and at that council all the bishops condemned him. — LIBERIUS. He has never been judged in his presence; at Tyre he was condemned without reason after he had withdrawn. — THE EMPEROR. For how much, then, do you count yourself in the world, that you alone, with an impious man, stand up to trouble the universe? — LIBERIUS. Even if I were alone, the cause of the faith would not fall on that account. — THE EMPEROR. What has once been settled cannot be overturned; the judgment of the majority of the bishops must prevail; you are the only one who clings to the friendship of this impious man. — LIBERIUS. Sire, we have never heard it said that, when an accused man was not present, a judge treated him as impious as though he were his personal enemy. — THE EMPEROR. He has offended everyone generally, and me more than anyone. I am more pleased at having removed this scoundrel from the affairs of the Church than at having conquered Magnentius. — LIBERIUS. Sire, do not use bishops to avenge yourself on your enemies; the hands of churchmen must be occupied in sanctifying. — THE EMPEROR. There is only one question: I wish to send you back to Rome when you have embraced the communion of the Churches. Yield for the good of peace, subscribe, and return to Rome. — LIBERIUS. I have already taken leave of the brethren at Rome, for the bonds of the Church are preferable to living in Rome. — THE EMPEROR. You have three days to decide whether you will subscribe or return to Rome; or else see to what place you wish to be taken. — LIBERIUS. The space of three days or of three months does not change my resolution; send me, then, wherever you please.

Two days later Constantius sent for Liberius, and, as he had not changed his mind, had him banished to Beroea in Thrace. When Liberius had gone out, the emperor had five hundred gold pieces offered him for his expenses. “Go,” said Liberius to the man who brought them, “give them back to the emperor; he needs them for his soldiers.” The empress sent him as much. “Give them back to the emperor,” said Liberius again; “he needs them for the expenses of his armies.” The eunuch Eusebius in his turn wanted to make him accept money. The holy Pontiff refused, saying: “You have made the Churches of the world desolate, and you offer me alms as to a criminal; go, begin by becoming a Christian.” And, without accepting anything, he left for his exile three days later.

Heresy was triumphant. As soon as Liberius had left Italy, the emperor had an antipope consecrated, Felix, archdeacon of the Roman Church. The Roman people would not communicate with this Pope, to whom it must moreover be granted in justice that, while favouring the Arian party, he did not abandon the faith of Nicaea and was blameless in his conduct (355). So several ecclesiastical writers, among them Bellarmine and Roncaglia, do not regard him as an antipope. According to them, St. Liberius, not wishing Rome to remain without a pastor during his exile, had provisionally abdicated and advised the election of Felix, who on his return is said to have renounced the sovereign pontificate of his own accord. When Gregory XIII had a new edition of the Roman Martyrology made in 1582, the name of St. Felix II was kept by his order after that of St. Liberius.[1] The trial lasted more than a year. Constantius finally yielded to public opinion. Liberius returned to Rome in 359, and Felix withdrew to another town.

St. Liberius’s return to Rome did not put an end to the sorrows of the Church: the Arians continued their intrigues; Catholic bishops gave sad examples of weakness; Constantius had council after council assembled to impose error; but Liberius conducted himself with such prudence and firmness that error could never triumph except in part. Constantius had been a persecutor: it was unlikely that he would die amid prosperity. He was in fact engaged in a war against the Persians when he learned that the legions of Gaul had revolted and had proclaimed emperor at Lutetia the Caesar Julian, nephew of Constantine. Constantius, furious, set

out to punish the rebel, whose benefactor he had been and to whom he had given his own sister in marriage; but he died on the way, at Mopsucrene in Cilicia, after receiving baptism from an Arian bishop, and Julian remained sole master of the empire (361).

The bloody persecution and the heresy were followed by a more refined persecution, more learned and a thousand times more dangerous: that of Julian the Apostate. But before the unshakable rock of the Church it remained powerless like the others: St. Liberius was able to witness the horrible death agony of the Apostate (26 June 363) and to behold, amid the ruins heaped up on every side, the triumph of Christianity; and although the last years of his Pontificate were still troubled by the intrigues of the Arians and by those of the Macedonians, partisans of the intruder Macedonius, who, developing the Arian heresy, had ended by denying the divinity of the Holy Ghost, he had the consolation of seeing peace at last restored to the Church, the orthodox bishops re-established in their sees, and the political power disposed to uphold the true faith.

It was amid these gleams of hope that St. Liberius gave back his heroic soul to God, on the eighth of the calends of October (24 September 366). He had occupied the pontifical see, in a first period, from 22 May 352 to 10 March 358; and, in a second, after his return from exile, from 359 to 366. Rome owes to this Pontiff, among other monuments, the basilica of Santa Maria Maggiore, so called because it holds the first rank among the churches dedicated to the Blessed Virgin.

NOTE CRITIQUE SUR LA PRÉTENDUE CHUTE DU PAPE SAINT LIBÈRE DANS L'HÉRÉSIE ARIENNE.

Critical note on the alleged fall of Pope St. Liberius into the Arian heresy.

Everyone knows the famous historical falsehood found even in the *Liber Pontificalis*, which consists in placing, at the time of Liberius's return from Beroea to Rome (359), a double act of weakness by this Pope: his subscription to the condemnation of St. Athanasius, and his subscription to an Arian formula of faith. What are we to think of this fall, which has been admitted by serious authors and which is supported by the testimony of St. Jerome, St. Hilary, St. Athanasius and Liberius himself? That is what we shall examine.

The testimonies cited from St. Athanasius, St. Jerome, St. Hilary and Liberius himself, which would be crushing if they were authentic, lose all their force before sound historical criticism. St. Athanasius speaks of the fall of Liberius in his *Apology against the Arians* and in his *History of the Arians*. Now the *Apology* was written at the latest in 350, that is, two years before Liberius became pope; it is therefore evident that there has been a later interpolation, made by a clumsy hand, for this addition makes the *Apology* absurd and ridiculous. The *History of the Arians* was likewise written before the time at which the fall of Liberius is placed, that is, in 357 or 358, and the passage that speaks of it can only be an addition made afterwards. The Arians did for Liberius what the Donatists did for Pope St. Marcellinus. Besides, the beginnings of the calumny are seen to appear only fifty years later. Rufinus, priest of Aquileia, who could have known Liberius in his youth and had certainly known Fortunatian, the alleged author of the alleged fall of Liberius, writes half a century after the event: "Liberius, Bishop of Rome, had returned in the lifetime of Constantius; but I do not know for certain whether the emperor granted it to him because he had consented to subscribe, or to please the Roman people, who had asked it of him before his departure." Thus Rufinus knows the rumour spread about the memory of Liberius, and he remains in doubt, he who had been in a position to learn the fact from the very mouth of Fortunatian! Would such doubt be possible if Liberius had really subscribed an Arian formula?

The testimony of St. Athanasius against Liberius therefore does not exist. That of St. Hilary exists no more, for the passages cited have no authenticity, any more than the letters of Liberius found in the *Fragments* attributed to St. Hilary, and it is recognized that these *Fragments* have been the object of bold and numerous falsifications. St. Jerome wrote these words in his *Chronicle*: "Liberius, overcome by the weariness of exile, subscribed to heresy and entered Rome in triumph." This testimony, which seems to have great force, has

none left when one considers that the *Chronicle* was written more than thirty years after Liberius's exile, and in the East, where the most slanderous rumours were spread about this Pope. It is proved, moreover, that the text of the *Chronicle* has been extraordinarily altered; finally, says Dr. Thomas Menochius, "there is no trace of the fall of Liberius in the manuscript of the *Chronicles* of St. Jerome kept in the Vatican, which was given to the Pope by the Queen of Sweden, a manuscript which Holstenius maintains is of very great antiquity and which scholars believe was written in the 6th or 7th century." Here again, then, it is a question of an addition made afterwards.

Another passage taken from St. Jerome's *Ecclesiastical Writers* is no more authentic. Nothing of what tells against Liberius survives, whereas the testimonies in his favour are numerous and magnificent. First there are all the bishops of the Catholic world, who continue to communicate with Liberius after his return as before; they send him the acts of the synods they hold and consult him on the major difficulties they meet. Then, on all sides, the greatest saints and the best-informed men pay homage to his virtues and his courage: St. Siricius regards him as one of his most illustrious predecessors; St. Basil calls him most blessed; St. Epiphanius calls him a Pontiff of happy memory; Cassiodorus says: the great Liberius, the most holy bishop who surpasses all others in merit and is in every respect one of the most celebrated; Theodoret regards him as an illustrious and victorious champion of the truth; Sozomen, as a rare man from whatever angle he is considered; St. Ambrose says of him that he was a Saint and a most holy bishop: "It is time," he says to his sister Marcellina, "to recall to you the instructions of Liberius, that Pontiff of holy memory, the words of a speaker the more pleasing as his virtues are the greater." Finally, the Menology of the Greeks, which cannot be suspect, announces the feast of St. Liberius in these terms: "27 September, the memory of our holy Father Liberius. The blessed Liberius, defender of the truth, was Bishop of Rome in the reign of Constantius; the zeal with which he burned for the orthodox faith made him take up the defence of the great Athanasius, persecuted by the heretics and driven from his see of Alexandria because of the attachment he professed to the truth. As long as Constantine and Constans, the two eldest sons of Constantine the Great, lived, the orthodox faith triumphed; but after the death of these princes, Constantius, the youngest, who was an Arian, was sole master of the empire, and heresy prevailed. It was then that Liberius, who fought with all his strength against the impiety of the heretics, was banished to Beroea, a town of Thrace; but the Romans, whose love and esteem he possessed, remained faithful to him and asked the emperor for his return. Liberius came back to Rome, where he died after wisely governing his flock."

After all these testimonies one may boldly conclude that the fall of Liberius is a historical falsehood. If this courageous pontiff signed a formula of faith other than that of Nicaea, he certainly signed only an orthodox formula of faith expressing the consubstantiality of the Word, and all the authentic acts of the holy Pope show him to be the fearless and constant defender of the Catholic religion.

We have taken the life of this holy pope, whom we were anxious to rehabilitate in the opinion of the faithful, from the *Histoire générale de l'Église* by the Abbé Darras and from the *Histoire populaire des Papes* by Chantrel, two authors of the school of sound criticism. — Cf. *Revue des questions*

historiques; and *L'Histoire et l'Infaillibilité des Papes* by the Abbé Constant. The question of the fall of Liberius is studied there from every side, and the result of this study is the complete vindication of the holy Pontiff.

Blessed Guy of Durnes, First Abbot of Notre-Dame de Cherlieu, in the Diocese of Besançon (about 1157)

The illustrious Abbot of Clairvaux founded, himself or through his disciples, twelve monasteries in the County of Burgundy; among them was Cherlieu (*Carus locus*), in the diocese of Besançon. Guy, of the illustrious house of Durnes (Doubs), and one of the most fervent and dearest disciples of St. Bernard, was

chosen to be the head of the new colony: twelve monks had been given him as companions; they arrived at Cherlieu on 17 January 1131.

Guy's first care, according to the constitutions of his Order and in conformity with the laws of the Church, was to go and throw himself at the feet of his bishop to take the oath of obedience to him, receiving from him the abbatial blessing necessary for his installation. Back at Cherlieu, he showed as much zeal as prudence in governing his community. The church of the monastery was dedicated to the Blessed Virgin Mary. Soon the buildings had to be enlarged, for the fame of Guy and his fervent monks drew a crowd of disciples to Cherlieu. They set about clearing the land round about; to the fatigues of outdoor work were added inconceivable mortifications. Guy and his disciples practised at Cherlieu the austere life they had led at Clairvaux, where most often they ate nothing but boiled beech leaves with barley or millet bread.

From the second year of his government Abbot Guy found himself at the head of a large community and took rank among the most distinguished prelates of Burgundy. Soon the colonies of his monastery were seen spreading into Burgundy, France and Switzerland, and themselves giving new daughters to Cîteaux in those regions. Haut-Crêt (diocese of Lausanne), Acey (diocese of Besançon), Le Gard (diocese of Amiens) and Hauterive (diocese of Lausanne) owe their origin to the principal disciples of the first Abbot of Cherlieu.

Blessed Guy was associated by St. Bernard in his important work of revising and correcting the liturgical chant, which he had decided at the General Chapter held at Clairvaux about the year 1150. St. Bernard afterwards gave him many further proofs of his esteem and affection. At last, after seeing his community prosper day by day and gathering the abundant fruits of a wise administration, father of a great family of monks and founder of a glorious constellation of monasteries, the blessed Abbot of Cherlieu, ripe for heaven, died amid his disciples and went to rejoin his illustrious master, who had gone before him by a few years into the abode of glory.

Extracted from the *Saints de Franche-Comté* and the *Ménologe de Cîteaux*.

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[1] The Bollandists assert that this is St. Paternus or Pair of Poitiers, Bishop of the former see of Avranches (480– 565), whose life we gave on 16 April (vol. IV, page 415), the day on which he is mentioned in the Roman Martyrology. Baronius, on the contrary, in his Notes on the martyrology, maintains that the question on this day is of another St. Paternus, a martyr and not simply a confessor like his namesake of 16 April, and moreover first Bishop of Coutances. But he assigns no date either to his episcopate or to his martyrdom.

[2] St. Constantius is the patron of sacristans, church beadles and vergers. He was mansionary, that is, sacristan, of the church of St. Stephen at Ancona, and sanctified himself by the zeal with which he carried out his duties and by the practice of the Christian virtues. God granted him the gift of miracles, and people came to him from very far off. A peasant had made a long journey to see him: he found a man of no great stature, up a ladder and busy cleaning the lamps of the church. He could not believe that this was the famous Constantius, and when he was assured that it was indeed he, he exclaimed in disappointment: "I thought I should see a perfect man, and I do not even see the figure of a man." Constantius, hearing these words, ran to embrace him, saying: "I thank you, for you are the only one who has valued me at my true worth." — *Les Saints de Troyes*, by the Abbé Defer.

[3] He was invoked especially at Paris to ask for the health of little children and to be delivered from headaches. — Fr. Jean Périer, in the *Acta Sanctorum*.

[4] Helen was born at Bologna (Romagna) in 1472, of parents whom their fellow citizens held in high esteem; to obey her mother's wishes she entered, although against her inclinations, into the bonds of marriage; but with her husband's consent she kept her chastity inviolate. Left a widow after a union of nearly thirty years, she gave herself wholly to the practice of virtue and bore with courage the bitter opposition that came to her from her family. At forty-eight, ripe for heaven, she went there to receive the crown of immortality (23 September 1520). On 22 March 1828 Pope Leo XII approved the cult that had been paid her from time immemorial and allowed her feast to be celebrated. — Charles Butler's *Supplement*; *Acta Sanctorum*, 23 September.

[5] *De Virgin.*, l. II, c. 3.

[6] See 29 July, vol. IX, page 91, note 2.

24 September

Martyrologies

Twenty-fourth day of September

MARTYROLOGE ROMAIN.

Roman Martyrology.

The feast of OUR LADY OF MERCY. 17th c. — At Autun, the birthday in heaven of the holy martyrs ANDOCHIUS, priest, THYRSUS, deacon, and FELIX, who, having been sent to the West by St. Polycarp, Bishop of Smyrna, to preach the Gospel in Gaul, were cruelly ill-treated there with blows of the stick, then hung up for a whole day with their hands behind their backs; thrown next into the fire, they were in no way hurt by it; at last, having had their necks broken with levers, they received the crown of glory. 178 or 179. — In Egypt, St. Paphnutius and his companions, martyrs. Paphnutius, who lived in the desert, having learned that there were a great number of Christians in chains, came, by an impulse of the Holy Ghost, and presented himself of his own accord to the prefect, declaring to him that he professed the Christian religion. He was first loaded with chains, which were bound tightly about him, then tormented for a long time on the rack; next he was sent, with several others, to Diocletian, who had him nailed to a palm tree; the others perished by the sword. About 303. — At Chalcedon, forty-nine blessed martyrs who, after the triumph of St. Euphemia, were condemned to the beasts under the Emperor Diocletian; but, having been preserved from them by an effect of the divine power, they were at last struck with the sword and entered victorious into heaven. 307. — In Hungary, St. GERARD, bishop and martyr, called the apostle of the Hungarians; he was a patrician of Venice and was the first to make his native land illustrious by a glorious martyrdom. 1047. — At Clermont, in Auvergne, the death of St. Rusticus (commonly St. Rotiri), bishop and confessor.[1] 446. — In the Beauvaisis, St. GERMER, abbot. 658.

MARTYROLOGE DE FRANCE, REVU ET AUGMENTÉ.

Martyrology of France, revised and enlarged.

In the diocese of Beauvais, St. Germer (*Geremarus*), first abbot of Flay, mentioned in the Roman Martyrology of this day. — In the dioceses of Dijon, Lyon and Nevers, St. Andochius and his companions, martyrs, mentioned today in the same martyrology. — In the dioceses of Meaux, Pamiers, Saint-Dié and Verdun, the feast of Our Lady of Mercy, mentioned in the Roman Martyrology of this day. — In the diocese of Nantes, St. Thomas of Villanova, Archbishop of Valencia and confessor, whose life we gave on 18 September. 1555. — In the diocese of Paris, St. Cornelius, pope and martyr, whose life we gave on 16 September. 252. — In the diocese of Soissons, the memory of St. Salaberga, abbess, whose life we gave on 22 September. 654. — At La Ferté-Milon, in the diocese of Soissons, St. Wulgis or Vulgis, confessor, whose life we shall give on 1 October. 550. — In the former Benedictine abbey of Saint-Victor at Marseilles (*S. Victor Massiliensis*, founded about 413 by Blessed John Cassian), St. Ysarn or Isarne of Toulouse, abbot, whose life we shall give on the 26th of this month. 1048. — At Périgueux, St. Israel and St. Theobald, canons of the collegiate church of Le Dorat, in the diocese of Limoges, whose lives we gave on 13 September. 1014 and 1070. — Formerly, in the diocese of Limoges, St. Elaphius, seventeenth Bishop of Châlons-sur-Marne and confessor, whose life we gave on 20 August. 587. — Formerly also, in the same diocese, St. Leudomir (Leumier, Lumier), eighteenth Bishop of Châlons-sur-Marne and brother of St. Elaphius. We shall speak of him more fully on 30 September. 626. — At Joinville (Haute-Marne), in the diocese of Langres, St. Amé or Amée, virgin, sister of Sts. Lindru (Lutrude, Lintrude), Hou or Hoilde, Pussinne or Pusinne, and Menehould, who all led the solitary life in the diocese of Châlons-sur-Marne. 7th c. — In Touraine, St. Solenne of Châteaudun (also called Soulein, Souleine, Solein, Solan), Bishop of Chartres and confessor, whose life we gave on 22 January. 509.

MARTYROLOGES DES ORDRES RELIGIEUX.

Martyrologies of the religious orders.

Martyrology of the Order of St. Benedict. — The feast of Our Lady of Mercy. — In Pannonia, St. Gerard, bishop and martyr, surnamed the Apostle of Hungary, a patrician of Venice, who was the first to make his native land illustrious by a noble martyrdom. 1047.

Martyrology of the Camaldolese Order. — The feast of Our Lady of Mercy.

Martyrology of the Congregation of Vallombrosa. — The same as among the Benedictines.

Martyrology of the Order of Friars Preachers. — At Gerona, in Catalonia, Blessed Dalmatius Monier, of the Order of St. Dominic, remarkable for his austerities and his penance; he enjoyed the familiarity of an angel, and was called *the Brother who talks with the angel*. 1341.

Martyrology of the Franciscans. — At Septempeda, an ancient town of the March of Ancona, the death of St. PACIFICUS of San Severino, confessor, of the Order of Reformed Friars Minor of the Observance, illustrious for his rare patience and for his love of solitude: canonized by Gregory XVI. 1721.

Martyrology of the Order of the Blessed Virgin Mary of Mount Carmel. — In Pannonia, St. Gerard, bishop and martyr, surnamed the Apostle of Hungary, patriarch of Venice, who was the first to make his native land illustrious by a noble martyrdom. 1047. — In Auvergne, the death of St. Rusticus, bishop and confessor. About 446. — In the territory of Beauvais, St. Germer, abbot. 658.

ADDITIONS FAITES D'APRÈS LES BOLLANDISTES ET AUTRES HAGIOGRAPHES.

Additions made from the Bollandists and other hagiographers.

At Pesaro (*Pisaurum*), a fortified town of Italy, chief town of the former Roman delegation of Urbino and Pesaro, St. Terence, martyr. His father was called Nardus and his mother Emerentiana. If his Acts (dated 1592) are to be believed, which the Bollandists, however, seem to hold suspect, Pannonia (Slavonia, Croatia, Hungary) was, in the 3rd century, the scene of a great persecution stirred up by a certain Dagnus, king of the country. Terence, who was a Christian, fled with his mother; they reached a ship and came to land at Aquileia (kingdom of Illyria). As he was making numerous conversions there, and striking wonders came to confirm his preaching, the prefect of the city, a witness of these marvels, had him arrested and thrown into a foul dungeon. But during the night, while Terence was at prayer, the walls of the prison collapsed, and the captive was able to leave the inhospitable city. He then went to Rome, and from there to Pesaro, where, among other miracles, he gave sight back to a blind man. One day, as he was coming back on foot from a neighbouring village where he had gone to preach the faith, robbers who were waiting for him on the road fell upon him and murdered him, then buried his body outside the town. A holy woman named Theodosia discovered it, and it was solemnly translated into a church of Pesaro that was dedicated under his invocation. His relics, laid at first in a marble tomb, were placed on the high altar in 1447; in 1566 they were laid on the left side of the same altar. 3rd c. — At Salzburg (*Juvanum*, *Salisburgium*), a town of Upper Austria, on the Salzach, the translation of the relics of Sts. Chuniald (Cunibald, Chunibald, Kuniald) and Gisilaire (Gislaire, Gisibaire), priest and confessor. They were among the twelve companions in the zeal and apostolic labours of St. Rupert or Robert, Bishop of Salzburg and apostle of Bavaria (27 March 718). Their relics were the object of two solemn translations, in 773 by St. Virgilius, and in 993 by St. Hartwic, Archbishop of Salzburg. They have been wrongly believed to be Scots or Irish, whereas they were of Frankish or Germanic origin. 8th c. — At Jerusalem, the feast of the annunciation of the Conception of St. John the Baptist. 1st century before Jesus Christ. — Also at Jerusalem, St. Gargilius, martyr, whose feast is also kept on 28 September. — At Arezzo, St. Anthilla, virgin and martyr. — In Africa, St. Laetus (*Lætus*), Bishop of Nepte and martyr. 479. — In Greece, St. Coprius (*Coprius*), confessor. About 530. — In the Circle of the Rhine (Rhenish Bavaria), the Venerable Ludevich, Count of Areinstein, founder of the abbey of Gommershein (Premonstratensian Order). Date uncertain.

Saint Andochius and Saint Thyrsus, Apostles of Saulieu, in the Diocese of Dijon, and Saint Felix, Their Host, All Martyrs at the Same Place

179. — Pope: St. Eleutherius. — Roman Emperor: Marcus Aurelius.

> *Allez, généreux soldats de Jésus-Christ, partez avec la force de Dieu ; allez conquérir pour le roi suprême des âmes qui lui appartiennent, et pour vous, la gloire éternelle.*
>
> *Go, generous soldiers of Jesus Christ, set out with the strength of God; go and win for the supreme King the souls that belong to Him, and for yourselves eternal glory.*
>
> *Breviary of Autun.*

In the shadow of the catacombs, before the tombs of the first Apostles and the first martyrs, the holy Pope Anicetus was forming the generous plot of at last raising Gaul against the worship of false gods, of uniting by conquest this vast and beautiful land of the Celts to the empire of the divine King. Soon valiant soldiers of Christ came to offer themselves to him and accepted with gratitude this post of honour in the Christian army. Among these heralds of the Gospel, resolved to brave for the sovereign Master the perils of the sea, the fatigues of the march, all sufferings, all pains, all the labours of a distant apostolate, all dangers and death itself, we distinguish St. Benignus, priest, whose life we shall give on 1 November, St. Andochius, priest, and St. Thyrsus, deacon. To renounce their country and their family for ever is a sacrifice that seems light to them, and one they made long ago to the sublime ambition of the salvation of souls and the glory of God. We are going to follow our missionaries as they make their way, with the blessing of the Vicar of Jesus Christ and the watchword of battle, towards the regions of the West.

Led by the hand of God, the messengers of the good news who were bringing salvation to our fathers landed, after a happy and quick voyage, on the shores of Massilia. Soon they reached Lyon, sowing the divine word in the places they passed through; they stopped on the banks of the Rhône, set up a humble oratory among the poor boatmen, whom, after the example of the divine Master, they evangelized first, and then went up into the Roman city to proclaim the unknown God there. Some time later, wishing to penetrate to the heart of the country of the Aedui, they went up the valley of the Saône, still sowing the Gospel in their path, and made for Augustodunum, where a numerous population flocked, a vast field for their zeal. At last they were within the walls of the vast and proud Gallo-Roman city, the capital, the queen, the Rome of the Aedui: it was about the year 170. Nothing had hindered their journey: the angel of God had gone before them to prepare their ways and to procure them entry into the pagan city, and entry into hearts as well.

On their arrival in this city they felt a deep sorrow and pity at seeing this vast city still sunk almost entirely in the darkness of a monstrous and impure idolatry. Nowhere had the worship of false gods and superstitions struck deeper roots in the corruption of the heart and in the credulous obstinacy of ignorance. Everywhere Christian eyes were saddened by the sight of pagan buildings, so that one could say of this city at that time: “Here everything was god except God Himself, and the city seemed to be one vast temple of idols.” The holy Apostles were received very charitably in the house of the noble senator Faustus and of Augusta his wife, the father and mother of St. Symphorian, whom they converted to the faith and baptized. After staying some time at Autun and completing the first labours of the mission, the holy and zealous missionaries prepared to leave, so as to carry the torch of the faith further. Full of the religious consolations of the holy ministry, the only ones that apostolic hearts know how to taste, they gave in a last instruction their last counsels to strengthen the new Christians against the dangers of scandal and against the seductions or the violence of paganism, entrusted the little flock of Jesus Christ to the keeping of some priests whom they had established, according to the recommendation of St. Paul, to take their place, and called down the blessings of heaven on all, and in particular on their noble hosts. Then they set out, accompanied by the prayers and tears of all the brethren, their spiritual children, and thanking God, who had been pleased to bless their word and even to support it by miracles. For often at their voice the blind had recovered their sight, the lame the use of their

limbs, and the devils had gone out of the bodies they possessed.

The holy apostles Andochius and Thyrsus therefore made their way towards ancient Alise (*Alesia*) and proclaimed Jesus Christ at various points of the territory of the Aedui, such as Saulieu (*Sedelocus*) and Dijon (*Divio*). While the Church founded by the holy missionaries was growing peacefully, adorned with all the virtues that beautified the first ages of the faith, suddenly the days of devout calm gave way to the struggle unto blood. Marcus Aurelius, a zealous pagan, a philosophical polytheist, at once superstitious and rationalist, regarding it as a public duty to strengthen the old Roman religion in the consciences of the peoples, had just rekindled the slumbering ardour of the persecutions, and this time the sword was reaching to the heart of Gaul.

The two messengers of the Gospel went on preaching the divine word in the country with the zeal of apostles and the courage of heroes. They had taken lodging in a house belonging to Faustus of Autun, situated at Beaulieu on the high road, and made it the centre of their evangelical work. God blessed the labours of His ministers and repaid their pains with the finest successes. After such a consolation He could not give them a greater one, except the eternal reward. Felix, a rich merchant from the East, to whom Faustus had recommended them, seconded their preaching admirably by his piety and above all by his inexhaustible charity, for he spent the whole profit of his trade in daily alms. This excellent man even wished, as soon as the persecution grew more threatening, to receive the two Apostles into his own house. That was to share their dangers: God rewarded him by letting him share their triumph.

The Emperor Marcus Aurelius, amid the grave cares of government and war, continued to pursue the Christians everywhere, but especially the preachers of the Gospel. The presence of the holy apostles at Beaulieu, where they were well known, and the house they lived in were pointed out by public report to the attention of the governor of the province. At once, the better to make sure of this new prey that he coveted, one of his men went by his order into Felix’s house and found Andochius with Thyrsus preaching the word of God. He came back in all haste and announced that the house held precisely the Christians who were being sought. “Let them be brought at once,” said the governor. Felix refused to give up his guests, and the door had to be broken down. When the guards appeared: “I do not want my lot to be separated from yours,” cried the generous Christian warmly, turning to Andochius. “Obtain from God that He deign to let me share with you the crown of martyrdom. Ah! let me follow you to death, to heaven.”

The Saints, after making a fervent prayer, presented themselves fearlessly to the soldiers, who at once bound their hands and led them thus before the governor, who said to them: “What is your country, what are your names, and what is the God you worship?” — “We come from the lands of the East,” answered Andochius. “We worship Jesus Christ, Creator of heaven and earth. My name is Andochius. My two brothers here are called Thyrsus and Felix.” — “And it is to destroy our power and that of our gods that you have made so long a journey?” — “We have come at the call of Jesus Christ, whose holy word we proclaim to the people.” — “Have you not learned, then, in your country or in this one, that the edicts of the emperors condemn whoever refuses to worship the gods to various torments and to death?” — “Yes; but we know too that it is not lawful to renounce the worship of the one true God, Creator of heaven and earth, to worship stones and wood, deaf and dumb idols.” — “What! you dare to call the invincible Jupiter, Mercury and Saturn deaf and dumb idols!” — “But they are only empty images that can neither see, nor walk, nor feel.” — “Sacrifice to our gods,” the tyrant went on, changing his tone, “and you will be loaded with riches and honours. Why stubbornly insist on dying for this Christ who was crucified by men?”

At this proposal all three cried out together: “May your gifts perish with you, since you thought that a man could sell his God for money or for a little smoke!” — “As for us,” Andochius went on, “we are ready to die rather than betray Jesus Christ and give up the magnificent rewards He keeps for us in His heavenly kingdom, where the just, plunged in the ocean of eternal light and brighter than the sun, will enjoy unspeakable happiness in a life without end. Whereas those who worship your so-called divinities will be

cast into that thick darkness, into that unquenchable fire created for the devils; a place of horror where there is nothing but eternal weeping and gnashing of teeth; where the eye, greedy for light, will seek in vain for a single ray of it. Ah! believe in Jesus Christ yourself, if you wish to escape that dreadful misfortune." It was thus that the holy martyr preached the faith and fulfilled his ministry as an apostle in the very face of the tyrant, in the face of death. The governor then handed them over to the executioners, saying: "If these Christians do not sacrifice to the gods this very day, let them be made to endure every kind of torment." The order was carried out at once. They were hung up by the hands from a tree, and heavy stones were tied to their feet. During this torment, which lasted a whole day, the blessed martyrs did not cease to sing psalms, often repeating these words: "O God, come to our assistance! O Lord, make haste to help us!" Their prayers were heard. God granted them a double miracle, that of perseverance amid so long and so horrible a torture, and that of a sudden healing. Although their limbs must have been broken and dislocated, yet when they were taken down they bore not the least trace of their sufferings. As sound, but at the same time as fearless as before, they were quite ready for a new torment.

The next day the cruel tyrant ordered them to be brought before him again, and said to them: "Well! has this torment, which your rebellion against my will has earned you, not decided you to sacrifice to the gods?" — "Wretched man," they answered him, "do you not see that your threats and your torments are our joy? And besides, look: where are the marks of the torments you made us undergo? Do you not recognize the protection of that same Jesus Christ whom you blaspheme?" The governor, seeing the uselessness of this first torment, had a pyre lit and said: "Sacrifice to the gods, or you will be thrown bound hand and foot into the midst of the flames." At these words the three generous soldiers of Jesus Christ cried out with one voice as they went towards the pyre: "We are quite ready. Here are our bodies; for a moment they are in your power: do all that the malice of the devil suggests to you. You can strike them, kill them, roast them and eat them if you wish; but our soul is beyond your reach; never will you prevent us from confessing Jesus Christ. Besides, He too will have His day." The furious tyrant was resolved to exhaust every kind of torment to wrest from the hearts of his victims an apostasy that they refused with such heroic constancy. He therefore had them thrown, as he had said, bound hand and foot, onto the burning pyre. But the fire respected them and consumed only their bonds. So that, more and more strengthened in faith and charity by this new miracle, they sang with the accent of gratitude these words of the Psalmist: "O God, Thou hast tried us by fire as silver is tried; Thou hast made us pass through the flames, and we have found refreshment there." Suddenly, in fact, the cloud had been rent by lightning with a terrible crash, and so unexpected and so abundant a rain had fallen on the pyre that no one could have believed there had been an immense blaze there a few moments before. The martyrs, thus miraculously delivered, presented themselves before the governor with fresh courage and said to him: "Do you recognize us? Seeing us come out unharmed from the midst of torments a second time, and appear in your presence full of life and health, will you not at last confess the power of Jesus Christ? Ah! there is still time: believe in Him, and you will have no need to dread the day of His vengeance; for His justice is slow to punish, and His mercy is quicker still to forgive our faults than our malice is to commit them."

The governor persisted in his blindness. "What!" he answered, "our gods have just saved your lives, and you say it is your Christ who came to your help!" — "Truly," replied Andochius in a tone of deep pity, "you must have a heart of stone not to believe, at the sight of these wonders, in the almighty God whom we worship." Then the impious tyrant, listening only to his spite and his cruelty, ordered that an end be made of them. They were clubbed to death on 24 September, about the year 178 or 179. All three received at the same moment the blow that men call mortal, but which in reality allows the soul to take its flight towards heaven; together also they entered the eternal city and went to receive the crown that never fades. In the eyes of men they seemed to succumb; and yet their persecutors, for a moment victorious in appearance, were to be vanquished, and their cause was to triumph.

They are represented: 1. clubbed to death; 2. standing side by side in a group, with an axe, as though they had simply suffered beheading.

CULTE ET RELIQUES.

Cult and relics.

The bodies of the holy Martyrs were taken up and buried through the care of the senator Faustus and of Symphorian his son. God was pleased by many miracles to glorify their tomb and to honour on earth the memory of His worthy ministers. The peoples began at once, and never ceased, to surround the relics of their fathers in the faith with filial veneration and trust. Their precious bones were kept in a crypt or underground chapel called *Crotine*, where the first Christians gathered secretly. As soon as circumstances allowed, men hastened to raise a basilica over the tomb that held their sacred remains. This church was already famous by the end of the 4th century. This sanctuary was visited by St. Amator, Bishop of Auxerre, by St. Clotilda, by King Guntram and by St. Columbanus.

A monastery was joined to the basilica of Saint-Andoche; it was enriched as early as the 8th century by the abbot Widrad or Waré, founder of that of Flavigny. In 843 Charles the Bald placed it under the dependence of the church of Saint-Nazaire at Autun. In the 9th century the relics of our holy Martyrs were in great veneration, not only in the diocese of Autun but throughout France, as is seen from the letter of St. Amulo, Bishop of Lyon, to Theobald, Bishop of Langres. In the 12th century (1119), Guy, Archbishop of Vienne, who had just been raised to the see of St. Peter under the name of Callistus II, went on 21 December from Autun to Saulieu. There, escorted by several cardinals and archbishops and by the bishops of Autun, Langres, Auxerre and Nevers, he presided over the ceremony of the solemn exaltation of the relics of the holy Martyrs Andochius, Thyrsus and Felix, which were carried from the crypt, where they had rested for nine hundred years, into the upper church. Every year at Saulieu, on the eve of St. Thomas, the indulgences were announced by the grant of which the Sovereign Pontiff had concluded this translation. Shortly afterwards the monks of Saint-Mansuy, moved by a feeling of devotion to the holy Apostles of Autun, wished to establish a confraternity between themselves and the abbey of Saint-Andoche at Saulieu.

At the end of the 12th century the abbatial revenues were annexed to the bishopric and the abbey transformed into a collegiate church of secular canons. In the 15th century Ferry de Grancey, Bishop of Autun, also wished to pay his tribute of veneration to St. Andochius by building a chapel in this same church of Saulieu. In the 14th century (1349), the English, victorious at Poitiers, spread like a torrent over France and sowed devastation and pillage everywhere. The town of Saulieu was sacked and partly burned; the collegiate church was no better respected and soon offered nothing but smoking ruins. But a few years later the holy building, raised from its ruins, could be given back to worship. Towards the beginning of the 15th century (1404) a confraternity under the title of St. Andochius was established at Saulieu. In the 17th century the cult of St. Andochius received a new lustre; but first let us note that the Martyr’s head had been set apart in a silver bust enriched with precious stones and admirably wrought. This magnificent reliquary, placed at the back of the choir in a great ark that was opened on the principal feasts of the year to satisfy the devotion of the faithful, was supported by eight angels of the same metal and rested on a pedestal of gilt copper, on which was represented in bas-relief, on twenty-two silver plaques, the story of the holy Apostles, that is, their mission, their preaching, their martyrdom and the exaltation of their relics. The rest of the precious bones was placed in an oak coffer closed tight by three iron bands and laid in a kind of tomb borne on four copper pillars behind the high altar. It was opened only in the middle of the 17th century, by Mgr d’Attichy, Bishop of Autun, and a little later by Mgr de Roquette, who also paid signal honours to the relics of the apostles of his diocese and gave their cult a new impulse. He had a magnificent cedar-wood shrine made at his own expense to replace the old oak ossuary, and carried out the solemn translation of the relics on 24 September 1675, with extraordinary pomp, amid an immense gathering of priests and faithful. In this shrine, which had

three distinct compartments, he placed the bodies of the three Martyrs separately. The new shrine, borne on copper columns, remained exposed in the choir of the church to public veneration. The official record drawn up at that time was recognized and renewed in 1753 by Mgr de Montazet, Bishop of Autun. This prelate, not having found, it seems, all the proofs one could wish of the authenticity of the relics enclosed in the bust, forbade them to be exposed. But in 1757, at the request of the canons and inhabitants of Saulieu, he had some of the relics that were in the cedar coffer placed in it and allowed the reliquary to be exposed. The church of Saulieu still keeps a part of the precious treasure it has possessed for seventeen centuries. A tibia had been given in 1638 to the Princess of Condé.

The basilica raised from the beginning over Andochius's tomb, still keeping his name despite the vicissitudes and transformations it has undergone through so many ages and such various events, is a true witness that speaks to us even today of the apostle of Autun. Nothing remains of the monastery except a fragment of the cloister, which seems older than the present church and must have led to it after the secularization of the monks. The church is well preserved; it is classed among the historic monuments and is of great interest, above all in its capitals. The crypts where the tombs of the three martyrs were still exist. That of St. Andochius was rediscovered and restored by M. Lallemant, parish priest and dean of Saulieu.

The Revolution of '93 confiscated and destroyed the fine reliquaries of our holy Martyrs, and part of the relics, laid in the cemetery of the church of Saint-Nicolas, disappeared in their turn. The other part, that is, the head of St. Andochius and a tibia of St. Symphorian, was handed over to the Abbé Gareau, parish priest of Saulieu, who was still in his parish at that time. Besides these two notable relics, a small reliquary containing a vertebra of St. Andochius and two molar teeth with three bones was saved by the sacristan of the time, together with the authentications. On 27 September 1868 these sacred remains were transferred into two shrines of very fine workmanship, and then exposed to the veneration of an immense crowd of devout faithful who had flocked to attend this ceremony, which was splendid and moving.

Saulieu is not the only town that possesses a monument adorned with the name of Andochius. As early as the end of the 6th century St. Syagrius founded at Autun, near an ancient temple of Minerva, a monastery-hospice that was placed under his patronage. This house afterwards became an abbey of women, which lasted until the Revolution. About the middle of the 9th century Jonas, Bishop of Autun, transferred to it a notable part of the relics of the martyr who had held Symphorian at the first font of Autun. From Saulieu the cult of St. Andochius spread into the country of Beaune and the country of Dijon, where several churches were placed under the invocation of the apostle Martyrs who had brought the benefit of the Gospel to those regions. We may mention those of Bosjan, Vignolles-sous-Beaune, Diancey, Molfey, Noidan and Échevronne.

St. Felix, who had given hospitality to St. Andochius and St. Thyrsus, was not forgotten either by the devotion of the peoples. A chapel built in a suburb of Saulieu recalled his name and memory. The church of Saulieu still possesses one of his relics, enclosed in a bust.

Extracted from *Saint Symphorien et son culte*, by the Abbé Dinet; and from *Notes* supplied by M. Lallemant, former parish priest and dean of Saulieu, and by M. Thubet, parish priest of Saulieu. — Cf. *Saint Andoche, son culte et translation de ses reliques*, extracted from the *Chronique religieuse de Dijon*, by the Abbé F. Merle, parish priest of Fontaine-lès-Dijon. Dijon, 1868.

Saint Germer of Vardes, First Abbot of Flay, Today Saint-Germer, in the Diocese of Beauvais

658. — Pope: Vitalian. — King of France: Clotaire III.

When Blessed Vedast, Bishop of Arras, came to evangelize the Beauvaisis, a lord of the royal race of the Franks received him in his castle of Vardes, situated a short distance from the town of Gournay

(Seine-Inférieure). This generous Christian allowed the Pontiff to make his dwelling the centre of the missions he was going to preach in the countries near the river Epte: in reward for his generous hospitality, Aiga or Ange, wife of Rigobert, one of his noble descendants, gave birth to a son whose brow was to shine with the brilliant halo of holiness.

This child blessed by heaven received in baptism the name of Germer (*Geremanus*). From his first steps in life he gave unmistakable signs of the high virtues to which God was calling him. He was seen early inclined to prayer, docile to the wishes of his parents, a stranger to the frivolous amusements of his age. Modesty and charity were the portion of his first years. At that time the clergy alone possessed enough virtue and learning to exercise well the holy and religious ministry of education. The priest in the country, and the bishop in the town of his residence, gathered round them a great many young people, whom they brought up for the Church and for the State. The first of these schools were called rural or presbyteral schools, and the second episcopal or cathedral schools. Among the latter, the schools of Poitiers, Autun, Trier, Tours and Bordeaux enjoyed great celebrity. Beauvais too had its own, renowned for the wisdom and skill of its masters: Germer was sent there by his family.

Gifted with the happiest dispositions for letters, the young Frank made rapid progress in profane learning, and above all in the knowledge of religion and of the divine Scriptures. As the Holy Books were the object of his continual meditations, in a short time he knew them almost entirely by heart. Drawing thus at every moment from the source of perfection and good works, he became the model of his fellow pupils by the regularity of his conduct. His prudence and the maturity of his judgement often made them seek his advice; his fasts, his vigils and his mortifications taught them to be on their guard against the combined assaults of the devil and of a nature corrupted by sin.

Germer passed without faltering through the trial of riches, so dangerous for a young man. Having become master of a great fortune by the death of his parents, far from making it serve vanity or pleasure, he exchanged it for the incorruptible treasures of heaven. From his generous hands the poor received abundant alms, poor churches all the objects necessary for worship, and needy clerics relief in their wants. The unfortunate without shelter always found a kindly hospitality at his hearth.

Called to the side of Dagobert I (604–638), even more by his merits than by the nobility of his birth, Germer soon won the confidence and friendship of that prince. In council he made his wisdom and prudence admired; amid the perils of war he showed a courage equal to every trial. His stay at court and in the camps in no way cooled his piety: it was even strengthened by the close friendship he formed at the palace with St. Ouen and St. Eligius. These three virtuous men, united in the same feelings of fidelity to God and to their sovereign, worked in common accord for the good of religion and of the kingdom. As the king feared that Germer’s piety might lead him to leave the world and withdraw into a monastery, he resolved to engage him in a marriage worthy of his virtues and his rank. Seconded by the Saint’s near relatives, he succeeded in persuading him to marry Domane or Domaine, a native of La Roche-Guyon, a small town of the department of Seine-et-Oise, situated three leagues from Mantes.

The death of Dagobert changed nothing in Germer’s high position, and he won the confidence of the new king, Clovis II (638–656), as well. The credit he enjoyed with this prince was not enough, however, to fix him irrevocably at court: the example of St. Ouen and St. Eligius, who had consecrated themselves to God, reawakened the desire he had long nourished of leaving the world. The three children born of his holy union with Domane were no obstacle to his design: one of his daughters, already ripe for heaven and worthy of the Spouse of Virgins, died at the moment when she was about to receive a mortal husband; the other consecrated herself to God in a cloister; his young son, Amalbert, led a pure and angelic life; his wife herself was longing for the moment when, free of every earthly care, she could occupy herself only with the interests of her soul. But his desires met with keen opposition at court: Clovis II would not consent to be deprived of his counsels. Unable therefore as yet to devote himself to the religious state, Germer wished at least to share

in the merits of those who had embraced it, by founding a monastery on his estate of l'Isle, not far from the castle of Vardes. He joined to it a church in honour of St. Peter and St. Paul, endowed it with landed property, enriched it with precious relics and gave it as its head a pious abbot named Porcarius. When his soul was weary of the care of temporal affairs, he came to restore its freshness and strength in this refuge. From Vardes he sometimes visited the Beauvaisis, where his presence was always marked by generous gifts.

Germer's repeated stays at the monastery of Vardes increased his aversion for the world and his desire for the solitary and hidden life. Soon the king made it a matter of conscience not to thwart any longer the holy vocation of the servant of God. He allowed him at last to leave the court, and Germer went to join his old friend St. Ouen at Rouen, while Domane his wife withdrew to Gasny, near the tomb of St. Nicasius.

In order to work more freely at acquiring the heavenly treasures, Germer handed over the ownership of his goods to his son Amalbert, put off the secular habit and entered the monastery of Pentale or Pentalion (*Pantalum*, *Pentale*[1]). As his virtues and the generous sacrifice he had just made could take the place of a novitiate for him, St. Ouen admitted him at once to religious profession. From the way the Blessed man fulfilled his new duties, one would have said he had been formed for several years in the life of the cloister. Dead to his own will and to his passions, he obeyed the least prescriptions of the Rule punctually and exercised a sovereign mastery over his senses. And so, when the abbot of the monastery had given back his soul to God, the monks of Pentale hastened to place themselves under his guidance, hoping to find in him, with the wisdom of an enlightened and prudent guide, the tender solicitude of a father.

Their expectation was not disappointed. Germer was above all concerned to lead them to perfection by the force of his example more than by that of his words. He walked first in the way he exhorted them to follow; he urged them to practise only what he practised himself, and laid on them no burden of which he did not carry the heaviest share. His abstinence was very severe; a single meal in the evening, with sailor's bread and a few vegetables, was enough to restore his strength; salt water served him for drink.

Unhappily, as the cockle is too often mixed with the good grain, some false brethren, who wished to taste the delights of the world in the cloister, came to bring trouble and desolation into the community of Pentale. These wretches, seeing in Germer's humble and mortified life the condemnation of their own laxity, added to their forgetfulness of the spirit of their state the crime of an infamous attempt on the Saint's life. They hid a knife under the covers of his bed, point upwards, so that Germer could not lie down without giving himself a mortal wound. But the pious abbot, contrary to his custom, and inspired no doubt by the Spirit of God, felt his bed before getting into it and discovered the treacherous snare laid for him. At once gratitude led him to go to the church, where he thanked God with tears for having stretched out His protecting hand over him. That same day he assembled his monks and, without speaking of the danger he had just run, made known to them the resolution he had taken of leaving his office. In vain did the community throw itself at his feet, begging him to change his decision: he laid down his authority and withdrew into a neighbouring cave that the prayers of Samson had once delivered from an enormous serpent. There he gave himself to an austere and mortified life, offering the divine sacrifice every day, which he never finished without shedding an abundance of tears. For five years and three months he led in his cave the penitential life of the first anchorites, working to expiate his faults, praying for sinners and calling the many pilgrims who came to visit him to contempt of the world and fear of the judgements of God. The illustrious solitary intended to leave his narrow retreat only when God should call him to receive the crown of the elect; but a very bitter trial was reserved for him. One day a messenger came to bring him the news that his son Amalbert was dead. This holy young man, returning from Gascony with the king, had been suddenly struck by a grave illness; soon he expired, to the great sorrow of the sovereign, the princes and the nobles, but to the great joy of the angels, who opened their holy ranks to receive him. At this news the faith of the Christian overcame in Germer the tenderness of the father; he cried out: "O my God, Thou hast been merciful to me in deigning to receive my son into Thy glory"; then he went to meet Amalbert's funeral procession, which the king and the nobles of

the court were attending. He met the funeral train in the territory of the diocese of Beauvais, took his son's body to the monastery of l'Isle, and stayed beside this dear and precious charge.

Having become master of his fortune again by Amalbert's death, Germer resolved to consecrate it to the God who would give it back to him in eternal and incorruptible treasures. In order to give it the use most profitable to the glory of religion and the salvation of souls, he had recourse to the counsels of St. Ouen. The prelate came to see the Blessed man at the monastery of l'Isle, where together they settled on the plan of building a vast abbey. When, after three days devoted to prayer and fasting, they were looking for a site in the woods and heaths of the Bray, a place bearing the name of Flay drew their attention. "A cloud," says an old legend-writer, "hovered above this solitude and covered it with a mysterious veil. Having taken a few steps, they distinctly heard a voice that said from the midst of the cloud: 'This ground has been blessed and sanctified for forty years for Germer, who is to people it with a multitude of monks; his community will prosper as long as the holy rules are observed there.' They were still listening when the cloud dispersed. At the same time a dew fell from it, which moistened the edges of this plain and traced a geometrical line around it. St. Ouen took a rod, measured the area of the ground, exhorted his friend to carry out a work so visibly pleasing to God, and set out again for his diocese."

Settled henceforth on the choice of the place where he was to build his monastery, Germer set to work at once. He first laid the foundations of a church in honour of the Holy Trinity, the Blessed Virgin, St. John and St. Peter, and gave it all the goods he possessed. Around this church he raised in succession the buildings of the abbey and other buildings intended for the crafts that were to be practised within the establishment: he wished in this way to free the monks from the need to go out, and to shield them from the dangers inseparable from dealings with the world. The work was carried out with great speed, and in a short time the wilderness of Flay was transformed into a flourishing abbey. Germer, who was its first abbot, gave his community the Rule of St. Benedict, under which new disciples came every day to strive to imitate the virtues of their blessed founder.

After devoting three and a half years to consolidating the work he had just founded, Germer was taken from the veneration and love of his monks. He died on 24 September, about the year 658, in his fiftieth year, and was buried in the church of his monastery. The Saint has left in these regions a memory ever blessed. The Beauvaisis has forgotten neither his virtues nor his benefits. If Germer withdrew from it for some time, he willed to give it his last breath and his last blessings. The mourning that his death caused the monks of Flay was softened by the miracles that followed it: if they had lost a father, they had gained a powerful protector in heaven.

St. Germer is represented in the company of St. Domane his wife and St. Amalbert their son.

CULTE ET RELIQUES. — ABBAYE DE FLAY.

Cult and relics. — The abbey of Flay.

The relics of St. Germer remained about two hundred years in the church of the monastery of Flay, which they made illustrious by several miracles. Near the tomb that held them, the blind, the lame, the deaf and other sick people received their healing. They disappeared from it at the time of the invasion of the Northmen. The canons, who had by then succeeded the monks, took them with them when they withdrew to Beauvais, and placed them in one of the highest towers of the city. The community of Flay, however, was not dissolved: it gathered round the blessed remains of its illustrious Founder and continued to celebrate the divine office in that place, according to the prescriptions of its Rule. After the death of the monks, as the priests charged with the same duty were guilty of neglect in fulfilling it, St. Germer's body was, by order of the clergy of the cathedral, carried into the church of Saint-Pierre and laid in a shrine more worthy of the blessed Confessor.

From on high in heaven St. Germer watched over the city that had welcomed his relics with such devout veneration. Often he made beneficent rains fall on its fields laid waste by drought, and restored its sick to health. The inhabitants of Beauvais also attributed to him the favour of having escaped the scourge known as the *mal des ardents* or *sacred fire*: they were spared, while the peoples of Gaul, decimated by this dreadful pestilence, went from sanctuary to sanctuary to ask for help against it. They owed this, no doubt, to the fact that from the approach of the scourge they had addressed fervent supplications to the Saint and carried his relics solemnly around the city, both inside and outside its walls.

This visible protection led some of the bishops of Beauvais to pay new honours to the Blessed man. Besides his feast of 24 September, they began to celebrate another on 20 May, for which John of Nointel, legate of the Holy See, instituted prayers of thanksgiving. In the year 1132 Peter of Dammartin, Bishop of Beauvais, laid the relics of the Saint in an elegant and rich shrine, made with the gifts granted by the pious generosity of Christians. Régnier, a canon of the cathedral, sold part of his plate and devoted the price to making this shrine. This translation took place, together with that of several other Saints, in the presence of Joscelin of Vierzy, Bishop of Soissons, of Eudes, Abbot of Saint-Germer, and of a great number of abbots and clerics of the diocese of Beauvais and the neighbouring regions. Eudes obtained on that day a relic of St. Germer and carried it solemnly to his monastery, accompanied by his monks and a multitude of the faithful. This translation was marked by several miraculous healings.

The precious relics of St. Germer were destroyed, with many other monuments of the respect and piety of our fathers, by the Vandals of 1793. But if impiety could make them disappear, it has not destroyed the devotion and trust of the people of Beauvais towards their powerful and glorious Patron.

As for the abbey of Flay, it suffered great disasters under Charles Martel (714–741) and, in the middle of the 9th century, at the hands of the Northmen. The government of the monks gave way to that of military chiefs and canons (831). Its total ruin was completed in 906; at that time a new band of Northmen, led by Rollo, destroyed it from top to bottom. The revenues of its properties, which had been granted to the bishopric of Beauvais from the first invasion of the barbarians, remained united to it until the 11th century.[2] In 1036 Drogo, one of the most illustrious bishops of Beauvais, at last raised it from its ruins, gave it the name of Saint-Germer, and established there monks of Saint-Maur-des-Fossés. The re-establishment of the abbey caused great joy to the inhabitants of that region. “They thought they were seeing again,” says M. Delettre, “the fine days of religion; and the example, so new to them, of a life wholly consecrated to God gave them the courage to fulfil their duties as Christians better. Striking conversions were not long in taking place, and persons accustomed until then to the delights of the world renounced everything and asked as a favour for permission to build themselves a cell outside the walls of the monastery, so as to devote themselves to the service of the community, contenting themselves with a coarse habit and with food that came to them from inside the convent. The mother of Guibert, Abbot of Nogent; the sister of Suger, Abbot of Saint-Denis; the wife of William, lord of Hénonville; that of Gerard, lord of Hanvoile, and a great number of other ladies of quality renounced the world and put on the habit of lay sisters, to live in retirement in the shadow of the walls of the new abbey.” In the 14th century the English first, then the Burgundians, dealt it fresh blows. All these evils were followed by the commendam,[3] followed closely by the heresy of Calvin. At last, in 1643, Augustin Potier restored its ancient reputation for virtue and learning by incorporating it into the Congregation of Saint-Maur. This reform took place under the celebrated abbot François Tiercelin de Brosse, protonotary of the Holy See. This same abbot organized there, in 1686, a college for the free education of poor gentlemen. He put his own apartments at their disposal. Other children were also admitted.

We have taken this biography from the *Vie des Saints du diocèse de Beauvais*, by the Abbé Sabatier.

Saint Gerard Sagredo of Venice, Bishop of Csanád, in Hungary, and Martyr

1047. — Pope: Clement II. — Sovereign of Hungary: Andrew I.

O dilectissimi, quis laudes beatissimæ Virginis digne decantare valeat ?

O frères bien-aimés, qui pourra chanter dignement les louanges de la bienheureuse Vierge Marie ?

O dearly beloved brethren, who can worthily sing the praises of the most blessed Virgin Mary?

Maxim of St. Gerard Sagredo.

The grace of God went before St. Gerard, born of Venetian parents, so abundantly that from his childhood he began to love Our Lord Jesus Christ tenderly and to practise the maxims of the Gospel: while still quite young he took the holy habit of religion,[1] and, renouncing the inclinations of the old Adam, put on those of the new. While he was carrying out exactly all the exercises of the monastic life, the thought came to him of visiting the Saviour's sepulchre at Jerusalem, so as to imitate in his pilgrimage the mortification of the Son of God, who despised all riches and became poor for love of us. He therefore left his country and his kindred and took the road to the East; but as he passed through Hungary he so pleased the holy King Stephen (997–1038) by the purity of his life and the excellence of his doctrine that this prince obliged him to stay in his dominions to be there the good odour of Jesus Christ, and even, for fear that he might escape him, gave him guards for some time. Gerard, seeing himself forced to make his dwelling there, withdrew to a place called Bél (diocese of Veszprém), where he built himself a little hermitage so as to live there apart from dealings with creatures. He spent seven years there in fasting and prayer, with no other company than that of a monk named Maurus. During this time St. Stephen triumphed over the impiety of those peoples, still idolaters; he softened their cruel and barbarous manners and prepared the hearts of most of them to receive the Christian religion. When he found himself at peace, he brought Gerard out of his solitude and placed him, against his will, on the episcopal see of the city of Csanád or Chzonad, eight leagues from Temesvár, so that he might form the new faithful according to the rules of the Gospel. Our Saint acquired so great a reputation by his preaching and his fine conduct that the Pannonians bore him an extraordinary love and regarded him as a new Abraham who had become their father in the faith.

As the idolaters were converted, he had churches built in the towns and villages. The principal one was that which he dedicated in honour of St. George; he set up in it an altar under the title of the Mother of God, and wished incense to be burned there day and night; to maintain this devout ceremony he appointed two old men who were to watch over it unceasingly. Every Saturday of the year he had an office of nine lessons celebrated, containing magnificent praises of this Queen of Angels, and that with as much solemnity as on the day of her Assumption into heaven. On the other days, after the morning and evening office, he came with his clerics to make his prayer in this holy chapel. He had so tender a devotion to this august Virgin that he could refuse nothing of what was asked of him in her name; he melted into tears when he heard her spoken of, and he called his "dear children" those who assured him that they sincerely believed she was the Mother of God. He had her called *Our Lady* throughout the kingdom, so that all might regard themselves as her subjects. In the same sense St. Stephen called his kingdom *the family of Mary*.

Our Saint had a marvellous skill in mortifying himself: he was seen going into the forest at night to make bundles of firewood, to carry them back afterwards on his shoulders. He often forestalled the work of his servants and did their tasks himself; he usually wore a hair shirt and clothes made of goat's hair; he tenderly embraced lepers and sometimes let them sleep in his bed; when he went on a journey he did not go on horseback but in a cart, so as to be able to read and study on the way. One day, when one of his servants had committed a serious fault, he let himself be carried away by anger against him, as sometimes happens to the greatest servants of God, and condemned him to be whipped and tied for some time to a stake. His people, who knew his clemency and gentleness, pretended to obey him, and, having put the blood of an animal on the back, shoulders and arms of the poor culprit, they tied him in that state at a spot by which they knew their master was to pass. This pitiful sight touched the holy pastor so keenly that he got down from his cart, ran to the sufferer, and, kissing now his arms, now his hands, now his feet or his bonds, begged him to forgive the severity he had shown him; at last he had him untied and showed him nothing but love and tenderness

thereafter. That was to be changed, according to the spirit of the Gospel, into the nature of children, who bear no resentment and quickly forget the wrongs done them.

His dignity and his pastoral duties did not prevent him from leading an almost solitary life. He had little cells built for himself in the woods near the towns where he went to preach, and withdrew into them to fill himself with heavenly light before distributing it to his people. He spent the nights there in prayer and practised austerities known to God alone. He felt an extraordinary joy when he saw people serving God with gladness: one day, having found at his inn a servant girl who was singing as she turned a mill with all her strength, he exclaimed that she was blessed and had a large sum of money given her.

After the death of St. Stephen (1038), Gerard had great trials to bear. The Hungarians took as king Peter the German, nephew of that holy monarch; but after a few years, no longer able to endure his cruelty and the excesses of his disorderly life, they deposed him and drove him out of the kingdom (1041). They then put in his place a lord called Samuel and surnamed Aba, who was no better than he. The clergy and people consented to his election; but our Saint, knowing how dangerous its consequences would be, opposed it and absolutely refused to put the crown on his head. He did not fear his power and did not dread his cruelty; but he maintained vigorously that, the king being alive, he ought not to mount his throne. His zeal even led him to rebuke him publicly for his injustices, and above all because, abusing his authority, he had already had several officers of his council impaled. Finally he foretold that his reign would not last long, and that after two years he would go to render his account to the just judgement of God. His prediction proved true; for Samuel, having become more insolent and more unbearable than his predecessor, the Hungarians revolted against him and had him put to a shameful death by the hand of an executioner (1044). In this way Peter, who had been driven out, was restored to his dominions and took the reins of government in hand again; but not for long. Two years later his new crimes caused him to be rejected a second time, and Andrew I, son of Ladislas the Bald, first cousin of St. Stephen, was elected king (1046), on condition that he would restore idolatry, abolish the Christian religion, exterminate its priests and bishops, demolish its churches and ruin all that St. Stephen had so wisely established. This prince, cowardly and ambitious, who preferred a kingdom to the duties of his conscience, agreed to all the demands of his subjects, while nourishing nevertheless the design of restoring everything when he should be in peaceful possession of his dominions.

Gerard, learning what the king had done, believed it his duty to remonstrate with him for his fault and make him retract what he had so basely granted. He therefore set out to go and find him at Alba Regia (today Stuhlweissenburg), with three other bishops fired with the same zeal as he. On the way he had a vision in which he thought he saw Our Lord presenting the chalice of His blood to him and to two of the bishops who were with him. He understood by this that the honour of martyrdom was prepared for them. After all saying Mass together at the village of Gyod, in the church of St. Sabina, martyr, they continued their journey and reached the bank of the Danube, where Duke Vatha, the most wicked apostate and the greatest enemy of Jesus Christ in all Hungary, having met them, ordered his men to stone them to death. St. Gerard made the sign of the cross over the stones, and at that very moment they stayed hanging in the air; but as this miracle in no way touched the despot, he had the Saint dragged from his cart, and after he had been hauled with great indignity onto the point of the rock that overlooked the Danube, he had him thrown down from the top to the bottom. This blow was enough to kill him; but these apostates, seeing that he still had some breath of life, which he was using, after the example of Jesus Christ and of St. Stephen, to pray for his murderers, finished him off with javelins (24 September 1047). Bezterd of Nitra and Buld of Erlau, two of the bishops who were with him, and a great number of clerics and lay people were martyred with him.

The drops of his blood remained imprinted for seven years on the stone on which he had broken his head as he fell, without either the rains of heaven or the floods of the river being able to efface the trace. It was like a permanent mark of the injustice and cruelty of the idolaters, and a silent appeal for the vengeance of God against the authors of the murder. The king, who had not personally consented to it, and who afterwards

promulgated numerous edicts for the restoration of Christianity throughout his lands, had the Saint's body taken up and ordered it to be buried in the church of St. George, in the chapel of the Blessed Virgin that he himself had built. This chapel was near the place where the Saint had breathed his last. The stone watered and stained with his blood was also carried there and built into the structure of the altar as an everlasting memorial of his martyrdom. Later his relics were translated to the cathedral of Csanád. In the reign of St. Ladislas they were enclosed in a shrine. The Venetians, having obtained them from the King of Hungary after many requests, had them carried solemnly to their city and laid them in the church of Notre-Dame at Murano.

He is represented: 1. with the censer in his hand before an altar of the most holy Virgin; this is to recall, as we hinted above, that he founded before the altar of Our Lady, in the church dedicated to St. George, a silver censer entrusted to the care of two old men charged with seeing that incense always burned in it; 2. in the company of St. Stephen of Hungary, whose fellow worker he was in the conversion of the Magyars; 3. carrying an image of the Blessed Virgin, for an obvious reason; 4. pierced with a lance.

The life of St. Gerard was written by an author of his time; it is given by Surius. Bonfinius also speaks of him in book II of the second decade of his *History of Hungary*. Baronius mentions him in his *Annals*, where he says that he is called the *First Martyr of Hungary* since St. Stephen, its king, had made it Christian. — We have completed the account of Fr. Giry with Godescard and the *Acta Sanctorum*.

Saint Pacificus of San Severino, of the Order of Friars Minor

1721. — Pope: Innocent XIII. — King of France: Louis XV.

> *C'est dans les maux que chacun souffre, et non dans les biens dont il jouit, qu'il a besoin de patience.*
>
> *It is in the ills that each one suffers, and not in the good things he enjoys, that he has need of patience.*
>
> *St. Augustine.*

In the March of Ancona, amid the mountains of the Apennines that border the Adriatic, stands the little friary of St. Francis of Forano. Founded by the seraphic patriarch, it was made illustrious in the fourteenth century by the heavenly favours received there by the two blessed friends Conrad of Offida and Peter of Treia. In this same little friary of Forano we find the illustrious St. Pacificus in the last years of the seventeenth century and at the beginning of the eighteenth.

He was born at San Severino, an archiepiscopal town of the March of Ancona, on 1 March in the year 1653. From his tenderest childhood he was marked with the seal of holiness, and his precocious piety excited the admiration of all who knew him. The love of God, so lively in his heart, enlightened and developed his intelligence, so that he was no less remarkable for his knowledge of divine things than for the ardour of his devotion. When Pacificus was still only three years old, the bishop of the diocese, having heard of him, had him brought, and was so struck by the already mature reason and the already solid virtues of this child that he gave him the Sacrament of Confirmation, which was generally granted only at the age of seven. The gifts of the Holy Ghost, descending into a heart so well prepared, strengthened still further the good dispositions of little Pacificus, and he never ceased to grow in virtue and grace. At the age of four all his recreations, all his joys, consisted in prayer and in the service of God, and nothing was more touching than to see him leave his childhood companions and give himself with angelic fervour to prayer, without any thought of sharing their games. Yet neither this refusal to join in the amusements of his comrades, nor the undisputed superiority he had over them in his studies, excited the least jealousy against him. He was of so engaging, so gentle, so modest and in everything so amiable a character that he was the idol of his fellow pupils as well as of his masters.

Pacificus was growing up thus in the fear and love of the Lord when, still quite young, he lost his father and mother within a very short time. The orphan was entrusted to the care of his uncle, a man without affection or charity, who, instead of taking the place of the parents this poor child had lost, treated him brutally and made him suffer all kinds of ill-treatment. Not content with failing thus in his duty as kinsman and guardian, he left Pacificus to the care of the servants, who, little pleased with this addition to their work and encouraged by their master's example, outdid even his brutality and heaped mockery, insults and outrages on one whose sad position should have excited their compassion, and whose gentle qualities were so well fitted to win their esteem. Our young Saint bore all these injustices with unalterable patience, and no complaint ever came from his lips; but he united his sufferings to those of his divine Saviour, offering us, even at so tender an age, a perfect model of gentleness and Christian resignation.

From his earliest years Pacificus had felt himself called to consecrate himself entirely to the service of God. His love of humility and poverty led him to choose the Order of Friars Minor for the accomplishment of his sacrifice. Having reached the age of seventeen, he asked to be admitted into the friary of the Observance at San Severino, his native town. The friars welcomed him with joy, for they knew what the innocence and fervour of his childhood had been. The happiness of Pacificus was no less great, and to show his gratitude to the Lord, who had granted him a vocation so suited to his inclinations, he set himself to practise all the seraphic virtues with ardour. His humility was admirable, and his love of abasement drove him to put himself below everyone, to choose the meanest and lowest employments, and to seek every occasion of drawing some contempt upon himself. He succeeded to his heart's content in this last point, for the other novices, understanding nothing of such perfect conduct, ridiculed our young Saint and put down to a lack of intelligence what was the sole effect of divine love. The superiors, however, more experienced in spiritual ways, discerned their novice's motives without difficulty, and, filled with admiration at seeing so consummate a virtue in so young a man, admitted him to profession without the least difficulty. Moreover, finding in him all the dispositions necessary for the priestly dignity, they had him follow the special studies required for that holy state. His rapid progress in the theological sciences showed his companions clearly the injustice they had done in thinking so little of his mind, and when he was ordained priest there was only one voice to praise his virtues and to express the hopes the Church could found on the ministry of so learned and so holy a religious.

Our Saint's humility kept him from considering his priestly future from so consoling a point of view. He trembled under the burden that had just been laid on him, which did not prevent him from rejoicing from the bottom of his heart at the signal honour the Lord had done him in calling him to the service of the altar. His love for God became more and more lively and tender. Like his seraphic Father, he often repeated in the transports of his devotion that cry of the loving soul: "My God and my all!" Nothing can depict the fervour with which he celebrated the holy Mysteries. Often during holy Mass he was rapt in ecstasy, and at the moment of the elevation those present saw him, to their great admiration, rise from the ground, drawn by the host he had just consecrated and carried away by the force of an act of adoration that had absorbed all the powers of his soul.

After his ordination he was charged with teaching philosophy to his brethren; but he soon gave up this employment, which his humility represented to him as too honourable for him. He then devoted himself to preaching, going through the mountains of the March and proclaiming the word of God to the poor peasants. He had the eloquence of the Saints; his preaching was simple but full of unction and strength; and so it produced marvellous fruits of salvation. Yet the Lord judged that His servant would be more useful to the Church in retirement than in public life. He therefore visited him with cruel infirmities, and thus obliged him to give up the apostolic ministry in the prime of life, when he was hardly more than about thirty-five years old. His legs became covered with sores and allowed him to walk only with difficulty; his eyes were veiled in darkness, and his ears could perceive sounds only with extreme difficulty. In a word, he became crippled,

deaf and almost blind. God, who wished to have Pacificus wholly for Himself, had made him incapable in appearance of anything at all except suffering and praying.

The trial was hard for a zealous soul; Pacificus nevertheless accepted it willingly. Happy in all that pleased his heavenly Father, he withdrew to the little friary of Forano, where he had made his novitiate; and God, who was calling him to this solitude, completed his sanctification there. His life was a continual fast. Besides the Lent of the Church and the two Lents of the Order, he kept all the Lents hallowed by St. Francis. He fasted on bread and water every Friday and every Saturday, as well as on the vigils of the feasts of Our Lady. On the other days his meal consisted of a little soup thinned with water or mixed with ashes, and a little bread soaked in water reddened with wine. The rest of his portion belonged to the poor, to whom he liked to distribute it himself. In winter he never went near the fire, or if he sometimes came to the common hearth, he stayed there so short a time that it served much less to warm him than to make him feel the more the severity of the cold, which is sharp enough in those mountains.

He wore an iron hair shirt continually. Every day he took the discipline three or four times, either in his cell or in some retired place; for he hid his austerities carefully, and they would never have been known but for the bloodstains that covered the walls or the floor of his retreat. He slept barely four hours, spending the rest of the night in prayer, either in his cell or in the little church of Our Lady of the Angels, of which he was especially fond. This church had been built close to the spot where the glorious Virgin Mary had once appeared to Blessed Conrad of Offida. Every morning the holy man went to confession before saying his Mass; and although he led a life more angelic than human, he shed torrents of tears as though he had been the greatest sinner on earth. At the holy altar his face lit up, his body rose, and he often remained thus in ecstasy until he was called back to himself. He spoke very little, and when he went about the friary he always had his rosary in his hand. His sister having come to see him on the day of the Portiuncula, he came to her at the friary door and said to her: “My sister, we must not lose a time that we can better use in gaining the indulgence; let us try to make ourselves worthy of so great a treasure.” Having said these words he left her, although he had not seen her for a long time. With his brethren, and with the people of the world who came to consult him, his words were brief and grave but full of charity. His bearing inspired respect, while at the same time his gentleness charmed and consoled souls. His face bore the stamp of a wholly virginal modesty; he never let his eyes rest on anyone’s face, and even the friars who lived with him could not say after many years what the colour of his eyes was.

He suffered more than can be told from the horrible sores he had on his legs, yet he was never heard to complain. If anyone spoke to him of his pains, he answered cheerfully: “God wills it so; may His holy will be done!” To those who asked for news of his health he answered invariably that he was much better than he deserved. His superior, wishing to test him, sometimes called him a hypocrite who claimed to steal paradise; Pacificus listened in silence and rejoiced in his heart. A man who hated him one day spat wine in his face in front of several people, calling him a drunkard. The Saint wiped himself calmly and answered nothing. So had Our Lord kept silence when He was insulted by being spat upon in the face.

To resemble Jesus Christ is the summit of perfection. It was to this summit that God had led St. Pacificus by the paths of a hidden, humble, suffering and resigned life. Perhaps the man of God would not have risen so high or so easily amid the cares and distractions of an active ministry; that is why Providence had led him into solitude by early infirmities.

From the depths of his solitude of Forano, Pacificus served the Church better than the greatest geniuses, for the merits he stored up became sources of grace for sinners. He ceaselessly asked God for their conversion. He prayed too for the infidels and for the missionaries who evangelize them, envying these last the happiness of being able to shed their blood for Jesus Christ. Who could tell the number of souls he saved by his prayers and sufferings? Our Lord, who loved him, did not refuse to the prayers of His faithful servant what was, besides, the dearest desire of His divine Heart. He revealed to him the needs of the Church and the deep

misery of sinners, so that Pacificus might implore Him to remedy them and might compel mercy to prevail over justice.

“The prayer of the just man, often repeated, has great power over the heart of God.” An impenetrable veil hides from us the phenomena of the supernatural world; we cannot always manage to grasp the mysterious chain of effects and causes; but beyond question the prayer of the Saints is one of the chief springs of the government of Providence. And if it pleased that same Providence to reveal to us the hidden ways that direct it in the disposal of the events of this world, how many of them should we not see that would have to be traced back to this principle!

On 16 August 1717, while the Christian army commanded by Prince Eugene of Savoy was fighting valiantly beneath the walls of Belgrade, Pacificus, kneeling in his cell, was invoking the God of battles like Moses. At the very hour when the Turks were defeated, he came out with a radiant and triumphant face, announcing the victory in precise terms to all the Brothers he met.

St. Pacificus passed from the darkness of this world to the eternal brightness of heaven in the year 1721, on 24 September, the feast of Our Lady of Mercy. He was then sixty-eight years old, and had spent fifty-one of them in the Franciscan life. His holiness had been too brilliant during his life not to be shown after his death. Numerous miracles, justifying the confidence the peoples had in him, affirmed the power he enjoyed in heaven. He was beatified by Pius VI in 1786, and solemnly placed among the saints by Gregory XVI on 26 May 1839.

He is represented carrying the cross with a lily, to recall at once his preaching and the practice of mortification that made him carry his baptismal innocence to the grave.

Extracted from the *Année franciscaine* and the *Annales franciscaines*, vol. VII. — Cf. *Les Saints et les Bienheureux du xviii■ siècle*, by the Abbé Daras.

Feast of Our Lady of Mercy

Pontificate of Paul V (1605–1621).

Redemit eos de manu inimici.

Elle les a délivrés des mains de l’ennemi.

She delivered them from the hands of the enemy.

Psalm cv, 10.

Among the religious Orders founded under the patronage of the Queen of Angels, one of the most illustrious has been that of Our Lady of Mercy.[1] The most holy Virgin made known her will to establish this Order by appearing to St. Peter Nolasco, to St. Raymond of Peñafort and to James I, King of Aragon; and the Sovereign Pontiffs have approved this by heaping graces and favours on the institute and by establishing a solemn feast throughout the Church to perpetuate its memory.

At the beginning of the thirteenth century the greater and better part of Spain was still under the yoke of the Mohammedans. These barbarous enemies of Jesus Christ held shut up in their dungeons a very great number of Christians, whom they tormented cruelly to make them deny the Catholic faith; many gave way, and the Church mourned with tears the loss of her children. Devout souls tried by their prayers and austerities to obtain from God that He would bring a remedy to so great an evil. These prayers rose up to heaven, and they were heard not only by God but also by the most holy Virgin, who from then on resolved to put an end to the trials of her children.

This merciful Queen, looking down from her heavenly throne on the miseries and calamities endured by the poor Christian slaves, and wishing to dry the tears of the Catholic Church and to prevent the loss of so many

souls, established a work of the most perfect charity, that of the redemption of captives. To carry out this design she chose three illustrious men, and, coming down herself from heaven, declared to them with her own lips her intention of founding an Order that would bear the title of her mercy; and she accomplished it in the following way.

There was at that time at Barcelona a holy man named Peter Nolasco, whose life we gave on 31 January. He belonged to a noble family of the Lauragais; but as the heresy of the Albigenses was then causing great havoc in that region, the holy young man, who was attached with all his heart to the Catholic faith, resolved to leave it. He sold his rich patrimony and went into Catalonia to visit the sanctuary of Our Lady of Montserrat, where he spent several days and nights in prayer. Having thus fulfilled his vow, he withdrew to Barcelona, where he was magnificently received by King James I, who knew his birth and his virtues. This king, seeing the heroic works of charity the Saint was performing in Barcelona, liked to talk with him about the redemption of captives; he shared with him his plans for the destruction of the Saracens and the deliverance of the poor Christians they held in their chains. When he made war on them he implored the help of the Saint's prayers, and he often acknowledged that he owed his conquests to him. Both mourned the lot of the Christian slaves, for whose relief St. Peter Nolasco had already spent his whole fortune. Another Saint shared the compassion of the king and of St. Peter Nolasco and encouraged them in their generous plans: this was St. Raymond of Peñafort.

The king addressed fervent prayers to God, to the most holy Virgin and to the holy patrons of the city of Barcelona, that they might favour him in his plans and inspire him with the means of accomplishing this work of charity. Our Lord heard his prayers, and granted them by founding the Order of Our Lady of Mercy.

On the first day of the month of August in the year 1218, under the pontificate of Honorius III, while the Church was celebrating the feast of St. Peter's Chains, towards the middle of the night, the Queen of Angels came down from heaven, accompanied by the heavenly spirits and a great number of Saints. She appeared first to St. Peter Nolasco, who was then at prayer. "My son," this glorious Queen said to him, "I am the Mother of the Son of God, who for the salvation and freedom of mankind shed all His blood, suffering the cruel death of the Cross; I come here to seek men who are willing, after the example of my Son, to give their lives for the salvation and freedom of their captive brethren. It is a sacrifice that will be very pleasing to Him. I desire, then, that an Order be founded in my honour whose religious, with a lively faith and a true charity, shall ransom Christian slaves from the power and tyranny of the Turks, even giving themselves as pledges, if need be, for those they cannot ransom otherwise. Such, my son, is my will; for when in prayer you begged me with tears to bring a remedy to their sufferings, I presented your prayers to my Son, who, for your consolation and for the establishment of this Order under my name, has sent me from heaven to you."

St. Peter Nolasco then answered the Queen of Angels humbly: "I believe with a lively faith that you are the Mother of the living God, and that you have come into this world for the relief of the poor Christians who are suffering in a barbarous servitude. But what am I, to accomplish so difficult a work amid the enemies of your divine Son, and to draw His children out of their cruel hands?" — "Fear nothing, Peter," the Queen of Angels replied; "I will assist you in all this affair; and that you may have faith in my word, you will soon see the fulfilment of what I have announced to you, and my sons and daughters of this Order will glory in wearing white garments like those in which you see me clothed." As she said this, the most holy Virgin disappeared and went back up to the throne of her glory.

St. Peter Nolasco remained in prayer until morning, pondering in his heart what he had heard and thanking God for so great a favour. As soon as day broke he went to St. Raymond of Peñafort, his confessor, to give him an account of his wonderful vision. But scarcely had he begun to tell it when St. Raymond, filled with astonishment, interrupted him, saying: "I had the same vision as you last night: I too was favoured with a visit from the Queen of Angels, and I heard from her lips the command she gave me to work with all my strength for the establishment of this religious order, and to encourage the faithful Catholics in my sermons

to come to the help of so perfect a work of charity. It was to thank God and the most holy Virgin that I had come so early to the cathedral."

Who can express the joy of these two holy men at seeing themselves the object of so great a favour on the part of Our Lady? They at once began to confer together on the means of accomplishing their mission. At that moment they saw King James come into the church; he too had been visited by the Queen of Angels and was hurrying to the cathedral to show her his gratitude. Catching sight of the two Saints, he called them, and, taking them aside, told them the vision he had had: "The glorious Queen of Angels," he said to them, "appeared to me last night with incomparable beauty and majesty, commanding me to institute, for the redemption of captives, an Order that would bear the name of St. Mary of Mercy or of Pity; and as I know in you, Peter Nolasco, a great desire to ransom the slaves, it is you whom I charge with carrying out this work. As for you, Raymond, whose virtue and learning I know, you will be the support of the Order by your preaching."

The two Saints then told him the words that they too had heard from the lips of the most holy Virgin, and, having recognized the will of God and of Our Lady from the agreement of their respective visions, they resolved to work at once for the foundation of the Order of Mercy.

The 10th of August of that same year was chosen to begin this great undertaking. The king went to the cathedral, where an immense crowd had gathered, for the report of the miracle had already spread through the whole kingdom. He was accompanied by St. Peter Nolasco and St. Raymond of Peñafort, by the councillors of Barcelona and by all the nobility. In the church was a great number of prelates summoned by the king. The Bishop of Barcelona sang the Mass; after the Gospel St. Raymond of Peñafort went up into the pulpit and told the vision he had had with admirable eloquence and fervour. The people, hearing the account of this miracle, whose three faithful witnesses they had before their eyes, could not contain their joy, and, amid their cries and tears, thanked the most holy Virgin for the pity she was showing to the poor slaves.

When the sermon was over, the king came down from his throne, clothed in his royal mantle and wearing a golden crown on his head; he had at his sides St. Raymond of Peñafort and St. Peter Nolasco, and was followed by the councillors of Barcelona and the grandees of the kingdom. He walked thus accompanied to the foot of the high altar, where the bishop was celebrating the holy Sacrifice; he stopped in his presence and said to him these words: "It is our will to carry out the command of God, transmitted to us by the most holy Virgin Mary, Queen of Angels, and accordingly to found a religious and military Order whose members will devote themselves to the ransom of captives, even to giving their freedom and their life for them. The first religious of this Order will be our companion and friend Peter Nolasco, whom the Mother of God has chosen to be the foundation stone of this great work of charity. It is for you now, reverend Father, to carry out the designs of God and of the most holy Virgin."

The bishop then, with the help of the king and of St. Raymond of Peñafort, gave the habit to St. Peter Nolasco, who was kneeling at his feet. All three shed tears of joy as they clothed him in this white robe, which had the shape of the one the Queen of Angels wore. The king then placed with his own hands on the scapular the shield of his royal arms, in the middle of which was a white cross, the badge of the cathedral of Barcelona. The king willed that St. Peter and his successors should have for ever the right to wear these arms on their breast. He also placed the Order under the protection of the councillors of Barcelona, recommending them to defend it with care in the course of the centuries.

St. Peter Nolasco then made the solemn vow to give himself as a hostage to the Turks, if necessary, for the redemption of Christian captives, which all the religious of his Order promise likewise. In a few years the new Institute produced admirable fruits, so that, wishing to strengthen it by the approval of the Holy See, King James sent St. Raymond of Peñafort to Perugia, where Pope Gregory IX was then residing. The Saint, prostrate at his feet, first told him of the apparition of the most holy Virgin and presented to him the petition

by which the king asked for the confirmation of this Order, founded twelve years before. Gregory IX graciously granted it, and added many graces and privileges, as almost all his successors have done too.

To preserve the memory of the favour the most holy Virgin had done to her Church, and to show God its gratitude for it, Pope Paul V instituted the feast of Our Lady of Mercy, ordering that it be celebrated in the Order on the Sunday nearest the calends of August. Innocent X increased the solemnity of the feast and allowed it to be celebrated in all the dominions of the King of Spain. Innocent XII afterwards extended it to the whole Church and had it inserted in the Roman Martyrology, placing it on 24 September.

The most holy Virgin has never ceased to protect the Order she had founded; under her auspices, indeed, it produced men of admirable charity who, not content with using the alms of the faithful to ransom captives, often gave themselves to restore freedom to those whose faith was in peril among those barbarous peoples.

For long centuries Mary showed herself in Africa the gentle consoler of the afflicted. And so, after the conquest of that den of pirates, an immense cry of gratitude rose on all sides to the Queen of Angels. Her cult was at once established at Algiers, in an old mosque converted into a church under the title of Our Lady of Victories; a great number of churches and chapels were placed under the patronage of the Blessed Virgin by Mgr Dupuch, first Bishop of Algiers. When the moment had come to give Mary a magnificent testimony of the gratitude of Europe, and in particular of France and Algeria, a temple was raised to her under the title of Our Lady of Africa. This sanctuary, set on a plateau at the top of a grandiose hill, today dominates the city conquered by faith and civilization: it dominates it as an act of gratitude for the past, a solemn manifestation for the present, a pledge of confidence for the future. The chapel is in the Byzantine style traditional in Africa, mingled with a Christianized Moorish style, and its great dome, like a beacon of blessing and salvation, appears from afar, symbolizing Mary's virginity by a crown of lilies, her motherhood by a crown of roses, and at the summit her royalty by a crown of stars.

Ribadeneira; *Notre-Dame de France*, by M. Hamon; and *Notes* supplied by the Abbé Ant. Ricard.

Blessed Dalmatius[2] Monier or Monner, of the Order of Friars Preachers (1341)

Blessed Dalmatius Monier was born in 1291 at Santa Coloma de Farners, near Gerona, in Catalonia; he began his studies in that town and went on to continue them at Montpellier (Hérault), whose university then enjoyed a great reputation. Most of the students who attended its courses led a scarcely Christian life; several even gave themselves up to shameful excesses: this inspired Dalmatius with redoubled watchfulness over himself, so as not to let himself be corrupted by their example. When his studies were finished, the fear of losing his soul in the world inspired him with the resolution of leaving it for good; and this he did by taking the habit of St. Dominic at Gerona (1314). After his profession he was charged with teaching theology, and afterwards he was made master of novices. After twenty years at Gerona, the applause and veneration that his holy life drew upon him decided him to leave that city, and he withdrew with the permission of his superiors to the hermitage of the Sainte-Baume, in Provence, where he gave himself to extraordinary austerities. He had been there three years when his superiors recalled him to Gerona; but, so as not to thwart too much the attraction he had for the anchoritic life, they allowed him to withdraw into a cave that he had dug near the monastery. He spent the last four years of his life there, and left it only to follow the principal exercises of the community.

He died on 24 September 1341, and several miracles took place at his funeral. In 1613 there was a solemn translation of his relics, and it was on this occasion that the city of Gerona raised a superb mausoleum to him and that an altar was dedicated under his invocation. Innocent XIII approved his cult in 1721; Benedict XIII, in 1726, allowed the clergy of the diocese of Gerona and the whole Order of St. Dominic to celebrate his feast on 24 September.

Extracted from the *Dictionnaire hagiographique* of the Abbé Migne.

[1] St. Rusticus, commonly called St. Rotiri (*Rusticus*), was parish priest of Aulnat (Puy-de-Dôme) when he was raised to the episcopal see of Clermont-Ferrand. His election had something extraordinary about it, according to St. Gregory of Tours. The bishops being assembled to give a successor to St. Venerandus (423), and opinions being divided over the choice to be made, a veiled woman, one of those consecrated to God, boldly entered the assembly and announced that at that very hour the Lord had set on the road the man He had chosen to be bishop. This speech surprised all present; and they did not know what to think of it, when they saw our Saint come in. No sooner had the handmaid of the Lord caught sight of him than she cried out: "There is the one whom the Lord has chosen." The people, stirred by these words, which seemed inspired and which no doubt truly were, began to cry out with one voice that Rusticus was worthy of the episcopate and that it was right to raise him to it. He at once received episcopal consecration, and was thus the eighth Bishop of Clermont (423–446). Raised to the see of the city of Auvergne, he is known to have fulfilled all the duties of a great bishop, and to have made himself admired for an eminent holiness and for the gift of miracles. But apart from this nothing is known of the principal actions of his life. He is believed to have been buried in the church of Aulnat. — *Chronologie des évêques de Clermont*.

[2] The monastery of Pentale, founded near the confluence of the Seine and the Risle by Childebert in favour of St. Samson, was of the Order of St. Benedict. It still existed in 833. It is believed to have been entirely destroyed by the Northmen. — *Dictionnaire des Abbayes*, Migne edition.

[3] We think, with the authors of the *Gallia Christiana*, that there were two successive destructions of the abbey of Flay: the first in 851 and the second in 906. After the first, St. Odo, Bishop of Beauvais, obtained from King Charles the Bald a charter that awarded the revenues of the abbey to his bishopric. This charter was sanctioned by Pope Nicholas I, on condition that the abbey should be restored later. Odo seems to have set to work at once (*restitutum ab Odone fuisse videtur*), for in 906 the abbey was destroyed again. As after the first destruction, the bishopric was put in possession of the revenues, but always on the same condition of restoring the abbey.

[4] The commendam was the provision of a regular benefice granted to a secular, with dispensation from regular observance. It was either temporary or perpetual. The first was a mere trust, which the commendatory gave up on the appointment of the titular. It is against the second, which put the commendatory on the same footing as the titular, that Popes and Councils have never ceased to protest. Abbeys were held not only by secular clerics but even by laymen.

[5] Among the Benedictines of San Giorgio Maggiore at Venice, according to Fr. Cahier (*Caractéristiques des Saints*).

[6] See some details on this religious order in the life of St. Peter Nolasco, its founder (31 January, vol. II, page 141).

[7] Alias: Dalmas, Daumas, Daumatz, Dalmatius.

25 September

Martyrologies

Twenty-fifth day of September

MARTYROLOGE ROMAIN.

Roman Martyrology.

At the village of Emmaus, the birthday in heaven of St. Cleophas, disciple of Our Lord, who is said to have been killed by the Jews for the name of Jesus Christ in the same house where he had received Him at his table, and where he is said to have been honourably buried.[1] 1st c. — At Rome, St. Herculanus, soldier and martyr, who, having been converted by the miracles that occurred at the martyrdom of the holy Bishop Alexander, was beheaded after several torments under the Emperor Antoninus. 2nd c. — At Amiens, St. FIRMIN, bishop, who, after being subjected to various tortures, was beheaded under the governor Rictiovarus during the persecution of Diocletian. Beginning of the 2nd c. — At Damascus, the holy martyrs Paul and Tatta his wife, with Sabinian, Maximus, Rufus and Eugene their children, who, having been denounced as Christians, gave up their souls to God amid scourges and various other torments. — In Asia, the martyrdom of St. Bardomian, St. Eucarpus and twenty-six others. — On the same day, St. Anathalon, bishop, disciple of the Apostle St. Barnabas and his successor in the episcopal see of Milan. About 61. — At Lyon, the death of St. Lupus, who from an anchorite became a bishop.[2] About 542. — At Auxerre, St. AUNARIUS, bishop and confessor. 603. — At Blois, St. Solemnis or Souleine, Bishop of Chartres, famous for his miracles.[3] 509. — On the same day, St. PRINCIPIUS, Bishop of Soissons, brother of St. Remigius, Bishop of Reims. About 505. — At Anagni, the holy virgins Aurelia and Neomisia. Beginning of the 11th c. — At Septempeda, in the March of Ancona, the death of St. Pacificus of San Severino, confessor, of the Order of Friars Minor of St. Francis called Reformed of the Observance, famous for his

unalterable patience and his love of solitude; he was placed among the Saints by Pope Gregory XVI.[4] 1721.

MARTYROLOGE DE FRANCE, REVU ET AUGMENTÉ.

Martyrology of France, revised and enlarged.

In the diocese of Ajaccio, St. Pacificus of San Severino, confessor, whose life we gave on the previous day. 1721. — In the diocese of Angers, St. Eustace and his companions, martyrs, whose life we gave on 20 September. 116. — In the dioceses of Arras, Beauvais, Cambrai and Paris, St. Firmin, apostle of Amiens and martyr, mentioned in the Roman Martyrology of this day. — In the diocese of Auch, St. AUSTINDUS or OSTENT (*Austindus*), archbishop of that see and confessor. About 1068. — In the diocese of Autun, the feast of the Impression of the Stigmata of St. Francis of Assisi, of which we spoke on 17 September. 1224. — In the dioceses of Avignon and Nîmes, St. Castor, Bishop of the former see of Apt and confessor, whose life we gave on 21 September. 420. — In the diocese of Bayeux, St. Floscellus or Flocelle, martyr, whose life we gave on 17 September. 257. — In the dioceses of Blois, Chartres and Tours, St. Solemnis, Bishop of Chartres, mentioned in the Roman Martyrology of this day, whose life we gave on 22 January. 509. — In the diocese of Le Mans, Sts. Cornelius and Cyprian, martyrs, whose life we gave on 16 September. 252 and 258. — In the diocese of Dijon, the feast of Our Lady of Mercy, whose history we gave on the previous day. 17th c. — In the diocese of Viviers, St. Lupus, Archbishop of Lyon, mentioned in the Roman Martyrology of this day. — At Orléans, the memory of St. Austregildis or Agia, sister of St. Aunarius of Auxerre, whose life we give on this day. 7th c. — In the diocese of Marseilles, St. DEFENDENS and his companions, martyrs. 290. — In the dioceses of Meaux, Pamiers and Tarbes, St. Thomas of Villanova, Archbishop of Valencia, whose life we gave on 18 September. 1555. — In the diocese of Clermont, St. Rusticus or Rotiri (*Rusticus*), bishop of that see and confessor, of whom we spoke on 24 September. About 446. — In the dioceses of Rouen and Sens, St. Lô (*Lauto*), Bishop of Coutances, of whom we spoke in the Martyrology of France of 21 September. — In the diocese of Montpellier, St. Cleophas, disciple of Our Lord, mentioned in the Roman Martyrology of this day. 1st c. — In the dioceses of Perpignan, Saint-Flour and Strasbourg, St. Joseph of Copertino, confessor, whose life we gave on 18 September. 1662. — In the diocese of Poitiers, St. Emmeran, bishop and martyr, whose life we gave on 22 September. 652. — In the diocese of Soissons, St. PRINCIPIUS, bishop of that see and confessor. About 505. — In the diocese of Verdun, St. Rouin (*Rodingus*), founder and abbot of Beaulieu (*Bellus Locus*), whose life we gave on 17 September. 680. — At Langres, the death of St. CEOLFRID, abbot of the English monasteries of Jarrow and Wearmouth, founded by St. Benedict Biscop. 716. — At Santoche (Doubs), in the diocese of Besançon, St. ERMENFRID or HERMENFROY, monk of Luxeuil and abbot of Cusance (*Cusantiense monasterium*, Order of St. Benedict). About 670. — In the former Benedictine abbey of Villemagne-l'Argentière (Hérault), in the original diocese of Béziers, the translation of the relics of St. Majan, bishop of the former see of Lombez (*Lombaria*), in the diocese of Auch. His death is noted in the Martyrology of France of 1 June. Date uncertain. — At Mauriac (Cantal), the translation of the relics of St. Quinidius or Quiniz, commonly Quénin, bishop of the former see of Vaison (Vaucluse) and confessor. He attended the fifth Council of Arles (552) and the fourth Council of Paris (573). His death is noted in the Martyrology of France of 15 February.[5] 578 or 579. — At Limoges, St. Ferréol, bishop of that see, whose life we gave on 18 September. 304. — In the diocese of Saint-Claude, St. Simon, Count of Crépy-en-Valois, whose life we shall give on 5 October. 1082. — In Belgium, the Venerable Baldwin of Boecle, who founded about 1200, in the Waasland, an abbey in honour of the Blessed Virgin. This house, called Baudeloo, was transferred to Ghent in 1580. 13th c. — In the diocese of Amiens, St. FIRMIN, third bishop of that see and confessor. 4th c.

MARTYROLOGES DES ORDRES RELIGIEUX.

Martyrologies of the religious orders.

Martyrology of the Order of St. Benedict. — St. Gerard Sagredo, bishop and martyr, who is mentioned on the 24th of this month.[6] 1047.

Martyrology of the Camaldolese Order. — The same as among the Benedictines.

Martyrology of the Congregation of Vallombrosa. — The same as among the Benedictines.

Martyrology of the Cistercian Order. — The commemoration of the impression of the sacred Stigmata on the body of St. Francis, deacon and confessor, who is mentioned on the 17th of this month.[7] 1224.

Martyrology of the Order of Discalced Trinitarians. — In the town of La Guardia, in the diocese of Toledo, St. Christopher, innocent and martyr, an oblate of our Order, whom the Jews carried off at the age of three to make him endure the outrages and torments of the passion of Our Lord Jesus Christ; they crucified him and at last pierced his side with a lance.

Martyrology of the Order of Friars Preachers. — At Valencia, in Spain, St. Thomas of Villanova, bishop and confessor, remarkable for his ardent charity towards the poor.[8] 1555.

Martyrology of the Three Orders of St. Francis. — The feast of Our Lady of Mercy.[9] 17th c.

Martyrology of the Order of Friars Minor. — At San Severino, in the March of Ancona, the death of St. Pacificus, confessor, of the Order of Friars Minor of St. Francis of the Reformed of the Observance, illustrious for his great patience and his love of solitude, whom Pope Gregory XVI placed among the Saints.[10] 1721.

Martyrology of the Order of Hermits of St. Augustine. — The Octave of St. Thomas of Villanova, bishop and confessor of our Order.[11] 1555.

Martyrology of the Order of Servites of the Blessed Virgin Mary. — The same as among the Hermits of St. Augustine.

Martyrology of the Order of Capuchin Friars Minor of St. Francis. — The same as among the Friars Minor.

Martyrology of the Order of Discalced Carmelites. — St. Gerard, bishop and martyr, of the Order of Mount Carmel, who on the eve of this day won the palm of martyrdom.[12] 1047.

ADDITIONS FAITES D'APRÈS LES BOLLANDISTES ET AUTRES HAGIOGRAPHES.

Additions made from the Bollandists and other hagiographers.

At Constantinople, St. NILUS, former governor of that city, and afterwards a solitary. 450. — At Cork, a city of Ireland, chief town of the county of that name, St. Finbarr, called by some authors Barrus or Barrochus, first bishop of that see and confessor. He was born in Connaught and was brought up in the monastery of Lough Eirce, where all who wished to train themselves in learning and virtue went. The concourse there became so great that the wilderness in which it stood soon became extremely populous: hence the origin of the city of Cork. Finbarr trained three disciples: St. Colman, St. Nessan and St. Brendan. He was Bishop of Cork for seventeen years and died at Cloyne (County Cork). His body was carried to his cathedral: some years later it was raised from the ground to be enclosed in a silver shrine, and it was long kept in the church that still bears the Saint's name. 6th c. — At the village of Vanares, in the province of Álava, in Spain, St. Formerius, martyr, whose authentic Acts are lost. He has sometimes been wrongly confused with St. Firmin of Amiens: the mistake came first from the fact that these two Martyrs are honoured on the same day, and then from the fact that St. Firmin of Amiens long enjoyed a special cult in the kingdom of Navarre. He has also sometimes been confused, but with more likelihood, with St. Fraigne (Fermère, Frenir, Frevir), confessor, honoured in Angoumois on 30 August and at Bazas (*oppidum Vasatum*), in the Gironde, on 1 October. Probably 6th c. — At Arezzo (*Arretium*), an episcopal city of Tuscany, St. Antilia or Anthilla,

virgin and probably martyr, already named on the previous day. She was formerly honoured as a virgin at Civitavecchia and at Arezzo; the latter city celebrated her feast on 27 September, and an indulgence of a hundred and sixty days was attached to the recitation of her office. In the 16th and 17th centuries these two cities honoured her as a virgin on 24 September; today, at Arezzo and at Montepulciano, she is honoured as virgin and martyr. The latter city possesses her head; Arezzo glories in possessing her body: it rests near those of Sts. Donatus, Laurentinus and Pergentinus. The Acts in which St. Anthilla is given the title of daughter of the Emperor Theodosius are completely erroneous; the error came from confusing St. Donatus of Arezzo (7 August 361) with St. Donatus of Euroea, in Epirus (30 April 387). — At Naples (southern Italy) and at Barcelona (Catalonia), Blessed Mary of Cervellione, commonly called Mary *de Socos*, virgin, of the Order of Our Lady of Mercy for the Redemption of Captives, whose life we gave on 19 September. 1290.

Saint Firmin of Pamplona, First Bishop of Amiens and Martyr

Beginning of the 2nd century.

> *En fines patrios deserit, oppida Lustrat præco Dei, ruraque Gallica : Et quocumque volat, plurima civium Christo millia subjicit.*
>
> *Firmin quitte sa patrie ; il court, missionnaire intrépide, annoncer la bonne nouvelle dans les villes et les campagnes de notre France ; et, à sa voix éloquente et convaincue, des milliers de voix répondent : Nous croyons au Christ !*
>
> *Firmin leaves his native land; a fearless missionary, he hastens to proclaim the good news in the towns and countryside of our France; and at his eloquent and convinced voice thousands of voices answer: We believe in Christ!*
>
> *Hymn of St. Firmin.*

Firmin was born at Pamplona in the second half of the first century. His father, named Firmus, was by rank and birth the first of the senators of the city; his mother was called Eugenia. Both, though pagans, were remarkable above all their fellow citizens for the uprightness of their life and the gentleness of their character. They had three children, two sons and a daughter; Firmin, the eldest of the three, was destined to do great things here below and to found the Church of Amiens, of which he is the first and the greatest glory.

In the reign of the Emperor Claudius, in the year 48, some years after the Ascension of Our Lord, the blessed Peter, Prince of the Apostles, who had received the charge of feeding the sheep and the lambs, had sent into Gaul the bishop Saturninus, his disciple, who established his see at Toulouse. Helped by his two disciples Honestus and Papulus, he had the happiness of converting a great number of the inhabitants of that vast city. When he began to see the faith somewhat spread there, he charged St. Honestus with going to preach the worship of the true God in Spain. Honestus hastened to cross the Pyrenees and came to Pamplona, where he proclaimed the Gospel.

The senator Firmus and his family, having heard him, were surprised at this language, which was new to them. Touched by grace, they asked the holy missionary what religion he wished them to embrace, or what God he wished them to worship in place of their idols. The holy priest, after instructing them, hastened to return to Toulouse and inform his master of the happy dispositions in which he had left the senator Firmus and his family at Pamplona. At this news St. Saturninus left Toulouse and set out promptly with Honestus for the city of Pamplona. Their preaching, accompanied by striking miracles that came to confirm their words, brought the whole people to conversion; nearly forty thousand persons came to ask baptism of the holy Bishop of Toulouse. St. Firmin was baptized by Honestus, and his parents by St. Saturninus, who entrusted to his companion the care of continuing his work at Pamplona.

Firmus too became an ardent propagator of the faith; he strove by gentle exhortations to bring under the yoke of the Lord all those over whom he had any authority. In the course of time, ever Catholic in faith and deed,

he entrusted the young Firmin, who was already his son by baptism, to St. Honestus, so that he might instruct him in letters and religion; he wished the priest to whose zeal he and his family owed the grace of Christianity to be the master charged with forming the heart and mind of what he held dearest in the world, the first-born of his children. The choice of the master in some sort foretold the high destiny of this child of blessing. Under the direction of such a guide the young Christian could only advance with great strides on the road of perfection. Firmin made rapid progress in learning and in virtue. From day to day his conduct became more exemplary, while at the same time his love for the divine profession he wished to embrace increased; as the rest of his life showed in brilliant fashion, he gathered up carefully the teachings he drew from so pure a source, and he was a model of good works.

At the age of about seventeen he was already instructed in letters and in Catholic doctrine. He went assiduously to the church to sing, at each hour, the praises of God and of His Saints. At so early an age he gave himself wholly to study and prayer. He liked to remain a long time in the holy place and often went there to pray. Insatiable in fulfilling the divine precepts of religion, he never ceased to meditate on them. In short, everything in his conduct breathed such a fragrance of holiness that St. Honestus, who was beginning to grow old, was not long in appreciating the happy dispositions of his pupil. His fatherly heart rejoiced at all the hopes they made him conceive, and, wishing to make him advance still further on the steps of virtue, he soon began not only to take Firmin with him on his apostolic journeys, but even afterwards to have him preach in his place in the suburbs and villages. The young Christian thus served his apprenticeship in the apostolate. He was trying his strength for that great combat he was one day to wage against idolatry in his glorious evangelical conquest of Picardy. It was a joy to him to fulfil these holy duties; he acquitted himself of them with all the zeal of which he was capable and, despite his youth, with a devout and admirable gravity, strengthening the weak and spurring on to still better things those who were firm in their faith. When necessary he knew how to confound unbelievers by his reasoning; and at the same time his word, as gentle as it was persuasive, brought to Jesus Christ those who were still in the darkness of paganism.

Seven years had passed; Firmin had continued to advance thus in the science of religion and in the paths of wisdom. He had reached the summit of virtue. He went on helping his devout master in his laborious ministry, and even went to preach the Gospel in places that distance and old age prevented Honestus from visiting often, when, at the age of twenty-four, he was judged worthy to be raised to the priesthood. By then St. Saturninus was no more; his apostolic virtues had earned him the palm of martyrdom. Angered by the silence of the oracles, struck dumb by the presence of the Christian bishop, the inhabitants of Toulouse had tied him to a raging bull, which had torn him to pieces in the streets of his episcopal city. It was therefore St. Honoratus, his successor, who conferred priestly anointing on St. Firmin.

The priesthood was for our Saint only a new goad that came to rouse still more his zeal for the glory of God and the salvation of souls. His venerable master continued to have him preach in his place; he acquitted himself of this duty with admirable piety and constancy and was much liked by the people, who were very religious. And so St. Honestus, seeing with happiness the eminent holiness of his pupil, foresaw no doubt that he was destined to become one of the first labourers in the vineyard of the householder, and he sent his disciple, now his fellow worker, back to St. Honoratus so that he might lay hands on him and consecrate him bishop.

When Firmin reached the Bishop of Toulouse, the latter recognized that he had been predestined for the episcopate and chosen by the Lord to proclaim to the nations the word of life and the grace of salvation. He therefore gave him episcopal consecration so that he might go and preach the true God in the West. “Rejoice, my son,” he said to him publicly, “for you have deserved to be a chosen vessel for the Lord. Go, then, through the whole extent of the nations; you have received from God the grace and the office of the apostolate. Fear nothing, for the Lord is with you; but know that in all things you will have to suffer much for His name in order to reach the crown of glory.”

How Firmin's heart must have throbbed with joy as he listened to these fine and holy words! Henceforth his mission is assigned; he is going to leave the land that saw his birth; he will abandon his goods and his kindred to go and found a Church far from his native land, and to make Jesus Christ reign over a land where the devil reigned as absolute sovereign. In the course of this apostolate he will have to "suffer much for the name of the Lord"; far from discouraging him, this thought rouses and inflames him. He does not dread sufferings; on the contrary, he desires them; for to him who has not fought there is no victory. And then these struggles, as St. Honoratus has just told him, he will sustain against hell only "to reach the crown of glory".

After receiving the fullness of the priesthood, Firmin bade farewell to the Bishop of Toulouse and his priests and went back joyfully to St. Honestus, his master and, one may say, his foster father. He told him what had happened to him on his journey and repeated to him the words St. Honoratus had addressed to him, telling him how and in what manner he had charged him to proclaim the name of the Lord through the extent of the nations; which foretold an approaching separation of master and disciple, of father and son.

St. Firmin stayed some time at Pamplona before carrying out the mission St. Honoratus had given him for the regions of the West. This stay, though not prolonged, may to a certain extent justify the Navarrese tradition that regards St. Firmin as the first Bishop of Pamplona. But strictly speaking he was never anything but a regionary bishop, and the diocese of Amiens itself could not regard him as its first Pontiff if he had not shed his blood within the walls of that city and thereby received a kind of special consecration that the cult of posterity was to acclaim.

In meditating on the Holy Books, Firmin was struck above all by these passages: "Go, teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost." — "Take no thought how you shall speak, for it is not you that speak, but the Spirit of God that speaketh in you." — "How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace and of salvation!" He resolved to follow these counsels of Christian perfection, and at the age of thirty-one he left his country, his father, his brother, his sister and all his kin to come and preach the faith in Gaul.

Firmin, after crossing the Pyrenees, began his apostolate in that vast part of our present France then known by the name of Aquitaine, which was subdivided into First Aquitaine, Second

Aquitaine and Novempopulana. The part of Second Aquitaine that later bore the name of Guyenne was the first theatre of his exploits. Arriving at Aginnum (Agen), where paganism was then very flourishing, Firmin strengthened the people in the faith that St. Martial of Limoges had preached there some years before. He met there a Christian priest named Eustace or Eustage, who was evangelizing that country. Our Saint stayed some time with him to help him in his apostolic ministry, preaching to the people, proclaiming the true God to them and instructing them in the Catholic faith.

From Agen the Saint made his way towards First Aquitaine; he came to the Arverni, and, passing near the capital of that country, he converted to Christianity the greater part of the inhabitants of the region, which would lead us to suppose, with the Bollandists, that he made a fairly long stay in the neighbourhood of Augustonemetum, today Clermont-Ferrand. The Arverni at that time had already received seeds of faith; St. Austremonius, first Bishop of Clermont, had proclaimed the Gospel in that city from the 1st century.

St. Firmin's apostolate in that country was marked by the conversion of two personages who apparently held a fairly distinguished position there. The holy Bishop met two ardent followers of the idols named Arcadius and Romulus; he did not disdain to enter into controversy with them on the falseness of their gods, and after long discussions he ended by converting them. "They laid down their arms, embraced our religion and detested their own, thereby enrolling many people under the banners of the Cross." Thus already every step of Firmin's was a defeat for idolatry. From the moment he had crossed the mountains that separate France, his second country, from Navarre, error retreated and seemed to flee before him, as though the infernal powers feared to enter into combat with this formidable adversary, certain in advance of being vanquished.

The conversion of Arcadius and Romulus contributed much to that of a great number of their fellow countrymen. After these last conquests our Saint, leaving Aquitaine and making towards the West, went to the Andes, later Anjou, to continue his fruitful apostolate. He stopped at Juliomagus, the capital of the region (Angers). The bishop of that city, whom several manuscripts and old Breviaries of Amiens name Auxilius, happy to have such a fellow worker to labour in the Lord's vineyard, wished him to help him proclaim the Gospel to his still pagan flock. Our Saint therefore stayed fifteen months in that country, preaching, baptizing and confirming. God continued to pour His blessings on his labours, and when, wishing to carry the torch of the faith further and to face greater perils for Jesus Christ, Firmin parted from Auxilius and resumed his apostolic course, he had brought most of the inhabitants of Anjou to God.

Amid all these conquests Firmin had not yet "suffered much" for the name of the Lord. Yet he ardently desired those sufferings which, according to the prediction of his holy consecrator, were to bring him "to the crown of glory". Learning, then, that Valerius, governor of the city of the Bellovaci in Gaul, was violently persecuting the Christians, and that a great number of them were being tormented there with various tortures because of their religion, he resolved to make for that city in the hope of experiencing his share of the persecution. Leaving the country of the Andes, the missionary bishop therefore made his way to the north-east. Our Saint came into that part of Gallia Lugdunensis later called Neustria or Normandy, which before the Revolution formed the diocese of Lisieux. The neighbourhood of Pont-Audemer in particular was the theatre of his apostolic exploits, and local tradition says that St. Firmin was arrested by the pagans not far from that town.

Delivered from the captivity into which tradition tells us he was for a moment plunged, the Saint, whose zeal it had only roused, marched straight northwards, crossed the Seine and came to the Caleti (the Pays de Caux), to the place where the village of Sommesnil now stands (in the canton of Ourville, arrondissement of Yvetot, department of Seine-Inférieure), in the green valley crossed by the little river Durdent, a country that at that remote period was already the seat of a fairly advanced civilization. It was not far from the banks of this river that, some years before, St. Denis of Paris had probably baptized the first Christians, and that St. Mellon of Rouen was to come nearly two centuries later to proclaim the words of eternal life there too. We do not know how long our Saint spent evangelizing the Caleti or how long he stayed on the banks of the Durdent. At last, ever eager to suffer for the God he preached and moved by the account of the persecutions at Beauvais, he left these enchanting banks that his presence had sanctified, and, bidding farewell to that region, he crossed the borders of Gallia Lugdunensis and Second Belgica, entered the country of the Bellovaci at the beginning of the second century, and was soon in their capital. He came there not only to convert an idolatrous people but also to console and strengthen in the faith those who had already embraced Christianity. As soon as he had entered it he began his apostolate. His burning charity eagerly embraced the care of these poor sheep, abandoned and surrounded by enemies. He encouraged them, strengthened them and went wherever a soul might need him; taking no rest day or night, he ceaselessly proclaimed the Gospel. He spent himself entirely in strengthening the faithful amid the snares of persecution and in snatching new souls from the worship of the faithful.

It was impossible that the report of our Saint's preaching and of the conversions he was making should not reach the ears of the Roman authorities. Indeed the governor Valerius soon learned that a new Lucian had suddenly arrived to console and strengthen his desolate children. In vain had the companion of St. Denis and his two disciples been put to death; another bishop was coming to preach his doctrine, and this Christian sect, thought to be destroyed for ever, threatened to fill the whole city. Such news could not leave Valerius unmoved: he ordered Firmin to be arrested and brought before him. The Saint generously confessed Jesus Christ; his reward was not long in coming: he was violently beaten with rods, loaded with chains and thrown into prison in a fort near the city. In his dungeon Firmin had long to suffer from hunger and filth. The God of Martyrs, for love of whom he endured these torments with patience, did not abandon him, and a consoling

Angel came down from heaven to visit the holy prisoner, who even in chains never ceased to proclaim the Gospel to all who could approach him, and became dearer to them day by day.

A second time the missionary seemed on the point of crowning his fine life with martyrdom; but God, who was watching over him, did not allow him to leave so soon a battlefield where he still had other victories to win. Meanwhile Valerius died wretchedly, killed, it is said, in a popular riot, and Sergius succeeded him. This new prefect did not change the system adopted by his predecessor; he did not have the doors of Firmin's dungeon opened, and no one could foresee the outcome of his captivity, when suddenly Sergius was struck down by death in a manner that might seem a punishment from on high. Then the Christians, flying to the prison, hastened to restore the captive Bishop to freedom, and he was able to resume the exercise of his laborious apostolate.

Persecution had not cooled the Saint's zeal; his courage, on the contrary, had grown in chains, and, if that were possible, he came out of his dungeon still more devoted to the salvation of all. As soon as he had crossed its threshold he began his preaching again, confirming the faith of the Christians by miracles and converting new ones every day. He had a church built at Beauvais, which he dedicated to St. Stephen, the first of the Martyrs. It was built, they say, on the very spot where our Saint had been imprisoned. The persecution, calmed for a moment by the death of the governor Sergius, took on new strength. As new enemies were again seeking the holy Apostle to put him to death, the Christians forced him to flee by an underground passage; but he did not on that account cease to proclaim the faith to the Bellovaci, and, going through the towns and villages, he went on evangelizing.

During the fruitful apostolate whose chief circumstances we have just retraced, Firmin had not yet had the happiness he so desired of shedding all his blood for the faith he preached. He had indeed seen the immortal crown hanging above his head, but it had always drawn away from him. Further north there were nations that needed to be evangelized, and he could hope to find there at last the palm of martyrdom. He did not hesitate to go and let them hear the good news too. "Let us go further," he said to himself, "to the Ambiani, to the Morini, those last of men, whose cruelty will make my blood flow." Leaving the Bellovaci, therefore, among whom his passage was to leave an imperishable memory, our Saint made his way towards Samarobriva Ambianorum (today Amiens), where, after new evangelical conquests, he was at last to gather the palm of martyrdom he had so ardently desired.

It was in the first years of the second century. Trajan, surnamed the Most Good, was reigning over the Empire. Sebastian and Longalus were governors of Gallia Belgica. Still young in years but already very old in works, the illustrious Apostle entered the city that was to be his episcopal see, and the bishopric of Amiens was founded. Seventeen centuries have passed since that ever memorable day, and the work of St. Firmin still subsists. The Roman Empire, then at the height of its glory, has disappeared; the ancient French monarchy, less ancient, however, than Firmin's bishopric, has sunk into the abyss of 1793; kingdoms and republics have succeeded one another on our soil, and the bishopric of Amiens still stands: like the Church, which, unchangeable on this earth where all passes, alone does not pass, because she is not of this world.

It was therefore on the tenth of the month of October that St. Firmin entered the city of Amiens, which he was to beget to Jesus Christ; it was thus, says an old Breviary, that he reached it, preaching the Gospel all the way from his departure from Pamplona, to receive the palm of martyrdom there. He entered it, tradition says, by the gate of Beauvais, that is, by the gate of Longue-Maisière, situated at the place Périgord, and was received there with great joy by Faustinian, one of the first senators of the city. The holy Bishop received Faustinian among the catechumens after baptizing his whole family, from which there was to come, about two centuries later, a child who received in baptism the name of Firmin in memory of the Apostle of his native city, was one of his successors, and now shares his glory in heaven.[1] An old tradition holds that on entering this city Firmin stopped at the place where the place Saint-Martin now is, and that there, dominating as it were the Gallic town of Samarobriva that spread out at his feet, having in view on his left the

Château-Fort in which he was to end his life by the sword, and the sacred grove of the rue des Orfèvres, not far from the prison where, many years later, St. Quentin, the second apostle of Amiens, was to be shut up, and defying the temple of Jupiter, which may be believed to have stood where the basilica of Notre-Dame now rises, he proclaimed the God of the Christians for the first time to the astonished Ambiani.

As soon as Firmin had entered the city of Amiens he began his preaching there. Far from wishing to rest from the fatigues of his laborious apostolate, he sought new ones by hastening to teach all its inhabitants the saving doctrine of Christianity. Without for a single moment thinking of escaping a new persecution by silence and inaction, he proclaimed the Gospel openly, showing always and everywhere that intrepid courage and that untiring zeal of which he had already given so many proofs. The people of Amiens came in crowds to hear this stranger who preached so astonishing a doctrine. Divine grace was not long in touching their hearts, and soon a great number of conversions came to reward the apostolic labours of the holy missionary. Not only did a great part of the people ask for baptism, but the leading men of the city also wished to embrace Firmin's faith. The Acts of his life have preserved for us the names of the senator Ausentius Hilarius with all his household; of Attilia, of an illustrious Roman family, widow of Agrippinus, with her children, her men-servants and her maid-servants, who received baptism on the same day from the hands of the great Bishop; and, his Acts add, "nearly three thousand persons of both sexes were baptized on three consecutive days." At about the same time the senator Faustinian, whom St. Firmin had received among the catechumens on his arrival at Amiens, was admitted to baptism, to the great joy of the Christians.

Firmin supported his preaching by numerous miracles. Castus, son of a notable inhabitant of Amiens named Andrew, had lost an eye; the holy Bishop healed him and restored his sight. Two men living near the Clypean gate were sick with leprosy; he healed them. People suffering from fever or other illnesses came to him; he invoked over them the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost, and health returned to them. By his prayers he drove out devils, made the paralysed walk, gave sight to the blind and speech to the dumb. In short, his Acts add, the Lord worked through him a countless number of other wonders. "They that believe," says Our Lord Jesus Christ, "shall cast out devils in My name; they shall speak with new tongues; they shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay their hands upon the sick, and they shall recover." The marvels St. Firmin performed were the fulfilment of these promises.

However numerous the conversions Firmin made within the walls of the city of Amiens, they did not succeed in satisfying the burning zeal that set the holy Bishop's heart on fire. Seeing these privileged souls embrace the Christian faith with love, he thought of those of the other inhabitants of the Ambianum, still wrapped in the darkness of paganism like a corpse in its shroud. He did not wish, therefore, to remain for ever shut up within the walls of Samarobriva, and, leaving it only for a time, he went to proclaim Jesus Christ to the country people as well. Tradition, which has preserved for us the memory of this part of his apostolate, points to several places in the diocese of Amiens that witnessed his preaching: such are Picquigny, Vignacourt and the neighbourhood of Boves. Picquigny, a market town on the Somme three leagues from Amiens, goes back to a fairly remote antiquity. The ruins of the old castle of the vidames of Amiens may be seen there, its first construction dating from the eleventh or twelfth century. It is the tradition at Picquigny that St. Firmin preached the faith there. There may still be seen, at the entrance of the rue des Chanoines, on the left, a small stone monument placed on the spot where the holy Apostle proclaimed the word of God.

Vignacourt is one of the largest villages in France, in the canton of Picquigny and two leagues north-east of it; it has nearly four thousand inhabitants.

No doubt in the course of his evangelical journeys Firmin often came back to Amiens; then, after proclaiming the truths of Christianity for a while longer to his attentive hearers, he went back to the inhabitants of the countryside, with whom his task must have been harder. The people of the towns, whom the conquerors had forced to abjure druidism and embrace Græco-Roman polytheism, must have held less

firmly, and did in fact hold less firmly, to their religious beliefs. It was not the same in the countryside, where druidism, banished from the cities, had dug itself in with the energy of despair, and where we shall still find it, more or less hidden and disfigured, for several centuries. For, violently shaken in the 4th century by St. Firmin the Confessor, it disappeared entirely only about the 6th, thanks to the monks, whose preaching did much to efface its last traces from the hearts of the inhabitants of the Picard villages and hamlets.

Our Saint did not confine himself to evangelizing only the surroundings of his episcopal city. He went further and carried the torch of the faith to the Morini. The extent of the country of the Morini was considerable. According to the most acceptable opinion, it comprised Ponthieu and the old and immense diocese of Thérouanne, which, after the destruction of that city by Charles V in 1553, formed those of Boulogne, Saint-Omer and Ypres. The bounds of the Morinie were thus: to the north, the German Ocean; to the east, the Menapii; to the south, the Atrebates and the Ambiani; to the west, the British Sea. Old local traditions make him evangelize Boulogne-sur-Mer, Thérouanne, Montreuil and part of Ponthieu.

Back at Amiens, his city dear above all others, Firmin continued to proclaim the God of the Christians there. When he made the word of life heard by the people of Amiens, says an old tradition reported by the old Breviaries, he often repeated: “My little children, know that God the Father, Creator of all things, has sent me to you to purify this city from the worship of idols, and to preach to you Jesus Christ, and Jesus Christ crucified according to the weakness of the flesh, living by the power of God.” This divine seed fell on well-prepared ground, which made it bear fruit a hundredfold and filled the heart of the fervent missionary with sweet joy. The Christian faith was establishing itself in his country, and was putting down there those strong and deep roots that seventeen centuries have only strengthened, that have survived every revolution and every upheaval, and that still make it shine in our day with an eternal youth. These marvels were taking place to the great despair of the idolatrous priests, who saw the Ambiani deserting their gods day by day for Firmin’s religion, to the point that in the end not a single worshipper presented himself in the temples of Jupiter and Mercury. The oracles of the false gods, struck dumb by the presence of St. Saturninus at Toulouse, had by their silence caused the death of that holy apostle of Gaul; the desertion of their temples at Amiens was to bring about that of St. Firmin. Our Saint was not content with proclaiming Jesus Christ only to the inhabitants of the capital of the Ambiani; he went through a great part, if not the whole, of their territory, evangelizing it. To the places we have already mentioned as designated by tradition as witnesses of his apostolate, we shall add a height to be seen near Boves, between the road from Amiens to Péronne and that from Amiens to Montdidier, which is called in the country the Mont d’Évangile, because, says the local tradition, St. Firmin from the top of this height proclaimed the Gospel to the people of the surrounding country, who had flocked to hear this marvellous stranger. The same tradition adds that St. Firmin came several times from Amiens to proclaim Jesus Christ in this place.

Meanwhile the temples of the idols of Samarobriva remained empty, and the pagans themselves were forced to acknowledge the eloquence of our great Apostle. The report of his preaching and of the numerous conversions he was making at last reached the ears of the governors of the province, Longulus and Sebastian, who were then at Trier, the metropolis of First Belgica. They at once hastened to come to Amiens and soon arrived there. It was in the course of the month of September. As soon as they entered the city they ordered all the inhabitants to assemble within three days at the praetorium called Cimilien. The storm was gathering; soon it was going to burst on Firmin’s head. When the three days had passed, the whole people of the Ambiani, the troops and the tribunes went to the praetorium. The pagan priests had not failed to be there either; they saw at last the coming of the moment to rid themselves of a man whom they regarded as a rival who had long annoyed them and as a formidable adversary of their gods. From the account that follows, one may even suppose that they had brought about this convocation.

When all were assembled, the governors ordered the members of the city council and the priests of the temples to come forward, and when they were before them, Sebastian harangued the crowd in these terms:

“The most sacred emperors have decreed that the honour and worship of the gods be preserved to them in all the lands of the world, by all peoples and all nations. They wish incense to be offered on their altars and the gods to be venerated according to the ancient customs of the princes. If anyone, then, attempts to go against the decrees of the most sacred emperors or to bring the least opposition to them, let him be tormented with various tortures and, according to the decrees of the senators and princes of the Roman Republic, let him suffer capital punishment.” When Sebastian had stopped speaking, Auxilius, a curial and priest of the temples of Jupiter and Mercury, took the floor to answer him. “There is here,” he said, “a Pontiff of the Christians who not only turns the city of Amiens away from the worship and religion of the gods, but who seems to be separating the whole universe and the whole Roman Empire from the worship of the immortal gods.” — “Who is it,” Sebastian replied in astonishment, “who is it that dares commit so great a crime and such a profanation?” — “His name is Firmin,” answered the pagan priest; “he is a Spaniard, very skilful, very eloquent and of great shrewdness. He preaches and teaches the people that there is no other God and no other power in heaven and on earth than the God of the Christians, Jesus Christ, whom he calls of Nazareth. He says He is almighty above all the gods; as for our gods, he calls them devils and denounces them openly to all as idols and empty images, deaf, dumb and senseless. He turns the people away from their religion to such a degree that no one comes any longer to offer incense or to pray in the venerable temples of Jupiter and Mercury, and he is seducing the hearts of all the senators in favour of the Christian sect. If you do not put him to death and make him suffer various torments as an example to others, great danger will arise from it for the Republic, and he will strive to overturn the stability of the Empire to its very foundations. But listen to our counsel, most excellent governor: to save the Republic and to rescue our gods and goddesses from so great a peril, order him to be brought before your tribunal in the presence of all.”

The speech, or rather the indictment, of Auxilius produced on Sebastian the effect the pagan priest expected. “The most excellent governor”, wishing to save the gods and goddesses from the great peril that threatened them, ordered his soldiers to seize Firmin and bring him to him two days later at the games of the theatre near the Clypean gate. Auxilius triumphs; the hour of martyrdom is about to strike for the first Bishop of Amiens; a few more days, and his eloquent word will no longer proclaim the vanity of the gods of the empire and the greatness of the God of the Christians.

Firmin soon learned of the decree issued against him. Without fearing death and without thinking of escaping by flight the torments with which he was threatened, he went of his own accord to present himself to the judges. Twice already he has been close to dying for his God; today he hopes that his pilgrimage here below will soon be ended. When he was in the praetorium, he was not afraid to proclaim there the almighty power of Jesus Christ and the obligation of overthrowing the sanctuaries of the idols.

Sebastian then put him through an interrogation: “Are you not that evildoer who overthrows the sacred temples of the gods and turns the people away from the religion of the most sacred emperors?” The Apostle answered him with assurance: “If you wish to know my name, I am called Firmin; born in Spain, I am a citizen of Pamplona and come of a senatorial family. I belong to the Christian faith and am invested with the episcopal dignity. I have received the mission of preaching the gospel of the Son of God, so that the nations may learn that there is no other God in heaven and on earth than He who made all things out of nothing and by whom all things subsist. He holds life and death in His hands, and nothing escapes His power. In heaven, on earth and in hell every knee bends before Him. Surrounded by the Angels and the Virtues of heaven, He brings kingdoms low and breaks the sceptres of kings. While times and generations pass before His eternity, He remains ever unchangeable in the face of the changing ages. But the gods you worship under the influence of the devil are only empty images, deaf, dumb and senseless, which deceive their victims and hurl them into hell. I come to declare to you that these idols are the work of the devil: deny them, then, if you do not wish to fall into the eternal abysses where the infernal power groans.”

At these words Sebastian, carried away by anger, uttered an exclamation that found a quick echo in the audience. Then he cried out: “In the name of the gods and goddesses, in the name of their invincible authority, I adjure you, Firmin, to renounce your folly and submit to the religion of your fathers; sacrifice at once to the gods and goddesses if you do not wish to incur torments of every kind and the torture of an ignominious death.” Far from letting himself be intimidated by these threats, St. Firmin answered: “I do not dread your torments: what grieves me at this moment is the folly that makes you believe that a servant of God can let himself be shaken by a guilty fear. Pile up torments; God will proportion His help to them, so as to obtain for me at the end of the combat the crown of imperishable glory. I do not wish to escape the sufferings with which you threaten me by sacrificing the eternity of happiness that the Son of God keeps for me in His kingdom. But you will be condemned to the everlasting flames of hell because of the cruelties you practise against the servants of God.”

The governor, as well as the whole assembly, was struck by Firmin’s constancy and the firmness of his answers. The people of Amiens, who remembered his striking wonders, wished to set him free. And so Sebastian did not dare to offend popular feeling by ordering public tortures that might have provoked disturbances. He pretended to leave Firmin at liberty, but he ordered his soldiers to arrest him shortly, take him to prison, cut off his head secretly in his dungeon during the night, and take care to hide his body after cutting it to pieces, for fear that the Christians might pay it a cult of veneration.

The holy bishop was therefore able to continue his preaching for some time longer to strengthen the new converts in the faith; but the governor’s soldiers, faithful to the orders they had received, carried them out in all their rigour by arresting St. Firmin; they took him to the prison of the castle, which was later known by the name of Castillon. They trembled with rage at hearing their prisoner ceaselessly celebrating the praises of Jesus Christ along the road; and so they hastened to shut him up in a dark dungeon, whose door they sealed and before which they posted guards.

When Samarobriva was buried in the shades of night, soldiers armed with swords went to the prison to carry out Sebastian’s orders. As soon as the holy bishop saw them he guessed his fate, and, shedding tears of joy, he cried out: “I give Thee thanks, O Saviour, rewarder of all good things, that Thou deignest to join me to the company of Thine elect. O merciful and most clement King, watch over those whom Thou hast called to Thee by my voice, and deign to hear all who shall call upon Thee in my name.” When this prayer was ended, a soldier drew his sword from its sheath and cut off the apostle’s head.

Thus died the first bishop of ancient Samarobriva, on the twenty-fifth day of the month of September, in the first years of the second century, in the reign of Trajan. St. Firmin’s blood, shed on the damp ground of his underground prison, was the first blood shed by paganism in the capital of the Ambiani. Had it been given to the executioner who had just made it flow to raise his eyes above this world, he could have seen it rise like a sweet incense to the foot of the throne of the All-Merciful who reigns in heaven, to fall again afterwards in a gentle dew of grace and sanctification on the still arid and dried-up hearts of those inhabitants of Samarobriva whom the zeal and devotion of the holy apostle had not been able to bring to the knowledge of the faith. God accepted the holocaust and blessed the martyr’s prayer, and the city, consecrated by the blood of its first bishop, became later one of the most Christian cities of most Christian France.

St. Firmin is represented in a bishop’s dress, but rarely holding his head in his hands. He is sometimes given as attribute the sword that consummated his martyrdom. Only at the portal of Saint-Riquier do we see two unicorns at his feet: this is what is said to have led to the adoption of these animals as supporters of the arms of the city of Amiens. The unicorn is known to be the emblem of purity, according to a tradition that perhaps has its origin in the ancient religion of the Persians.

One of the portals of the cathedral of Amiens (to the north of the façade) is dedicated to St. Firmin. His statue dominates the pier of the doorway. The figure the Saint tramples underfoot has the Roman type and dress; we

believe that one should recognize in it Sebastian Valerius rather than the emblem of idolatry. Below, one sees on one side the beheading of St. Firmin in his prison, and on the other a scene that perhaps represents Sebastian plotting the missionary's ruin. Four other subjects, set in trefoiled arcades, show details of the finding of the relics. The apostle's statue has as its escort fourteen holy personages, among whom one recognizes St. Gentian, St. Salvius, St. Domitius, St. Honoratus, St. Ulphia, St. Fuscian, St. Victoricus and St. Firmin the Confessor. In the tympanum the two upper tiers of sculpture, composed of sixty-eight figures, represent the Finding of the body of St. Firmin and the triumphal procession of his relics.

The choir screens, on the Epistle side, are devoted to glorifying the founder of the Church of Amiens. We shall confine ourselves here to indicating simply the subjects of the medallions.

The thirteen medallions, containing in all a hundred and seven figures, represent the following details: 1. the baptism of St. Firmin; 2. his education by St. Honestus; 3. St. Saturninus baptizes St. Firmin's father; 4. St. Firmin's preaching; 5. he is consecrated by St. Honoratus; 6. the holy bishop converts Arcadius and Romulus; 7. he evangelizes Angers; 8. he has a church built at Beauvais to St. Stephen; 9. he heals the sick; 10. the healing of two lepers; 11. Castus sees with an eye he had lost; 12. the healing of a sick man; 13. possessed persons delivered.

The martyrdom of St. Firmin is sculpted in the round in the cloister of the cathedral of Amiens that leads to the great sacristy. His statue is seen on the north tower; on the left flank, between two windows; at the base of the gilded steeple; in the chapel of St. John the Baptist (the work of Poultier, 1710) and in that of St. Firmin (the work of Vimeu). At Notre-Dame of Amiens there is a fine painting by M. Lécurieux representing St. Firmin baptizing the first Christians.

A manuscript book of hours of the 15th century, kept in the Library of Boulogne-sur-Mer, shows St. Firmin holding a burning heart in his right hand. This is an attribute of which we know no other example. Stained-glass windows of the 15th century at Saint-Firmin-en-Castillon represented the story of our Apostle. He is seen holding his head in his hands in a window of the 13th century in the cathedral of Amiens.

The breviary of Fr. Faure (1667) is adorned with an engraving by Sanson representing St. Firmin kneeling in his prison. An executioner, lit by his assistant, is preparing to cut off his head. Three spectators watch this scene from behind a barred window. — In the missal of Fr. Faure, St. Firmin beheaded, an engraving by Noblin. — At the head of this missal and of that of M. de La Motte, another engraving by Noblin, in which St. Firmin is beside St. John the Baptist. M. Guénebaud (*Iconographie des Saints*) thus describes a woodcut after Burgkmair for the series of the Saints of the family of Maximilian of Austria: "St. Firmin standing, holding a crozier and a book; on the ground before him a bishop's severed head, near which is a sword; various instruments of torture are fastened to a column."

At the bishop's house in Amiens a tapestry (1612) is kept, representing St. Firmin's entry into Amiens; and at the Poor Clares' a hanging of the same period showing the Beheading. St. Firmin appears on some old seals of the bishops of Amiens. On that of Jean de la Grange he is beside the Virgin holding the child Jesus.

CULTE ET RELIQUES.

Cult and relics.

The body of the glorious Martyr having been left in the prison, the senator Faustinian succeeded in carrying it away secretly during the night and buried it in his family tomb, situated near his farm of Abladène, on the present site of the church of Saint-Acheul. A new sepulchre, in which no one had yet been laid, received the Martyr's remains, wrapped in spices and precious stuffs. Numerous miracles took place at this tomb, which was later to shelter a church built by St. Firmin the Confessor.

His cult soon spread into the neighbouring dioceses and into some provinces even far from ours, and afterwards penetrated into Spain and England. Under the episcopate of St. Salvius, the baron of Picquigny wished to hold of the arm of St. Firmin. Pope Alexander III in 1164 granted an indulgence of forty days to the faithful who should visit the holy Martyr's tomb during the octave of his feast. The same favour was granted in 1248 by Innocent IV for the octave of the Finding. Renaud of Amiens, lord of Vignacourt, founded in that place in 1216 a chapter of

St. Firmin the Martyr, which in the 18th century numbered twelve canons, one of whom was parish priest of the parish.

Theobald of Amiens, Archbishop of Rouen, who died in 1229, founded the feast of St. Firmin in his cathedral and obtained that the Church of Amiens should celebrate, for its part, the feast of St. Romanus, Bishop of Rouen. The Church of Amiens still celebrates the feast of the latter pontiff; but the Church of Rouen, at the time of the introduction of the Roman liturgy, gave up the feast of St. Firmin, although a cult of more than three centuries authorized it to keep its ancient usage.

In 1490 a small chapel was dedicated to St. Firmin under an arch of the rood screen of the cathedral. An archdeacon of Notre-Dame of Paris, a native of Amiens, Jean de Courcelles, founded in the 15th century, in that metropolitan church, an annual procession on the day of St. Firmin. It was at the same period that a chapel of Notre-Dame at Caudebec was dedicated to our bishop: it has since been placed under the patronage of St. Peter.

The general procession on St. Firmin's day was instituted on 14 September 1598; from the year before, the election of the members of the town council took place on 24 September. On the next day two of the municipal magistrates going out of office carried St. Firmin's shrine in the procession.

The Church of Amiens formerly celebrated five special feasts in honour of its founder: 1. the Finding and Translation of his relics, on 13 January; 2. his Beheading, on 25 September; 3. the octave of that feast, on 2 October; 4. St. Firmin's Entry into Amiens, on 10 October; 5. the feast of the Reposition of his relics in a golden shrine, on 16 October.

The feast of the Finding, transferred from 13 to 14 January by M. de la Motte because of its coinciding with the octave of the Epiphany, has been kept on the latter date in the liturgy of Amiens, and is celebrated very solemnly in the church of Notre-Dame at Saint-Acheul. Formerly several neighbouring dioceses kept this Finding on different dates. The Beheading of St. Firmin has always been celebrated everywhere on 25 September, except in Spain, where it is transferred to 7 July.

In 1747 a pastoral letter of M. de la Motte kept as a holiday of obligation in honour of St. Firmin only that of 25 September. After the concordat of 1801 this solemnity was transferred to the nearest Sunday, and the fast of the vigil was abolished. The present Mass of the Beheading, like that of the Finding, has been composed from old liturgical monuments of the diocese: the fine preface of the missal of 1752 has been kept in it.

The collegiate church of Saint-Quentin celebrated on 19 May the special feast of the Coming of the relics of St. Firmin, St. Victoricus, St. Fuscian, etc., which it had possessed since the 9th century. We find one or more feasts of St. Firmin in the Propers of the abbeys of the diocese of Amiens, in the present breviaries of Spain, in those of all the houses of Prémontré, and in the old breviaries or present Propers of Amiens, Agen, Arras, Boulogne, Bourges, Bayeux, Beauvais, Cambrai, Châlons-sur-Marne, Évreux, Laon, Le Puy, Lisieux, Meaux, Nancy, Noyon, Orléans, Pamiers, Paris, Reims, Rouen, Saint-Omer, Senlis, Sens, Thérouanne, Troyes, Toulouse, Tulle and Verdun. Since the introduction of the Roman liturgy the office of St. Firmin has disappeared from some of the dioceses we have just named, which had borrowed it from the breviary of Paris in the course of the 18th century.

The cult of the holy pontiff was introduced by the Navarrese into the Spanish possessions of America.

Pilgrimages are made in honour of St. Firmin: to Saint-Acheul-lès-Amiens, whose crypt is widowed of his tomb; to Tully (Somme), to be preserved from boils; to Saint-Pierre-du-Chastel (Eure), against the prickings called *fourmilière*; to Morbecque (Nord), where people go to drink the water of St. Firmin's well to be preserved from fever, cramps and rheumatism; to Cormeilles (Eure), to make children walk; to Saint-Firmin-sur-Loire (Loiret), for pains in general; in various churches of Normandy, against the shakes; to Saint-Martin-Saint-Firmin (Eure); to Saint-Firmin-des-Bois (Loiret); to the chapel of Saint-Firmin at Pamplona, etc. In the Middle Ages he was invoked especially for erysipelas and scurvy.

At Sommesnil and at Greuville (Seine-Inférieure) there is still today a confraternity of St. Firmin. Similar congregations once existed at Madrid and at Saragossa.

St. Firmin is the patron of Navarre and of the dioceses of Amiens and Pamplona, and secondary patron of Notre-Dame of Amiens, of Saint-Germain of Amiens and of the diocese of Arras. Thirteen churches are dedicated to him in the diocese of Amiens: those of Crocquoison, Crouy, Éramecourt, the faubourg of Hem at Amiens, Saint-Firmin (canton of Rue), Hocquincourt, Millancourt, Sourdon, Thieulloy-la-Ville, Tully, Vaux-en-Amiénois and Vignacourt. The village of La Neuville-lez-Amiens celebrates his feast on 14 January. Nine in the diocese of Arras: Bouin, Brévillers, La Calotterie, Fontaine-l'Étalon, Henneveux, Marles, Nempont-Saint-Firmin, Reclinghem, Sempy; six in that of Beauvais: Doméliers, Saint-Firmin, Hainvillers, Le Mesnil-Saint-Firmin, Le Saulchois, La Vacquerie; four in that of Rouen: Esteville, Greuville, Sommery, Sommesnil; three in that of Orléans: Saint-Firmin-sur-Loire, Saint-Firmin-des-Bois, Saint-Firmin-des-Vignes; two in that of Blois: Concriers, Saint-Firmin-des-Prés; one in each of the dioceses of Cambrai, Gap, Nancy, Nevers and Séez: Morbecque (Nord), Saint-Firmin en Valgaudemar (Hautes-Alpes), Saint-Firmin (Meurthe), Saint-Firmin de Bussy (Nièvre), Normandel (Orne); one in England: North Crowley, in Buckshire; and a certain number in Spain.

The company of firemen of Amiens has a solemn Mass sung in the cathedral on St. Firmin's day, its patronal feast. At Amiens and at Abbeville the guilds of coopers, of wine merchants and of wine porters had also chosen him as patron. The coopers of Abbeville alone have kept up this patronage.

Under his patronage there were formerly two parish churches of Amiens, now destroyed; a collegiate church of Montreuil; the church of the faubourg of Thoule at Roye, later dedicated to St. Medard; the church of the Bons-Enfants, in the rue Saint-Victor at Paris; a hospital of Amiens, which occupied part of the present rue des Écoles-Chrétiennes, etc. The constitutional parish set up in the church of the Cordeliers of Amiens (now Saint-Remi) was for some time placed under the patronage of St. Firmin.

The students of the Picard nation at the universities of Orléans and Paris had chosen the first Bishop of Amiens as their patron. The university statutes of June 1331 prescribe that the students of the diocese of Amiens, on entering the faculty of Paris, must bind themselves by oath to pay their share of the religious feast of 25 September. This solemnity took place in the 17th century in the chapel of the college of Cardinal Lemoine. At Orléans this feast was celebrated in the parish of Saint-Pierre-le-Puellier on 13 January.

It would take too long to list the chapels that were dedicated to St. Firmin; let us note only those that were consecrated to him at Saint-Éloi of Dieppe, in the abbey church of Saint-Denis and in the leper house of Saint-Riquier, and those that still keep his name today, at Saint-Vulfran of Abbeville and in the cathedrals of Amiens, Rouen and Pamplona.

A certain number of places bear the name of Saint-Firmin. Besides those we have already named, we shall mention as being under this patronage an annexe of Le Crotoy, an annexe of Eppeville, a faubourg of La Fère, a river that rises north of Roye, a street of that town, a square in Amiens and one of the towers of Saint-Vulfran of Abbeville.

The name of St. Firmin is written in old litanies of the Middle Ages; in martyrologies of Rome, Amiens and Cologne; in those of Florus, of St. Jerome, of Rabanus Maurus, of Usuard, of Wandelbert, etc.

At the beginning of the 7th century the site of St. Firmin's tomb was unknown. A miraculous ray pointed it out to St. Salvius while he was celebrating the holy mysteries in the church of Notre-Dame des Martyrs; the body, when brought to light, gave off a sweet fragrance that spread even into the neighbouring dioceses; these relics were afterwards carried to the new church dedicated to St. Peter and St. Paul and laid, at the east end of the building, in a crypt that was decorated with admirable art in honour of St. Firmin. The same bishop afterwards adorned the shrine splendidly with gold and pearls. This translation took place on 13 January.

Odulphus, treasurer of Saint-Riquier, obtained in 864 from Hilmerad, Bishop of Amiens, a fragment of the garment St. Firmin was wearing when he was martyred. In 860 Otger, Bishop of Amiens, offered some relics of the holy bishop to the collegiate church of Saint-Quentin, of which he had been a canon. In the first half of the 11th century Alix of Crépy, wife of Theobald III, obtained from her cousin Fulk, Bishop of Amiens, a particle of St. Firmin's arm, which she laid in the underground church at Provins that was dedicated to him. The ruins of this church can still be seen, as well as those of the church that stood above it, which was dedicated to St. Peter. At about the same time a rib of the Saint was given to the collegiate church of Saint-Martin at Picquigny. St. Geoffrey, whose devotion to the holy Martyr was great, had a new and extremely rich shrine made, into which the relics of St. Firmin were transferred about 1110.

A violent fire had consumed part of the city of Amiens on 3 August 1137. To rebuild the churches it was resolved to collect alms throughout the diocese; and, to stir up the devout generosity of the faithful, it was decided to carry St. Firmin's shrine to various places. On the appointed day the inhabitants of the city went to the cathedral to be present at the departure of the relics, which most of them watched with deep sorrow; the faithful addressed their complaints simply to the shrine, borne on the shoulders of the priests, and begged the Saint not to abandon them. The procession went on its way; but when it reached the gate of the Grand-Pont, which stood in the chaussée Saint-Pierre, the shrine became immovable, and those who were carrying it could not struggle against the supernatural force that stopped them. The relics were carried back triumphantly to their sanctuary amid outbursts of popular joy, which on this occasion gave its Patron the surname of *the Lover*.

About 1180 offerings began to be collected for the making of a new shrine. It was finished on 16 October 1204, when the translation took place. This precious monument in pure gold had the shape of a house and offered twelve enamelled panels relating to the life of St. Firmin.

In 1185 or 1186 Peter Paris, Bishop of Pamplona, obtained from Thibaut d'Heilly a part of St. Firmin's head, which is still venerated today in the church of San Lorenzo.

At an unknown time, but before the 14th century, an arm had been detached from St. Firmin's body, with which, on the feasts of the Finding and of the Martyrdom of the holy Apostle, the Bishop of Amiens gave the blessing. The head had also been set apart in a special reliquary, which two aldermen carried in processions. As for the great shrine, it was carried by knights inside the cathedral, and then in the streets by six burgesses. This custom having fallen into disuse, the town council revived it as early as the year 1465, urging on the Chapter the antiquity of this privilege.

It was not only on the feasts of St. Firmin and on the solemnity of the Ascension that these processions took place: it was also in times of drought. It is related that in 1478, at the moment when the shrine reached the church of Saint-Acheul, an abundant rain came to answer every prayer and removed all fear of famine.

On the eve of the processions of St. Firmin the bishop's officers summoned the vassals of the bishopric to keep guard during the night near the exposed shrine. The officers were to keep watch outside the cathedral.

St. Firmin's shrine was frequently enriched by gifts of jewels and precious stones, which are mentioned in the various inventories of the treasury of Notre-Dame. Some of these jewels were stolen in 1573. Similar thefts were repeated in the course of the 16th century.

In 1588 some jewels of the head of St. John the Baptist were sold to have a silver bust made, in which the head of St. Firmin was placed, kept until then in a sort of cup. This new reliquary was carried in procession on 27 February 1590 to ask for the success of the Catholic army against the Huguenots.

A relic of St. Firmin, given by the Bishop of Amiens to the church of Haisnes, near La Bassée (Nord), was in great veneration in that region.

When St. Firmin's shrine was sent to the Mint (1793), M. Lecouvé, mayor of Amiens, gathered up the relics, consisting of nine bones: the right shoulder blade, the two incomplete hip bones, the two ulnas, a radius, the right femur and the two tibias, and handed them over to M. Lejeune, the constitutional parish priest of Notre-Dame. This cleric restored his precious charge in 1802. These relics, verified in 1816 and 1829, were solemnly transferred together with other bones of Saints on 14 January 1851 into a silver shrine of the 13th century, which an anonymous donor had given to Mgr de Salinis. On 19 January 1851 a small relic of St. Firmin was solemnly transferred to the church of Saint-Germain, of which the first Bishop of Amiens is secondary patron, and laid in the shrine of St. Germanus the Scot.

More or less important relics of the holy bishop have also been preserved: at Amiens, in the churches of Saint-Jacques (1825), Saint-Leu, Saint-Firmin (1861) and Saint-Martin; at the Hôtel-Dieu; in the convents of the Carmelites, of l'Espérance, of Louvencourt, of the Sacred Heart, of the Ursulines and of the Visitation; in the rest of the diocese, at the Saint-Sépulcre of Abbeville, at Corbie, at Fay (Chaulnes), at Longpré-les-Corps-Saints, at Mailly, at Mont-Saint-Quentin, Picquigny, Vignacourt, etc.; in the neighbouring dioceses, at the cathedral and at Saint-Nicolas of Arras, at Saint-Firmin near Chantilly, at Sommesnil and at Saint-Wandrille (Seine-Inférieure), at Saint-Martin of Laon, etc.; at Pamplona (the cathedral, San Lorenzo and the church of San Fermín de Aldapa).

There was formerly kept in the church of Saint-Jean at Picquigny a rib of St. Firmin with bones of St. Varlois and St. Luxor, in a shrine of the 11th century. The inventory of the cathedral of Noyon (1426) mentions "cloths of St. Firmin in a silver casket". Other old inventories record relics of him at the cathedral of Laon (1523); at the collegiate churches of Saint-Vulfran and Saint-Quentin; at the abbeys of Saint-Acheul, Saint-Jean of Amiens, Saint-Riquier, Saint-Vaast of Arras and Saint-Remi of Reims; in the convents of the Celestines of Amiens and the Carthusians of Abbeville, etc.

We have extracted this biography from the *Histoire de saint Firmin* by M. Charles Salmon and from the *Hagiographie du diocèse d'Amiens* by the Abbé Corblet.

SAINT FIRMIN, THIRD BISHOP OF AMIENS AND CONFESSOR

4th century.

> *Renes servans et cor mundum, Vicit carnem, vicit mundum Vicit et dæmonia.*
>
> *La pureté dont il ceignit et ses reins et son cœur fut l'arme invincible avec laquelle il terrassa la chair, le monde et le démon.*
>
> *The purity with which he girded both his loins and his heart was the invincible weapon with which he overthrew the flesh, the world and the devil.*
>
> *Ancient prose of St. Firmin the Confessor.*

Firmin had for his father Faustinian, who was perhaps the son or the grandson of the senator of that name who gave the honours of burial to the first apostle of Amiens (St. Firmin the Martyr). The young Firmin, endowed with an excellent nature, consecrated himself to the Lord from his earliest years, and, under the

direction of wise and religious masters, made rapid progress in study. His noble features reflected the precocity of his intelligence and the grace of his modesty. He often meditated, in solitude, on the passages of holy Scripture that he had heard in the assemblies of the church, which he attended assiduously. The simplicity of the dove, his biographer tells us, was joined in him to the wisdom of the serpent; and so the renown of his virtues and his talents soon spread through all Gaul. An assembly of bishops, which was held about the year 359, resolved to raise Firmin to the episcopal dignity. The new Bishop of Amiens, persevering in perfection, kept the same humility, the same charity, the same constancy that had animated him before, and the elevation of rank only set his modesty in higher relief. Knowing how to punish and to pardon, according to circumstances; gentle towards all, even towards the proud, whom his long-suffering ended by subduing; full of thoughtfulness for the poor and for strangers; drawing from the fulfilment of his duties the strength to avoid the least faults, he offered in all things the finished model of the zealous and vigilant pastor. On certain days he received twelve poor men at his table, washed their hands, and himself served them bread and wine. It is claimed that Firmin went to stay in Rome for three years and that he afterwards travelled through many countries, teaching everywhere the manner in which the true God must be honoured. It would be after these many apostolic labours that Firmin at last returned to his episcopal city, so long widowed of his presence.

Various miracles are attributed to the holy bishop. He drove out, it is said, the demons from the bodies of various possessed persons, healed several paralytics, and delivered from fever the son of the patrician Callistus.

The zeal of St. Firmin did not confine itself within the limits of the Amiénois. He evangelised the Morini country, Ponthieu, Vimeu, the pays de Talou, that of Caux, and the distant shores of the Ocean, where Christianity had not yet penetrated. He destroyed pagan temples, broke idols, struggled against the hostile dispositions of barbarous peoples, and bore patiently their ingratitude and their outrages. His efforts succeeded at last in converting a part of these rough populations, which had at first shown themselves very careless of the future life.

The renown of Firmin soon spread through all Gaul and even into the neighbouring countries. The glory of martyrdom was the only one that he lacked; but it was not for want of having braved death, which more than once threatened his head. Feeling his end approach, he assembled his disciples and addressed to them these touching words: “My well-beloved children, hear the last counsels that my tender affection can give you. Strive to fulfil the divine commandments; let your sighs rise without ceasing towards Jesus, and let His holy law remain deeply engraved in your minds. If you truly love me, fear the terrible judgments of the Lord and meditate often on your last ends. In leaving you for ever, I leave you the very workers of the salvation of your souls. O divine Redeemer of the world, Thou who hast been my strength and my protection, I commit my spirit into Thy hands!”

The venerable Pontiff died on the first of September, at the age of sixty-seven; he was buried in the church of Notre-Dame, which he had built, and he became the protector of the diocese that he had governed so well.

CULTE ET RELIQUES. — MONUMENTS.

Cult and Relics. — Monuments.

The cult of St. Firmin probably goes back to the very time of his death. His name is found inscribed in the Caroline litanies, in those of Amiens (12th century), and in the oldest catalogues of the bishops of that see.

St. Salvius, Bishop of Amiens, having built, within the city, a church which he dedicated to the Apostles St. Peter and St. Paul, translated the body of St. Firmin the Confessor there at the beginning of the 7th century. Another solemn translation of his relics took place on 16 May 1272, in the presence of Philip the Bold, King of France, and Edward IV, King of England.

On 10 January 1697, while work was being done on the foundations of the high altar in the church of Saint-Acheul, six stone tombs were discovered in a crypt, which soon became the occasion of a heated controversy. The religious of Saint-Acheul were convinced that they had discovered the body of St. Firmin the Confessor in his supposed tomb, and consequently denied the authenticity of the relics kept at the cathedral. A host of pamphlets were published on this question, which inflamed people's minds. To end these irritating debates, it was at last decided to open the shrine of the cathedral. This ceremony took place on 10 January 1715, before a large assembly composed of the canons of the cathedral, those of Saint-Acheul, parish priests, superiors of monasteries, magistrates and physicians. In the 13th-century shrine were found many bones, with inscriptions and documents that could leave no doubt. Pierre de Sabatier published the official report of this opening, signed by all the witnesses, following a pastoral letter dated 12 January. In it he condemns the various works that had attacked the cathedral's possession, and orders that in future the office of the Translation of the relics of St. Firmin shall be celebrated on 10 January of each year throughout the diocese. This commemoration disappeared from the Amiens breviary with the introduction of the Roman liturgy.

In 1793, before the confiscation of the shrine, the bones of St. Firmin, twelve in number, were taken out of it by M. François Derivery and entrusted to M. Lejeune, constitutional parish priest of the cathedral, who restored them in 1802. These relics were recognised in 1816 and in 1829. They are today gathered, with many others, in the shrine called that of St. Honoratus.

In the garden of the Orphanage at Camon is shown the place where, according to an ancient tradition, St. Firmin the Confessor is said to have preached. An old juniper that stood in the garden of Gresset's Solitude, at Le Pinceau (La Neuville), was regarded as having been planted by our bishop. The laying out of the railway required the moving of this tree and brought about its death.

The church of Saint-Firmin-le-Confesseur succeeded the basilica dedicated by St. Salvius to St. Peter and St. Paul, on the present site of the north transept of Amiens cathedral. It was destroyed about 1236 in order to carry out the magnificent plans of Bishop Évrard, and was rebuilt a little farther off, on the ground of the old Hôtel-Dieu. This church, parochial and collegiate, on which eight hundred houses depended, was enlarged in the 16th century and demolished about the year 1795. A street and a cul-de-sac have preserved the name of the ancient parish.

Extracted from the Hagiographie du diocèse d'Amiens, *by M. l'abbé Corblet.*

SAINT PRINCE OR PRINCIPIUS, TWELFTH BISHOP OF SOISSONS AND CONFESSOR

About 505. — Pope: Symmachus. — King of the Franks: Clovis I.

> *Episcopi propter christianos populos ordinamur; quod ergo christianis populis ad christianam pacem prodest, hoc de nostro episcopatu faciamus.*
>
> *C'est pour le peuple chrétien que nous sommes ordonnés évêques; notre épiscopat doit donc tendre sans cesse à procurer au peuple chrétien une paix chrétienne.*
>
> *It is for the Christian people that we are ordained bishops; our episcopate must therefore tend without ceasing to procure for the Christian people a Christian peace.*
>
> *St. Augustine.*

Prince or Principe (*Principius*) was the son of Emilius, Count of Laon, and of St. Céline or Célinie, of a senatorial family of the same city. He had for his brother Remigius, who was Archbishop of Reims; but there was a great difference of age between them: Prince was born in the first years of the marriage of Emilius with Célinie, whereas Remigius was a miraculous fruit of the old age of the two spouses.

Our Saint had married and had had a son, named Lupus, who entered the clerical state. St. Edibius, Bishop of Soissons, having died (10 December 462), the clergy and the people cast their eyes on Prince to replace him. It was not without difficulty that they succeeded in persuading him to accept the heavy charge of the episcopate. At all times the holiest and the most worthy take fright and turn their heads away at the sight of the mitre and the pastoral staff; the less able and the presumptuous, on the contrary, accept without blinking the honour that is offered them; the ambitious obtain it by dint of intrigue, without thinking that thereby they put their eternal salvation in peril and expose themselves on earth to wearing only a crown of thorns, a source of smarting pains and bitter disappointments.

St. Prince was a great and pious bishop, and his reputation spread far through the Gauls. Without knowing personally Sidonius Apollinaris, Bishop of *Arvernum* (Clermont-Ferrand), he kept up an exchange of letters with this celebrated poet. In the nine books of *Letters* of Sidonius that remain to us, two are found addressed to the Bishop of Soissons, to whom he gives the title of *Pope*, that is to say, *father*. They are the fourteenth of Book viii and the eighth of Book iv. They will be read with interest:

“Sidonius to the lord Pope Principius, greeting. For a long time, venerable pope, although I do not know you by sight, your deeds have been known to me; for once the merit of virtue has broken through, it cannot be confined within fixed limits. Hence it is that, if a good conscience has no assigned bounds, neither has a good renown. What I tell you, regard it as a falsehood if my words are not supported by the noble testimony of a distinguished man, of a man who aspires to equal in austerity the archimandrites of Memphis and of Palestine. I mean the Bishop Antiolius; it is from him that I learned with joy what a worthy father you have, what worthy brothers you are yourselves, and what purity of life you both bring to the exercise of the high functions of the episcopate. When you put your hand to the altar, you do not offer a strange fire, but, with charity and chastity for victims, you make the most fragrant perfumes burn in your hearts as in censers. Moreover, every time that, by the bonds of preaching, you fasten the yoke of the law on the heads of rebellious and proud men, you then spiritually immolate bulls to the Lord. Every time that, by the goads of a Christian reprimand, you bring back to the sweet odours of purity men defiled in the mire of a depraved conscience, you make to Christ, with goats, a sacrifice that is pleasing to Him. Every time that, by your exhortations, a contrite and repentant soul sighs at the thought of its faults, there is no doubt that you then offer mystically a pair of turtle-doves or two young pigeons, which, by their number as by their moaning, represent the twofold substance of our nature. Every time that, following your warnings, a man comes to consume the plumpness of his body in the heat of frequent fasts, there is no doubt that you then consecrate, in a manner, on the altar of continence, the purest fine flour. Every time that, by your counsels, you bring a man to renounce the aberrations of a wandering mind and to profess a sound doctrine, to embrace the faith, to follow the right road, there is no doubt that, in the amendment and conversion of this man, who finds himself freed from heresy and schism, you present to the Lord the purest bread of proposition with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth. That is why I address lively thanks to God, because, from the tenor of your letter, I recognise without difficulty that, if Antiolius told me great things of you, he hid from me still greater ones. There can be no doubt that, if you seem good when people speak of you, if you appear better when you are read, you are excellent when one has the happiness of seeing you.

“The cleric Megetius, the bearer of your eloquent letter, brings back to you the expression of our respects. I earnestly entreat you to be so good as to satisfy the thirst I have for your admirable letters, and to write to me often, you and your brother, but you more often. If the difficulty of the roads and the distance of the places stand in the way of the fulfilment of my desires, pray at least sometimes for those who ask for your prayers. Deign, lord Pope, to remember us.”

In the second letter Sidonius, preoccupied with his approaching end, entreats his pious colleague to obtain for him from God a holy death.

"….. Favoured with a second missive, or rather with a second blessing, I too greet you anew, proportioning my respects to the number of your letters, without being able to make them equal to your merits. Since we live, lord pope, in regions at once united and separated, and since this distance prevents us from enjoying each other's presence, ask in your prayers that, delivered by a desirable and pious death from the miseries and the burden of life, we may, when the sacred day of judgment shines forth, be placed in your train after the resurrection, even in a servitude like that of the Gibeonites; for the heavenly promises assure us that the children of the faith shall be gathered from all nations, provided that I, guilty one, obtain pardon, while to you, blessed one, glory is assured; if we are separated by the difference of merits, we shall not, however, be separated by the distance of places. Deign, lord pope, to remember us."

One sees from these letters what esteem the two prelates had for each other.

It was under the long episcopate of St. Prince that the most important events were accomplished at Soissons and in the neighbouring countries: the end of Roman rule in the Gauls and the establishment of the rule of the Franks. St. Prince was a witness of the death of Aegidius, Count of Soissons (464), and of the defeat of Syagrius, his son, who was vanquished by Clovis, then twenty-two years of age (486). Soissons fell into the hands of the victor and thus became the cradle of the French monarchy. Syagrius, who after the loss of his army had fled to Toulouse, to Alaric II, King of the Visigoths, was handed over to Clovis by that barbarian prince, and secretly slain in the prison of the Château d'Albâtre, where St. Crispin and St. Crispinian had been confined.

The virtues of Prince won him the respect of Clovis, whom they helped to make better. The holy bishop's conversations with Clotilde, the king's wife, encouraged that princess and sustained her in the attempts she was constantly making to overcome her husband's resistance and to make him embrace Christianity. The glory of baptising him, together with the chief men of the Franks, was, in the designs of God, reserved to the brother of St. Prince, the illustrious St. Remigius, Archbishop of Reims. But St. Prince undoubtedly attended the ceremonies of that solemn baptism with most of the bishops of northern Gaul, and, on his return to Soissons, he helped the many neophytes of the court and of the army to lead a life in keeping with the Gospel doctrine of which they had just made open profession.

The favours of Clovis, now a Christian, were not lacking to St. Prince, who profited by them to extend further the influence of religion and to soften the lot of the peoples. He built new churches and multiplied the altars or parishes, to make the instruction of the populations easier. It is thought that he transferred the episcopal see from the abbey of Saint-Crépin-le-Grand to the church of Saint-Gervais-et-Saint-Protais, situated within the city.

St. Prince died at a great age, on 25 September, about the year 505, and was buried by St. Remigius, his brother, in the chapel of Sainte-Thècle, outside the walls of Soissons. His relics were later transferred to the cathedral, but the heretics gave them over to the flames and reduced them to ashes in 1567. The *Gallia Christiana* says that his arm was venerated at Douai, in the collegiate church of Saint-Amé.

We owe this notice to the kindness of M. l'abbé Henri Conguet, of the chapter of Soissons.

SAINT ERMENFROI OR HERMENFROY, MONK OF LUXEUIL AND ABBOT OF CUSANCE, IN THE DIOCESE OF BESANÇON

About 670. — Pope: Vitalian. — King of Austrasia: Childeric II. — King of Neustria: Clotaire III.

Ille perfectus est monachus qui huic sæculo et corpore et corde discretus est.

Celui-là est un parfait religieux qui est séparé du monde et par le corps et par le cœur.

He is a perfect religious who is separated from the world both in body and in heart.

St. Isidore of Spain.

At the end of the 6th century the seigneurial residence of Rantechaux, in the neighbourhood of Clerval (Doubs, arrondissement of Baume-les-Dames), was inhabited by Ermenric, brother of Iserius, chief of the Varasci. Instructed and confirmed in the faith through the care of St. Eustasius, he brought up his family with all the solicitude that can be expected of a Christian father. It was made up of two sons: the elder was named Ermenfroi, and the younger Waldelenus. After having them taught letters divine and human, he sent them to the court of Clotaire II, about the year 614. Waldelenus appeared there with all the qualities that could win him the favours of the prince. He was endowed with a pleasing face, a great facility for study, and a remarkable aptitude for the handling of temporal affairs. Clotaire, charmed with his talents as well as with his good looks, entrusted him with the title of chancellor and gave him the charge of keeping the royal ring. Ermenfroi was distinguished above all by a gentle and modest bearing. His virtues were more easily guessed than known, and they made one foresee in him a minister of the altar rather than a favourite of kings. He possessed in the highest degree the secret of keeping the friendship of God without losing that of men. His speech was winning and persuasive, his learning as wide as it was deep, his charity always ready to show itself in works. When he appeared in public, the joy people felt at seeing him was painted on every face. He left those whom he had visited and conversed with so edified by his conversation that they seemed to have become better for it: his gentleness and his goodness towards all were admirable, and one could have applied to him in all truth the words of Isaiah: “He shall not cry, nor contend; his voice shall not be heard in the streets; he shall not break the bruised reed, nor quench the smoking flax.”

Thus lived Ermenfroi amid all the pomps and all the grandeurs of the world. The intrigues and the pleasures of the court, which should naturally have drawn him away from God and from his duties, on the contrary drew him nearer to them; for he saw at closer quarters the enjoyments that the world offers, and could consequently better appreciate them at their just value. A particular circumstance came to make him feel still better the nothingness of human vanities. Ermenric died at the very moment when his children were beginning to repay him by their gratitude for the pains of their early education, and when he was preparing to carry out for them all that was in his heart. From then on our Saint thought only of solitude and retirement; everyone could see that, on his return from the funeral, he regarded his stay at the palace as a heavier burden and an obstacle to his salvation. But to leave a monarch from whom he had received so good a welcome, he needed a legitimate reason: Providence was not slow to furnish him with one.

After the death of Iserius, Islia, his daughter, had received his patrimony for the benefit of the monastery of Cusance, which she directed; but a frightful plague carried her off with all her nuns and left Cusance without inhabitants. This rich and vast domain returned, by right of succession, to the family of Ermenfroi. As this young lord had himself become the head of his house, he left the court once again to take possession of his kinswoman’s inheritance. The sight of the monastery in ruins, the memory of the virtues that had been practised there, the charms of a solitude so melancholy and so sweet, made him wish to exchange as soon as possible the life of the court for the life of retirement. On his return to Soissons, he soon let it be seen that his heart was elsewhere. Without having lost anything of his usual amiability, he was continually occupied with the maxims of the Gospel. In the midst of plenty he was devoured by hunger and thirst, but by hunger and thirst for that justice which consists in renouncing everything to follow Jesus Christ. While the courtiers studied to please by good manners and a distinguished appearance, he sought to draw near to Christian simplicity. One day Clotaire could not help reproaching him for it, whether he was really shocked by Ermenfroi’s carelessness and negligence, or whether he wished to make easier for him an opening for which he had long been prepared: “Ermenfroi,” he said to him, “why do you wear your tunic so carelessly? Have you then the intention of becoming a cleric?” — “Yes, prince,” our Saint answered eagerly. “I should like to be a cleric; I should like to be a monk; and the most signal favour that you could add to all those I have received from you is to grant me permission to enter a monastery.”

Although Clotaire was expecting this answer, he was all the more grieved by it because Ermenfroi's departure would naturally bring about that of his brother Waldelenus. They did in fact leave the court about the year 625, and withdrew with their mother to their lands of Cusance and Rantechaux. But Ermenfroi was not yet delivered from the temptations of the flesh and of the world. His mother pressed him to marry, and the deference he had for her gave this wish the authority of a command. He besought the Lord to enlighten him and sustain him against this last assault, and at last openly rejected every thought of marriage and of a temporal future, so as to leave room in his mind only for the great ideas that God inspired in him. He first set about rebuilding the abbey of Cusance on other proportions, and it is to be believed that this work occupied him for a fairly long time; he was seen to put all his care into it; every detail of this building was suited to his views and to his plans for the future. However, it was not with him as with most of those who attend to purely material occupations; often with these the recollection of the mind becomes impossible. As for him, he knew how to find God at every moment in the silence of contemplation, and when his presence at the monastery was not indispensable, he hastened to reach the neighbouring countryside to pray there at his ease.

This calm and tranquil kind of life, which Ermenfroi had exchanged for the agitations of the world, certainly had its enjoyments. The company of a learned and pious brother, the care of a tenderly loved mother, pleasant leisure sanctified by prayer, the contemplation of the charms of nature — everything combined to embellish his stay at Cusance. But he heard within him a voice that called him to a more perfect life; he sighed for the sweetness of the cloister, and already he had his eyes turned towards the monastery of Luxeuil. This abbey had just been entrusted to the care of St. Walbert, and its renown for learning, piety and discipline was spread through all Gaul. Ermenfroi resolved to go there. He therefore bade farewell to his family and went to put himself under the direction of St. Walbert. This illustrious abbot received him as an envoy from heaven, and counted him among his disciples for nearly four years. It is to be believed that these years of noviciate were for Ermenfroi years of holiness and grace. The abbot, who took pleasure in paying homage to his merit, pointed him out to the bishop as a precious subject for the priesthood, and after having had hands laid on him, sent him back to Cusance for the carrying out of his work. Here begins, properly speaking, the career of St. Ermenfroi as a monk, and, if we can trust the reckoning of the Bollandists, we are at the year 630. The first thing he did on arriving at Cusance was to strip himself of the goods that remained to him, either for the benefit of the churches or for the benefit of the poor. His only treasure was thenceforth the love of a severe rule and of the community of religious who were not slow in coming to submit to his laws. The number of his monks rose within a few years to three hundred, so great a charm was there in obeying him! He had taken care to draw Waldelenus to him, and to give him a cell in the neighbourhood of the monastery. This pious lord provided for the temporal needs of the community, at the same time as he gladdened it with the odour of his virtues. Nothing was so admirable as the spectacle of this house directed by two brothers, of whom one took care of the spiritual and the other of the material. What was most striking, what Ermenfroi applied himself to make reign among his religious, was evenness of soul, obedience and charity. He wanted in his family neither a great outpouring of joy nor that painful withdrawal that sadness engenders; and, as though to give them the right measure in this, he was accustomed to weep with those who wept and to rejoice with those who rejoiced. His merit and his virtues were so well appreciated, and he himself gave his orders with so much prudence, that all his monks obeyed him with more happiness than worldly men have in commanding; all had an ardent desire to reach perfection, and they knew that the surest way to attain it was to submit in everything to the will of their superior. Nor can one say to what a degree these good religious esteemed and loved one another before God: never the least murmur; never a movement of jealousy; never anything that could break that unity of heart and soul by which Jesus Christ recognises His disciples. Ermenfroi himself seemed satisfied with the way in which profit was drawn from the efforts of his zeal and from the graces of God. One of his great joys was to be in the midst of his monks; on feast days he distributed the eulogiae to them, and when, on this occasion, he noticed hands that bore witness to the week's labour, he kissed them with a tenderness mingled with respect. If there were harder tasks, he took care to

reserve them for himself. Thus he often spent the day sifting by himself the wheat that his religious threshed or shelled, taking turns one after another. His favourite maxim was the very word of the Prophet: “Thou shalt be happy, and thy lot shall be worthy of envy, when thou shalt live by the fruit of thy labours.”

Nothing more, it seems, was lacking to this model community but to be able to maintain itself in its first fervour, in spite of the natural tendency to relaxation and in spite of outside vexations, fairly common at that period. But the wise foresight of Ermenfroi had already provided for this. From the third year of Dagobert, that is to say the year 632, he had attached his house to the monastery of Luxeuil by introducing the Rule of St. Columban there, and by placing it under the high patronage of Walbert and his successors. We must no longer be surprised, then, that there were pious and virtuous disciples of St. Ermenfroi at Cusance. When a learned man directs a house, educated men usually come out of it; but a superior who is a saint always makes the rays of his holiness reflect on those around him. Among the religious who were above all the glory of the abbey in the seventh century, let us name Wandalbert, Abaco, Ravenborde, Adbert, Athaël, Caranus and Maldagis. They helped to embellish the crown of Ermenfroi, and showed by their more and more edifying conduct in what school they had been formed.

Meanwhile, Ermenfroi and Waldelenus were beginning to feel the weight of years, and their mother had already gone before them to heaven. They had shortened their lives, the latter by the secret mortifications he had added to the labours with which he was charged for the benefit of the monastery; the former by the fatherly anxieties that the direction of a large community gave him to the end. But God, who wished to finish purifying our Saint and to detach him completely from the world, permitted him to attend yet his brother’s funeral. Waldelenus having fallen ill at Rantechaux, Ermenfroi, informed of the progress of the illness, came to bring him the consolations of the faith, and promised him to pray that the will of God might be done. And indeed, on returning to his cell, the holy abbot hastened to call his religious together, set before them his brother’s condition, and invited them to join with him in the sacrifice and in prayer; so that it was amid a concert of prayers that the soul of Waldelenus flew from earth to heaven. At the news of his death Ermenfroi, sorrowfully affected but always equal to himself, went to spend the rest of the night in the church. The next morning he led his monks as far as Hyèvre, to meet the body. They brought it back to Cusance, crossing with marvellous speed the steep heights of the Lomont. Two religious were enough to carry the coffin, in spite of the weight of the body and the difficulties of the road. The people, who could hardly keep up with the procession, drew from this circumstance an omen favourable to the holiness of the departed.

Some time after the death of his brother, about the year 670, St. Ermenfroi fell ill, and his illness soon took on a particularly grave character. One evening, when the religious had gathered round him to express by their sighs and tears the grief they felt, they thought they saw the first signs of the death agony, and withdrew to some distance, as though to escape sad farewells. At that very moment a bright light spread over the body of our Saint, and his beautiful soul went to enjoy a light brighter still in the bosom of his God. It was 25 September, about 670.

CULTE ET RELIQUES.

Cult and Relics.

His disciples buried him with honour and laid his remains beside those of Waldelenus, within the church dedicated to St. John the Baptist. From the day of the burial, the religious of Cusance gave Ermenfroi a kind of private cult: a lighted lamp was hung over his tomb, and the Lord deigned to show by a striking wonder that this cult was pleasing to Him; for the lamp remained lit for several years, and the oil, far from diminishing, overflowed every day in quantity enough to feed a second lamp, by which the monks’ church was lit. The biographer who relates this fact assures us that he had the happiness of witnessing it. As for most of the other miracles worked at the tomb of our Saint, he declares that, because of the humble and modest tastes of the early religious, who preferred the cultivation of the land to the cultivation of letters, he was

unable to procure a written account of all the facts. However, he cites some that oral tradition has preserved, and which suffice to attest the power of St. Ermenfroi with God.

Not only did he have his altar and his office at Cusance; but, according to the testimony of Mabillon, he was particularly honoured at Luxeuil, and in the year 1691 his feast was still celebrated there with the semi-double rite. It is fixed on 25 September in the diocese of Besançon. Trithemius, Bucelin, du Saussay, H. Ménard and Chastelain make mention of him on that date. Several parishes have been established under the invocation of this holy abbot.

His precious remains, after having been long kept in the monastery of Cusance, were afterwards carried to Santoche (Doubs, arrondissement of Baume-les-Dames, canton of Clerval), to the church of his patrimonial lands. This parish showed itself holily jealous of the deposit that had been entrusted to its keeping, and it kept it with great veneration until the beginning of the 17th century. When the Swedes invaded Franche-Comté, the relics were brought to Clerval to put them out of reach of profanation by the enemy. What remains of them today is kept with honour in that town. M. l'abbé Guillaume, the parish priest of the place, had the authentic recognition of these precious relics made and enclosed them in an elegant shrine.

We have extracted this biography from the Vie des Saints de Franche-Comté, *by the professors of the college of Saint-François-Xavier at Besançon; they themselves took it from the* Life of St. Ermenfroi, *written about forty years after his death by Egilbert, one of his disciples, provost of the monastery of Cusance.*

SAINT CEOLFRID[1], ABBOT OF WEARMOUTH AND JARROW, IN ENGLAND

716. — Pope: St. Gregory II. — King of France: Charles Martel.

> *Peregrini sumus coram te et advenæ, sicut omnes patres nostri.*
>
> *Nous sommes des voyageurs devant vous, ô mon Dieu! comme l'ont été tous nos pères.*
>
> *We are travellers before Thee, O my God, as all our fathers were.*
>
> *I Paralip., xxix, 15.*

St. Ceolfrid, commonly called in France St. Céoulfroy or St. Ceufrey, was born in Bernicia (present-day Northumberland). He was a kinsman of St. Benedict Biscop, and left the world together with him. They made a journey to Rome together, as much to satisfy their devotion as to perfect themselves in the knowledge of sacred letters. When they had returned to their country, St. Ceolfrid helped St. Benedict Biscop with his care in the foundation of the monastery of St. Peter at Wearmouth, in the diocese of

Durham, which was built in 674. He would have liked all creatures to despise him as he despised himself, and no one to think of him. He lived in the community of Wearmouth in the same manner as St. Anthony and St. Hilarion lived on their mountains. His penance was very austere, and his recollection continual. St. Benedict Biscop having formed the resolution of building the monastery of St. Paul at Jarrow in 682, St. Ceolfrid was charged with the care of forming the new establishment, and chosen to govern the infant community, which was composed of seventy religious. Seven years passed in this way. In 689 St. Benedict Biscop made him superior of Wearmouth as well. He governed the two monasteries for twenty-eight years; they were held to be but one, because they were very close to each other, and there were constant relations of union and understanding between the one and the other. He joined to a wise activity in his undertakings a penetrating mind, a solid judgment and a great fervour of zeal. In Bede, who lived under his direction, are found the least equivocal proofs of his learning, his fine qualities and his virtues. As he loved the sciences that had religion for their object, he formed good libraries in his monasteries; but he would not put in them any of those books that serve only to feed curiosity. Bede is an example of the success with which study was pursued in the communities subject to him.

Naitan, King of the Picts, had him consulted on the time when Easter ought to be celebrated, as well as on the form of the clerical tonsure. His subjects did not agree with the rest of the Church on these two matters. The holy abbot answered him, and proved to him that one must hold to the practice of the Roman Church: celebrate Easter with her, and wear the crown used in that same Church, to which he gives the name of the crown of St. Peter. Naitan received it with joy, and ordered his subjects to conform to it; he also asked Ceolfrid for workmen, in order to have a church of stone built, which he dedicated, as he had promised, to the Prince of the Apostles.

The holy abbot, feeling his strength exhausted by age and illness, resolved to give up his post, which he no longer believed himself able to fill. His religious begged him in the most pressing manner not to abandon them; but they gave way at last, and elected as abbot of the two monasteries Huchtbert or Hubert. There were then six hundred monks, at Wearmouth and at Jarrow together. When Ceolfrid saw himself replaced by the one of his disciples whom he had himself designated, he made an address to exhort the brethren to live in union and charity; but, fearing that the great men of the kingdom, filled with veneration for him, might make efforts to keep him back, he announced that he was going to leave for Rome, to visit the tombs of the Apostles before he died. On the road, he was not content with saying the divine office every day; he also recited the whole psalter twice. He also celebrated Mass regularly: he missed it only once at sea, and on the last three days before his death. As he was crossing France he fell ill at Langres (Haute-Marne), and died there on 25 September 716, in the seventy-fourth year of his age. He had been a priest for forty-seven years, an abbot for thirty-five, and had governed the monasteries of Wearmouth and Jarrow alone for twenty-seven. He was buried near Langres, in the church of the three twin martyrs, or of Sts. Speusippus, Eleusippus and Meleusippus. The relics of St. Ceolfrid were later carried to Jarrow, and then to Glastonbury (county of Somerset), during the ravages of the Danes.

Godescard. — Cf. Vies des Saints du diocèse de Langres, *by M. l'abbé Godard;* Vie de saint Bénigne de Dijon, *by M. l'abbé Bougaud.*

SAINT AUSTINDUS[1] OF BORDEAUX, ARCHBISHOP OF AUCH AND CONFESSOR

1068. — Pope: Alexander II. — King of France: Philip I.

> *Rexisti provinciam Ausciam Et ampliasti Ecclesiam.*
>
> *Glorieusement assis sur le siège de la métropole d'Auch, vous avez su agrandir votre Eglise et faire rentrer dans leurs droits celles de votre province.*
>
> *Gloriously seated on the see of the metropolis of Auch, you were able to enlarge your Church and to restore to their rights those of your province.*
>
> *Hymn of St. Austindus.*

St. Austindus was born at Bordeaux. Forestalled early by the graces of heaven, he learned to know the world only to fear or despise it, and, in order to place his youth and inexperience more out of reach of the snares of the tempter, he made haste to enrol himself among the clergy of his native town. The first time that the annals of the Church of Auch mention his name, they show him to us at a religious ceremony presided over in that city by Archbishop Raymond Coppa.

Until then Auch had had only one cemetery. It was still the one that the first Christians had established around the church of Saint-Jean. When St. Orientius, imitating his predecessors and imitated in his turn by the bishops who succeeded him, had chosen his burial place there, people liked more than ever to rest near ashes so venerated; and more than once, no doubt, the piety of the faithful showed itself generous and paid handsomely for the hospitality it came to ask. As long as there was only one parish church in the city, this custom continued without difficulty. But after the division of the town between Sainte-Marie and

Saint-Orens, it was bound to be otherwise. The establishment of a new religious service, by creating two different administrations and almost opposing interests, was naturally bound to bring about the creation of a second cemetery. Several archbishops had understood this; but, whether from timidity or from weakness, they had all drawn back before the opposition that this measure could not fail to arouse. Raymond Coppa, firmer and more courageous, resolved to carry it out. He chose a site within the town, at the very doors of the metropolitan church; and, without stopping either for the outcries or for the protests of the monks of Saint-Orens, declared adversaries of the plan, he solemnly blessed the chosen site, enriched it with indulgences, and established the new cemetery there. The act of this establishment bears the date of 4 November 1045. Among the three or four subscriptions with which it is furnished, one reads that of St. Austindus, who styles himself in it a cleric of the Church of Bordeaux.

In spite of this adhesion given publicly to Coppa's attempt, when the young cleric wished to withdraw entirely from the hopes of the world and embrace a more perfect life, he did not hesitate to retire among the monks of Saint-Orens, whom his conduct must have singularly displeased; and, astonishing thing, it was he whom they chose to place at their head, after two or three years of noviciate. The life of the new abbot was to present another singularity, greater than the first. The Archbishop of Auch having died meanwhile, the chapter of Sainte-Marie, in open conflict with the monks of Saint-Orens, placed their superior on the metropolitan see (1041). Certainly a very rare and well-recognised merit was needed to triumph thus over the most legitimate prejudices and to win so quickly votes so opposed.

His first acts announced what was to be expected of his episcopate. Strong in his right and deaf to all the considerations of a vain prudence, he took up again the work of his predecessor, which the Holy See, deceived by the monks, had annulled; and in spite of a bull whose nullity he suspected, and which was later established, he reopened the cemetery of Sainte-Marie and ordered burials there. His former community at once cried out and sent two of its members to Rome. The Prelate followed them there; but before setting out, pouring out his soul before the altar of the Virgin and prostrate at the feet of her image, he besought heaven to defend his cause and to thwart the designs of his adversaries. His prayers were granted. The deputies of Saint-Orens died on the road, and he himself had no difficulty in justifying his claims in the eyes of the Sovereign Pontiff and in obtaining from him a favourable sentence, which, however, was not promulgated. The rights of the Archbishop no doubt appeared so evident that this formality was judged unnecessary.

The slight possession of a cemetery would not have been enough to tear Austindus from his flock and take him beyond the Alps. Graver interests had called him to Rome. He needed the support of the Pope to carry out a reform that he was meditating. Two centuries before, when Gascony was nothing but a heap of ruins, a Count Gombaud had had himself given the holy anointing and had united in his hands the administration of the bishoprics of Bazas, Aire, Dax, Oloron, Bayonne, Lescar and perhaps even Lectoure. What had been in the days of desolation was perpetuated when times had become better. Religion groaned to see the Canons violated, and society suffered from it still more than religion. The Church then, by her spirit, by her principles, by her constitution, was very nearly the only providence of the serfs who covered the land; for all that there had formerly been of free men, of former owners of small manors, of inhabitants attached to the homeland by the feeling of possession, had completely disappeared. The absolute lack of social guarantees had made the situation intolerable. The people did not yet exist. The priesthood was to bring it to birth later and raise it under its beneficent tutelage. In these circumstances, to increase the number of pastors was to multiply the guarantees of the weak, of the poor, of all that suffered.

Austindus obtained the deposition of Raymond the Elder, who, in the middle of the 11th century, held as many sees as Gombaud had occupied in the 9th, and usually took, like him, the title of Bishop of Gascony. The great blow was struck; order was not slow to be restored. Raymond, nephew of the deposed bishop, known in history by the name of Raymond the Younger to distinguish him from his uncle, kept the bishoprics of Bazas, Dax and Bayonne; but soon he gave up the last two and kept only that of Bazas. The

ecclesiastical province of Gascony thus found itself, thanks to the zeal and activity of Austindus, reconstituted as it had been before the invasion of the Saracens of Spain and the long struggle of Charles Martel, Pepin the Short and Charlemagne against Duke Eudes and his descendants had brought trouble and desolation into its bosom. This first goal attained, Austindus assembled at Jaca, in Spain, a council over which he presided and where he appeared with his suffragans Heraclius of Tarbes, Stephen of Oloron and John of Lectoure. There too he occupied himself with restoration; for all the decrees passed there concerned the re-establishment of ecclesiastical discipline and of the sacred rites.

But it was above all against the lords that St. Austindus was called to struggle; for it was above all among them that he was to meet an obstinate resistance. They had broken into the sanctuary amid the public disturbances, and, relying on the time and possession that had sanctioned their encroachments, they claimed to keep them. At the beginning of his pontificate, however, the archbishop's zeal had found some sympathy in Guillaume Astanove, Count of Fezensac. The church of Sainte-Marie was very cramped and rather badly built. Austindus had it rebuilt on a plan larger and more worthy of a metropolitan church. Guillaume Astanove helped him in his undertaking, put at the service of this work his gold, his workmen and his authority, and, when the building was finished, he gave the new church all the ground he possessed in the neighbourhood, which touched the basilica on one side and his castle on the other. The count and the archbishop also joined to enlarge the canons' house, which had become insufficient since the canons had adopted the common life, which had come about under one of the preceding pontificates. Finally Guillaume Astanove supported the prelate in his claims against the monks of Saint-Orens; but he died soon afterwards, and his son Aymeric II did not inherit his sentiments.

Bernard Tumapaler, Count of Armagnac, then suzerain of all Gascony, jealous of his authority as weak minds almost always are, was particularly prejudiced against Austindus. Other lords, and in great numbers, shared Bernard's jealousy and his hatred for the metropolitan of Auch. It is well to remember that, as a result of the misfortunes of every kind that had weighed for a very long time on Gascony, the lords had seized not only the goods of the clergy but also most of the churches, which they had served by a few starving clerics to whom they threw a meagre share of their revenues. One understands from this the respective positions of the metropolitan of Auch, resolved to restore to their proper purpose the churches and their enfeoffed goods, and of the upstart lords, obstinate in keeping the riches of which an unjust spoliation had made them masters. The archbishop invoked the Canons; he prayed, exhorted, urged. Some lords listened to his voice. The greater number showed themselves deaf. Austindus was not a man to stop in the fulfilment of a recognised duty. Seeing his exhortations disdained, he threatened with the sword that the Church had placed in his hands. There was courage in such a threat. The guilty were numerous, and at their head three counts were conspicuous for their resistance, whom history does not name, but who were none other, very probably, than the Counts of Fezensac, Armagnac and Astarac, the most powerful in the region.

Minds grew heated: alarmed rapacity made its vociferations heard. Far from fearing and weakening, Austindus hurled the thunderbolt and struck the guilty with excommunication, whatever their rank, and laid their churches under interdict. At this blow passions knew no more bounds. The days of the courageous Pontiff were in danger; why should he not spare the sacred character with which he was invested gratuitous outrages, and perhaps even a final crime to sheep whose straying made them only dearer to his heart? He went away, carrying with him, along with some violent hatreds, many very keen regrets, and went to wait on foreign soil until the storm should pass; he withdrew to the celebrated Gervase, Archbishop of Reims, who kept him with him for two whole years. Meanwhile the memory of his virtues lived on among his flock: his zeal and his firmness, those two qualities that always strike the masses, lent them a new lustre. The interdict above all, then strictly observed, weighed on the faith of the people. They were alarmed at being so long deprived of the ceremonies of worship and almost of the benefits of religion. They murmured against an obstinacy provoked by greed and pride; and in a time of roughness and violence threats were easily translated

into deeds. The guilty were therefore forced to bend before the general reprobation and to promise the restitution demanded.

The inhabitants of Auch at once sent some of their chief fellow citizens to the prelate, to carry the happy news to the archbishop and to beg for his return. Delighted with a change that fulfilled all his wishes, Austindus was not slow to leave Reims and take the road back to his diocese. On his way he went to Paris, where he stayed a few days. From Paris he made for Provence, visited Rimbaud or Rajambaud, Archbishop of Arles, and attended the consecration of the church of Tritis performed by that prelate. He himself consecrated that of the priory of Saint-Zacharie, a dependency of Saint-Victor of Marseilles. The act drawn up on that occasion and bearing his signature was preserved until 1793. At last, after so long an absence, he returned to his metropolitan see amid general rejoicing. Hearts were changed. Austindus thought he could solemnly establish his victory, or rather irrevocably consecrate his rights. He took advantage of the passage through Gascony of Cardinal Hugh the White, legate of the Holy See in Spain, and assembled at Auch a council over which he presided jointly with the legate, and which was attended not only by all his suffragans but also by the abbots and even the chief lords of Gascony. It was decreed there that all the churches situated within the limits of Gascony should pay to their respective sees a quarter of the tithes, which had not been the practice until then. The council finished overcoming all resistance. The law it made passed into general practice; it was still being carried out in 1790.

This work crowned the life of the illustrious Prelate. God had called him to the chair of the metropolitan see only so that he might restore the churches of his province to their rights. This mission fulfilled, he fell ill towards the end of the council, and a few days later he fell peacefully asleep in the Lord, on 25 July 1068, although his feast has been transferred to 25 September, without its being possible to assign the reason in a very certain manner.

CULTE ET RELIQUES.

Cult and Relics.

St. Austindus was buried in the old basilica of Saint-Jean, beside his two holy predecessors, St. Taurin and St. Léothade. Most of the bishops and abbots who had come to the Council of which we have spoken, and whom the metropolitan’s illness had kept at Auch, wished to attend his funeral and so pay a last tribute of homage to his piety and of gratitude to his zeal.

At a period that can no longer be fixed exactly in our day, the bodies of these three holy bishops were carried into the church of Sainte-Marie. When the crypts of the present metropolitan church were finished, they were taken down into them, and each of them had his sarcophagus, his chapel and his altar. In 1810 the venerable Léonard Destrappes, Archbishop of Auch, visited them and had the honours due to them paid to them; the tombs were sealed again, after first placing in them the official report of this invention or recognition, written on a parchment rolled in the manner of the ancient volumes, to serve as a monument to posterity.

So things came to the great storm of 1793. Then impiety swooped down on the metropolitan church and stripped it of the sacred vessels, the pontifical or priestly vestments, the reliquaries of silver or silver-gilt, and all the objects that presented to the eye the appearance of some value that could be reckoned in money; but it left it a more precious treasure, almost all its great relics. The verification of them was made on 20, 21 and 22 January 1857, by order and under the eyes of Mgr de Salinis. Here is the inventory of the relics of St. Austindus according to this recent verification: 1° the lower jaw, entire but fractured; 2° two shoulder-blades; 3° two collar-bones; 4° twenty ribs or fragments of ribs; 5° the sternum; 6° twenty vertebrae; 7° the two humeri, the two ulnae, the two radii; 8° the two hip-bones and the sacrum; 9° the two femurs, the two kneecaps, the two tibias, the two fibulae; 10° one calcaneum, the two astragali; 11° two bones of the tarsus and two of the metatarsus; — 12° two vessels of ashes. *Extracted from the* Vies des Saints évêques de la métropole d’Auch, *by J.-J. Monlezun, canon of Auch and of Le Puy. — Auch, 1857.*

SAINT DEFENDENS, MARTYR, IN THE DIOCESE OF MARSEILLES (290)

St. Maurice and his generous companions, the soldiers of the illustrious Theban Legion, had fallen on 22 September 286 under the executioner's sword, giving the whole world a magnificent spectacle of Christian heroism. Some legionaries, however, had escaped the general massacre: God was reserving them for an approaching martyrdom. Defendens was of their number. He was crossing the Rhône with a few faithful companions when the spies of the bloodthirsty Maximian surprised them. The following dialogue was exchanged between the executioners and the victims: "Are you not of the company of those infamous men on whom the emperor's edicts did justice four years ago?" — "We are of that company; but our brothers are not infamous men; that term can apply only to you and to your emperor." — "Do you really dare to despise in this way the august Maximian and his envoys?" — "We despise his threats, his impiety, his cruelty." — "Do you know that we can make you pay for your blasphemies with your heads?" — "Here are our heads, strike; may we die for Jesus Christ and go to join our brothers!" And their heads rolled on the ground.

Defendens and his companions were buried by Theodore, Bishop of Marseilles; a church was dedicated under their invocation. Their cult soon spread into Italy: many towns took them as their patrons and raised altars to them. Let us name Chivasso, on the Po, in the diocese of Turin; Calvi, in the Terra di Lavoro; and Novara, in the former Sardinian States. The church of the Hermits of Calvi possesses a part of their relics. A miraculous fact, related by the Bollandists, will show us, together with the power of St. Defendens, the respect with which the day of his feast was once surrounded. A villager of the diocese of Calvi, instead of attending the Mass of the patronal feast of his hamlet, was busy at home cooking some little birds that he had caught while hunting. All at once they come back to life and take flight, while the hunter, who had thought he could excuse himself from his duty, loses his sight: he recovered it only after doing penance for his fault and invoking, before the altar of St. Defendens, the intercession of the servant of God.

Acta Sanctorum, 2 January, new translation.

SAINT NILUS, FORMER GOVERNOR OF CONSTANTINOPLE, AND SOLITARY (450)

Born of a family that ranked among the first nobility of Constantinople, St. Nilus, by his distinguished condition joined to his personal qualities, was raised to the dignity of prefect or governor of that imperial city, under the reign of the great Theodosius and of Arcadius his son. He contracted marriage with a wife worthy of his merit as much by her birth as by her virtues. God blessed their union, which they had placed under the protection of heaven. Two children were granted to them. Meanwhile the Lord was calling him to a more perfect life and was disposing him for it from day to day. Docile to the merciful impressions of grace, and entirely disgusted with the court and the world, he resolved to abandon the world and embrace the solitary life. His virtuous wife consented to it and wished to imitate his example. She withdrew with her daughter into a monastery of Egypt; the refuge that St. Nilus chose with his son Theodulus, to escape the dangers of the world, was Mount Sinai, where a great number of anchorites lived a wholly heavenly life. There, stripped of all that could flatter him — wife, relatives, friends, riches, dignities — he took God alone for his portion and the lot of his inheritance, and applied himself with uncommon ardour to the acquiring of the religious virtues. God favoured him with the gift of prophecy and with a deep knowledge of the ways of perfection.

St. Nilus was the zealous defender not only of St. Chrysostom when he was persecuted, but also of the Catholic faith, often attacked by the errors of innovators. His excellent letters on various points of dogma prove clearly that he was no less able and enlightened in vindicating the doctrine of the Church than in laying down the rules of morals. He died at a very advanced age, under the reign of the Emperor Marcian, about 450. His relics were carried from Mount Sinai to Constantinople under the reign of Justin the Younger, and

laid beneath the altar of the church of the Apostles St. Peter and St. Paul, according to Nicephorus and the Greek Menaea.

St. Nilus was endowed with much learning and eloquence; his style is pure, ornate, delicate and sometimes sententious; it shows abundance. We have several learned works of this Saint, of which the following are the chief and the most authentic: 1° *Epistles* in great number; 2° a treatise on the *Monastic Life*, and one on the *Flight from Vices and the Practice of Virtue*; 3° the book of *Prayer*; 4° a treatise on *Voluntary Poverty*; 5° a treatise *to Eulogius*; 6° a treatise on the *Eight Spirits of Wickedness*; 7° a treatise on *Prayer*, divided into one hundred and fifty-three articles; 8° a treatise on *Evil Thoughts*; 9° *Sentences*; 10° lastly, on the *Massacre of the Solitaries of Sinai and the Captivity of Theodulus*.

As for the other writings that some wish to attribute to him, sound criticism disowns them. Joseph-Marie Suarez, former Bishop of Vaison, Father Pierre Poussines, Jesuit, and Leo Allatius have given various editions of his works. The last is the most esteemed and the most complete.

Extracted from the Esprit des Saints, *by M. l'abbé Grimes.*

SAINT AUNARIUS OR AUNACHARIUS, EIGHTEENTH BISHOP OF AUXERRE AND CONFESSOR (603)

Aunarius was of the first nobility of the town of Orléans. His father was called Pastor and his mother Ragnoara. They sent their son early to the court of Guntram, King of Burgundy. There a holy inclination for the reading of the divine Scriptures soon gave him a distaste for human grandeur, and made him prefer the service of the King of heaven to that of the kings of the earth. He went to Tours, accompanied by only two servants and without his parents' knowledge, had his hair cut there on the tomb of St. Martin, and took there the humble habit of clerics. His parents, distressed that he was no longer at court and not knowing what had become of him, found no one who could give them news of him. St. Syagrius, Bishop of Autun, having learned what had happened, sent for Aunarius from Tours, kept him with him, took care of his education and made him pass through all the degrees of the clerical state; so that after the death of St. Etherius the people and clergy of Auxerre unanimously chose him to succeed him. His consecration took place at Auxerre itself on the day of the feast of St. Germanus, 31 July 573.

It was not long before all the merit of the new pastor was known: he showed his love for the citizens, made his vigilance over the clergy felt, proved his charity towards the poor, and distinguished himself in all that concerned the service of God. His face, say the authors of his life, resembled that of an angel, his sermons were of a moving eloquence, and he was easy of access. He ordered that prayers should be said every day in each of the parishes of his diocese, fixed the hour at which all the archpriests and abbots should celebrate the night office every Sunday, attended the councils that met at Paris (573) and at Mâcon (583 and 585), and assembled a synod in his episcopal city about 585 for the notification and execution of the canons of the last Council of Mâcon that we have just mentioned. He himself added forty-five disciplinary statutes to them. The name of St. Aunarius is found among those of the bishops who, in 589, worked for the pacification of the troubles that had arisen in the monastery of Sainte-Croix at Poitiers. This pious prelate was honoured with two letters from Pope Pelagius II, and died on 25 September 603, leaving several estates of his patrimony to the church of Saint-Étienne and to that of Saint-Germain, where he was buried. His episcopate had lasted thirty years, one month and twenty-three days. Aunarius was truly the head of a family of Saints: he had for his brother the venerable Austrinus, Bishop of Orléans, and his sister Austregildis or Agia, honoured with a public cult, was the mother of St. Lupus, Archbishop of Sens. He had the happiness of bringing up in his clergy St. Outrille or Austregisilus, who became Archbishop of Bourges, and, in his monastery, the celebrated Valery, later abbot of a monastery situated in the diocese of Amiens.

We owe to the zeal of this prelate two works which he had written by a priest named Stephen the African, on the lives of St. Amator and St. Germanus: the first of these works is in prose and the other in verse. Constantius, a priest of Lyon, had already written the latter life in prose. In 1567 the Huguenots profaned the relics of the holy Bishop of Auxerre.

Gallia Christiana nova; Godescard; Baillet.

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[1] Some authors have thought that this Cleophas was the same as Cleophas the husband of the other Mary, the sister of the Blessed Virgin, the brother of St. Joseph and the paternal uncle of Jesus. But there is every reason to think that the question here is of another, much younger Cleophas. For Cleophas the Elder had died, according to the testimony of several Fathers. Besides, it is hardly likely that, after his four sons, James, Simon, Jude and Joses, had attached themselves to Jesus as disciples, their old father should likewise have become a disciple of Christ and undertaken to preach the Gospel. He must, like Zebedee, have contented himself with the part of a simple believer, not that of a preacher and missionary. — The Abbé Maistre, *Histoire des soixante- douze disciples*; Baillet; *Acta Sanctorum*, 25 September.

[2] St. Lupus spent the first years of his life in the monastery of L'Île-Barbe (*Insula Barbara*), near Lyon, of which he became the eleventh abbot; the brilliance of his virtues caused him to be chosen, on the death of St. Viventiolus (of St. Eucherius II, according to others), to succeed him in the metropolitan see of Lyon. He had much to suffer from the troubles that followed the death (1 May 524) of Sigismund, King of Burgundy, and could fulfil his duties in peace only when the city of Lyon had passed under Frankish rule through the division of the kingdom of Burgundy made by Childebert and Clotaire. He presided over the third Council of Orléans (5 May 538), died on 22 September 542 and was buried at L'Île-Barbe. As devout as he was zealous for the defence of the true faith and the maintenance of discipline, he had governed the Church of Lyon for nearly eighteen years (524–542). A church had been raised under his invocation, and Mgr Camille de Neuville, Archbishop of Lyon (1654–1693), had had it restored; it disappeared during the revolutionary storm. — *Gallia Christiana nova*, and the *Proper* of Viviers.

[3] See his life on 22 January, the day of the translation of his relics.

[4] See the previous day.

[5] See that day, vol. II, page 543.

[6] We gave his life on the previous day.

[7] See 17 September.

[8] We gave his life on 18 September.

[9] See the previous day.

[10] We gave his life on 24 September.

[11] See his life on 18 September.

[12] See his life on the previous day.

[13] St. Firmin the Confessor, third Bishop of Amiens, in the 4th century, whose life we give on this day.

[14] Alias: Céoulfroy, Ceufrey, Ceufrai, Ceufrol, Souffroy, *Ceolfridus*.

[15] Alias: Ostent, Ostend, Osten, Ostein, *Austindus*.

26 September

Martyrologies

Twenty-sixth day of September

MARTYROLOGE ROMAIN.

Roman Martyrology.

At Nicomedia, the birthday in heaven of the holy martyrs CYPRIAN and JUSTINA, virgin. Justina, after suffering many ill-treatments for Jesus Christ under the Emperor Diocletian and the governor Eutolmius, converted Cyprian, who, given up to magic, was striving to seduce her by his enchantments; she was afterwards martyred with him. Their bodies, which had been exposed to the beasts, were carried off by night by Christian sailors and taken to Rome; they were later translated to St. John Lateran, where they were given an honourable burial near the baptistery. 304. — At Rome, St. Callistratus, martyr, and forty-nine other soldiers, who, during the persecution of Diocletian, seeing that Callistratus, who had been shut up in a sack

and thrown into the sea, had come out of it safe and sound by the permission of heaven, were converted and suffered martyrdom with him. 304. — At Rome, St. EUSEBIUS, pope. 310. — At Bologna, St. Eusebius, bishop and confessor.[1] 400. — At Brescia, St. Vigilius, bishop.[2] 6th c. — At Albano, St. Senator. — Near Frascati, St. NILUS, abbot, founder of the monastery of Grottaferrata, a man of great holiness. 1005. — At Tifernum (Città di Castello), St. Amantius, priest, in whom God made the gift of miracles shine forth. About 900.

MARTYROLOGE DE FRANCE, REVU ET AUGMENTÉ.

Martyrology of France, revised and enlarged.

In the dioceses of Amiens, Angers, Chartres, Poitiers and Viviers, St. Thomas of Villanova, bishop and confessor, whose life we gave on 18 September. 1555. — In the diocese of Algiers, St. Arcadius, martyr at Caesarea in Mauretania (*Julia Cæsarea*), now Cherchell, on the north coast of Africa. Zeno, Bishop of Verona (Venetia), his contemporary and the author of his *Acts*, tells us that St. Arcadius had at first hidden himself so as not to see with his own eyes the sorrowful spectacle of the sufferings of his brethren the Christians; but, having learned that one of his relatives was being held in chains for having refused to reveal his hiding place, Arcadius hastened to declare himself a Christian. The joints of his limbs were cut off one after another, so that he might see himself reduced to the state of a living corpse. 3rd or 4th c. — Also in the diocese of Algiers, the memory of St. Severian and St. Aquila his wife, who were burned alive at Caesarea in Mauretania. Their acts perished in one of those upheavals of which the land of Africa has so often been the theatre. — In the diocese of Bayeux, St. Lô, Bishop of Coutances, mentioned in the Martyrology of France of 21 September. 575. — In the diocese of Beauvais, the feast of Our Lady of Mercy, whose history we gave on 24 September. 17th c. — In the diocese of Blois, the holy martyrs Cornelius and Cyprian, whose life we gave on 16 September. 252 and 258. — In the dioceses of Carcassonne and Nice, St. Eusebius, pope and confessor, mentioned in the Roman Martyrology of this day. — In the diocese of Gap, the feast of the Octave and of the translation of St. Arnoux (*Arnulphus*), bishop and confessor, whose life we gave on 19 September. 1070. — In the dioceses of Digne and Fréjus, St. Elzéar or Augias, Count of Ariano and confessor, whose life we shall give on 27 September, the day on which he is mentioned in the Roman Martyrology. 1325. — In the diocese of Fréjus, Blessed Delphine of Glandèves, wife of St. Elzéar of Ariano, whose life we shall give on 26 November. 1360. — In the dioceses of Cologne and Verdun, St. Maurice and his companions, the soldiers of the Theban Legion, martyrs, whose life we gave on 22 September. 286. — In the diocese of Clermont, St. Thecla of Iconium, virgin and martyr, whose life we gave on 23 September. 1st c. — In the diocese of Dijon, St. Januarius of Pozzuoli and his companions, martyrs, whose life we gave on 19 September. 305. — In the diocese of Mainz, St. Emmeran, bishop and martyr, patron of Regensburg, whose notice we sketched on 22 September. 652. — In the dioceses of Marseilles and Pamiers, St. ISARNUS or YSARN, abbot of Saint-Victor of Marseilles and confessor. 1048. — In the diocese of Perpignan, St. Linus, pope and martyr, whose life we gave on 23 September. 67. — In the dioceses of Saint-Flour and Tours, St. Eustace and his companions, whose life we gave on 20

September. 116. — In the former abbey of Vicoigne (*Viconia S.-Sebastiani, Casa Dei*, Order of Prémontré), in the diocese of Cambrai, Blessed Walter of Le Quesnoy (*Walterus Quercetanus*), second abbot of that monastery and confessor. He succeeded the Venerable Raoul and walked faithfully in his footsteps. Besides the good works that his eminent piety made him produce, he also contributed much to the development and prosperity of his monastery, which he governed for eighteen years and where he died in peace, leaving behind him a revered memory. 1229. — At Clermont in Auvergne, St. Eutropia, widow, on whom some details may be read in note 4 to the Roman Martyrology of 15 September. 5th c. — In Gascony, St. Devota, whom several hagiographers think to be the same as St. Devota, virgin and martyr, patroness of Monaco, whose life we gave on 27 January. 300. — At Tours, St. Eustochius, archbishop of that see and confessor, mentioned in the Roman Martyrology of 19 September, where we gave (note 2) some details of his life. 461.

— In the diocese of Sens, St. Aunarius, archbishop of that see and confessor, whose life we gave on the previous day. 603. — In the former abbey of Hohenbourg or Mont Sainte-Odile (*Altitona*, *Mons Sanctæ Odilæ*), in the diocese of Strasbourg, St. EUGENIA, abbess. 735.

MARTYROLOGE DES ORDRES RELIGIEUX.

Martyrology of the religious orders.

Martyrology of the Order of St. Basil. — At Città di Castello, St. Nilus, abbot, of the Order of St. Basil, founder of the monastery of Grottaferrata, a man of great holiness. 1005.

Martyrology of the Order of St. Benedict. — St. Thomas of Villanova, bishop and confessor, who is mentioned on 8 and 18 September.[3] 1555.

Martyrology of the Camaldolese Order. — The same as among the Benedictines.

Martyrology of the Congregation of Vallombrosa. — The same as among the Benedictines.

Martyrology of the Congregation of St. Sylvester. — On the Saturday before the third Sunday of September, the translation of the body of our Father St. Sylvester, abbot. — On the Saturday before the fourth Sunday of September, the octave of the translation of the body of our Father St. Sylvester, abbot.

Martyrology of the Cistercian Order. — On the Saturday before the third Sunday of September, the feast of the Seven Sorrows of the Blessed Virgin Mary, extended to the whole Church by the Sovereign Pontiff Pius VII.

Martyrology of the Order of Friars Preachers. — The feast of Our Lady of Mercy.[4] 17th c.

Martyrology of the three Orders of St. Francis. — At Salerno, Blessed Lucy or Luce, virgin, of the Third Order, who shone by many virtues and miracles. 1400.

Martyrology of the Order of Friars Minor. — The same as above.

Martyrology of the Capuchin Minors of St. Francis. — The same as above.

Martyrology of the Order of the Blessed Virgin Mary of Mount Carmel. — St. Gerard, bishop and martyr, of the Carmelite Order, who won the palm of martyrdom on the 24th of this month.[5] 1047.

Martyrology of the Order of Hermits of St. Augustine. — At Rome, on the Appian Way, Blessed Cornelius, pope and martyr, who, during the persecution of Diocletian, after being condemned to exile, was subjected to the torture of the leaded cords, after which he was beheaded, with twenty other persons of both sexes.[6] 252. — In Africa, the martyrdom of St. Cyprian, Bishop of Carthage, most illustrious for his holiness and his learning, who, after a painful exile under the Emperors Valerian and Gallienus, consummated his martyrdom by beheading six miles from Carthage, on the seashore. The feast of these two great Saints is celebrated in the Church on 14 and 16 September, and in our Order on the 26th of the same month.[7] 258.

Martyrology of the Order of the Servants of the Blessed Virgin Mary. — At Todi, the third translation of St. Philip Benizi, whose bones were solemnly transferred, with great miracles, from the church of San Marco to the church of Santa Maria delle Grazie, now called San Filippo Benizi.[8] 1285.

ADDITIONS FAITES D'APRÈS LES BOLLANDISTES ET AUTRES HAGIOGRAPHES.

Additions made from the Bollandists and other hagiographers.

At Hersfeld, a town of Hesse-Cassel on the Fulda, Blessed Meginhard or Meginher, abbot of the Benedictine monastery of that town and confessor. He was in his time a model of virtue and perfection for all Germany. His wide knowledge of the holy Scriptures and of the other sciences raised him to the dignity of abbot when

Rudolf, his predecessor, was called to fill the episcopal see of Paderborn on the Pader (Westphalia). After the fire of 1037, which reduced the whole abbey of Hersfeld to ashes, Meginhard raised it from its ruins and had the relics of St. Wigbert and St. Lull carried into the new church. He afterwards had, on the subject of his rights of tithe in Saxony, long disputes with Burchard, Bishop of Halberstadt on the Holtemme (Saxony); but heaven gave him the right of it: Burchard died miserably. 1059. — In Ireland, St. Colman Elo, founder and abbot of the monastery of Land-Elo, now Lin-Alli, in the county of King's County (the King's county). He was born in the county of Meath, and had left his country while still very young, to consecrate himself entirely to the service of God. Before founding Land-Elo, he had spent a considerable time both on Mount Blandin (province of

Leinster) and at Connor (Ulster). St. Columkille was his intimate friend. 610. — At Nicomedia, now Isnikmid, a town of Bithynia on the Propontis, St. Theoctistus or Theognitus, companion in martyrdom of Sts. Cyprian and Justina, mentioned in the Roman Martyrology of this day. 304. — In Sardinia, the holy martyrs Magigne (Migigne, Nigène, Migiune, Magne, Nigne, Migne), Nabor (Nabrot, Nabort, Nabost) and Faustin or Fastin, mentioned by the copies of St. Jerome. — At Milan, the capital of Lombardy, St. John of Meda, founder of the third Order of the Humiliati[9] and confessor. He was of the Oldrati family of Milan, which has given the Church two cardinals, four archbishops of Milan, two bishops of Novara, and a general to the Order of St. Dominic. The surname of Meda was given him because he was born in that place, which is ten miles from the town of Como, of which he was lord; but he renounced all the riches of the earth and withdrew into the solitude of Rondenario, on the river Coscia, some distance from the town of Como, where it is claimed that, as he was one day at prayer, the Blessed Virgin appeared to him and, showing him a white habit, ordered him to go and join the Humiliati of Milan; he was received into the convent of Brera, of which he became superior. He then had his religious adopt the Rule of St. Benedict and the white habit. As for himself, he gave himself to preaching, and made so many conversions that a great number of persons entered that Order. Several gave him their goods, which enabled St. John of Meda to create several establishments in Lombardy, and won him the surname of Propagator of the Order of the Humiliati. After governing his monastery for many years, he died, laden with years and merits. Alexander III (1159–1181) inscribed him in the catalogue of the Saints. His tomb is seen in the church of Rondenario, where he was buried, and which is occupied today by the Clerks Regular of Somasca. 1159.

SAINT CYPRIAN AND SAINT JUSTINA, MARTYRS AT NICOMEDIA, IN BITHYNIA

304. — Pope: St. Marcellinus. — Roman Emperor: Diocletian.

> *Où est la crainte de Dieu, là est aussi la chasteté; mais sans cette crainte la chasteté n'existe pas.*
>
> *Where the fear of God is, there too is chastity; but without that fear chastity does not exist.*
>
> *St. John Chrysostom.*

The light of Our Lord Jesus Christ had come down from heaven upon the world, the oracles of the Prophets were being fulfilled; everywhere the word of God was multiplying the faithful, and all who believed in God the Father, and in Jesus Christ Our Lord, and in the Holy Spirit, were baptized. Among these new conquests of the faith we must count the virgin Justina, whose father, named Elusius, lived in the city of Antioch, near the place called Daphnis. One day she had heard the preaching of the deacon Praulius; from her window, where she was sitting, she had been able to follow the account of the wonders of the Most High. Praulius told how God our Saviour had taken human nature; how, according to the Prophets, He had been born of a virgin named Mary; and how the Magi had adored Him. Then he spoke of the appearing of the star, the songs of glory of the Angels at His cradle, the power of the signs and wonders that He had worked, the virtue of His cross, His resurrection from the dead, His manifestation to the disciples, His ascension into heaven, where

He is seated at the right hand of the Father, and finally His reign, for ever immortal. The blessed virgin, on hearing this preaching of the deacon, could not bear the flame of the Holy Spirit that was consuming her; she would have liked to see face to face Him who was instructing her, and in the ardour that devoured her soul she said to her mother: “Mother, listen to me and believe the words of your daughter. These gods that we worship every day are nothing. Silver perhaps, or gold, or iron, or brass, or lead, or stone, or wood, or even the bones of the dead: there are our idols. Let only a Galilean come; even before he has touched them with his finger, he will break them all together by a single word of his mouth.”

Her mother answered her: “Be silent, and take care that your father does not hear such talk.” The daughter went on: “O my mother, it is time that my father, as well as you, should know that I worship Christ, Him whom the deacon Praulius taught me to know during the few days that I was able to listen to him at the window, as he told us all the wonders that God has worked. Now this God always helps, by the sign of the cross, those who fear Him; for the Christians say that there is no other God by whom we can be saved.” Having spoken thus, she went to the church to pray. Her mother, going up at once to her husband’s room, told him all that her daughter had just said to her. They drew out their conversation far into the night, until at last sleep came upon them. But during their sleep Edusius and his wife saw in a dream the army of the Angels, and in the midst of the Angels Christ, who said: “Come to Me, and I will give you the kingdom of heaven.” In the morning, when they awoke, full of wonder and amazement because of this vision, they took their daughter with them and presented themselves at the house of God. The deacon Praulius brought them in; they asked him to take them to the bishop Optatus: the deacon having done this, they prostrated themselves at the bishop’s feet and begged him to give them the mark of Christ.

But the bishop would consent only when the husband and wife had made known to him the vision in which Christ had shown Himself to them. At the same time they told him of the desire their daughter had to consecrate herself to God. Edusius had his beard and his long hair cut off (for he was a priest of the idols); then all three, prostrate at the bishop’s feet, received the mark of Christ. After a year and six months of preparation, Edusius was found worthy of the honour of the priesthood and renounced the world. As for the young virgin, her happiness was to come often to the church of God. Now a young advocate of the city, named Agladius, who often saw her going there, conceived a keen desire to marry her. He had her asked for by a great many persons of every rank; but the virgin always answered: “I have been betrothed to Christ, the heavenly Bridegroom; He will keep me pure and spotless until the day of His coming.” Then, gathering a crowd of men sold to his passion, Agladius lay in ambush and watched for the moment when the virgin would go to the church, intending to carry her off by force. At the sight of the danger, the women and girls who were with her raised cries and spread the alarm in the house of Edusius. Swords and staves were quickly taken up, and the ravishers were put to flight. The virgin went on going to the church and giving herself to prayer; and she always triumphed over the many attempts of which she was the object, by tracing the sign of the cross on her forehead. Agladius therefore had recourse to a skilful magician named Cyprian, and promised him two talents of gold if by his evil arts he could win him the heart of the virgin Justina. He did not know, unhappy man, that the power of Christ is invincible. Cyprian readily entered into the designs of Agladius; soon he shared his passion for Justina, and resolved to act in his own name.

By means of the secrets of his magic art he called up a demon. This demon, answering his summons, said to him: “Why have you called me?” Cyprian said to him: “I love a virgin of the sect of the Galileans; can you win me her heart and persuade her to marry me?” The demon, in spite of his powerlessness, promised everything. And Cyprian said to him: “Show me your works, and I will believe in your power over the virgin Justina.” The demon answered: “I deserted the standard of God to obey my father; I have thrown men into confusion, and torn Angels from heaven. It was I who led Cain to kill his brother, and persuaded the Jews to crucify Christ. I have overthrown cities, I have shaken walls, I have undermined palaces; and these are only the least effects of my power; a young girl will not triumph over it. Take, then, the mixtures that you know,

and go and pour them round the virgin's house on the outside; then I will come to your help, I will inspire her with the true sentiments of my father, and at that very hour she will obey me."

It was in the middle of the night; now, when the third hour came, the virgin of God rose to pay the Lord the homage of her prayer. All at once she felt the impetuous attack of the demon; at once she made the sign of the cross over the whole house, asking God to put her enemy to flight. "Almighty God," she said, "only Son of the Father, You who created man in Your image and likeness, and formed Eve from the rib of Adam; You gave them both to enjoy every creature in innocence; and when, yielding to the seductions of the serpent, they had deserved death, You had pity on their misery, granting them, with the remission of sins, the resurrection of the flesh. O Lord! every creature that has come from Your hands glorifies You as the true God. Lord, Redeemer God, help me and strengthen Your servant, make me worthy of You; for Satan wishes at this moment to tempt my soul." Her prayer being ended, she again made the sign of the cross over her whole body and breathed upon the demon. Then the demon went off to Cyprian and presented himself before him.

Cyprian said to him: "Well! why have you not brought me this virgin?" The demon said to him: "Do not force me to confess what I cannot say; I saw a sign, and I trembled." Cyprian laughed at his weakness and sent him away; then, having recourse a second time to the secrets of his magic, he called up another, more powerful demon. This one, like the first, boasted of his strength and said to Cyprian: "I have heard your wishes and I have seen the powerlessness of him whom you called before me. Take up again, then, the preparations of your art, and go and pour them round the girl's house; I will come afterwards, and I undertake to win her." Cyprian did what the demon had told him. In the middle of the night the virgin Justina had risen, according to her custom, to pray. She said in the fervour of her prayer: "In the middle of the night I rise to sing Your praises, because of the judgments of Your justice, O God of all creation, Lord of mercy! for it is You, sovereign ruler of heaven and earth, who confounded the devil and gave men the power to trample underfoot the strength of the enemy; it is You who snatched the holy prophet Daniel from the lions' den and destroyed Bel with his dragon; You have enlightened our darkness and given the dead back to life; You have confounded death and given men the resurrection. Tender Father, do not reject me; pardon Your servant, O almighty King! Lord, keep me in chastity, and Yourself guard my lamp, lest it go out; so that I may enter with You into rest, O my Saviour, God of holiness and of purity! To You be glory with God the Father in the unity of the Holy Spirit! Amen."

She spoke, and, tracing the sign of the cross upon herself in the name of Jesus Christ, she breathed upon the demon; the demon at once left her and came back to Cyprian. All covered with confusion, he stood before him, upright and silent. Cyprian said to him: "Where is the virgin to whom I sent you?" The demon answered: "I have been vanquished; I am afraid to answer your question, for I saw a sign that filled me with terror." Cyprian therefore sent him away, mocking his weakness; and, having recourse for the third time to the secrets of his art, he called up Satan in person, him whom the demons call their father, and said to him: "What is this powerlessness to which you are condemned? A virgin has triumphed single-handed over all your power." Satan answered him: "I flatter myself that I shall bring her to you presently; only hold yourself ready." Cyprian said to him: "Tell me, what is the instrument and the sign of your victory?" Satan answered him: "I am going to kindle against her the rage of the furies; by illusions and phantoms I will set her body on fire with the passion of evil, and I will prepare her like a victim for your shameful desires." At these words Satan showed himself to the virgin of God in the form of a young girl. Having entered her room, he sat down on her bed and said to her: "I have been sent to you today by Christ, to learn to live like you in chastity. But tell me first, what is the reward of the battles you have to sustain to keep your virginity? I see you worn out by abstinence." The holy virgin Justina answered: "The reward is immense and the pain slight." Satan said to her: "In the beginning God blessed Adam and Eve, and said to them: 'Increase and multiply and fill the earth.' It seems to me that if we persevere in virginity we shall have despised the word of God, and deserved

to be treated at His judgment as rebels who disdain the orders of their master and refuse to obey him." At these words the virgin felt her heart inflamed, as though the serpent had distilled a deadly venom into it. In her trouble she rose and wished to go out, so violent were the thoughts that stirred in her soul; but God, who never permits His servants to be tempted beyond their strength, revealed to the virgin, by His Holy Spirit, that it was Satan who was speaking to her thus. At once she made the sign of the cross upon herself, said a prayer, and at the same time breathed upon the infernal spirit. Satan vanished before her eyes, like wax that melts at the approach of fire, and he appeared no more. The virgin then recovered from her trouble; the flame that was burning her in her flesh had been suddenly put out.

She cried out: "Glory to You, O Christ, Son of God, our Saviour! In the perils in which Your servants are on the point of foundering, You save them and bring them back to the light; they were running after a strange will, and You make them embrace Your will as their guide. Lord, my God, do not permit Your servant to be vanquished by Satan, the prince of evil; let not the jealous serpent defile the purity of Your dove; keep me spotless for Your divine holiness; pierce my flesh with the goad of Your fear."

Satan, confounded, appeared again to Cyprian, and Cyprian said to him: "You too, as I see, have been vanquished! How is it that a Christian virgin all alone has been enough to subdue you? Tell me what is the cause of her victory." Satan answered him: "I cannot tell you; but I saw a terrible sign and I trembled; at once I fled, and the form I had taken vanished like smoke. You wish to know what mysterious virtue has given the victory to this girl; I ask an oath of you; take it, and I will answer you." Cyprian said to him: "By whom do you wish me to swear?" Satan answered him: "Swear by my wonders and my power, which remain unimpaired, that you will never separate yourself from me." Cyprian said: "I swear it by your wonders and your great power: never will I separate myself from you." Satan, full of confidence in this word, answered: "I saw the sign of the Crucified, and at once terror seized me; I felt my whole being melt away like wax in the presence of God." Cyprian said to him: "The Crucified is greater than you, then? Craftsman of lies, why did you lay a snare for my soul, when you were conscious of your weakness? If the mere shadow of Christ is enough to vanquish you, what will you do when He comes Himself in person? His name, the sign of His Passion, strike you powerless; will you be able to snatch us from His hands when He comes to punish? Flee, then, far from me, cruel enemy of truth and of piety; too long have I been the plaything of your impostures." At these words Satan threw himself upon him to strangle him. Cyprian, on the point of succumbing under the violence of his grip, remembered the sign the virgin had used, and cried out: "God of Justina, help me." At this word he recovered his strength; his hand was free again, and he made the sign of the cross. Satan then left him, but hurling curses and threats at him. Cyprian, repeating the sign of Christ over himself, was not frightened by them. He came to the bishop, threw himself at his feet and said to him: "Servant of the Most High, mark me with the sacred sign and catechize me, that I may know Christ."

But the blessed bishop Anthimus, fearing that he had come to draw the Church into his errors, drove him away, saying: "Be content, Cyprian, with those who are outside; you can do nothing against the Church of God; for the power of Christ is invincible." — "I too know," answered Cyprian, "that the power of Christ is invincible. This very night I sent two demons and Satan himself to the holy virgin Justina to seduce her; but both the demons and Satan were put to flight by the power of the cross. That is why I implore you to have pity on me and to save my soul." The bishop gave thanks to God, blessed him and promised to receive him into the ranks of the catechumens, saying: "Make haste, my son, to go to the church of God, and do not cease to offer your prayers to the Lord." Cyprian, back at his house, broke all his idols; he spent the rest of the night in prayers and tears: "How," he cried, "shall I dare to appear before the power of Christ, after committing so many crimes? How will my lips be able to bless Him, after having so often called upon the unclean demons and eaten the meats defiled in their sacrifices? O God, I implore Your mercy; have pity on me!" The next day, which was the day of Holy Saturday, he went to the church, making this prayer to God in his heart: "Lord Jesus Christ, if I am worthy to be called Your servant, deign to make me hear it by the voice

of Your Holy Spirit." His desire was to receive, in the reading of the holy Scriptures, a word of consolation.

Now, at the moment when he touched the sacred threshold of the church, he heard the faithful singing the psalms aloud and saying: "Save Your servant, for he hopes in You"; then, in the reading from the Prophet: "Behold, My servant has received understanding; he shall be exalted and filled with glory"; and again in the Psalm: "You have seen, O Lord; keep silence no longer; Lord, do not go far from me"; then these words of the Apostle: "Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law"; and finally in the holy Gospel: "This is my son; he was dead, and I have found him again." Meanwhile the deacon, raising his voice, said: "Catechumens, withdraw." Cyprian remained seated. The deacon Asterius said to him: "Cyprian, get up and go out." Cyprian answered him: "I have become a servant of Christ, and you drive me out!" The deacon said to him: "Have you become a perfect servant of God?" Cyprian answered: "Long live Christ, who has confounded the demons, saved the virgin and had pity on me! I will not go out until I have become a perfect servant of Christ." The deacon made this answer known to the bishop. The bishop sent for Cyprian and, according to the custom of the Church, asked him what he wanted; he then had him tell, before all the faithful, the events that had led him to ask for baptism; finally, after catechizing him, he baptized him.

Some time afterwards Cyprian was made a deacon of the holy mysteries of Christ; grace was given him against the demons, with the power of healing all diseases, and he converted a great number of Gentiles to the Christian faith. He was irreproachable in his life, and his morals were pure and spotless. At the end of a year he was promoted to the priesthood, whose holy functions he exercised for sixteen years. But at last the blessed Anthimus, foreseeing his approaching death, called together an assembly of bishops and consecrated Cyprian as his successor; almost immediately afterwards, giving back his soul to God, he fell asleep in the peace of Christ. Cyprian, having become bishop, placed the virgin Justina in a monastery, of which she was abbess and mother, with authority over a great number of other holy congregations of virgins; for Cyprian enlightened souls by the word of Christ and converted them, multiplying every day in a wonderful way the flock that had been entrusted to him.

Meanwhile, the cockle having become mixed with the good seed in the field of the householder, persecution was not slow to break out. The faithful people were scattered; the wolf scattered the flock of Christ. In the midst of these dangers, Cyprian strengthened all the brethren by his letters, not only in the city but throughout the whole region, and he succeeded in snatching a great number from the wolf's tooth. But the serpent, envious of these successes, suggested to Eutolmius, count of the East, that Cyprian, the teacher of the Christians, was ruining the glory of the gods; that, in concert with a certain virgin, he was perverting souls by his sorceries, at the same time as by his letters he was stirring up the East and the whole world. The count, full of anger at this revelation, had the two accused put in chains and gave orders to the prefects to have them taken under good escort to Damascus. When they had arrived, the count questioned them: "Are you not that teacher of the Christians who once gathered, under the power of the gods, many worshippers, but who today deceives men by the sign of a Crucified, flatters their ears with a new doctrine and teaches them to prefer to the immortal gods a man hanged on a cross?" — "And you yourself," answered Cyprian, "tell me how you dare thus to lift yourself up in the pomp of a vain pride and give yourself over to this diabolical madness? Once I was, as you are today, chained by the enemy and blinded by the wisdom of the Gentiles; I have caused a great number of souls to perish; to a great number I have taught the infamies of vice; but Christ saved me through the holiness of a virgin. An advocate named Agladius, of the family of Claudius, loved her passionately and wished to marry her. His efforts having been in vain, he had come to ask me for a magic preparation that might overcome her resistance. I, trusting in the secrets of my books, called up a demon and sent him to her; but the virgin was able to render him powerless by the sign of Christ. I began again as many as three times; and the third time I sent her the prince of the demons, Satan. Always with the same sign, the virgin triumphed. Then I wished to know what the power of this sign was; I adjured Satan, and Satan revealed everything to me. At once, touched with repentance, I went to find the bishop, the

one who preceded me in this city; I brought him my books of magic; and in the presence of the chief men of the city I tore them up with my own hands and threw them into the fire. I implore you, then, to renounce, as I have done, the vain follies of the idols, and to come with me into the house of the Lord. There the true God is glorified in truth and piety: there you will learn to know the invincible power of Christ."

The count, boiling with anger and to stifle the cries of a guilty conscience, ordered the martyr to be hung up and had him torn with iron claws. As for the virgin, he had her scourged with hard thongs by two executioners who relieved each other in turn. During this torture Justina sang these words: "Glory to You, O God, who, in spite of my unworthiness, have chosen me according to Your good pleasure and have admitted me to the honour of suffering these torments for the glory of Your name." At length the strength of the executioners was giving out, and the Saint repeated her hymn to the Lord unceasingly. The prefect had to order the cruel torture to be stopped. For his part Cyprian, while he was being torn in the most barbarous way, did not even think of complaining. The count said to him: "Why so much folly and so little care for your fate?" The blessed Cyprian answered: "It is you who have shown improvidence and folly, by becoming an apostate, a deserter from the faith of Christ; for as for me, the divine Shepherd knows me today, and I am eager to reach the palace of heaven, so as to enjoy the eternal goods that your tortures will have earned me."

At these words the tyrant, grown more furious, cried out: "If torments earn you the kingdom of heaven, I will add others still more cruel." However, when he saw the martyr on the point of dying under the tortures, he had him thrown into prison. As for the virgin, she was entrusted to Terentius, who was to keep her in his house. That house, when the Blessed one entered it, was entirely lit up with the grace of Christ. After some days the count again had the Saints brought before him, and he said to Cyprian: "I wished to advise you not to persist in dying for a dead man, whose sorceries and magic you are under." The blessed Cyprian answered: "Such a death gives eternal life to those who have desired it." Then the count, after a moment's deliberation, had a great fire lit under a huge cauldron, which he had filled with pitch, wax and fat; then he ordered the holy martyrs to be thrown into it. The fire spared the blessed Cyprian; as for the virgin, at the moment when she was coming near to enter it, the enemy of all good, Satan, inspired her with some fear. Then the blessed Cyprian said to her: "Come with me, tender sheep of Christ; is it not you who opened to me the gates of heaven and showed me the glory of the Lord, you who vanquished the demons and brought to nothing their prince, Satan, by the power of the sign of the cross?" At these words the Saint, making the sign of the cross upon herself, sprang into the cauldron. But soon, amid the heat of the flames, both felt as it were a gentle dew that refreshed their limbs and gave them new vigour. Then Cyprian, beginning a canticle of thanksgiving, cried out: "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men of good will! for since Satan has been cast down from his throne, peace has filled the world. Christ, having come upon earth, has chained the devil, and by the almighty power of the cross He has mercifully delivered the world. That is why I give You thanks, O God, Lord of mercy, for having deigned to make me endure these torments for the glory of Your name, and I beseech You to receive these two victims whom we offer You as a holocaust of sweet odour." The count cried out, on hearing this prayer: "I will today convict you of imposture and make known to all the vain frauds of your magic." At the same time a certain Athanasius, who, formerly a priest of the idols, had become the count's assessor and friend, said to him: "Let your power command me to stand in the midst of the fires of the cauldron; I will, in the name of the gods, triumph over the pretended power of Christ." The count at once gave leave by a sign to Athanasius, who went up to the cauldron, saying: "Hercules, your name is great among the gods; Aesculapius, you are called their father, and it is you who give health to men." But hardly was he a few steps from the flame when the fire enveloped him, his belly burst, his entrails poured out on the ground, and his bones were devoured in a moment; while the blessed Cyprian remained with the virgin in the midst of the flames without suffering the slightest harm, and glorified the Lord.

At this sight the count cried out: "Invincible, then, is the power of Christ! But what grieves me deeply is that He has killed a priest of the gods, the only friend I had here below." He therefore sent for one of his kinsmen

named Terentius, and said to him: “What am I to do to these evildoers?” Terentius answered him: “Beware of undertaking anything against the Saints, and do not try to resist the truth; for the God of the Christians is invincible; but send them to the emperor, with a report of all that has happened.” The count did in fact make the report; it was couched in these terms: “To the mighty emperor who rules over the world, to Diocletian, greeting. According to the law of your empire, I have had Cyprian, the teacher of the Christians, arrested, and at the same time a virgin named Justina, as you will learn from the acts that I send you. They have refused to obey, in spite of the terrifying tortures to which I have subjected them; that is why I have had to send them back before your majesty.” The emperor read through the acts of the holy martyrs, and was astonished that they had been able to withstand such torments. Then, having taken counsel, he pronounced the sentence: “Cyprian,” it said, “the teacher of the inhabitants of Antioch, and with him the virgin Justina, have followed the senseless sect of the Christians and despised life; to our gods they have preferred their Christ; therefore I order that they be beheaded with the sword.”

They were led to the banks of the river that flows through the city of Nicomedia. There they obtained from the executioner a few moments to pray and to commend to God all the churches and all the faithful. Then the blessed Cyprian, having made the sign of the cross, placed the blessed virgin on his right; for he judged it fitting that she should be executed first. When she had fallen under the sword, the blessed Cyprian cried out: “Glory to You, O Christ!” At that moment Theoctistus happened to pass by the place of execution; he caught sight of Cyprian and embraced him tenderly. The assessor Phuléanus, witnessing this touching scene, flew into a great rage; he had Theoctistus arrested and had him beheaded at the same time as the blessed Cyprian. By his order the bodies of the martyrs were thrown on the refuse-ground, to the north of the city. They remained thus exposed to the beasts for several days; at last, at the end of six days, some of the faithful of Rome, sailors by profession, having learned that Cyprian had died in the faith of their Church, managed to deceive all the guards and carried off the bodies of the martyrs, with the signs that were to establish their authenticity. They then hastened to regain their boats and return towards Rome, happy to possess this rich treasure. On their arrival they laid it at the feet of Rufina, a Roman virgin, whose family was connected with the most illustrious names. Rufina had these holy relics placed in an honourable spot, where all who visited them received the healing of their infirmities and blessed the Lord. They were afterwards translated to the church of St. John Lateran, which was called the basilica of Constantine, and honourably laid near the baptistery. This triple martyrdom took place under the consulship of Diocletian, in the famous city of Nicomedia.

St. Cyprian and St. Justina are represented holding a book and a lily. Cyprian is also represented standing in a magic circle, surrounded by demons whom he has called up to seduce the Saint, who is protected by an angel. — Justina is represented seated, reading and holding a branch of flowers. This is the moment when she is exposed to the seductions of the magician Cyprian, whom she succeeded in converting. In the sky an angel protects the Saint, who holds a lily, the symbol of virginity. — St. Cyprian and St. Justina are sometimes represented beheaded.

We have borrowed from the Bollandists these acts, so celebrated in ecclesiastical antiquity, so popular in the Middle Ages and so worthy of being saved from oblivion. The translation is due to the Benedictines.

SAINT EUGENIA OF OBERNAI, ABBESS OF HOHENBURG OR MONT-SAINTE-ODILE, IN THE DIOCESE OF STRASBOURG

735. — Pope: Gregory III. — King of France: Theuderic II.

> *Heureux est l’homme en qui habite la divine charité, parce qu’il porte Dieu dans son cœur, selon cette parole de l’Évangile : Dieu est charité, et celui qui donne dans la charité demeure en Dieu.*
>
> *Happy is the man in whom divine charity dwells, because he carries God in his heart, according to this word of the Gospel: God is charity, and he who gives in charity abides in God.*

St. Ephrem, Ascetical Discourses.

Eugenia, sprung from a princely family, was born towards the end of the 7th century at Obernai. Her father, named Adalbert, was Duke of Alsace; her mother, Gerlinde, came of a family no less illustrious than Adalbert's: both were remarkable for a lively faith and an eminent piety; and so they taught their child early to fear God and to love Him. Eugenia had received from heaven a tender and sensitive heart and good inclinations to virtue: a happy presage of an angelic life that was to be consumed entirely in innocence and in the fervour of divine love, and that was as it were the first sketch of the holiness to which she was afterwards to rise. Early on, our Saint felt herself strongly drawn to the practice of all the Christian virtues, and particularly of those of which her pious mother gave her the example. And, seeing the ardour with which she followed this attraction, one might have thought that Eugenia, seized with a generous desire to rival her, had formed the design of surpassing her.

Thus prevented by grace, she spread around her the fragrance of modesty and piety. All the mothers envied her mother for her; the children of her age liked to be with no one but her; her angelic character and the gentle serenity spread over her brow won her the hearts of all who came near her, and already in her obligingness, in her gentleness, there showed through that charity of which her life was to be one continual act. The joy of others was her pleasure; their sorrows made her tears flow. To all this Eugenia further joined the most attractive bodily qualities. With the most modest bearing and a noble gravity she united such sobriety in her words and so touching a simplicity in her ways, that her presence alone commanded respect; but a holy ignorance hid all these gifts from her and kept her from being vain of them. For to the beauty that captivates the hearts of men she joined a treasure a thousand times more precious, piety, which wins the friendship of God.

Everything combined to carry Eugenia towards the world: the nobility of her race, the great wealth of her parents, the beauty and charms of her person, her early maturity of reason, the angelic gentleness of her character and the graces of her mind; but a divine inspiration made her value all these advantages at their just worth, and drew her towards things more solid and less perishable. Providence seemed to have loaded her with all these gifts of nature only to make the triumph of grace the more brilliant. Eugenia was born and was growing up under the wing of God: her pure heart wishes to taste only the delights of piety. Renouncing the frivolous amusements of childhood, making up by fervour for the weakness of her age, her soul flooded with grace and her understanding enlightened by heavenly light ran ahead of her years, and young, very young still, her virtue shone with an altogether divine brightness: one could guess in her the beloved of the God of innocence. While others went to offer their incense to the idol of laughter and games, Eugenia raised her pure hands in secret to the Creator and offered Him the sacrifice of her innocent lips. From then on she was seen to seek in retirement a refuge against dissipation, which is as it were the element of early youth. She went out towards the Author of her being by the pious movements and burning desires of her heart. Her spirit, raised above the earth, had its conversation only in heaven. Now at the foot of the altars, penetrated with the presence and the majesty of Him before whom the cherubim bow down, cover themselves with their wings and are lost in reverence, she made her vows rise to the foot of the throne of God with deep recollection, humble modesty and an altogether childlike grace. Now, in some solitary and quiet spot, she meditated on the law of the Lord: all her happiness was to hear people speak of God and of the mysteries of our faith. No one could tire of admiring this angel of earth, so favoured by God at an age still so tender! People were delighted to find, in the midst of a seductive world, this flower of innocence and purity, this young soul, so beautiful in candour and divine love, which, without the help of any mortal, had risen to so high a perfection.

Eugenia spent peaceful and pure days, divided between the care of her sanctification and the ordinary duties of life. A tender and submissive daughter, she had for her parents a lively and respectful love; Adalbert and Gerlinde, for their part, neglected neither prayers nor good works to draw down upon their child an abundance of heavenly blessings. Every morning the pious duchess took her to the chapel of the castle, and

there, prostrate before the image of Jesus and Mary, she consecrated her to their service and besought them to develop in her young heart all the Christian virtues. As she saw her strength develop, she applied herself with more assiduity to make the language of piety heard in her ears. She habitually fed her eyes with the sight of the most edifying objects, and her efforts, powerfully seconded by the inward unction of grace, met with so prompt a success that Gerlinde soon found herself obliged to moderate her daughter's fervour.

As the impulses of grace grew from day to day, Eugenia felt herself carried more and more towards the highest practices of perfection. The inward attraction she felt for solitude, where God speaks so intimately to the heart of those who love Him, thus grew every day; but, unable to hide from herself the obstacles she would meet in living in the world, she took the resolution of leaving it. This word of the Gospel: "He who shall leave his house, shall leave his father, his mother, his brothers or his sisters, or his fields, for my name's sake, shall receive a hundredfold and shall enjoy life everlasting," did not fall upon a cowardly heart. Determined to embrace the religious state, she chose the monastery of Hohenburg, where St. Odile, her aunt, had for some years been giving the example of virtue and making holiness flourish there. This monastery was then known for its piety, not only throughout Alsace, but also in France and Germany; and so Eugenia's parents could only applaud the choice of their beloved daughter. Struck by the virtue that seemed stamped upon her face, and no doubt enlightened by God about the hidden treasures of this heavenly soul, St. Odile had read in her niece's heart all the innocence and candour it held. She had recognized in her the precious seed of a future more glorious still. Guided by a divine inspiration, she did not hesitate to admit her into the number of her virgins in order to consecrate her to God, in spite of her young years, in spite of the fears of weakness and inconstancy that her youth might have inspired.

The first sacrifice that our Saint wished to offer to the Lord was that of her young years. Very young, she already said that she had promised God to consecrate her life to Him, to employ solely for His glory the days He would let her spend on earth. She said, too, that she would like to live in voluntary poverty, so as to be able more freely to help the sick, protect the weak and console the afflicted. And more than once, while she was speaking thus, her voice grew animated, her eyes shone with the purest joy; the faith that transported her soul was reflected on her brow; her eyes seemed lit up with divine love; something supernatural betrayed itself in her and already announced a privileged creature, and no one could doubt that the words that came from her mouth came from the abundance of her heart. As she knew that this earth, through sin, is no longer anything but a valley of sadness, whose desolation is softened and whose night is lit only by the light and under the influence of virtue, and that the world, in whatever rank one may be placed in it, is no longer a place of enjoyment, but rather of combat and self-denial, she gave thanks to heaven for having inspired her with the thought of leaving it and consecrating to God the first-fruits of her life.

St. Eugenia was approaching her fifteenth year: that was the age fixed by St. Odile for the public consecration of her niece to the Lord. The dawn of the fine day that was to witness it found the young virgin at prayer in a humble nook of the monastery of Hohenburg, where she had come the evening before with her parents and several of her childhood friends. She was pouring out her heart before God, and sweet tears flowed from her eyes onto the floor where she lay prostrate. When the hour of the pious ceremony had come, Adalbert and Gerlinde called their daughter; she came and threw herself at their feet, asking their blessing. Then, having received it, she rose and greeted with a smile her companions, who had followed her up the heights of Hohenburg to form a train for her and to be edified by the sight of her piety and modesty. She entered the sanctuary, accompanied by her father, her mother and her companions. The holy sacrifice begins: the nearer the moment came when Eugenia was going to give herself for ever to the God whom her heart had chosen, the more her fervour and piety redoubled. After the celebration of the divine mysteries, the humble servant of Jesus Christ comes forward; on her face shone a modesty and recollection that betrayed the sentiments with which her heart was filled. The bishop places on her head the white veil, emblem of chastity and of eternal union with the divine Bridegroom of her soul. From that day to the last of her life, Eugenia had

not a single thought, not a single beat of her loving heart, that was not for God. Her whole life will be, so to speak, only one long but sweet sighing.

All Eugenia's thoughts, all her movements, all her actions seem to have been concentrated in the desire to serve God and to deserve heaven. All her days are marked with the double seal of innocence and piety. Never was there seen in her that impetuosity of movement, that changeableness of impressions, that lightness of conduct, which are the usual portion of youth. Seeing her, one would have said that she belonged more to heaven than to earth, and a feeling of respect mingled with admiration when one caught sight of that gentle face, on coming from prayer, all lit up with a supernatural brightness. Eugenia was one of the small number of those souls whom sin never held under its sway. Thus it was that, under the eyes of God and of the angels, in silence and prayer, unknown to the world, she grew in wisdom and virtue as she advanced in age. St. Eugenia had understood early the unknown delights that are tasted in the service of God. And so her heart, where the storm of the passions had never rumbled, had nothing to prevent it from hearing the mysterious sounds of that divine voice which resounds in the sanctuary of the conscience.

After the death of St. Odile, which happened some time afterwards, Eugenia was designated to succeed her in the government of the monastery. Very different from those souls who willingly follow Jesus Christ on Thabor, but whom the crib and Calvary frighten and to whom the cross is repugnant, she sighed only after voluntary poverty and suffering. Initiated early into the mystery of that heavenly science of which the cross is the adorable object, she felt within herself that those alone are happy who love, suffer and pray. She knew that poverty and suffering had been the cherished companions of Jesus during the whole course of His mortal life, and that the doctrine of this God-Man rests, in a manner, on this fundamental maxim: There is no happiness here below save in suffering and spiritual poverty. Blessed are the poor in spirit! Blessed are they who suffer! Our Saint, whose heart had tasted this doctrine of the divine Master, at the same time as her mind had sounded its depth, drew with invincible energy from this spring of living waters that drink of chosen souls, never ceasing to desire ardently this feature of likeness to the Saviour God. To this burning love for God, with which she was holily inflamed and which constantly renewed in her heart the fervour and admirable joy with which she had consecrated herself to the Lord from her young years, St. Eugenia joined the most implacable hatred of herself.

Animated by the ardent desire to conform herself in everything to Jesus Christ, and making the mystery of the Passion the unceasing object of her meditations, the holy abbess had come to understand that Jesus Christ, that spotless victim, burning with the greatest love for men, had passed His mortal life in continual privations and sufferings, from the crib to that supreme instant when He accomplished the mystery of our redemption. And Eugenia, amid the ineffable sweetness of the graces with which He flooded her, eager for sufferings, living, so to speak, on austerities and penances, pursued that course with a joyful ardour that was to leave her only at her last breath. And so it could be said of her that she was as it were a living host sacrificed by penance. She fed on the most tasteless food, often fasted on bread and water, took only a hasty light sleep on the bare ground, braved the most bitter cold of winter, and mortified her senses to the point of refusing them the most innocent satisfactions. Such were the mortifications that she practised right into the arms of death.

Never did a bodily nature come closer to the pure essence of spirits. Her prayer rose up in holy aspirations, in transports of love; she thrilled with gladness at it. Her prayer greeted, as at the morning of a fine day, the mystical sun that enlightened her, warmed her, flooded her. She was often, in her moments of ardent love, consoled and sustained by ravishing ecstasies and unspeakable delights. It was not only her spirit that soared into the bosom of God; her body itself was carried along and as it were absorbed by her soul. Her feet rested only reluctantly on the ground, and the least remembrance of heaven, where her thoughts and desires were, lifted her above the earth like a sigh of innocence and love. It was then that her soul understood with wonderful clearness the vanity of all earthly things and the infinite love that is due to God alone. It could be

said that the Lord's benefits flowed upon St. Eugenia in such profusion that she was like those pure intelligences who lie prostrate before the Eternal. She possessed God in so intimate a manner that it sometimes seemed to her that she was altogether filled with His essence.

Love of her neighbour, as we have already said, had been noticeable in her from childhood; our Saint drew it, like all her other virtues, from those views of faith and of love of God that are so fruitful in acts of perfection. Wherever she went, she seemed accompanied by the train of all the virtues. In her bearing, in her words and in all her works there was something angelic that revealed the beauty of her soul. Though abbess, she regarded herself as the humble servant of the monastery, the last of her nuns; her greatest happiness was to serve with her own hands these daughters unknown to the world, but in whom her faith saw so many precious stones that were one day to adorn the diadem of the heavenly Bridegroom of virgins. Her eyes were always open upon the poor and the unfortunate; they were for her the beloved of Jesus, and on that account they had a right to a particular love. St. Eugenia remembered these words of the divine Master: "As often as you have given to eat to one of the least of these my brethren, you have done it to me." With what zeal and what solicitude, with what touching compassion she relieved the needs of the unfortunate! She opened her arms to all the wretched; her heart was like a harbour of refuge for all the shipwrecked; as their number grew, she seemed to grow larger. Eugenia was their support, their protectress, the mother of widows and orphans; a consoler of the afflicted, she clothed some and gave hospitality to travellers; no one had more charity than she in drying the tears of those who came to implore her help and consoling them in their ills. Did she meet some unfortunate near the monastery, she at once helped him to climb the toilsome path that led to it, holding him up with her arms, and did not leave him until she had commended him to the care of her nuns and made sure that he would want for nothing. On Maundy Thursday, to imitate the humility of the Saviour, she brought into the monastery a band of poor people, whose feet she washed and kissed; and after this touching representation of the charity of Jesus Christ, she gave them clothes, served them at table, and did not send them away until she had lavished on them all the services that charity inspires.

She had a tender compassion for the sick. No contagious disease could restrict the range of her zeal: neither the frosts, nor the rains, nor the violent winds of autumn kept her from hastening to the bedside of the most unfortunate to console and help them. In the hospice of Saint-Nicolas as in the cottage of the poor of the valley, everywhere she brings, with her alms, words of consolation and hope. Charity walks before her, and all the virtues whose brightness she had thought to bury in the obscurity of solitude formed the most magnificent train around her. All Alsace blessed the name of Eugenia, while heaven, for its part, often rewarded with striking miracles the good works of this faithful servant of the poor of Jesus Christ, who seemed to have been placed on earth like the angel destined to dry every tear and to soothe every pain! This charity towards her neighbour, which was admired in St. Eugenia, thus had its source in the burning love for God that inflamed her soul and overflowed around her. To love everything for God was for her the holiest of duties; to love God alone in every person and in everything was in her eyes the perfection of love. And so this divine love, which in the Saints usually appears only at certain intervals and on certain occasions, was in Eugenia, so to speak, a habitual and permanent state. It was seen in her words, in her features, in all her actions. That was truly the natural element of her life.

During the fifteen years that St. Eugenia had been abbess of the monastery of Hohenburg, she had never ceased to be the edification of the community and to give the earth the spectacle of the most touching virtues. The moment was drawing near when she was to enjoy eternal happiness. Feeling her end approaching, she redoubled her zeal so much in the exercise of the duties of the religious life, applying herself chiefly to filling each moment so well, that she let none pass without gaining merit before God by the labours of penance. It was little for her heart not to lose her day; she wished to make it fuller, more profitable for her soul. The odour of her holiness drew a great many people to her every day, to profit by her pious instructions and her examples, and all who came near her venerated her as the angel of the earth. The love of God had so

inflamed her heart that it made it melt night and day in tears, and when she prayed, it was with such ardour that those present kept silent to listen to the words, all of fire, which came even more from her heart than from her mouth. At such moments nothing could distract her. God was her life and her happiness. She lived only on Him, on knowing Him, on beholding Him, on enjoying Him, and her frail existence could hardly bear any longer this immense weight of love. Eugenia had risen to the highest perfection; she had put on Jesus Christ, and death alone, which for her was only a passage to the happiness of eternity, could set the last seal on her likeness and her union with the divine Bridegroom of her soul.

Though still young, she had worked for her salvation from the first days of her life with such ardour and perseverance that she was early a fruit ripe for heaven. In a few years she had spent all her strength and life to reach God more quickly. At last came the moment fixed by divine Providence to end so beautiful a life and to reward such glorious deeds. Eugenia had passed a night full of agony. The virgins of the community of Hohenburg stood round their dying mother and wept. The humble servant of God talked with her nuns of the things of heaven, and spoke of them like an angel speaking of its homeland. A holy joy shone in her look, and this moment, which for her sisters was a moment of desolation and mourning, was for her the beginning of her glory and her happiness. She contemplated heaven, which seemed to her half open to receive her, with all the ardour of a long hope on the point of being satisfied. One would have said that she was gathering all her efforts to spring at one bound into the heavenly homeland, so fervent were her desires, so perfect was her love. At last, without giving any sign of death or uttering any sigh, her soul flew away to the heavenly homeland, after leaving to the whole community the inheritance of her example and her virtues; it was a Friday, the sixteenth day of September in the year 735.

The news of her death was a general mourning for all Alsace. On every face a deep sadness was painted; everywhere nothing was heard but lamentation; one would have said that every family had just been struck in its dearest affections. The poor above all spoke to one another only to pour out the common grief. And they went in crowds up the heights of Hohenburg to look for the last time on the venerated features of their benefactress and to kiss the hands that had so often helped them. St. Eugenia was buried beside St. Odile, in the church of St. John the Baptist.

CULTE ET RELIQUES.

Cult and Relics.

At the sight of the miracles that were worked from the very first days at her coffin and in the chapel of St. John the Baptist where she was buried, the faithful hastened to invoke her as a Saint. Her name is cited in the old litanies of the diocese of Strasbourg. In the prayer used for the blessing of the water that pilgrims carried away from the spring of Sainte-Odile, her name was invoked after those of the Holy Trinity and of St. Odile, and an old martyrology of the 8th century places the day of her death among the solemn feasts that were celebrated at that period in the diocese of Strasbourg, and chiefly at Obernai, where she was born. This cult was confirmed by the bulls of the Popes and the pastoral letters of the bishops, and attested by the constant devotion of the faithful of every century who visited her tomb.

In 1622 Count Mansfeld, called the Attila of Christendom, had the abbey of Hohenburg set on fire, then rushed with his soldiers upon the treasures of the sanctuary and plundered everything of value that he found. Then, when he entered the chapel of St. John the Baptist, the tomb of St. Eugenia was the first object of his profanation; being unable to open it, his soldiers smashed it with blows of maces. They then carried off the bones and the manuscript containing the history of the Saint, to burn them on the blazing ruins of the abbey. But suddenly so strong a fragrance spread abroad, and so piercing a clash of arms was heard, that the profaners, seized with terror, fled, abandoning the precious relics. Cardinal Leopold of Austria, then Bishop of Strasbourg, at once had the relics of St. Eugenia brought down to Obernai, where he kept them hidden for two years. At last, on 6 August 1624, they were enclosed in a gilded shrine and carried back in procession to

Hohenburg amid an immense concourse of people. They were laid under the altar of the chapel of the tears, which took the name of Sainte-Eugénie, except for some parts that were put back under the little altar of the chapel of St. John the Baptist, where the body had first been buried. The parish church of Obernai obtained a bone of these relics, which was enshrined in a statue of solid silver representing the Saint, and every year, on 26 September, her feast was solemnly celebrated in that town, at the Kappelkirche, which, according to tradition, occupies the site of a chapel where Adalric, St. Odile and St. Eugenia once came to pray.

The gilded shrine containing the relics of St. Eugenia remained only a few years on the mountain of Hohenburg. In 1632 the Swedes plundered and burned Hohenburg. In 1687 the monastery and the church were rebuilt. The chapel of Sainte-Eugénie, or of the tears, can still be seen today; under the altar dedicated to her are the remains of her tomb and all that could be gathered of her precious remains. The parish church of Willgotheim, a small village of the Bas-Rhin, possesses some fragments of the relics of St. Eugenia. In the monastery founded near Abbeville by St. Angilbert, relics of St. Eugenia are spoken of as enclosed in one of the altars of the church. Some are still to be seen enshrined in an altar near the great door of the basilica of St. Matthias at Trier.

Taken from the Histoire de sainte Eugénie, *by M. l'abbé Joseph Alter, and from the* Acta Sanctorum.

SAINT NILUS OF ROSSANO, CALLED THE YOUNGER, FOUNDER AND ABBOT OF THE MONASTERY OF GROTTA-FERRATA, IN ITALY

1005. — Pope: John XVIII. — Emperor of Germany: Henry II, the Saint.

> *L'homme saint ne doit pas se croire en sécurité tant qu'il se trouve dans l'arène de cette vie.*
>
> *The holy man must not think himself safe so long as he is in the arena of this life.*
>
> *St. Jerome.*

St. Nilus, a Greek by descent, was born in the little town of Rossano (Calabria Citeriore) in 910. He received in baptism the name of Nicholas, but took that of Nilus at his religious profession. He showed great fervour from his childhood, and made great progress in letters divine and human. He entered the married state, with the intention of fulfilling in a Christian way the duties attached to it. He never failed to reserve some hours to recollect himself, as well as to give himself to reading, prayer and meditation, lest the cares and entanglements of the world should stifle in him the seeds of piety for which he was indebted to grace. This attention to watch over himself did not prevent him from being faithful to his obligations towards his neighbour. Having afterwards grown slack in his exercises, his first fervour diminished little by little, and he went so far as to contract vicious habits; but after the death of his wife he felt keenly the danger of his state. His old love of retirement led him to withdraw into a monastery, so as to deliver himself for ever from the temptations that are met with in the world. He was then in the thirtieth year of his age. The monastery of

St. John the Baptist at Rossano was the one where he went to taste the sweetness of solitude.

Rossano was the only town of the country that had escaped the ravages of the Saracens. There was a celebrated image of the Blessed Virgin there, which is said to be still in the cathedral. It was at the feet of the Mother of God that Nilus solemnly consecrated himself to the Lord; he then visited the monastery of St. Mercurius, which the holy abbot John was then governing, and those of Fantinus[1] and of the abbot Zachary, which were afterwards destroyed by the Saracens and which were on the coasts of the Tuscan Sea. Having taken the habit in the abbey of St. Mercurius, he withdrew a little later to that of St. Nazarius, now called St. Philaretus, which is about five miles from the first. He carried obedience, humility, mortification of the senses and contemplation to so high a degree of perfection that he was called another St. Paul, while St. Fantinus, his friend and spiritual father, was regarded as another St. Peter. At the end of some years his superiors granted him the permission he asked to go and live in a neighbouring forest and to settle in a

hermitage adjoining a little chapel of St. Michael. In the course of time he received two disciples, named Stephen and George. The second was a gentleman of Rossano, who died in the odour of sanctity.

St. Nilus soon became famous for his preaching and his miracles. The reputation of his great holiness spread throughout the country; people came from all sides to consult him. In 976 Theophylact, metropolitan of Calabria, accompanied by Leo, lord of the country, as well as by some priests and several other persons, came to see the Saint, less to be edified by his discourses than to find out his knowledge and learning. Nilus perceived it. After courteously greeting the company and saying a short prayer, he handed Leo a book containing various maxims on the small number of the elect. As they were found too severe, the Saint proved that they were in keeping with the principles laid down by the Gospel, by St. Paul and by the Fathers of the Church. “They seem frightening to you,” he said, “because they are the condemnation of your conduct. Unless you all live holily, you cannot escape eternal torments.” These words threw terror into the souls of all the hearers, and they expressed by their groans and sighs what they were feeling. Someone in the company having asked the holy abbot whether Solomon was damned or saved, he answered: “What does it matter to you to know whether Solomon is saved or not? What it matters to you to know is that Jesus Christ threatens with damnation all who commit the sin of impurity.” He spoke thus because he knew that the man he was addressing was unchaste. “I should rather know,” he added, “whether you will be damned or whether you will be saved. As for Solomon, Scripture does not speak of his penance, as it does of that of Manasses.”

Euphraxius, as full of vanity as of haughtiness, having been sent to Calabria with the title of governor by the court of Constantinople, several abbots made him presents. St. Nilus did not follow their example. Euphraxius, to avenge himself, sought every occasion to mortify him; but he soon changed his feelings towards him. Having fallen ill, he sent for him, asked his pardon on his knees, and besought him to give him the monastic habit. “The vows of baptism are enough for you,” the Saint said to him; “penance does not require new ones. Only have a contrite heart and the desire to change your life.” Euphraxius, not content with this answer, pressed him again to give him the monastic habit, which was granted him. As soon as he had received it, he appeared an entirely new man; he freed his slaves, distributed all his goods to the poor, and died three days later with great sentiments of piety.

The emperor Otto III, having come to Rome, drove out of it Philagathus, Bishop of Piacenza, whom the senator Crescentius had made antipope. St. Nilus went to find him, to beg him, as well as Gregory V, who was the lawful Pope, to show mercy to the Bishop of Piacenza and not to forget, in the punishment to which he would be condemned, the character with which he was invested. Nilus was received with great marks of honour, and they promised him to pay regard to his recommendation. When Otto made a pilgrimage to Monte Gargano, he went to visit the Saint in his monastery, which was nothing but a cluster of poor huts. “These men,” he said, speaking of Nilus’s disciples, “are truly citizens of heaven; they live in tents, as strangers on the earth.” The servant of God took him first to the oratory, where he prayed for some time, and then brought him into his cell. Otto offered him in vain a site on which to build a monastery that he promised to endow. “If my brethren,” answered St. Nilus, “are true monks, Our Lord will not abandon them when I am no longer with them.” — “Ask me whatever you please,” the emperor went on; “I regard you as my son; I will grant it you with joy.” St. Nilus, then laying his hand on his breast, said to him: “The only thing I ask of you is that you think of the salvation of your soul. Though you are emperor, you will die and you will give an account to God like other men.” He would not accept the bishopric of Rossano, and refused to listen to the pressing entreaties that were made to him to go to the court of Constantinople.

St. Nilus had formed a kind of community of his disciples, who lived in huts near his hermitage; but he could never be got to consent to take the title of abbot. As the Saracens extended their conquests and ravages more and more in Calabria, he withdrew with his monks to Monte Cassino. Aligern, who was abbot there, went out to meet him with his community, and received him with the distinction his holiness deserved. Some time afterwards he gave him the monastery of Val di Luce; but Nilus soon left it, because he did not find the place

solitary enough. He spent ten years in the monastery of Serperis, situated on the seashore. That time over, he went with his disciples to Tusculum, twelve miles from Rome, and settled in the hermitage of St. Agatha, inhabited by Greek religious. He took care to lead his religious in the ways of perfection; but he lived in a separate cell, without assuming the authority of superior. He must nevertheless be regarded as the principal founder of the monastery of Grotta-Ferrata, although it was completed after his death by Father Bartholomew. He had long been at St. Agatha's when God called him to Himself. He died in 1005, at the age of ninety-five. His community was afterwards transferred to Grotta-Ferrata, in the neighbourhood of Tusculum (Frascati).

St. Nilus and his disciples celebrated the office in Greek and followed the Rule of St. Basil; so he must not be counted among the Saints of the Order of St. Benedict. His relics were carried to Grotta-Ferrata.

While St. Nilus the Younger was one day at prayer before a crucifix, Christ detached His right hand to bless him. In the abbey of Grotta-Ferrata there is a picture representing this incident. One of the frescoes of that church represents him healing a possessed youth, and another receiving the emperor Otto III.

Acta Sanctorum; Godescard.

SAINT EUSEBIUS OF CASSANO, POPE AND CONFESSOR (310)

Eusebius, a native of Cassano on the Adda (Lombardy), the son, as it is said, of a physician, and at first a physician himself, succeeded Pope St. Marcellus I in the see of St. Peter (310). He found heretics in the city of Rome, and reconciled them to the Church by the mere imposition of hands. Restituta, a noble lady of the island of Sardinia, entrusted him with the education of her son; the pontiff instructed the young man in the Christian faith, baptized him and gave him his own name: this Eusebius later became Bishop of Vercelli.

At the beginning of Eusebius's episcopate, several *traditores* were pointed out to him who had handed over the sacred vessels and books to the officers of the treasury: these *lapsed* wished to be reconciled with the Church, but they wanted to be Christians in name without venerating its mysteries. The old question of the *lapsi*, already debated under the pontificate of St. Cornelius (251–252), arose again with some bitterness. Heraclius, the leader of the Manichaeans, maintained that penance was useless for the *lapsi*; the holy pontiff Eusebius, on the contrary, reminded these unhappy people of the necessity of weeping for their crimes. The people divided into two opposing parties; sedition, murders, discord and civil war, openly encouraged by the cruel tyrant Maxentius, once more laid the Church waste. A faithful defender of the rights of truth, Eusebius was proscribed by the judges; he died in exile on the shores of Sicily on 26 September 310.

St. Eusebius sat four months and sixteen days (the *Proper of Rome*, contrary to the *Liber pontificalis* and to all the other authors, says "two years, eight months and sixteen days"). In one ordination he had laid hands on thirteen priests, three deacons and fourteen bishops destined for various Churches. He was buried in the cemetery of Callistus, on the Appian Way.

Proper of Rome; Liber Pontificalis; *Pontificat de saint Eusèbe, after Chantrel; Darras; Artaud de Montor.*

SAINT ISARNUS OR YSARN OF TOULOUSE, ABBOT OF SAINT-VICTOR OF MARSEILLE, AND CONFESSOR (1048)

Isarnus was born at Toulouse of a respectable family, and was entrusted from his early childhood to religious, who instructed him in piety at the same time as in letters. Then he vowed himself to God and passed through his youth without staining the whiteness of his baptismal robe by the vices usual at that age: this purity he kept intact to the end of his life.

Resolved to embrace the monastic life, he asked for admission to the Cassianite monastery of Saint-Victor of Marseille: he was received there with joy. Planted thenceforth in the house of the Lord, he flourished there by

the exact observance of discipline. Full of an ardent devotion for the tombs of the Martyrs, he often spent the night venerating those that adorned the monastery. His virtues, whose fragrance spread far and wide, raised him to the dignity of claustral prior under the abbot Wilfred, and he knew how to behave in this office with a humility that showed that commanding others was for him a burden rather than an honour. After the death of Wilfred, while the abbots of the neighbouring monasteries, gathered with the religious of Saint-Victor, were deliberating on the choice of his successor, a child, moved by the Holy Spirit, cried out: "Isarnus is abbot"; and Isarnus was in fact elected on the spot by unanimous consent.

It was chiefly in the fulfilment of this high office that he displayed his gentleness, his humility, his spirit of penance and his charity towards the poor. Under his administration a new church of the monastery was consecrated (15 October 1040) by Pope Benedict IX, who, in the words of the Bull, "sanctified it with the triple blessing, and, by an apostolic privilege, restored it to the honour it formerly had of absolving sinners." Twenty-three bishops, a great number of abbots and religious, and all the nobility of Provence attended this dedication. Shortly before his death Isarnus made a journey to Spain to see to the ransom of the religious whom the Saracens had carried off into captivity after the devastation of the monastery of Lérins.

The life of the blessed abbot ended in the midst of good works. He fell asleep in the Lord, surrounded by his beloved brethren, on 24 September 1048. His body was laid in the lower basilica of the monastery. From the year 1050 pilgrims went in great numbers to the crypt that held his tomb, already made illustrious by several miracles. In our own day the Church of Marseille still celebrates every year the feast of the illustrious abbot of Saint-Victor, but his memory has faded from the minds of the people. The tomb that worked miracles no longer rests in the ancient crypts in the shadow of the underground chapels: it is given over to the profane gaze of the visitors to the museum. May those who now live in the presence of the last remains of the old abbey love their holy fellow-countryman as he was loved by their ancestors eight centuries ago!

Proper of Toulouse, completed with notes kindly supplied by M. l'abbé Antoine Ricard and M. l'abbé Bayle. — Cf. Vie de saint Ysarn, *by M. Bayle.*

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[1] St. Eusebius of Bologna was one of the chief defenders of the orthodox truth against the Arians at the Council of Aquileia (381). An intimate friend of St. Ambrose of Milan, he almost always spoke there after him, and it was following his example that all the other Catholic bishops pronounced anathema against whoever would not confess Jesus Christ co-eternal with His Father. St. Eusebius is regarded as the fourth Bishop of Bologna; his episcopate is made to begin about 390, and is not made to end until about 400. — Baillet.

[2] He died in the town of Iseo (Lombardy), and his body was first laid in an underground chapel. In 1524 and in 1633 translations of his relics were made, and they were placed in a more honourable spot in the church of Iseo. Here is the list of them: a large and a small bone of the arm; a hip-bone; a large bone of the foot; two shoulder-blade bones; a bone of the sternum; a bone of the collar-bone; two small bones seeming to belong to the shoulder-blades; six whole ribs; three small fragments of ribs, and some ashes. — Father John Pinius, in the *Acta Sanctorum.*

[3] We have given his life on 18 September.

[4] See 24 September.

[5] See his life on 24 September.

[6] We have given his life on 16 September.

[7] See his life on 16 September.

[8] See his life on 23 August.

[9] There is no agreement on the period at which the Order of the Humiliati was founded (some put its origin in 1017, others in 1180, others again in 1190, and several in 1196), but there is almost unanimous agreement on the circumstance that gave rise to this foundation. The Emperor St. Henry II (972–1024), in one of his Roman expeditions, took prisoner a number of notable inhabitants of Lombardy and carried them off as hostages to Germany. There they were seized with regret at having failed in the fidelity they owed the emperor, and they joined together to form an association of penitent brethren. The emperor had them brought before him, and his first words were these: "So here you are, *humbled*!" Whereupon he gave them their freedom and allowed them to return to their country. They had not bound themselves by vows; however, when they had recovered their freedom, the habit they had put on remained dear to them, and several kept it. In Germany they had been called *Barettini of Penance*, because of their cap (*barettino*), and this name stayed with them in Italy. Such was the first Order of the Humiliati. In 1134, on the advice of St. Bernard, the Barettini separated from their wives to live in continence, took white habits to mark the purity of their souls, and bound themselves to a more

perfect kind of life. The Order then entered its second period. The institute of the Barettini long continued without a written rule; John of Meda gave them that of St. Benedict and thus created the third Order of the Humiliati. In 1200 it was approved by Innocent III. The Humiliati, subject to a perfect discipline, did much good for a long time; unfortunately, with wealth the corruption of the age made its way into their ranks, and in the 16th century disorder reached its height. Pius V abolished for ever, by a bull of 8 February 1571, the Order, whose goods were put to pious uses. The nuns of this Order have continued down to our own day.

[10] St. Fantinus, having suffered much in Calabria at the hands of the Saracens for sixty years, withdrew to Thessalonica, where he died. Father Pinius, one of the continuators of Bollandus, has given his life, with remarks, under 30 August.

27 September

Martyrologies

Twenty-seventh day of September

MARTYROLOGE ROMAIN.

Roman Martyrology.

At Aegae, in Cilicia, the triumph of the holy martyrs COSMAS and DAMIAN, brothers, who, during the persecution of Diocletian, after suffering with superhuman courage chains, prisons, the sea, fire, crosses, stoning and arrows, were beheaded. There are also recorded, as companions of their martyrdom, Anthimus, Leontius and Euprepius, their brothers. About 286. — At Rome, St. Epicharis, a woman of senatorial race, who, after being torn with leaded scourges, was beheaded during the same persecution. 3rd c. — At Todi, St. Fidentius and St. Terence, martyred under the same Diocletian. 3rd c. — At Cordova, the holy martyrs Adulphus and John, brothers, crowned for Jesus Christ during the persecution of the Arabs. About 852. — At Semond (*Sedunum*), in Lyonnese Gaul, St. FLORENTIN, martyr, beheaded with St. HILIER after having his tongue cut out. 3rd c. — At Djebel, in Phoenicia, St. MARK, bishop, who is also called John by St. Luke. 1st c. — At Milan, St. Caius, bishop, a disciple of the apostle St. Barnabas, who, after suffering much during the persecution of Nero, died in peace.[1] 85. — At Ravenna, St. Aderitus, bishop and confessor.[2] 2nd c. — At Paris, St. Vincent de Paul, priest and founder of the Congregation of the Mission and of the Daughters of Charity, an apostolic man and father of the poor. His feast is celebrated on 19 July.[3] 1660. — In the same city, St. ELZÉAR, count. 1325. — In Hainaut, St. HILTRUDE or HELTRUDE, virgin. 785.

MARTYROLOGE DE FRANCE, REVU ET AUGMENTÉ.

Martyrology of France, revised and enlarged.

In the diocese of Avignon, St. Elzéar or Augias, Count of Arian and confessor, named in the Roman Martyrology of this day. 1325. — In the dioceses of Lyon and Chartres, the memory of the holy martyrs Florentin and Hilaire or Hilier, named in the Roman Martyrology of today. 3rd c. — In the diocese of Paris, the holy martyrs Cosmas and Damian, named today in the Roman Martyrology. About 286. — In the diocese of Cambrai, St. Hiltrude or Heltrude, virgin, named on this day in the same martyrology. 785. — In the diocese of Paris, St. CÉRAUNE or CÉRAN (*Ceraunus*, *Cerannus*), twenty-fifth archbishop of that see and confessor. About 621. — In the diocese of Vannes, St. Gingurien, lay brother of the Benedictine monastery of Saint-Gildas de Rhuys (*S. Gildasius Ruyensis*), called to heaven by the archangel St. Michael, who honoured him with his appearance. 11th c. — At Chaumont (Haute-Marne), in the diocese of Langres, the Venerable Father Honoré, Capuchin. He was born at Paris on 7 January 1567, and before entering religion was called Charles Bochart de Champagny; his father, Jean Bochart, was a councillor of State. Brought up at Paris, at the Collège de Clermont, directed by the Jesuits, Charles Bochart received the habit of St. Francis on 15 September 1587, at the convent of Saint-Honoré in the same city: he made his profession after a year of noviciate. Humility formed the basis of all his virtues: it suggested to Father Honoré the thought of asking to hold no office in his Order; but he was successively named director of novices at Verdun, at Nancy and at Orléans. At the request of the Cardinal of Lorraine he was sent to Rome to ask for the organization of a

province of the Order in Lorraine, and he succeeded in this negotiation. In 1592 he was elected provincial, and from then on was able to have dealings with many towns. Those he had with Chaumont go back to 1598; in that year he founded there a convent of Capuchins, which lasted until the Revolution. It was there that he died and was buried. Numerous miracles, among which the raising to life of several children was remarked, led to efforts for his canonization. In 1637 Sébastien Zamet, Bishop of Langres, sent the documents of the process to Rome; Louis XIII and his wife wrote to Pope Urban VIII on the subject in 1637 and in 1639. A shrine in the church of Saint-Jean-Baptiste at Chaumont contains some of his relics. The cult with which that town honoured his memory still survives in part; before the Revolution the anniversary of his death was kept with the firing of cannon and by lighting, on the Place des Capucins, a bonfire whose cost was borne by the hospital.[4] 1624. — In the diocese of Dijon, St. APHRODISIUS, companion in martyrdom of Sts. Florentin and Hilaire, named in the Roman Martyrology of this day. 3rd c.

MARTYROLOGES DES ORDRES RELIGIEUX.

Martyrologies of the Religious Orders.

Martyrology of the Congregation of St. Sylvester. — At Cingoli, in the March of Ancona, St. Bonfilius, bishop and confessor, who, sprung from the illustrious family of Auxima, gave his name to the monastic discipline, and was called in spite of himself to govern the church of Foligno, where he was set upon the see of that city by the will of the Pope; then, out of humility, he freely resigned that charge so as to give himself more freely to holy things. About 1115.

Martyrology of the Three Orders of St. Francis. — At Paris, the death of St. Elzéar, confessor, Count of Arian, of the Third Order of our Father St. Francis, who, faithfully keeping virginity with Delphine, his wife, went full of merits to the Lord, and, illustrious in his life and after his death, was placed among the Saints by the Sovereign Pontiff Urban V. 1325.

Martyrology of the Order of Friars Minor. — The same as above, adding: His body, under the pontificate of John XXII, was carried to Apt, in Provence, and honourably laid in the church of St. Francis, of the Friars Minor. 1325.

ADDITIONS FAITES D'APRÈS LES BOLLANDISTES ET AUTRES HAGIOGRAPHES.

Additions made from the Bollandists and other hagiographers.

Among the Jews and the Ethiopians, the memory of JUDITH OF BETHULIA, widow, deliverer of the Hebrew people. 7th c. B.C. — Among the Greeks, St. Zenas or Zeno, one of the seventy-two disciples of Christ, Bishop of Diospolis or Lydda, today Ludd or Loddo, in Syria (pashalik of Damascus). He is mentioned in the Epistle of St. Paul to Titus in the following manner: "When I shall have sent to you Artemas or Tychicus, make haste to come to me at Nicopolis (today Prevesa-Vecchia, at the entrance of the Gulf of Ambracia, in Epirus), for I have resolved to winter there. Send Zenas, the doctor of the Law, and Apollo before you, and take care that they want for nothing." These words of the Apostle show us clearly enough that Zenas worked with zeal, like the learned doctor Apollo, in the apostolic labours. The blessed Peter placed him in the episcopal see of Diospolis, and, say the Greek Menaea, "he taught his people the divinity of Jesus Christ. After bearing many pains for the edification of the Churches and the destruction of idols, after working several wonders and a great number of miraculous healings, he went to enjoy the glory of the Lord." About 70. — At Caesarea in Cappadocia (*Cæsarea Eusebia*), today Kaisarieh, on the Halys (Cappadocia), St. Heleutherius or Eleutherius, martyr, named by the martyrology of St. Jerome. 2nd c. — In the diocese of Sora, a city of Italy, in the former kingdom of Naples (Terra di Lavoro), St. Deodatus, confessor. His relics were discovered in 1621 at Calvi by Jerome Joanellius, Bishop of Sora, who made a solemn translation of them. About the 4th c. — In Egypt, St. Baule, martyr. — In Armenia, St. Gaïeune,

virgin and martyr. About 310. — In Ethiopia, St. Saluce, abbot. — In Ireland, St. Lupite, virgin. — At Wiborg, a city of Russia (Finland), St. Kétil, confessor. 9th century. — In Greece, St. Ignatius of Bathyriac, abbot. About 999.

JUDITH OF BETHULIA, WIDOW, DELIVERER OF THE PEOPLE OF ISRAEL

7th century before Jesus Christ.

> *La femme elle-même connaît cet enthousiasme belliqueux qui l'enlève aux habitudes de son sexe et arme sa faiblesse de toute l'intrépidité d'un mâle courage.*
>
> *Woman herself knows that warlike enthusiasm which carries her beyond the habits of her sex and arms her weakness with all the intrepidity of manly courage.*
>
> *Mgr Darboy, Éloge de Judith.*

The Assyrian monarchs are cited in Scripture for their pride. One of them, known in history by the name of Saosduschin, who reigned at Babylon a short time before the captivity of the Jews, wished to bring all the peoples of Asia under his power and to break their temples and their altars so as to have himself proclaimed god. He entrusted the execution of his designs to Holofernes, the commander-in-chief of his troops. Holofernes set out with a formidable army; terror went before him. In their consternation, the cities on his route received him with crowns and to the sound of instruments, as though to rejoice at his victories; but resistance did not stop him, and submission found him inflexible: he dragged pillage and fire across twenty provinces. The Israelites tried to defend themselves; they made themselves masters of the heights commanding the passes by which Jerusalem could be approached; then they had recourse to the exercises of religion that might move heaven and call down upon them the benefit of an effective protection. Astonished and furious, Holofernes asked what people this was that dared to await him arms in hand. Achior, chief of the Ammonites, who were already ranged under the conqueror's laws, answered that the Israelites would easily be vanquished if they had betrayed their God, but that, if they had remained faithful to Him, no one would attack them without becoming the reproach of the whole earth. These words, which linked the events of the war to a force quite other than the valour and genius of Holofernes, deeply wounded his pride: he meditated punishing them, and, the better to show the confidence he placed in his arms, he gave orders to lead Achior towards Bethulia (today Safed), in the tribe of Zabulon, where the Israelites had shut themselves up, and promised to find him there again one day and to make him pay for the frankness of his language.

The Bethulians, in a sortie, fell upon the men of Holofernes, who took flight after tying Achior to a tree. The unhappy prince's bonds were broken; he made known what had happened and how he had incurred the enemy's anger. There was great mourning in Bethulia when the cruel hopes of Holofernes were learned, and above all when he was seen, the next day, marching with all his troops against the town. Then, instead of fighting, he resolved to force the inhabitants to surrender or to die of thirst: he cut an aqueduct that brought them the waters of the neighbourhood; for Bethulia was on a height, and to quench its thirst it had only a few springs that gushed out at the foot of its walls. Soon even this last resource failed it: the enemy kept a strict guard round the springs. Then the besieged, men, women and children, reduced to the last extremity, begged Ozias, who had organized and was encouraging the resistance, to surrender at discretion. Seeing all this multitude in tears, Ozias rose, and, his face bathed in tears, said: "Brethren, be of good courage; let us wait five days more for the mercy of the Lord. If, when these five days are past, no help comes to us, we will do what you have proposed."

These words of Ozias were reported to Judith, daughter of Merari, of the tribe of Simeon. Judith had been a widow for three years and a half. Her husband, who was called Manasses, died of sunstroke while he was overseeing the workmen employed at his harvest; he left all his riches, which were very great, his servants

and his flocks to Judith, whose beauty surpassed even her wealth. A woman of noble heart, her faithful affections fell asleep with the ashes of him who had first received them; in her widowhood she knew no joys but the joys of religion. She had made herself a secret room in her house, where she lived in retirement with her maidservant; she wore a coarse haircloth, the sign of her inconsolable grief; she fasted almost every day. This conduct, inspired by pious sentiments, had won her universal esteem; unfavourable words never came to tarnish the brightness of her reputation, that fair and fragile ornament of young widows. Such was Judith of Bethulia.

When, then, she had learned that her fellow citizens had decided to surrender in five days, she sent for the elders of the people and said to them: “What is this resolution taken by Ozias to deliver the town to the Assyrians if within five days you are not relieved? And who are you, to tempt the Lord? This is the way, not to draw down His compassion, but rather to stir up His anger and kindle His fury. You have set a term to the mercy of God, and you have appointed Him a day at your pleasure. But because the Lord is patient, let us do penance for this very fault, and implore His indulgence with tears… Let us believe that these scourges, with which God punishes us as His servants, are sent to correct us and not to destroy us.”

Ozias and the elders of the people answered: “All that you have said is just, and there is no fault in your words. Pray therefore for us, for you are a holy woman and one who fears God.” Then Judith went on: “As you acknowledge that what I have been able to say comes from God, so prove whether what I have resolved to do comes from Him, and pray that He may strengthen my design. You shall stand this night at the gate of the town; I will go out with my maidservant. Pray meanwhile that, as you have said, God may look upon His people within these five days. I do not wish to be questioned about my plan; until the hour when I come to tell it you, let nothing else be done but pray for me to the Lord our God.” — “Go in peace,” Ozias said to her, “and may the Lord be with you to take vengeance on our enemies.” And he withdrew, followed by the elders of the people.

Judith went back into the privacy of her house, and there, clothed in haircloth, with ashes on her head, prostrate before God, she cried out, recalling the vengeance that Simeon, her ancestor, had once taken for the outrage done to Dinah: “Lord, God of my father Simeon, who armed him with the sword to punish the strangers, the unclean profaners of a virgin’s honour; who gave up their wives as a prey, their daughters to captivity, and their spoils to be divided among Your servants who were zealous for You; Lord my God, help, I pray You, a desolate widow. You worked the wonders of old and determined those that followed them, and nothing has been done but what You willed. All Your ways are made ready, and Your judgments are founded on Your Providence. Look upon the camp of the Assyrians, as You once looked upon the camp of the Egyptians, when they pursued Your servants in arms and trusted in their chariots, their horsemen and the multitude of their warriors. You cast a look upon their camp, and darkness wearied them, the deep held fast their feet, and the waters covered them. Lord, so may these perish, who rely on their numbers, who glory in their chariots, their javelins, their shields, their arrows and their lances, and who know not that You are our God, You who from the beginning of the ages break up wars, and whose name is the Lord. Lift up Your arm as You have done before, and break their strength by Your strength. Let them fall under Your anger who promise themselves to violate Your sanctuary, to defile the tabernacle of Your name, and to cast down with their sword the majesty of Your altar!” Then, pointing to the stratagem she meant to use against Holofernes, Judith added: “Grant, Lord, that the head of this proud man may fall by his own sword. Let him be caught by his own eyes, as in a snare, when he sees me, and strike him with the charm of my words. Put constancy in my heart to despise him and strength to overcome him. Let him perish by the hand of a woman; this will be the glory of Your name. For Your power, Lord, is not in the number of soldiers, Your good pleasure does not depend on the strength of horses, and the proud have never pleased You; but You have always accepted the prayer of the humble and the meek. God of the heavens, Creator of the waters, Master of every creature, hear her who calls on You in her weakness and trusts in Your mercy. Lord, remember Your covenant, put the

words on my lips, strengthen the resolve of my heart, that Your house may keep its holiness undefiled, and that all peoples may acknowledge that You are the true God and that there is no other but You."

Having thus prepared her soul, Judith rose from the place where she lay prostrate. She went down into her house and put off the mournful garments of her widowhood; she took precious perfumes to anoint her body, and adorned her head with a rich head-dress; bracelets, ear-rings and other jewels gave her an air of splendour: it was the finery she had worn in the days of her former happiness. A glow of supernatural beauty set off this attire; for God, who saw the heart of His servant, and that virtue alone, and not vain self-pleasing, ruled her actions, even added to the grace of her features, so that she appeared in the eyes of all with incomparable lustre. God no doubt thus favoured the designs of the heroine who wished to protect the people against the insults of the enemy and to snatch her fellow citizens from oppression and from the danger of idolatry.

Meanwhile Judith went out accompanied by a maidservant. So as not to be forced to eat forbidden meats during the days she would spend among the enemy, Judith had her maid carry some provisions: oil, flour, figs, bread, and a vessel of wine. On reaching the gate of the town she found Ozias and the elders of the people waiting for her. At the sight of her they stood struck with astonishment, and could not admire enough all that was noble and beautiful in her person. They asked her nothing; they let her pass, saying only these words: "May the God of our fathers give you His grace and strengthen by His might the resolutions of your heart, that Jerusalem may glory in you and that your name may be among the holy and the just." And all who were present supported this patriotic wish with repeated cries.

Judith passed through the gates, a prayer on her lips and still followed by her maidservant. At daybreak, as she was coming down the mountain, the advanced guards of the Assyrians came to meet her, and, seizing her, said to her: "Where do you come from, and where are you going?" She answered: "I am a daughter of the Hebrews. I am fleeing from their company, foreseeing that they will be given up to you as a prey, because they have despised you and would not surrender of their own accord so as to find favour in your sight. That is why I said within myself: I will go and present myself to the prince Holofernes, to disclose their secrets to him and to give him a way of taking them without a single man of his army perishing." The soldiers gazed with delight on the young deserter, in whom the grace of her words and manners surpassed even the brilliance of her ornaments. So they took her to the tent of Holofernes. She went in: the general was dazzled and vanquished, and the officers said: "Who would despise the Hebrew people, who have such beautiful women? And have we not reason to make war on them to have them?" Holofernes was seated under a canopy of purple, embroidered with gold and set off with emeralds and precious stones. Judith cast a look at the Assyrian captain and bowed down to the ground in sign of respect; then Holofernes's men raised her up at their master's command. He asked her the cause of her flight. Judith answered him with artifice: "The wisdom of your mind is famous among all nations; everyone proclaims that you are the best and the most powerful man of the kingdom, and in all the provinces men speak only of your ability. It is known what Achior said, and how you had him treated… Because the children of Israel know that they have offended their God, they tremble before you. Moreover, famine is laying them waste, and they are half dead with thirst; they are even deciding to kill their beasts to drink their blood, and to put to their own use the wheat, the wine and the oil, things consecrated to the Lord, which they must not touch with the hand, much less consume. Since, then, they are doing these things, it is certain that they will perish. In this conviction your servant has left them, and God sends me to reveal these secrets; for your servant is faithful to her God, even here. I will go out, then, and pray to the Lord; He will tell me the hour of His vengeance, and I will come and announce it to you. I will lead you into the midst of Jerusalem; all the people of Israel will be before you like a flock without a shepherd; not a voice will bark against you. These things are known to me by the permission of God, who has sent me to tell them to you."

Judith's speech pleased Holofernes exceedingly, and he ordered his servants to take the deserter to the chamber of his treasures; he wished too that she should receive from his table whatever she desired. Judith pointed out that, as the religious laws of her country did not allow her to make use indiscriminately of all kinds of meats, she had brought the provisions she needed. "If what you have brought is not enough," said Holofernes, "what shall we do?" — "I swear it by my life, my lord," replied Judith, "before your servant has used up the food she has, God will accomplish by my hand what I have thought." Then she asked to be allowed to go out at night to say her prayer outside the camp. The prince consented, and the guards were ordered to let her go in and out as she pleased. She went, then, during the nights into the valley of Bethulia, and, after religious ablutions, she returned to her tent, praying God to help her to set her people free. She remained fasting all day and took her food only towards evening.

At last, on the fourth day, Holofernes gave a great banquet, to which he invited Judith. "Who am I," she answered the messenger, "that I should refuse my lord?" And, pretending to take the invitation as a mere token of goodwill, she added graciously: "I will do all that seems best to him; whatever pleases him will always be a great good to me." So she put on all her ornaments, and, thus adorned, she went in. The heart of Holofernes was shaken; he said to Judith: "Drink now, and eat with joy, for you have found favour before me." And she answered: "I will drink, my lord, because my soul receives today the greatest glory it has ever had." And indeed she made use of the food that her maidservant had prepared. Holofernes was so happy at this that he took more wine than he had ever taken in his life.

When evening came, all the guests withdrew; they were soon asleep. Holofernes lay down; the excess of wine weighed him down in a deep sleep; his people had left Judith alone in their master's tent. But Judith, for her part, had ordered her maidservant to stand near the door, outside the chamber, and to keep watch there. She herself stood before the bed, praying with tears and in silence: "Strengthen me," she said, "Lord God of Israel; look upon the work of my hands, and, according to Your promise, raise up Your city of Jerusalem, and let me accomplish what I have believed I could do with Your help." After these words she goes up to the pillar at the head of the bed, takes down the sword that hung on it, draws it from the scabbard, and, taking Holofernes by the hair, says: "Lord God, sustain me at this moment." She strikes twice and severs the head from the trunk, which she leaves stretched on the ground. She goes out a little after, gives her maidservant the head of Holofernes, ordering her to hide it in the bag in which they had brought their provisions. The two of them go off as if to pray as usual, cross the camp, turn along the valley and arrive at the gates of Bethulia.

Then Judith cried from afar to those who were guarding the walls: "Open the gates, for God is with us, and He has worked a wonder in Israel." At this cry the guards called the elders of the people. All ran to Judith: no one had expected that she would come back. Torches were lit, and they gathered round her. The heroine went up to a higher place, called for silence and said: "Praise the Lord our God, who has not forsaken those who hoped in Him. He has shown, by His servant, the mercy promised to the house of Israel, and this night He has slain by my hand the enemy of His people." Then, showing the assembly the trophy of her victory, she added: "Here is the head of Holofernes, general of the army of the Assyrians, and here is a curtain of the canopy under which he slept in his drunkenness, and where the Lord our God has struck him by the hand of a woman. The living God is my witness that His angel guarded me on my going out from the town, during my stay in the camp, and on my return here. The Lord has not allowed His servant to be defiled by any sin; but He has brought me back to you, happy in His triumph, in my safety and in your deliverance. Praise Him, for He is good, and His mercy extends to all ages."

All the inhabitants of Bethulia recognized the finger of God in the death of Holofernes, and they said to Judith: "The Lord has blessed you in His strength, and through you He has brought our enemies to nothing." And Ozias, prince of the people, added: "You are blessed above all the women of the earth. Blessed be the Lord, who created heaven and earth, and who guided you to strike down the chief of our enemies! He has made your name so great today that your praise shall not depart from the mouth of men, who will remember

for ever the power of God; for you have not spared your life in the face of the perils and anguish of your people, but you have averted its ruin before God." And all the people applauded these well-deserved praises.

Judith, pursuing her mission of deliverance, said to the people: "Brethren, listen to me. Hang this head on our walls; and as soon as the sun has risen, let every man take his arms; make a noisy sortie, not to reach the enemy, but as though to attack him. Then the advanced guards will necessarily run to wake their general for the battle; and when the chiefs, going to the tent of Holofernes, find there only a headless body drowned in blood, terror will seize them. When, then, you see them flee, go boldly after them, for the Lord will crush them under your feet." And indeed, at daybreak the head of Holofernes was hung on the walls; every man took his arms; all went out in tumult and with great shouts. At this sight the Assyrian sentries run to the general's tent; his servants try to wake him by making some noise, for no one dared either to knock at the door or to enter the chamber of Holofernes. But the principal chiefs arrive and say to his people: "Go in and wake him, for these rats have come out of their holes and dare to challenge us to battle." A servant goes in, then; he claps his hands, listens, and, hearing no sound, comes closer; he sees the corpse of Holofernes stretched on the ground, headless, all covered with blood. He gives a great cry, shedding tears, runs to Judith's tent, and, finding the deserter no longer there, goes out and cries: "One woman of the Hebrew people has brought confusion on the house of Nebuchadnezzar; for there lies Holofernes stretched on the ground; he is no more than a headless trunk." At these words the chiefs of the Assyrian army tear their garments; fear freezes them, confusion seizes them; the whole camp resounds with fearful clamour.

When it was known in all the ranks that Holofernes had been beheaded, there was general consternation. Irresolute, without counsel and without courage, all obeyed fear alone and thought only of seeking safety in flight. Silent, heads bowed, abandoning everything, they hastened to escape the Hebrews, whose noisy approach could be heard, and in disorder they took the roads of the countryside and the paths of the hills. The Bethulians came down in crowds, sounding the trumpet and raising great shouts. They marched together and in good order, and because the Assyrian troops were fleeing scattered and at random, they made a horrible slaughter of them. After driving them far off, they returned to Bethulia, bringing back numerous flocks and immense riches; for their part, those who had remained in the town went down to the camp to plunder it: the booty was prodigious. Ozias had at the same time made known to all the towns and all the provinces the complete rout of the enemy; the bravest young men took up arms and pursued the fugitives, a great number of whom were put to the sword. Thus this flood was stopped before the daring of a mere woman: God sets against the mighty waves of the sea a grain of sand on which all their fury comes to break and die; into skies full of storms He sends a light wind that scatters the clouds and brings back serenity to the heavens.

After the victory the Jews came from all sides to Jerusalem to give thanks to God. They rejoiced at the sight of the holy places happily preserved from the profanations of the enemy. All the riches found in the tent of Holofernes, the gold, the silver, the stuffs and the precious stones, were given to Judith; she made an offering of them to the Lord and placed them in the temple as a monument that was to recall to posterity the memory of an illustrious benefit of God.

Judith continued to live at Bethulia, enjoying the esteem and veneration of all the people. She remained faithful to her former mourning and resumed her habits of penance and religion. She gave freedom to the generous slave who had followed her to the camp of the Assyrians. Her glory increased with the years, and when she appeared in public on feast days she was received with unanimous respect. She died at a very advanced age (she was a hundred and five), and was buried at Bethulia in her husband's tomb; the whole nation mourned her for seven days.

The name of Judith has frequently inspired Christian art; it would take long to describe and praise the works that reproduce the greatest scenes of this illustrious life. The story of Judith is painted in miniature in a manuscript of the Vatican which is dated back to the 9th century. She is represented in a window of the Sainte-Chapelle in Paris; some features are missing there today, but it could once be seen entire. A painting

on wood of the 15th century is known, which shows Judith coming out of the tent of Holofernes and carrying off the head of the Assyrian general. It is precisely this tragic scene that has been chosen by preference by the great artists: Michelangelo, with all his verve and powerful imagination, has taken the moment when the heroine, having placed the head of Holofernes on a dish covered with a cloth, gives it to her maidservant to carry; then, imagining that the enemy still breathes, casts a last look of terror at the corpse to make sure that he lives no more. In Raphael, Judith is of a sublime character; she stands upright, leaning on her sword and trampling the head of Holofernes underfoot. In Domenichino she shows the head she has just cut off; in Guido Reni she raises her eyes to heaven with admirable feeling; in Carlo Maratta she holds the severed head and watches the blood flow; her figure is superb in movement and expression. Rubens twice reproduced this subject in compositions full of energy and magnificent in colour. Finally, in our own day, M. Horace Vernet, whose talent is so well known, has painted Judith in a remarkable work: Judith looks at her victim with a courage mingled with terror, and makes ready to raise the sabre that is to strike off the head of Holofernes. This fine page of contemporary art at present adorns the Luxembourg Museum.

CULTE. — LIVRE DE JUDITH.

Cult. — The Book of Judith.

To honour the courage of Judith, the Hebrews established a feast called the *Deliverance of Bethulia*, which was long celebrated in Judaea. Formerly the Church of Ethiopia also commemorated this deliverance of Israel. This cult passed to the person of Judith, and Christians have given public honours to her name. It is found marked in the Julian calendar on 27 September, and in that of Ethiopia on 4 August. Indeed, the siege having been laid to the town by Holofernes at harvest time and during the great droughts of the year, which in Judaea came towards the end of June or the beginning of July, 4 August may well have been the day of the victory won over the Assyrians and of the deliverance of Bethulia. Peter de Natalibus places Judith with the two Tobits in his *Catalogue* in the month of September, immediately after the feasts of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross, St. Cyprian and St. Euphemia. He has had regard to the usage of the Church, which reads the history of Tobit in its offices of the third week of September, and that of Judith in its offices of the fourth week.

We have in our ordinary Bibles the Book of Judith, divided into sixteen chapters; it immediately follows that of Tobit and precedes that of Esther. The truth of this history is a point that the rationalists have strongly contested in these last centuries; it does not come within our scope to follow this controversy.[1] Let us say only that the ancient Fathers of the Church did not judge so, and believed that the history of Judith, however marvellous it might be, contained nothing but what was true; they took care not to regard it as a fiction or to turn it into a parable. They regarded Judith not as a figure of Judaea, but as a real widow, worthy of respect and veneration, and they counted her among the widows of the Old Testament who were to serve as models to those of the New. But even if one wished to suppose that the Book of Judith is only a parable or a narrative composed with the design of consoling the Jews in their affliction and giving them a model of virtue in the person of Judith, nothing could be concluded from this against its canonicity. The book would be no less divine and the work of the Holy Spirit, since one sees from a great number of passages, both of the Old and of the New Testament, that parables are placed among the divine Scriptures. Besides, the authority of the Book of Judith is very ancient in the Church. Proof of this is found in St. Clement of Rome, Clement of Alexandria and Tertullian, who extolled with great praise the faith, the valour and the holiness of Judith; which they doubtless did only because this book already enjoyed great authority in their time.

The author of the Book of Judith is entirely unknown to us, and, however much care he took to give his narrative full circumstantial detail, he did not make himself known in any place. St. Jerome seems to have believed that Judith wrote it herself; but he gives no reason for his opinion. Others believe that it was the high priest Eliacim, who is spoken of in this book and who had a great part in all that happened in Judaea when

Holofernes came to besiege Bethulia. This opinion is founded on the testimony of Josephus, who tells us that the Jewish priests took care to collect all the most memorable things that happened in their nation.

The Book of Judith was written in Chaldee and translated into Latin by St. Jerome; it contains the events that took place from the war between Nebuchadnezzar and Arphaxad until after the death of Judith.

Taken from the Femmes de la Bible, *by Mgr Darboy, and completed, for the cult, with the* Vie des Saints de l'Ancien Testament, *by Baillet, and, for the bibliography, with the* Histoire des Auteurs sacrés et ecclésiastiques, *by Dom Ceillier.*

SAINT JOHN MARK, DISCIPLE OF THE APOSTLES, COUSIN AND COMPANION OF ST. BARNABAS

1st century.

> *Perfectio discipulorum, gaudium et corona magistri est.*
>
> *La perfection des disciples est la joie et la couronne du maître.*
>
> *The perfection of the disciples is the joy and the crown of the master.*
>
> *St. Ambrose.*

It is no small consolation for the children of the Church to see again, at least through the narrative of history, the first spirit of the early Christians: it is in this spirit that we give the summary of the life of the holy disciple called John Mark, whom some authors have wrongly taken for St. Mark the Evangelist. He whose life we are writing was the son of Mary, who had a house in the city of Jerusalem, where it is believed that the faithful assembled freely, after the ascension of Our Lord Jesus Christ and the descent of the Holy Spirit, to carry out there without fear all the exercises of nascent Christianity. We learn at least from the Acts of the Apostles that several of the faithful had gathered at her house during the night when St. Peter was delivered from prison by an angel, and it may be conjectured that it was their custom to gather at the house of this holy woman, since the Apostle made his way there without hesitating and without inquiring where the Christians were assembled.

St. Jerome assures us that St. Mark was a disciple of St. Barnabas. A few days after the deliverance of St. Peter, St. Paul and St. Barnabas, who had come from the city of Antioch to Jerusalem to distribute to the poor in Judaea the alms they had received from the faithful of Syria, persuaded the holy disciple John Mark to come with them when they were ready to return. Some time later, having been declared apostles of the Gentiles and sent in that capacity by the Holy Spirit to proclaim the Gospel to distant nations, they set out in the same year to fulfil this holy mission in the island of Cyprus.

The blessed Mark accompanied them, and served them everywhere, both in the functions of their apostolate and even in their bodily needs. But we learn from the history of the Acts of the Apostles that when they had left Paphos to go into Asia Minor and had arrived at Perga, in the province of Pamphylia, he parted from them to return to Jerusalem, for reasons that the history does not mention; St. Paul, however, did not approve of this disciple's conduct on that occasion, and he made his feelings known six years later, when St. Barnabas and he were preparing to make another journey into Asia to see in what state the new Churches then were in the cities where they had come to preach the Gospel.

St. Barnabas was quite of the opinion that they should take the blessed John Mark with them on this journey; but St. Paul would not consent, saying that it was not fitting to take as a companion a man who had left them, without there appearing to be any necessity, when they were in Pamphylia, and who had not had courage enough to accompany them in their ministry. There arose, then, a dispute between them, which caused them to part from one another. St. Chrysostom makes us observe on this point that the severity of St. Paul and the gentleness of St. Barnabas were equally necessary to John Mark, and that both were of great use to the

disciple: that the firmness of the first made him open his eyes to the greatness of his fault, showed him its unhappy consequences and made him enter into himself; and that the tenderness of the second kept him from falling into discouragement and made him conceive a great confidence in him, so as to profit by his advice and instructions and attach himself to his person.

In fact, St. Paul having parted from St. Barnabas, the latter took John Mark with him and made him his associate on his journey to Cyprus; it is perhaps for this reason alone that St. Jerome gives the man of whom we are speaking the title of disciple of St. Barnabas. After this time it appears that St. Barnabas persuaded him once more to accompany St. Paul, and that by this reunion with St. Paul John Mark repaired the fault he might have committed in leaving him; for there is every reason to believe that it is he whom St. Paul commends to Philemon and to the Colossians: he calls him Mark, cousin of Barnabas, in the Epistle he writes to the Colossians. He places him among the small number of converted Jews who assisted him at Rome in his bonds: which makes it known that he was with him in that city during the years 62 and 63. Writing to the Colossians, he begs them to receive Mark well if he came to them, and speaks to them of certain instructions that St. Barnabas and he had given them in something that concerned him. It appears, in fact, that John Mark, after St. Paul's release, made a journey into Asia; he was there at least two years later, when St. Paul wrote from his last prison the second Epistle to Timothy, who was then in Asia; he begged him to bring him to Rome with him, saying that he was useful to him for the ministry of the Gospel.

We can hardly know more of this blessed disciple; what is most certain about him is drawn from the passages of Scripture that have been noted here. Attempts have been made to confuse him with several others of the same name who were worthy of note; but, as there is nothing very convincing in what is related of them, it is more fitting to keep to what is most commonly believed about him. The Greeks at least knew nothing of his death and burial in the city of Ephesus, since, supposing that he was Bishop of Byblis (today Djebel) in Phoenicia, between Berytus and Tripoli, they mark his burial and his cult there too. They give him the title of apostle and honour his memory on 27 September. In this they are followed by the Latins, who seem to have spoken of him more particularly only since his name was inserted in the Roman Martyrology.

Tillemont; Acta Sanctorum; *Baillet. — Cf.* Histoire des soixante-douze disciples, *by M. l'abbé Maistre.*

SAINT COSMAS AND SAINT DAMIAN, BROTHERS, MARTYRS AT AEGAE, IN CILICIA

About the year 286. — Pope: St. Marcellinus. — Emperor: Diocletian.

L'homme ne peut mieux se donner à Dieu qu'en se livrant à la mort pour l'honorer.

Man cannot better give himself to God than by delivering himself to death to honour Him.

St. Anselm.

St. Cosmas and St. Damian were born in Arabia towards the end of the 3rd century, of noble and virtuous parents. Their mother, left a widow, found herself burdened with five children, namely Anthimus, Leontius, Euprepius and our two Saints, whom the historian Gregory of Tours believes to have been twins; she took great care to bring them up in the fear of God and in the love of Our Lord Jesus Christ. And as they followed the good examples and pious instructions of so holy a mother, they made wonderful progress in virtue. At the same time they applied themselves to the study of letters. St. Cosmas and St. Damian in particular became very skilful in the knowledge of nature and of medicine, which they studied in Syria; so that, their learning being accompanied by the gift of miracles, they worked admirable cures. They gave sight to the blind, walking to the lame, hearing to the deaf, the use of their limbs to the paralysed, freedom of soul and body to the possessed by driving out the demons, and in general joy, strength and health to the afflicted, the languishing and the sick; and as they exercised their art purely out of charity and for the love of God, without receiving any fee, the Greeks gave them the surname of *Anargyroi*, that is to say, "without money".

Under the empire of Diocletian and Maximian, Lysias being seated on his tribunal in the city of Aegae (Cilicia), some of his officers said to him: “There are here certain Christians very skilled in the art of medicine. They go through the towns and villages, healing various sick people and delivering those who are possessed by unclean spirits, in the name of him whom they call Christ; in this way they do many marvellous things; but they do not allow men to go to the temple to honour the gods with sacrifices.” The governor, at this news, sent guards to seize them and bring them before his tribunal. When they were before him he said to them: “You go through the towns and villages to persuade the inhabitants not to sacrifice to the gods? Tell me, then, where you come from, and what is your fortune and your name.” The blessed Cosmas answered: “If you wish to know that, governor, we will tell you boldly: we are Arabs; we have no fortune, for Christians do not know it, they do not even name it. Here now are our names: I am called Cosmas; my brother is called Damian. There are three others besides: if you wish, we will tell you their names too.” The governor: “Well! tell me their names.” The blessed Cosmas: “Anthimus, Leontius, Euprepius.” The governor said to his officers: “Let them be brought before the tribunal.”

The soldiers went at once to fetch them and brought them to the governor. He, looking at them, said to them: “Listen to my orders: you have to choose what is to your advantage; do not go and disobey. If you yield to my counsels, you will receive great and magnificent honours from the emperors; if, on the contrary, you do not agree to my invitation, I will torment you with various kinds of tortures; and after you have suffered much, you will deny your Christ.” The holy martyrs said to him with one voice: “Do what you will; for we have Christ, who will help us. We do not sacrifice to idols; they are without eyes and without any feeling.” The governor ordered them to be stretched on the ground and beaten with thongs of ox-sinew. The holy martyrs, in the midst of this torture, said: “Lord, You are our refuge from generation to generation. Before the mountains were formed, before the creation of the earth and the universe, You exist from age to age. Turn not away from us in our lowliness; for You have said: Be converted, O children of men. Turn towards us, Lord, and hear the prayer of Your servants.” As they prayed thus, the blows did them no harm; and they said to the governor: “Make us undergo still more cruel torments, that you may know the strength of the power of God that is in us: for the tortures you have inflicted on us have not touched us: you see that our bodies are as sound as before.” The governor said to them: “I hoped that you would yield: that is why I did not wish to make you endure too harsh torments. Now I see that you persist in your impiety and will not sacrifice to the gods; I will therefore have you bound with chains and thrown into the sea.” The holy martyrs answered: “Do what you will, governor; in that very thing you will know the power of our God.” The soldiers chained them all and led them towards the shore. The martyrs went there joyfully singing psalms, and they said: “We delight, Lord, in the way of Your commandments as in the midst of immense riches; and even though we should walk in the shadows of death, we would fear no evil, for You are with us, Lord. Your rod and Your staff have comforted us. You have prepared a table before us against those who afflict us. You have poured oil upon our head, and Your inebriating chalice, how delightful it is! Your mercy will accompany us all the days of our life. O God, You have led us to the haven of Your will.” Praying thus, the martyrs reached the shore, and the soldiers at once threw them into the sea. But at the same moment the angel of the Lord drew near to them, broke their bonds and drew them from the waves safe and sound.

The torturers, witnesses of the fact, went in all haste to tell the governor what had happened. Lysias ordered the martyrs to be brought before him and said to them: “Your spells surpass all those of the magicians: teach me this art too, then.” The blessed Cosmas said to him: “We are not magicians, but Christians; and it is in the name of our God that we destroy the power of your divinities. And you yourself, if you become a Christian, will see that all these things are worked by Him, and you will know the power of Christ.” The governor added: “In the name of my god Hadrian, I will follow you wherever you go.” He was still speaking when two evil spirits rushed upon him, and for an hour did not cease to strike him on the jaw. Then he cried out: “I implore you, servants of God, pray for me, that I may be delivered from this punishment.” The Saints having set themselves to pray, the demons withdrew forthwith. The governor then said to the martyrs: “You see how

the gods have punished me for having wished to abandon them, and to what torment they have given me up." The Saints replied: "Fool! how do you not recognize that it is a mercy God has shown you? But you prefer to believe that you owe your cure to blind and deaf idols, which you call gods. Acknowledge rather the Lord Jesus Christ, who has restored you to health, and put no trust in these gods whom you worship." The governor, irritated by the firmness of the confessors, said to them: "I swear by the gods that I will not yield to your persuasions; but on the contrary I will make you suffer various tortures, and I will give you to the beasts, to teach you to obey the orders of the emperors." And he ordered them to be kept in prison until he had decided their fate. As they were being taken there, they sang thus: "Let us sing to the Lord a new canticle, for He has done marvellous things. You have delivered us, Lord, from those who afflict us, and You have confounded those who hate You. You remember Your mercy towards Jacob and the truth of Your promises to the house of Israel. All the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God." And they spent the whole night thus in hymns and prayer.

The next day Lysias, having mounted his tribunal, had the holy martyrs brought before him. As they were being led, they said: "Give us, Lord, Your help in tribulation; for vain is the salvation that comes from man. As for us, we will show strength in God, and He will bring our enemies to nothing." When they had arrived before the governor, he said to them: "Have you decided to sacrifice, or do you persist in your folly?" The martyrs answered: "We are Christians, and we do not deny our God. Do now what you will; we do not sacrifice to idols." The governor, seeing their admirable bearing, gave orders to bring dry wood, to light a great fire with it and to throw them into it. The servants hastened to carry out their master's orders. The holy martyrs stood upright in the midst of the flames and said: "We lift up our eyes to You, Lord, who dwell in the heavens. As the eyes of servants are fixed on the hands of their masters, and those of the handmaid on the hands of her mistress, so our eyes are turned to the Lord our God until He has pity on us. Have pity on us, Lord, have pity on us, for we are overwhelmed with contempt. Send us help, Lord, and deliver us from those who rise up against us, lest those who do not know You should say: Where is their God?" As they prayed thus, there came a great earthquake, and the flame, leaping out from the pyre, burned a crowd of pagans who were present. The martyrs came out of it unhurt, so that not one of their hairs was touched by the fire; and thus they presented themselves before the spectators.

The governor, stupefied by the wonders he saw, held himself in for an hour; then, calling the martyrs, he said to them: "I swear by the gods, I am very anxious for you; for clearly it is your magic art that has put out such fierce flames." The holy martyrs said to him: "How long, impious man, will you refuse to acknowledge the mercy that God shows towards us? You wish to force us to sacrifice to your senseless stones! Know, then, that we do not abandon our God, and that we do not sacrifice to unclean idols." The governor, angered, gave orders to raise them on the rack and to beat them without respite. But the angel of the Lord, who stood near them, took away the pain. The governor, seeing that the torturers were about to drop from weariness, ordered the martyrs to be untied and brought to him. They came at once and presented themselves before him full of the grace of God and with faces radiant with joy. The governor said to them: "I call the gods to witness, I will not let myself be vanquished by your spells; but I will inflict on you yet more kinds of tortures, and I will end by giving your bodies to the birds of prey." The martyrs answered: "As we have in heaven an eternal King, Our Lord Jesus Christ, we do not fear your torments. Do all that you will, as we have already told you."

Then the governor Lysias pronounced a sentence condemning Cosmas and Damian to be crucified, then stoned by the people. As for the blessed Anthimus, Leontius and Euprepius, after having them scourged, he had them taken back to prison. The torturers, then, having crucified Cosmas and Damian, the people began to stone them; but the stones fell back on those who threw them. The governor, seeing his guards all covered with bruises, was beside himself with fury, and ordered four soldiers to pierce the martyrs with arrows. At the same time he had Sts. Anthimus, Leontius and Euprepius brought out of prison, and ordered them to stand near the cross. But the arrows, like the stones, came back on those who shot them. The governor,

perceiving at last that all his efforts against the martyrs gained nothing, ordered their heads to be cut off.

The executioners at once seized the holy martyrs and led them to the place of execution. On the way these blessed ones praised God, saying: “It is good to praise the Lord and to sing to Your name, O Most High, to show forth Your mercy in the morning and Your truth in the night; for You have magnificently shown Your mercy upon us. The senseless man knows not these things, and the fool understands them not. When the sinners shall be burned like grass, all those who work iniquity shall also be scattered. They have humbled Your people, they have afflicted Your inheritance: they shall perish for ever and ever. But You, Lord, are the Most High for evermore.” After this canticle the blessed martyrs raised their hands to heaven, and, having prayed inwardly, they said: “Amen.” The executioners then drew near and cut off their heads. And thus, in tranquillity and peace, they gave back their souls to God, to receive from the Saviour the crown of victory.

The glorious martyrs Cosmas and Damian, Anthimus, Leontius and Euprepius suffered in the city of Aegae on the fifth of the calends of October (27 September), under the reign of Our Lord Jesus Christ, to whom be honour and glory with the Father and the Holy Spirit for ever and ever. Amen.

In a mosaic of the 6th century at Ravenna they are represented holding something like a scroll. They are also painted sometimes beheaded, sometimes with a young child kneeling between the two of them. Each holds a phial. — St. Cosmas alone is represented seated, holding a kind of medicine box; the same, holding an arrow and a little phial, and near him St. Damian holding the same objects.

CULTE ET RELIQUES.

Cult and Relics.

A good part of the sacred relics of St. Cosmas and St. Damian was afterwards brought to Rome and laid in the catacomb situated near the ancient temple of Romulus and Remus, in the Forum. At the end of the 5th century Pope St. Felix III raised over the tomb, and under the titles of Sts. Cosmas and Damian, the fine church that is seen today, which was much embellished in the 17th century by Urban VIII. The choir is adorned with old and curious mosaics. A coffered ceiling covers the nave, which is decorated with interesting frescoes representing the life of St. Felix.

God has worked several miracles through their intercession. The emperor Justinian, having been cured of a dangerous illness by their merits, raised a magnificent basilica under their names at Constantinople. He also had another built in Pamphylia, at Cyr, which he had fortified out of respect for their sacred remains. The great St. Sabas, abbot, changed his father’s house into a temple, which he had consecrated to their memory. The book entitled *The Spiritual Meadow* speaks, in chapter cxxvii, of a very famous pilgrimage that was made to a church dedicated to them in Palestine; and the cult paid them at Rome was so great that some have believed that they suffered martyrdom there. The Greeks themselves, in one of their manuscript Menologies, are of this opinion, and place their death on 1 July. Jean de Beaumont, a French lord, on his return from the Holy War under the pontificate of Alexander III, brought to France some of their sacred bones, of which one part is seen at Luzarches, seven leagues from Paris, in a collegiate church under their name: these were two large whole bones and several fragments. The whole was enclosed in two shrines of solid silver. Everything was destroyed and profaned in 1793; and the other part, in the metropolitan church of Paris. The Parisians have also shown their devotion to these holy Martyrs by the erection of a parish church dedicated in their honour. The church of Longpont keeps a notable relic of these Saints, as do the churches of Saint-Germain and Saint-Médard in the diocese of Meaux.

The four ordinary martyrologies commemorate them. Cardinal Baronius has not left them out of his *Notes*.

We have borrowed these acts from the Acta Sanctorum, *as translated by the Benedictines, and we have completed them, as regards the cult and the relics, by means of notes supplied by the parish priest of Longpont and by M. l’abbé Tresvaux, vicar general of Paris.*

SAINT HILTRUDE OR HELTRUDE, VIRGIN, AT LIESSIES, IN THE DIOCESE OF CAMBRAI

785. — Pope: Adrian I. — King of France: Charlemagne.

La vie est belle quand elle unit à la pureté de l'esprit la fleur de la virginité.

Life is beautiful when it unites to purity of mind the flower of virginity.

St. Gregory the Great.

At the time when Pepin the Short was beginning to govern the kingdom, there lived in the neighbourhood of the town of Poitiers a noble lord called Wibert. This man, of great piety and incorruptible virtue, was often exposed to the attacks of the peoples of those regions, because he would not support the party of Waifre, Duke of Aquitaine, against the King of the Franks. Wearied by these continual persecutions, which he could not effectively resist, he came to make them known to the king and to set before him the difficulties of his position. Pepin, pleased with this step, which clearly revealed the sincerity of Wibert's feelings towards his person, gave him a part of the lands of his domain in Hainaut and the Thiérache, so that he might settle there. The noble leude therefore went into that country with Ada, his wife, and their children, among whom are especially mentioned St. Hiltrude and the virtuous Guntard, her brother.

Some years later the first buildings of the monastery of Liessies were seen to rise, which was afterwards to enjoy so just a renown. Wibert and Ada destined it for their son Guntard. This young and virtuous lord had formed the plan of withdrawing into this solitude, there to consecrate himself entirely to the service of God and to live in complete separation from the world. St. Hiltrude, his sister, would gladly have followed his example; but before obtaining this favour she was to undergo some trials that would give her virtue a still brighter lustre.

This young virgin, brought up in her father's house with all the care and vigilance that Christian parents bring to the fulfilment of that important duty, grew up under their eyes in wisdom and piety. She joined to all the virtues of her sex the most brilliant qualities. And so her name was not slow to become known in the neighbouring countries, and her parents soon found themselves solicited by various lords who wished to marry her. The Saint's biographer mentions in particular a noble Burgundian called Hugh, who belonged to one of the most important houses of the kingdom.

Wibert and Ada would have seen with pleasure the alliance of their daughter with this young lord, and they did not hesitate to make known to her their intention and their wishes in the matter. But the virtuous Hiltrude had already made to God the sacrifice of her virginity, and she was resolved to belong entirely to Him until her last breath. "My dear parents," she then answered with modesty, "you ask me what I think of the proposal you are making me; I am going to tell you frankly. For a long time I have loved Jesus Christ above all things; I have given Him my faith; it is with Him that I ardently desire to contract an alliance. If you truly love me, if you treat me as your daughter, if you do not separate me from Him whom I have chosen for my Bridegroom, I shall always be your child: if, on the contrary, you wished to force my will, how could I believe that I am still your daughter?" These words made a deep impression on the minds of St. Hiltrude's parents: they knew, moreover, that her brother Guntard shared her sentiments and helped her with his counsel and his influence.

Nevertheless the entreaties of Wibert and of his wife Ada continued and grew ever more pressing. The virtuous Hiltrude, who loved them dearly, keenly regretted the pain that her persevering refusals seemed to cause them; but her confidence in God and an entire abandonment to His will strengthened her soul and made it capable of the most heroic resolutions. One day, then, when keener fears about the fresh solicitations that were going to be made to her had taken hold of her mind, she formed the design of going away for some time into an unknown solitude, so as to show her family in this way how fixed and irrevocable her resolution was. She told her plan to several persons who had her confidence, and withdrew with them into a small wood near

by, where they built themselves a dwelling.

The anxiety and grief of the parents were great when they noticed the flight of their beloved daughter. They easily guessed the motive that could have led her to take this course, and their sincere piety filled them in spite of themselves with admiration for so courageous a virtue. On the other hand, they feared that a positive refusal might anger the young Burgundian leude, in whom they had raised hopes. Such was their position when a thought that God suggested to them came to put an end to this embarrassment and to the perplexities of St. Hiltrude.

Wibert and Ada had another daughter, called Bertha, who, like her sister, joined to an eminent piety the finest qualities of heart and mind. They conceived the idea of giving her in marriage to the young Hugh in place of Hiltrude, who still persisted in her resolution to consecrate herself solely to God.

Whether the prayers of the virgin of Liessies had disposed the heart of the noble Burgundian to this sacrifice, or whether he was himself animated by great sentiments of religion, he consented to this arrangement. He accepted the virtuous Bertha as his wife, and left St. Hiltrude free to follow the way of perfection to which heaven was calling her.

A short time, indeed, after these events, St. Hiltrude, back in her father's house, obtained the long-desired permission to go and live in retirement and the practice of works of piety. Her parents themselves asked the venerable Bishop of Cambrai, Alberic,[1] to give her the veil of virgins, after which she withdrew into a little cell adjoining the monastery of Liessies, which her brother Guntard governed.

From that moment above all, the life of the blessed Hiltrude was devoted to acts of charity and religion. Her fasts were frequent, her prayers continual, her union with God without interruption. She was often seen with her venerable brother Guntard, conversing of the things of heaven and stirring each other up to the love of God and to ever more ardent desires for the heavenly homeland. One would have said it was St. Benedict and his sister St. Scholastica talking together of the things of eternity. For seventeen years these pious conferences went on and developed in these two holy souls an ever new emulation to reach the perfection of their state.

St. Hiltrude, although she was still of no great age, was already ripe for heaven, and God was about to call her to the eternal reward for which she sighed. A wasting illness reduced her little by little to extreme weakness. In her last moments she had the consolation of seeing gathered round her bed all her family and the religious of the community of Liessies. It was under their eyes and amid their prayers that she peacefully gave back her soul to her Creator, on the twenty-seventh day of September, about the year 785.

Her body was placed in the church of Liessies, near the altar. These words were read on her tomb: "Here was laid, on the fifth of the calends of October, the body of the virgin Hiltrude."

She is found represented holding a lamp and a palm. In the collection of the Saints in the Cabinet des Estampes in Paris she is seen crowned with roses, holding a lighted lamp and an open book.

CULTE ET RELIQUES.

Cult and Relics.

Numerous healings worked at the tomb of St. Hiltrude made her memory dear to the people of Hainaut. These many wonders determined the Bishop of Cambrai, Erlum, to raise this holy body from the ground and place it in a shrine. This ceremony was performed with solemnity and amid a great concourse of the faithful on 17 September 1004. The shrine was placed behind the high altar, which was under the invocation of St. Lambert, Bishop of Maastricht and martyr.

In 1128 these relics were put into a new shrine of magnificent workmanship, which had been given by Agnes, Countess of Avesnes. It was afterwards replaced by another still finer, made in Paris by order of the

Abbot of Liessies, Antoine de Winghe. It was this one that was kept until the time of the Revolution of 1793.

The relics of the Saint were not immediately placed in this shrine. It was only in 1637, on 12 May, that the Archbishop of Cambrai, François Vander-Burch, carried out this ceremony in the town of Mons.

Every year at Liessies a feast was celebrated in memory of the day on which the body of St. Hiltrude was raised from the ground. It had been transferred to the Sunday within the Octave of the Ascension, because it quite often happened that the feast of St. Lambert, the other patron of Liessies, fell on the seventeenth day of September, the anniversary of that solemnity. This feast, as well as that of 27 September, which recalled the day of St. Hiltrude's blessed death, was celebrated with Vigil and Octave.

The people of the neighbouring countries flocked to Liessies on those days to commend themselves to the protection of their holy patroness. Many pilgrims, after paying her their homage, went out of devotion to draw water at a spring about half a league away. An ancient tradition relates that St. Hiltrude, when she left her father's house so as not to marry the lord Hugh, had drunk of this water, and that God, for her sake, had given the spring the property of healing the sick, and particularly those suffering from fever.

St. Hiltrude has had a proper office in the diocese of Cambrai for a very long time. Her memory was formerly honoured in the town of Douai, where some of her relics were possessed. There were also some at Mons, in an oratory that the abbots of Liessies had built to withdraw to at the approach of the wars so frequent during the 16th century.

A great number of miracles worked through the protection of St. Hiltrude have made her cult very famous in the northern regions. These healings or signal marks of the protection of the virgin of Liessies have been collected by various historians, most of them contemporaries.

Taken from the Vie des Saints de Cambrai et d'Arras, *by M. l'abbé Destombes.*

SAINT ELZÉAR OR AUGIAS OF ROBIANS, COUNT OF ARIAN AND CONFESSOR

1325. — Pope: John XXII. — King of France: Charles IV, the Fair.

> *Le sein des pauvres est le trésor de Jésus-Christ. Comment pouvons-nous demander à Dieu son royaume, si nous lui refusons un verre d'eau ?*
>
> *The bosom of the poor is the treasury of Jesus Christ. How can we ask God for His kingdom if we refuse Him a glass of water?*
>
> *Maxim of the Saint.*

St. Elzéar was born at Robians, a small village (which had ceased to exist before 1789) not far from the castle of Ansouis, in the former diocese of Apt, today the diocese of Avignon, about the year of Our Lord 1285. His father was Hermangaud de Sabran, Count of Arian, Baron of Ansouis, Lord of Cadenet, Grand Justiciar of Naples, etc.; and his mother Laudune d'Aube de Roquemartine, called the *good countess* because of her charity. When she had brought Elzéar into the world, she made a sacrifice of him to God in these words, which she uttered with admirable fervour: "I give You thanks, my Lord and my God, at whose command all creatures receive life, for the son whom Your goodness has just given me. I most humbly beseech You to receive him into the number of Your servants and to pour into his soul the blessings of Your grace. But I implore You besides that if, by Your infinite knowledge, You foresee that he is to be rebellious to Your holy will, You take him out of this world as soon as he has been regenerated in the waters of baptism; for I would rather he died innocent and received at once the glory that You have merited for him by Your passion, than see him on earth in a state to offend You." The prayers of so virtuous a mother were heard, and the child was preserved because he was to serve God with inviolable fidelity. He drank in piety with his milk, and even from the cradle gave proofs of great charity towards the poor; for when any of them presented himself before

him, he could be quieted only by putting into his little hands something to give them in alms.

At the age of five he distributed to them everything that was given him for his amusements. He preferred to take his recreation with the poor rather than with the children of his rank, and saw to it that some of them were always given a meal with him. These first steps show that he was of a tender and kindly nature, full of compassion for the miseries of others. The obedience he paid to his governor and his tutor was admirable. He spoke little, but was nonetheless affable towards those who had the honour of approaching him: his modesty and reserve, as well as the maturity of his mind, were far beyond his age; but a pleasant gaiety that shone on his face won him the heart and affection of everyone.

When he had spent the first years of childhood in the castle of Ansouis, he was placed under the guidance of Guillaume de Sabran, his paternal uncle, Abbot of Saint-Victor of Marseille, to learn the precepts of virtue and to study humane letters. Hearing the Acts of the Martyrs read in this religious house, he felt keenly drawn to imitate them; he asked a religious to tell him where the servants of Jesus Christ were tormented in this way, so that he might share their sufferings.

Elzéar was still only ten years old when his father, by order of Charles II, King of Jerusalem, Naples and Sicily, betrothed him to a young lady of his own rank called Delphine; at the age of twelve she had already earned by her virtues the admiration of all who knew her; and three years later their marriage was celebrated in the castle of Puimichel, in Provence. Elzéar, whose young wife asked him to live in continence, consented to it provisionally, until God should have made His will known to them.

Some time afterwards, our Saint, having gone to Marseille to visit the Abbot of Saint-Victor, his uncle, found there some young men who held conversation with him well calculated to draw him into sensual pleasures. He resisted this temptation vigorously. That year he fasted rigorously through Lent, although, by the laws of the Church, which do not yet oblige at that age, he could have dispensed himself from this austerity. He also wore on his bare flesh a cord full of knots and points, which he drew so tight that he made several wounds, from which the blood flowed in abundance.

Having been invited, at the age of fifteen, together with his uncle, to a first Mass and to the ceremony held for the reception of a new knight on the day of the Assumption of Our Lady, he attended without omitting any of his usual practices of piety. He rose at midnight to hear Matins in the place of the gathering, called Le Sault. He went to confession and received the Holy Eucharist, to be present in spirit at the triumph of that Queen of angels; he also performed some acts of humility and chastity. While he was dining beside his uncle, divine love so inflamed his heart that his face appeared all on fire. As he had lost consciousness, he was carried to a bed, and the curtains were drawn to let him rest. He then felt that divine operation which mystical theologians call transformation; his soul melted and lost itself, so to speak, in the heart of his Saviour. At the same time he received a heavenly light that made him know the shortness of this life, the vanity of the goods of earth compared with those of heaven, which never perish, and the powerlessness of all the pleasures of this world to content the mind: which made him conceive an extreme contempt for them that lasted him all his life.

He recognized too, in a singular manner, the great mercy of God towards him in having preserved him from mortal sin and kept his virginity for him; so that he resolved from that moment to keep it inviolably. He even considered abandoning all his riches and withdrawing into a solitude so as to think of nothing but the work of his salvation; but as he was in this thought, he seemed to hear a voice telling him, in the depth of his heart, not to change his state. “But if I remain in the world,” he answered this inspiration, “how shall I be able, in fragile flesh, to keep the fervour with which I now feel myself animated?” — “I know what you can do and what you cannot,” that divine voice went on; “I will make up for this weakness; keep your virginity, and have confidence in Me.” After this visit of God he found himself entirely dead to all the things of the world, and the heats of concupiscence were so extinguished in him that from that age, which was only fifteen, he

spent the rest of his life in perfect continence. He and his wife often spent the night in prayer, during which they were several times favoured with heavenly visions. Our Lord, who takes wonderful delight among the lilies and with pure and innocent souls, appeared to them visibly to console them by His presence and to strengthen them by His graces to remain faithful to their holy and generous resolution. It was in these precious visits that Elzéar discovered the adorable mysteries of divine Providence, the economy of the Incarnation of the Word, the excess of the charity of Jesus Christ in the institution of the Holy Eucharist, and several other secrets of grace, which caused admirable transports of love in his soul.

When he had reached the twentieth year of his age, not finding in the castle of Ansouis all the tranquillity he wished, because his parents were doing their utmost to give him a taste for the world, he resolved to withdraw elsewhere, where he could live according to the movements of his devotion. He had difficulty in obtaining this separation from them; but they were obliged to grant to his prayers and entreaties what was so repugnant to their inclination. Of all his lands he chose the castle of Puimichel, which belonged to him through his wife. There this new father of a family began to govern his house in an entirely new way. Here are the rules he made for this, contained in ten articles: 1° Let all my servants hear Mass every day; 2° let blasphemy be banished from my house; 3° let all respect modesty; 4° they must go to confession often and communicate on the principal feasts; 5° I wish idleness to be avoided. When the women have fulfilled their duties of piety in the morning, they must spend the rest of the time working; 6° no games of chance: there are enough innocent recreations; 7° God dwells where peace reigns. Let envy, jealousy, suspicions and tale-bearing never divide my people; 8° if a quarrel breaks out, I wish them to be reconciled before nightfall; 9° every evening there shall be an assembly for a spiritual conference in which God will be spoken of. It is a great misfortune that, placed on earth solely to merit heaven, we hardly ever speak of it; 10° I forbid all my officers to wrong anyone, or to oppress the weak and the poor under pretext of maintaining my rights.

It was in these pious conversations that this holy young man revealed the lights of divine wisdom with which his soul was enlightened. His words were flaming darts that stirred up in his servants ardent desires for their own perfection, and one cannot tell the admirable fruits that his urgent exhortations produced. Those who came nearest to him and enjoyed his conversation most familiarly felt the corrupt inclinations of the flesh and the movements of concupiscence die out and be extinguished in themselves. So that several, even among the men of war, touched by this secret virtue as well as by his words, made a vow to keep chastity inviolably all their lives.

So as not to neglect his own salvation while securing that of others, our Saint followed these practices: he recited the divine office every day, according to the use of the Roman Church, with such devotion that he even gave devotion to those who had the happiness of seeing or hearing him. Besides the fasts of precept, he fasted also every Friday of the year and all the vigils of feasts, with the whole of Advent. Under his costly garments he wore a rough haircloth, which he often did not take off even at night. He usually slept clothed, in garments he had had made on purpose. He had a discipline made of iron links, and gave himself three strokes at each verse of the psalm *Miserere*. He received the Holy Eucharist every Sunday of Lent and Advent, and on the feasts of several Saints, particularly those of virgins, to whom he bore a singular devotion; he communicated with so great an abundance of graces that he sometimes confessed to his dear wife that, when he had the sacred host on his tongue, he tasted inconceivable sweetness: “Ah! the greatest pleasure of a soul,” he added, “is to approach holy communion often.” He had such facility in rising to God that he needed no effort to apply himself to prayer, meditation and contemplation. The taste for heavenly things never left him, whether he was at table, or conversing with people, or even when, unable to excuse himself, he found himself at great gatherings for entertainment where there was singing and playing of musical instruments; for amid the sound of the melody his mind was so occupied with eternal truths that he fell into a kind of ecstasy. He sometimes spent whole nights in contemplation, and during that time shed torrents of tears. His greatest recreation was to converse with his wife about the perfections of Jesus Christ, the excellence of virginity, the

delights of paradise and blessed eternity; so that it may be said that their room was an oratory where they attended only to exercises of piety, and their souls an altar on which they continually adored the divine Majesty. He inviolably observed these three maxims: first, to avoid the smallest things that might displease God; secondly, to offer himself to Him at every moment with fervour; finally, to keep hidden in his heart, particularly from worldly and carnal men, the visits and favours he received from heaven.

From this interior disposition proceeded that admirable charity which he exercised towards the unfortunate. Every day he gave dinner to twelve poor people or lepers, washed their feet and kissed them tenderly: after which he gave them large alms. Having once gone to visit a lazar-house, he found there six lepers so disfigured that they were horrible to look at. But, overcoming the repugnance of nature, he talked with them for some time, then kissed them affectionately, and at once the hospital was filled with a very sweet fragrance, and the poor sick men found themselves perfectly cured. He forbade his valet and his surgeon, whom he had brought with him, to make this miracle known; but heaven revealed his humility by another wonder: for as the Saint was leaving the place, a brilliant light appeared above his head, which spread over the hospital and grew as he went on towards his castle. During a famine that reduced the people to the utmost misery, he had all the provisions of his granaries distributed to the poor, not even keeping back what seemed necessary for the support of his household; this liberality was so pleasing to God that the wheat and flour were found miraculously multiplied in his granaries, so that he could extend it to a greater number of the needy. His castle was the hospice of all travelling religious. He gave them every possible welcome, and above all he was delighted when he could lodge preachers, of whom he took extraordinary care, hoping by this charity to share with them the reward of their labours. He did not wait for the poor to ask him for help and reveal their needs to him; he had them sought out and anticipated them with his alms. He never refused any who had recourse to him, and when he could learn of those whom shame kept from asking him anything, he had them helped secretly.

At the age of twenty-three, having lost his father, who had made him his heir by will, he was obliged to make a journey to Italy to take possession of the property that came to him from this inheritance. There for three years he suffered all kinds of injuries from his subjects of the county of Arian, who rose against him, falsely accused him of several crimes, and laid ambushes to put him to death. The Prince of Taranto offered him his troops to bring them back to their duty and to punish some of the most guilty, so as to strike terror into the others; but Elzéar rejected all these harsh measures, hoping to subdue them by his patience. And indeed he won them so well by his gentleness that, having submitted to him, they not only respected him as their master but also loved him as their father. He found among his father’s papers letters that certain lords had written to him to dissuade him, on false pretexts, from making him his heir; yet he bore them no resentment, for, far from letting them know that he knew of the bad turns they had done him, he showed them more friendship than the others, and lived with them in perfect understanding. He had above all a particular tenderness for the one who was the author of the whole intrigue, whatever cause for displeasure he had received from him. He was never seen troubled or angry. There always appeared on his face a wonderful serenity and calm, which clearly showed the peace and tranquillity of his soul. Everyone admired this constancy, so rare in persons of quality, who make it a point of honour to be infinitely sensitive to the least things. His wife herself, unable to understand this mystery, asked him one day how he could remain unmoved amid so many reasons for flying into a passion. “It seems to me,” she said to him, “that you are a statue deprived of all feeling. Is it that you do not notice the injustices done you, or that you have not the heart to be angry at them? You are a great lord, and you are thought not to lack courage; what harm would you do in appearing indignant against those who wrong you, so that they might stop persecuting you?” — “What good would it do me to get angry?” answered Elzéar; “I find no advantage in it. I feel well enough the harm that is done me; but when any movement of indignation arises in my heart on that account, I at once turn my eyes to my Lord Jesus Christ, who suffered for me so many reproaches, outrages and curses, although He deserved the respect of all creatures; and I find myself at that very hour so disposed to endure everything that, if my servants were to

pluck out my beard or cover my face with blows and spittle, I would still think it very little compared with what I ought to suffer in gratitude for the sorrows of my God. This sight makes so much impression on my soul that it checks on the spot the outbursts of my passions. God then grants me this great grace with regard to those who offend me, that I love them more tenderly than before, that I pray to Him more heartily for them, and that I acknowledge that I deserve, for my past sins, many other ill-treatments than those they inflict on me."

These fine sentiments will no doubt astonish the people of the world, who make true strength consist in feeling an injury keenly and in taking vengeance on one's enemies: yet it was neither cowardice nor weakness that made our Saint lay down his arms; it was rather greatness of soul, rising above nature and above a chimerical point of honour; he endured generously, for the love of Jesus Christ, the affronts and ignominies that the great ones of the world, who love only themselves, cannot bear. Elzéar was so brave, besides, that he was no less admired in the exercise of arms than in the practices of devotion; for in a tournament that Robert of Naples gave to entertain the lords of his court, our count carried off the ring so skilfully, broke lances with such vigour, and performed other such fine feats, that the spectators awarded him the victory and judged him worthy of the prize offered and of the name of knight.

His extreme gentleness did not, for all that, make him too soft in the administration of justice. He wished the criminal judges to follow the rigour of the laws against murderers, thieves and in general against those who disturbed the tranquillity of his States. In civil matters he showed great indulgence and relieved those who were in prison for debt, by paying their creditors for them a third, a half and often the whole of what they owed; but he did it secretly, for fear his charity should be abused. He would never profit from the confiscation of goods that fell to his domain through the death of condemned men; but he handed them over, through a third party, to the widow or the orphans, judging them afflicted enough by the loss of persons dear to them. He himself visited criminals before they were led to the last punishment. He gave them salutary instruction, moved them to penance and exhorted them to have recourse to the passion of Jesus Christ. And by this means he converted obstinate men who had no concern about dying in their sin.

After four years' stay in Italy he returned to France, where he made a vow of perpetual continence; for he had kept it until then without binding himself to it by any express promise. This was at the castle of Ansouis, of which he had taken possession since his father's death, and on the day of St. Mary Magdalen, patroness of Provence. He first performed his devotions in the chapel of the castle, dedicated in honour of St. Catherine. Then, accompanied by his wife, he went to the room of the Blessed Garsende, a widow of most eminent virtue, who had been his governess and who, being ill at the time, had not been able to come to the oratory. He wished to perform the ceremony in her presence, because it was she who had brought devotion into his father's house, who had given him its first impulses, who had upheld him against the complaints and slanders of worldly people in the resolution he had taken to labour at the great work of his own sanctification, and who advised him to seal his virginity with the seal of an eternal vow. Being therefore at the foot of her bed, with his dear Delphine, the nun Alazie and the lord Ivorde, son of this holy widow, on his knees and with his hands joined on a missal, he pronounced his vow in these terms: "My Lord Jesus Christ, from whom spring all the good things we receive: trusting entirely in Your help, and acknowledging on the one hand that, frail and infirm sinner that I am, I cannot persevere in continence without a special assistance of Your goodness, and on the other that all things are possible to me by Your grace, I vow and promise to You and to Your most holy Mother, as also to all the Saints of paradise, to live chastely until death and to preserve all my life the virginity that I have kept until now by Your mercy; I am ready to endure all kinds of afflictions, torments and even death rather than ever violate it." Delphine, who had already made this vow privately, renewed it with all her heart on this occasion, and their example so moved the young Ivorde that he too made the same vow. On the very day on which they made their vow of chastity they entered the Third Order of St. Francis.

When Robert, after the death of his father (1309), went to Avignon to receive there the investiture of his States, he took in his train his brother John, Prince of Morea, and Count Elzéar de Sabran. Soon afterwards he entrusted to Elzéar the education of his son Charles, Duke of Calabria. This young prince already had inclinations wholly corrupted and given to pleasures and sensuality; but the good guidance of our Saint made him so wise and so virtuous that the courtiers loudly proclaimed that, since he had been in the hands of this excellent governor, he was entirely changed and had acquired the perfections of a great prince: which would one day make him wear the crown with as much glory for himself as happiness for his subjects. This charge, however, honourable as it was, was extremely burdensome to him, because it took him away from the solitude he enjoyed in his own house. The purity of his conscience made him regard the court as a place of torment, where a soul is continually ill at ease, as much because of the dangers that surround it as because of the ways of acting that must be observed there, which savour so little of Christian simplicity. It was an unbearable torment to him to find himself obliged to spend whole days in the bustle of affairs, receiving and paying visits, hearing or paying compliments, and in other actions of this kind that so fully occupy courtiers. He had only the night at his disposal; so he often spent it in prayer and contemplation, to fortify his soul against the deceitful charms of a worldly life. During the absence of the king, who had gone to Provence, all the affairs of the kingdom passed through his hands, because the Duke of Calabria did nothing except by his advice. It was then that he needed great firmness of mind and perfect disinterestedness: for, as he was the arbiter of all deliberations, people had recourse to him for favours as well as for justice, and there was no one who did not seek his protection. Some even offered him presents in an attempt to obtain it; but it was impossible ever to make him accept any, and he always took the side of equity, without any view to reward. When his friends pointed out to him that he could, without wounding his conscience, receive the things that were so freely offered him, and that the great labours he undertook for the State well deserved to be acknowledged by some courtesy, he answered them that it was difficult to do so without scandalizing one’s neighbour; that it was to be feared that, having begun with what was permitted, one would end with what was forbidden; that one takes first the fruit, then the basket, and finally the tree and the garden itself. In a word, that since the intention of those who give is often to corrupt the integrity of ministers, it was safer to accept nothing and to await the reward from God alone.

We have already spoken of the charities he practised in his house and privately; but having found the opportunity of practising them in greater number and more universally, he did not fail to profit by it. Having noticed that the affairs of the poor were almost forgotten, and were dealt with only after delays that were harmful to them, he begged the duke to allow him to become their advocate in the council. In this capacity, which he valued more than all the others, he took up their interests with more warmth than his own. He received all their petitions, not only in his house or at the palace, but even when he was going through the streets he would gladly stop to listen to them. Sometimes so great a number presented themselves when he returned home that he needed heroic patience not to be put off by their importunity. He would not have been at rest had he not heard all their reasons, however ill-digested they might be. He took the trouble of making extracts from the memorials that had been given him, and, by the penetration of mind he possessed, he reduced to certain heads all that he had read or heard, and then made his report on it to the council, where he spoke eloquently in their favour. One day a poor man, having slipped into his room, asked him, as he was sitting down to table, what he had done with the petition he had presented to him. “I have not yet reported on it,” the Saint answered him; “but wait a moment, I pray you, and I will deliver the dispatch of it to you.” And indeed, leaving his dinner, he went at that very hour to the duke’s palace, where he settled this poor man’s business, and, after placing it in his hands, sat down to table again. Some ladies of quality of Sicily having taken refuge in Naples because of the war in their country, he took them with all their families under his protection and had them assisted as long as their exile lasted.

We should never finish if we wished to speak in detail of all his virtues. There is hardly an action in his life that does not contain several of them at once. The purity of his soul was incomparable, his modesty angelic,

his kindness charming, and his indifference to all the things of earth perfect and universal. He was so constant in the faith that he said to St. Delphine that, even if all Christians were to change their religion, he would always remain firm in Catholicism, God having made known to him its truth and certainty by lights so abundant and so penetrating that he was ready to endure a thousand deaths, and even all the persecutions of Antichrist, rather than waver for a single moment on any one of its articles. He had a tender devotion to the Passion of the Saviour. He often meditated on it with loving transports that cannot be expressed. One day, writing to the countess his wife, who was anxious about him, he told her that whenever she wished to find him she should seek him in the wound in the side of Jesus Christ, because that was the place to which he usually withdrew, that he was safe there, and that there he tasted bitter sweetnesses and bitternesses full of sweetness from which his soul received unspeakable consolation. We shall not speak of the visions with which he was favoured and in which he gained knowledge and received extraordinary graces: the reader will be able to see them in the authors of his life, whom we shall cite at the end of this abridgement. His confessors testified after his death that in his general confessions they had not noticed any mortal sin, and that in his ordinary ones he accused himself of the slightest faults with so much humility and sorrow that he thought himself the greatest sinner in the world. As he was returning from Naples to Provence with his wife and all his household, a furious storm tore the sails, broke the mast and brought the ship within a hair's breadth of destruction. While every passenger, seized with terrible fright, was preparing for death, Elzéar remained as peaceful and as calm as if he had been on dry land. Having obtained calm by his prayers, he rebuked his people for their excessive timidity, as for a lack of confidence in the power and infinite goodness of God. Delphine, surprised at this fearlessness, asked him privately how it could be that he had not been afraid in so great a danger of death. "It is," he answered her, "that since a heavenly vision I had, whenever I see myself in any peril by sea or by land, I at once have recourse to God and make Him a humble prayer from the bottom of my heart, in which I implore Him to discharge all His anger upon me, as upon the greatest sinner in the world, and to spare those who are with me; no sooner have I uttered this prayer than I feel in my heart a wonderful consolation that makes me insensible to fear."

He showed no less prudence and valour in the armies than justice and kindness in peace. The Emperor Henry VII was at war with Robert, King of Naples. Pope Clement V strove to reconcile them, but without effect, because the emperor would never listen to the proposals made to him, however reasonable they might be. The King of Naples gave the command of his army to Prince John, his brother, and to the Count of Arian. They fought two battles and won two signal victories. The glory of them was attributed to the skill and generosity of Elzéar, and he was paid great compliments on them. The king himself showed him his gratitude by marks of affection and by presents. He took no glory at all in all this applause, and distributed to the poor all that the king his master gave him. However, having withdrawn to his closet, he had two scruples that gave him much pain: one was a fear of not having rejected quickly enough feelings of vanity amid the praises given him; the other was a doubt whether he had not followed the movements of anger in the slaughter he had made of the enemy. He bitterly wept for these supposed faults and asked God's pardon for them. A heavenly voice then cried to him: "Know, Elzéar, that you came very near to losing My grace in the heat of battle; but fear not, your sins have been forgiven you."

These words touched him to the depths of his soul. The mere thought of the loss of grace being more painful to him than all the ills that can be suffered on earth, he humbled himself before Our Lord and begged Him to punish him in this world rather than reserve the chastisements for him in the next. At the same moment he was seized with so burning a fever that he seemed to be between two beds of fire; and, while reciting the psalm *Miserere mei, Deus*, he felt an invisible hand striking him hard. At last he again heard these kindly words: "Courage, Elzéar, do not be troubled, your sins are forgiven you." Thereupon he fell asleep, and on waking found himself cured and was flooded with a torrent of heavenly consolations. Men of war should reflect here with what uprightness and purity of intention they ought to conduct themselves in battle, where they kill and slaughter men like themselves, redeemed by the blood of Jesus Christ, lest they take away the

life of their own soul in taking away that of the body from their enemies.

The King of Naples, who knew Elzéar's ability particularly well, after employing him in the government of his States in Italy and in the command of his armies, sent him as ambassador to Charles IV, King of France, to negotiate there the marriage of the Duke of Calabria with Marie, daughter of Charles, Count of Valois, uncle of that great monarch. He was received by him with every possible welcome, not only out of consideration for the king his master and because of the business he had come to treat, but also for his personal merit, the reputation of which had spread throughout the kingdom. It was during his stay in Paris that the wonder occurred which we are about to relate, and which greatly increased the esteem in which he was already held. Passing one day along the rue Saint-Jacques, accompanied by a crowd of courtiers, he met a priest carrying the Viaticum to a sick man. While everyone threw himself on his knees to adore it, Elzéar barely put his hand to his hat to greet the cleric. The courtiers murmured at it, and the people were at first scandalized; but he removed the scandal and silenced the murmuring by making the priest admit, before his bishop, that the host he was carrying was not consecrated. The fact was that this cleric, knowing that the sick man was an impenitent usurer, and yet not daring to refuse him communion openly, had imagined, mistakenly, that he was permitted to give him bread instead of the adorable body of Jesus Christ. The report of this affair having spread through the city and the court, the ambassador was more esteemed than ever, and he was now regarded only as a heavenly man to whom God revealed impenetrable secrets.

Having happily concluded the marriage that was the object of his embassy, he fell sick of an acute fever which he knew, by divine inspiration, was to bring him to the grave. So, thinking no longer of anything but preparing for a good death, he began with a general confession, which he made shedding torrents of tears and with sentiments of a most perfect contrition. However violent his pains were, no movement of impatience was ever seen in him: the gentleness of his words and the serenity of his face were visible testimonies of his good conscience and of the gladness of his soul. He did not let twenty-four hours pass without going to confession. His conversations were on the mercy of God, on grace, predestination and the glory of the blessed in heaven. He had the Passion of Our Lord read to him from time to time, so as to stir himself to sorrow for his sins and to conform his death to that of the Saviour of the world, dying like Him poor, detached from earth, humble, patient, resigned to the will of God, on fire with love, in a word in the consummation of the work of his salvation. As soon as he saw the priest come in bringing him the holy Viaticum, he rose and prostrated himself on the ground, adoring his sovereign Lord with deep humility. He received Him with his eyes bathed in tears and with interior dispositions that can better be imagined than described on paper. When he was given the sacrament of Extreme Unction, he himself answered all the prayers of the Church in a firm voice; but when he heard these divine words: *Per sanctam Crucem et*

Passionem tuam, libera eum, Domine: "We pray You, Lord, by Your holy cross and by the merit of Your passion, to deliver this dying man from all the enemies of his salvation," he made an effort and, lowering his voice, said: *Hæc spes mea, in hac volo mori*: "This is all my hope, in which I wish to die." In his agony his face changed and became like that of a terrified man who sees something dreadful. During this struggle he cried out: "My God, how great is the power of the devil!" Some time afterwards he said again: "O good Jesus! how much we owe You: for by Your passion You have subdued all the powers of hell." These words showed clearly enough that he was at grips with the evil spirit, who was trying to drive him to despair; but what astonished those present still more was this word that he said: "Alas! I submit myself entirely to the judgment of my God," as if he still feared for his salvation, he who was known to have led an entirely innocent life; yet a moment later he consoled everyone by uttering these words with great signs of joy: "By the grace of my God I have won the victory; yes, most assuredly, I have conquered." And at once his face recovered its former serenity.

It was amid these sweetnesses and these trials that he gave up his spirit, on the 27th of September 1325, in the flower of his age. A very dissolute lord who was present at this death was so strongly moved to

conversion that, no longer able to bear the weight of his sins, he withdrew into a room and humbly made his confession to one of the Cordelier Fathers who had assisted the Saint in his agony. Elzéar, a little before he died, being urged by a strong divine inspiration, revealed the virginal secret of his marriage: “I am only a wicked man,” he said to all who were present, “but the holiness of my wife has set me on the way of salvation; I married her a virgin, and I leave her with her virginity.” At the moment of his death he appeared to her in Provence, where she then was, and assured her that, by the mercy of God, he was enjoying in heaven the blessed happiness of the Saints.

He is represented: 1° holding in his hand a small cross, to recall the meeting-place he named from afar to his wife St. Delphine, assuring her that they would find each other again in the heart of Jesus Christ pierced on Calvary; 2° holding a discipline; 3° in a group with St. Delphine.

CULTE ET RELIQUES.

Cult and Relics.

St. Elzéar was buried in the habit of a Cordelier, and his body was laid in the church of the great convent of those same Fathers in Paris, from which it was carried the same year to the town of Apt, in Provence, and buried in the church of the religious of the same Order, where he had chosen his burial place, beside the Blessed Garsende, of whom we have spoken in this history. When his body was near the city of Avignon, all the bells rang of themselves: which happened again when it left. Although his holiness had been made sufficiently clear on earth, heaven nevertheless willed to make it still more glorious by great and frequent miracles performed at his tomb or through the merit of his intercession. The dead were raised, the blind given sight, paralytics restored to the use of their limbs, and countless sick people restored to perfect health. When he died, the kingdom of Majorca was disturbed by a war whose consequences were greatly feared; but as he had declared that it would be ended without any shedding of blood, he himself made his prediction come true: after his death, appearing to those who were the authors of the sedition, he compelled them to give back to their country the tranquillity they had taken from it by their revolt. All these wonders gave occasion to Pope Clement VI, twenty years after his death, to have their truth established. He was canonized by Urban V on the 16th of April 1369; the bull of canonization was published at Avignon on the 5th of January 1371, under Gregory XI, in the church of Saint-Didier, and the feast of the Saint began to be celebrated every year on the 27th of September under the title of confessor.

In 1373 Cardinal Anglicus, a kinsman of St. Elzéar, took his relics out of their lead case and exposed them in a cypress case on the high altar of the church of the Cordeliers of Apt, in the portico of a pyramidal tomb that he had had built at his own expense and which was destroyed in 1793: the top of this mausoleum reached the vault of the church, and the base was adorned with marble bas-reliefs representing the principal scenes of the Saint’s life. Peter of Luxembourg gave a reliquary of silver-gilt enriched with precious stones, in which the bone of the right arm was enclosed.

The possession of the remains of St. Elzéar won for the town of Apt the spectacle of a national council and the eager visits of various popes, cardinals, bishops, kings and queens, and later that of the bishops of Spain who, before going to the Council of Trent, wished to address their prayers to the holy confessor.

The church of Apt, the former cathedral, still possesses at present the precious relics of St. Elzéar, as well as those of St. Delphine, his wife, whose life we shall give on the 26th of November. These holy relics had rested in the church of the Cordeliers until the Revolution.

In composing this biography we have made use of the Acta Sanctorum*; of Surius; of the* Life *of the Saint by the Rev. Fr. Jean-Marie de Vernon; of the* Annals *of the Order of St. Francis; of the* Biographie Vauclusienne, *by C.-F.-H. Barjavel, and of* Local Notes *supplied by the parish priest of Apt.*

SAINTS FLORENTINUS, HILARY OR HILIER, AND APHRODISIUS, MARTYRS NEAR BRÉMUR, IN THE DIOCESE OF DIJON (3rd CENTURY)

The soldiers who kept watch over the security of the empire in the Duesmois (part of the former Auxois) counted zealous Christians in their ranks. One of them, named Florentinus, had made himself the steward of the poor, the teacher of the ignorant and the support of all who suffered. He had as companion and rival in virtue a holy man, Hilary or Hilier. Together they served God in prayer and penance; together they instructed the pagans and led a poor life so as to be able to give the more. The abundance of their alms and the brilliance of their virtues disposed the people to listen to them, and the name of Jesus Christ was already received by a great number when an army of Vandals, under the leadership of the famous Chrocus, invaded the Duesmois and seized *Sedunum*, today Semond,[1] the usual residence of Florentinus and Hilary.

The goods they possessed marked them out at once to the greed of the barbarian chief, and when he learned they were Christians he had them brought before him and began to dispute with them about the worship of the gods and the power of idols. Florentinus refuted him without difficulty. Then Chrocus changed his part and, fixing his eyes on him, uttered terrible threats.

Irritated by his answers, he orders that he be struck on the mouth and his teeth broken to punish him for his impiety. When the executioners had obeyed, Florentinus gave thanks to God and mocked the idols. “Let his tongue be cut out to the root,” cried Chrocus. And the holy Martyr’s tongue was cut out to the root; and, by the almighty power of God, he went on none the less glorifying Our Lord and deriding the folly of his executioner. At the same time, armed with the sign of the cross, Florentinus and Hilary began to overturn and break the idols that were in that place and to drive out the demons that dwelt in them. The demons thus driven out at once took possession of the barbarian chief and of some of his officers, and tormented them horribly. At the sight of these wonders the terrified multitude asks to worship Jesus Christ.

A Christian of noble family, named Aphrodisius, dared to rebuke Chrocus openly for his impiety. The latter at once had his tongue cut out. But God renewed in his favour the miracle He had already worked for Florentinus, and Aphrodisius praised Jesus Christ. To put an end to this unequal struggle, the prince ordered that the disciples of Christ should be beheaded. Scarcely had the executioner finished his work when the hand of God fell heavily on Chrocus and struck him blind. This chastisement inspired him with feelings of repentance, and, in the hope of being healed, he prostrated himself before the holy Martyrs, confessed his sin and begged them to return him good for evil. They prayed for him indeed, and obtained for him health and sight. In gratitude he had them buried with honour.

The Christians surrounded the sepulchre with prayers and love. Amid political upheavals, invasions and wars this cult declined, and the chapel that sheltered the holy relics fell down from age. In 855 Aurelian, archdeacon of Autun and abbot of Saint-Martin d’Ainay, obtained from the diocesan bishop, Jonas of Autun, permission to carry them to Lyon. The head of St. Florentinus was left at Semond and is preserved in the church of Brémur (arrondissement of Châtillon-sur-Seine), near the place where he fell under the sword.

There is still shown, says Mabillon, an oak called St. Florentinus’s oak, near which tradition fixes the place of the martyrdom. People go there in procession in times of drought to obtain rain.

Acta Sanctorum, translation by M. l’abbé Duplus, in his Vie des Saints du diocèse de Dijon.

SAINT CERAUNUS OR CÉRAN, TWENTY-FIFTH ARCHBISHOP OF PARIS AND CONFESSOR (621)

St. Ceraunus or Céran succeeded Bishop Simplicius. In his person the Church of Paris had a prelate worthy of the first centuries of Christianity, in whom learning kept pace with virtue. He first applied himself to a

thorough study, at the very sources, of all the dogmas of religion; and when he had received the fullness of the priesthood, he made it a capital duty to labour at imitating by his actions the holiest bishops of apostolic times. One of the principal fruits of his learning and piety was to collect the Acts of the Martyrs, so as to preserve them in his Church as precious monuments of their constancy and their faith. To this end he applied to a cleric of Langres named Warnahaire to obtain those of some Saints. Warnahaire sent them to him with the following letter: “You never cease to walk in the footsteps and to equal the merit of the most illustrious bishops by your whole conduct in the priesthood, in which you seek no other lustre than that which religion gives. You have already made yourself skilled in the sacred letters, and, to crown your glory, you wish to collect in the city of Paris the Acts of the Martyrs; in which you are comparable to St. Eusebius of Caesarea. Excuse my small ability: I would praise you better if I had more eloquence; but you will at least know my obedience. I send you, as you commanded me, the Acts of the three twins of Langres (Speusippus, Eleusippus and Meleusippus), and those of St. Desiderius, martyr and bishop of that city.” That is all we know precisely about St. Ceraunus. His zeal in collecting the histories of the Saints well deserved, however, that his own should have been preserved for us. It is nevertheless beyond doubt that he attended the Council that met on the 18th of October 614, by order of King Clotaire II, in the church of Saint-Pierre-et-Saint-Paul in Paris, where seventy-nine bishops were present from all the provinces of Gaul, which he had newly united under his rule. Perhaps St. Ceraunus also attended the Council that Clotaire summoned two years later in one of his royal residences, at Bonneuil (*apud Bonogilum*), in the territory of Meaux. His death may be placed between the years 618 and 621. He was buried on the 27th of September, the day on which his feast is celebrated in the diocese, and his body was laid in the underground chapel of the church of Saint-Pierre-et-Saint-Paul, to the left of the tomb of St. Genevieve. His translation took place on the 16th of November 1628; but during the Revolution his relics, for fear of profanation, were burned together with others that were kept in the church of Sainte-Geneviève. Pious hands gathered up the ashes; and when peace was restored to the Church of France, they were laid in the parish church of Saint-Leu-et-Saint-Gilles, where they are preserved today.

Dom Rivet, Histoire littéraire de la France*;* Gallia Christiana nova.

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[1] St. Caius was the third Bishop of Milan; he was a Roman by birth, and he attached himself as a disciple to the apostle St. Barnabas, together with the Greek Anathalon. The Bollandists, who nevertheless call this last fact in question, say that his relics are kept in the church of Saint-François at Milan: it is the chapel of Saint-Bonaventure (the present chapel of the Conception) that possesses this precious treasure; these relics were visited and authenticated on 14 September 1571 by St. Charles Borromeo, Archbishop of Milan. — Baronius, *Notes* on the Roman Martyrology; *Acta Sanctorum*, 27 September.

[2] It is believed that Aderitus, who is also called Abderitus, was a Greek by origin and that his name comes from his having lived for a long time in the city of Abdera (today Polistilo), in Thrace. He was a disciple of St. Apollinaris and succeeded him in the episcopal see of Ravenna. He died in a small town in the neighbourhood of that city, and was buried in the church of St. Probus. His relics were found there in the 10th century, translated to Ravenna and placed on an altar dedicated in his honour. — Father John Pinius, in the *Acta Sanctorum*, 27 September.

[3] We have given the life of St. Vincent de Paul on 19 July.

[4] M. l’abbé Godard, *Vies des Saints du département de la Haute-Marne*.

[5] It can be followed at length in Dom Ceillier (*Histoire des Auteurs sacrés et ecclésiastiques*, vol. i, p. 96, Louis Vivès edition, 1858), and in Darras (*Histoire de l’Église*, vol. iii, p. 108, Louis Vivès edition, 1863).

[6] The Acts say Bishop Thierri; but this is an error, as Mabillon, Le Cointe and the Bollandists very well prove.

[7] A dependency of Saint-Marc-sur-Seine (Côte-d’Or, arrondissement of Châtillon-sur-Seine, canton of Beigneux-les-Juils). Some critics see in *Sedunum* Suin in the Charollais (Saône-et-Loire), and say that Florentinus is supposed to have gone to that side of the Aeduan frontiers to stop the Vandals who were coming out by the Rhône. The proofs they put forward are not very conclusive.

28 September

Martyrologies

Twenty-eighth day of September

MARTYROLOGE ROMAIN.

Roman Martyrology.

In Bohemia, St. WENCESLAUS, Duke of Bohemia, renowned for his holiness and his miracles, who, having been murdered in his brother's house, won the palm of martyrdom. 936. — At Rome, St. Privatus, martyr, who, being covered all over with ulcers, was healed by Pope St. Callistus, and afterwards was scourged for the faith of Jesus Christ with leaded cords until he breathed his last. 222 or 223. — In the same place, St. Stacteus, martyr. — In Africa, the holy martyrs Martial, Laurence and twenty others.[1] — At Antioch in Pisidia, the holy martyrs Mark, a shepherd; Alphaeus, Alexander and Zosimus, his brothers; Nicon, Neon, Heliodorus and thirty soldiers, who, having been converted at the sight of the holy shepherd's miracles, were martyred in various places and by various kinds of torments. 303. — The same day, St. Maximus, martyred under the Emperor Decius. 250. — At Toulouse, St. EXUPERIUS, bishop and confessor, to whom St. Jerome gave this illustrious testimony, that he was very sparing towards himself and very liberal towards others. About 415. — At Genoa, St. Solomon,[2] bishop and confessor. About 469. — At Brescia, St. Sylvinus, bishop. About 444. — The same day, St. Eustochium, virgin, daughter of St. Paula, who was brought up with other virgins beside the manger of Our Lord, whence she flew to heaven all resplendent with merits.[3] 419. — In Germany, St. LIOBA or LIEBA, virgin, renowned for her miracles. 779.

MARTYROLOGE DE FRANCE, REVU ET AUGMENTÉ.

Martyrology of France, revised and enlarged.

In the former Cistercian abbey of Saint-Jacques de Vitry (*S. Jacobus Vitriacensis*), in the diocese of Châlons-sur-Marne, St. Clotaire, confessor, mentioned in the Martyrology of France on the 7th of April. The pilgrimage to St. Clotaire is very ancient, and confidence in the prayers of this servant of God is still very widespread; people come from very far to invoke him for children suffering from catarrh. 7th c. — In the diocese of Rodez, commemoration of St. Exuperius, Bishop of Toulouse and confessor, mentioned in the Roman Martyrology of this day. 415. — At Riez (*Reii Albiæci*, in the Basses-Alpes), in the diocese of Digne, St. FAUSTUS, third abbot of Lérins (Var), bishop and titular patron of the former see of Riez. He has already been named in the Martyrology of France on the 16th of January. 493. — In the diocese of Lyon and at Chalon-sur-Saône (Saône-et-Loire), in the diocese of Autun, St. ANNEMUNDUS or CHAMOND, thirty-sixth archbishop of that see and confessor. 657. — In the diocese of Tarbes, St. Faustus, bishop of that see and confessor, renowned for his holiness, his learning, his eloquence and his zeal for preaching. He was the spiritual master of St. Licerius or Lizier, regionary bishop of the Couserans (Ariége). The enemies of the faith raised great persecutions against him; he was even exiled to Aire (*Vicus Julii*), in the Landes: Licerius followed him there and remained with him until his death. Towards the end of the 5th c. — At Auxerre, St. Alodius, also called Aleu and Aloge (*Alodius*), eighth bishop of that see and confessor. A disciple of St. Germanus, he succeeded (451) St. Fraternus in the see of Auxerre and imitated the virtues of his predecessors, Saints Peregrinus, Marcellianus, Valerius, Helladius, Amator and Germanus. He was buried in the oratory of Saint-Maurice, which was already called the church of Saint-Germain. 472. — In the diocese of Auch, St. Dode d'Eslarac, virgin, who gave her name to the town of Sainte-Dode (Gers, arrondissement of Mirande, canton of Miélan), where her relics are venerated. — In the former abbey of Saint-Martin-ès-Aires (*S. Martinus in Areis*, Order of St. Augustine), near Troyes, St. Bouin (*Boëmius*), priest and solitary, whose life we shall give on the following day, which is that of his death. 570. — At Sens, St. Annobert, also called Onobert and Honobert, twenty-second archbishop of that see and confessor. We said a word about him on the 5th of January. About 643. — At Die (*Dea Vocontiorum, Augusta Dea*), in the diocese of Valence, St. ISMIDO or ISMEON, bishop of the original see of Die, and confessor. 1120. — In the diocese of Paris, St. Ceraunus or Céran, archbishop of that see and confessor, whose life we gave on the preceding day. 621.

— In the former Benedictine abbey of Saint-Florent of Saumur (*S. Florentius Salmuriensis*), in the diocese of Angers, the Venerable Frederick, abbot. His holiness and his eminent virtues, says a contemporary author, shone like the morning star in the midst of his brethren. He contributed powerfully to the restoration of regular discipline in his abbey, so that the other monasteries made it a point of honour to model themselves on that of Saint-Florent. After occupying the abbatial chair for thirty-three years, the Venerable Frederick expired in the midst of his brethren and was buried in the community church, behind the altar of the Crucifix. 1055. — In the Limousin, the Venerable William Sudre, a native of Laguenne (Corrèze, arrondissement and canton of Tulle), in turn a religious of the Order of St. Dominic, professor of theology at Carcassonne, at Avignon and at Paris, provincial (1348) of the province of Toulouse, Master of the Sacred Palace (1349), Bishop of Marseille (1361), cardinal (1366), dean of the Sacred College (1367), apostolic legate. The church of Laguenne possesses part of his pontifical vestments. He was buried in the chapel of Notre-Dame of the Dominicans of Avignon. 1373.

MARTYROLOGES DES ORDRES RELIGIEUX.

Martyrologies of the Religious Orders.

Martyrology of the Order of the Discalced of the Most Holy Trinity. — At Madrid, in Spain, Blessed SIMON DE ROXAS, confessor, of the Order of the Most Holy Trinity of the Redemption of Captives, most renowned for his compassion for the poor, especially for captives, as well as for his zeal in spreading the cult of the Blessed Virgin Mary and of her most sacred Name. 1624.

Martyrology of the Order of Friars Preachers. — At Osimo, in the March of Ancona, Blessed Joseph of Copertino, confessor, of the Order of Friars Minor Conventual, whom Clement XIII placed among the number of the Saints.[4] 1662. — In Bohemia, St. Wenceslaus, Duke of Bohemia and martyr, renowned for his holiness and his miracles. 936.

Martyrology of the Three Orders of St. Francis. — At Pavia, Blessed BERNARDINE OF FELTRE, confessor, of the Order of Friars Minor, who, most zealous for preaching and for the salvation of souls, flew to heaven laden with good works, illustrious for the gift of prophecy and of

miracles. 1494. — On the Saturday before the third Sunday of September, the feast of the Seven Sorrows of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

Martyrology of the Order of Friars Minor. — The same as above.

Martyrology of the Capuchin Minors of St. Francis. — The same as with the Friars Minor.

Martyrology of the Order of St. Jerome. — At Bethlehem of Judah, St. Eustochium, virgin, daughter of Blessed Paula and disciple of our Father St. Jerome, who was brought up with other virgins near the Saviour's manger, whence she flew to heaven all resplendent with virtues.

ADDITIONS FAITES D'APRÈS LES BOLLANDISTES ET AUTRES HAGIOGRAPHES.

Additions made from the Bollandists and other hagiographers.

In Judaea, the prophet BARUCH, disciple and secretary of Jeremiah. 6th c. before Jesus Christ. — At Salzburg (*Juvacum*), a city of Upper Austria on the Salzach, St. Thiemo, also called Theodmar, Dietmar and Dimothiemo, archbishop of that see and martyr. He was descended from the counts of Medlingen (Bavaria) and spent his early years in the Benedictine monastery of Nieder-Altaich (founded in the 8th century by Odilo, Duke of Bavaria), where he perfected himself in sacred and profane learning. In 1079 he became abbot of Saint-Peter's at Salzburg, and in 1090 he was consecrated archbishop of that city, which had been widowed of its chief pastor by the death of Gebhard. Thanks to his zeal, the faithful of his diocese were not

touched by the baneful influence of the schism then reigning in the Church. But the enemies of religion ended by triumphing, and our Saint was driven from his see. At the time of the crusade undertaken by Godfrey of Bouillon, giving up hope of being restored to his flock, he set out for the East to bring spiritual help to the Christians of those lands. There martyrdom awaited him; the Turks took him prisoner and, seeing that they could not bring him to deny his faith, massacred him. God glorified his tomb with many miracles.[5] 1101. — At Pistoia (*Pistoria*), a city of Tuscany on the Bronia, Blessed LAURENCE OF RIPAFRATTA, confessor, mentioned in the Martyrology of the Friars Preachers on the 18th of February. 1457. — At Pola (*Pietas Julia*), a fortified town of the Austrian States on the Adriatic (Istria), Blessed Solomon, King of Hungary, then hermit. He was born about 1048 of Andrew I, King of Hungary, and of Anastasia or Agmunde, a Muscovite princess, and succeeded his father in 1058. Stripped of his States by the usurper Geisa, he recognized the vanity of all perishable greatness, resolved to attend seriously to his eternal salvation, put on a coarse hair shirt and withdrew into Istria, where he served the Lord by prayer, fasting and vigils and ended his days in a most touching manner. His body was buried at Pola, where his relics were discovered in 1657 by Bishop Eloi Marcel. Towards the end of the 11th c. — At Rome, together with St. Stacteus, martyr, mentioned in the Roman Martyrology of this day, St. Turturinus, whose relics enrich the town of Fulda (Hesse-Cassel). — At Camogli (*Camulium*), near Genoa, in the former Sardinian States, St. John, martyr. — In Palestine, St. Chariton, abbot and confessor. A native of Iconium (today Konieh, in Anatolia), he was arrested in that city as a Christian under the Emperor Aurelian and suffered great torments there for Jesus Christ. At Aurelian's death the persecution ceased, and Chariton withdrew to Jerusalem, where he led the eremitical life, became renowned for his miracles, reached a very great old age and fell asleep in the Lord, leaving his disciples the most edifying instructions. 4th c. — At Freising (Bavaria), on the Isar, St. Eberhard, shepherd (*Eberhardus Opilio*), honoured in that country from time immemorial. — In Japan, the holy martyrs John Cocumbuco, Mancius, Michael Kinochi, Laurence Chixo, Peter Cufioie and Thomas, all six Japanese and of the Third Order of St. Augustine. 1630.

SAINT EXUPERIUS OF ARREAU, BISHOP OF TOULOUSE AND CONFESSOR

About 415. — Pope: St. Innocent I. — Emperor of the West: Honorius.

> *Manquant de tout, il nourrit ses frères ; défiguré par les jeûnes, il est encore tourmenté par la faim qui dévore les autres. Lacking everything, he feeds his brethren; disfigured by fasting, he is still tormented by the hunger that devours others.*
>
> *St. Jerome, Eulogy of the Saint.*

St. Exuperius, the most illustrious of the bishops of Toulouse after St. Saturninus, was born about the middle of the 4th century at Arreau, a small town in the valley of Aure, in the diocese of Comminges, now in the diocese of Tarbes. His parents were without temporal goods, but rich in those of grace and virtue. Their humble condition did not prevent them from undertaking, with the help of the richest people of the place, to give their son a careful instruction and upbringing. While still young, Exuperius showed great aptitude for letters, but above all he had a gentleness and amiability of character that won him the affection and respect of all who approached him. St. Silvius or Sylvius, Bishop of Toulouse, having noticed his rare qualities, offered to take him under his discipline and protection. The young man, happy to find a master whose great virtues resounded in the diocese of Comminges as in that of Toulouse, willingly agreed to follow St. Silvius. It was not without a great wrench, and without shedding abundant tears, that he parted from his parents, who were grieved to see him go away from them.

The holy Bishop of Toulouse conferred sacred orders on him and charged him with the task of proclaiming the word of God to his diocesans. Exuperius acquitted himself of it with great zeal and with rare success. It was above all his charity and his gentleness that won hearts and brought them back to good. His reputation

for zeal, learning and holiness was so well established at the death of St. Silvius that by the unanimous consent of the people and clergy he was chosen to replace him in the see of St. Saturninus. Far from coveting this honour, Exuperius regarded it as a burden too heavy for his shoulders, and it was only when overcome by the entreaties of the people of Toulouse and by the fear of displeasing God that he allowed the episcopate to be imposed on him.

One of his first cares was to correct the abuses that had crept into his Church. He banished simony and avarice from it, more by his exhortations and his example than by the holy severity his zeal knew how to use at the right time. God gave him so happy a success in this undertaking that St. Jerome, who spoke only with tender emotion of the rare virtues of the holy prelate, pointed him out to everyone as a divine man prepared by heaven to regenerate the Church. “This holy bishop,” said the great doctor, “has had no need to arm himself with the whip or to have recourse to the bitterness of reproach in order to overturn the tables and the seats of those who sold doves, that is to say, the gifts of the Holy Spirit, and to scatter the money of those unworthy traffickers, so that the house of God can be called, in his diocese, a house of prayer and not a den of thieves.”

Breathing only the glory of God and the honour of the most holy Virgin, Exuperius converted a temple formerly dedicated to Minerva into a church which he consecrated to the Mother of God, and which has become Notre-Dame de la Daurade. Amid the cares that, as a vigilant and zealous pastor, he devoted to his flock, he burned with the desire for martyrdom. He would have been happy to be able to give his life for the faith, like St. Saturninus, for whom he had a very great devotion. St. Silvius had laid the foundation of a basilica that was to enclose the precious relics of the apostle of Languedoc, St. Saturninus; but death had prevented him from carrying out his wish. St. Exuperius, taking up the work again, finished this basilica and translated the body of the holy martyr into it. The respect the holy prelate had for these precious bones at first made him fear to touch and move them; but he was warned, it is said, in a dream, that his fear was misplaced and contrary to the honour of the Saint. He therefore went on with his undertaking, and, opening the wooden coffin that held the precious body, he exposed it to public veneration and laid it in a marble tomb, which he placed in the church at the entrance of the canons’ choir. The basilica of Saint-Saturnin built by St. Exuperius was destroyed in 721; rebuilt some time afterwards, demolished a second time in the 11th century, it was rebuilt for the third time and took the form it has today, under the name of the church of Saint-Sernin.

A perfect model of all the Christian and episcopal virtues, St. Exuperius was distinguished above all by his admirable charity and his love for the poor. St. Jerome was so touched by it that he did not know how to extol it enough. In his letter to Rusticus the holy doctor says that, “not content with spending all that he possessed and reducing himself to the most complete destitution to relieve the needy, Exuperius, during a great famine that afflicted the south of Gaul, went so far as to sell all the chalices and reliquaries of his churches and to use a simple glass in which to consecrate the precious blood of God the Saviour, sacrificing in a manner, to the relief of the poor, the honour due to the awesome mystery of our altars.” St. Jerome, after comparing the holy Bishop of Toulouse to the widow of Sarepta, shows him to us with a face pale and wasted by fasting and privations of every kind, tormented by the hunger that the poor suffer more than by his own, and himself dying of hunger to feed his brethren: “What can be found richer in virtues and merits,” he says, “than this holy bishop, reduced by his charity to carrying the sacred body of Jesus Christ in a wicker basket and His precious blood in a simple glass?” This conduct of St. Exuperius with regard to the most holy Sacrament, which was the object of his greatest love and which he nevertheless seemed to sacrifice to the relief of human miseries, God deigned to approve by a striking miracle. St. Ambrose, Archbishop of Milan, being afflicted with a grave and long illness, informed his friend Jerome of it. The latter advised him to have recourse to the merits of the Bishop of Toulouse. St. Ambrose, taking the advice, sent a messenger to Toulouse with orders to bring him some of the water in which the glass that served Exuperius as a chalice had been washed. The envoy, having found a way of procuring some of this water without the holy bishop’s

knowledge, carried it away as a precious medicine. No sooner had St. Ambrose tasted it than he was cured of the illness that had long afflicted him. The glass, witness of the generosity of St. Exuperius, remained with his relics in the church of Saint-Sernin of Toulouse until the sacrilegious profanations of the great revolution.

The liberality of our Saint was not confined within the limits of his diocese, nor even of the south of Gaul. As if he had not met with enough misfortunes to relieve in his own country, the holy prelate extended his benefactions and help as far as Egypt and Palestine. Having been informed of the extreme poverty of the virgins and solitaries who lived in those holy places, he sent them such abundant alms that St. Jerome exclaimed: “If these desert and arid lands of Egypt are not watered by the waters of the Nile, they are very abundantly watered by the fruitful waters of Gaul.” It was on the occasion of these alms that St. Jerome, who received a letter from the holy Bishop of Toulouse, wrote to him in his turn to congratulate him and to show him the admiration and joy his inexhaustible charity caused him. He showed him these same sentiments by dedicating to him his commentaries on the prophet Zechariah.

The virtues of St. Exuperius ought to have won him every heart. Yet it was not so. So violent a party formed against him that the holy bishop thought he should withdraw, at least for a time, from his flock, as if to let the passions roused by his zeal subside. But, says an old author, just as the sun in hiding deprives the world of its light and its beneficent influence, so the absence of Exuperius brought such deplorable disasters on the city of Toulouse that the inhabitants, persuaded that their misfortunes came from their guilty conduct towards their holy pastor, go to beg him to forgive them and return among them as soon as possible. The Saint, whether from a holy indignation inspired by God or to make them feel more keenly the crime of their revolt, at first refuses to grant their request. He boldly declares to them that they may just as easily expect to see a staff he is holding in his hands burst into flower as to see him take up again the charge they have made so painful to him by their unruliness. No sooner had he uttered these words than the staff miraculously grew green again and became laden with leaves and flowers. At this miracle the envoys cry out that heaven is on their side; they burst into tears and protest that they will be submissive to him for ever. The Saint, seeing that the will of God calls him back to his see, yields to the entreaties of his diocesans, whom he had never ceased to love with the tenderest love. He returns to Toulouse amid the rejoicing of the whole city, and by his presence he makes the scourges cease and brings back plenty there with heavenly blessings. The precise time at which this withdrawal and this return of St. Exuperius took place is not stated.

The holy pontiff had to struggle not only against famine and passions, but also against numerous heresies that were constantly springing up in those troubled times. One arose concerning the canonical books both of the Old and of the New Testament, whose true number had not yet been very explicitly determined. The Bishop of Toulouse wrote about it to Pope Innocent I. The reply that the Sovereign Pontiff addressed to him is found among the letters of the Popes. The catalogue of the sacred books is drawn up in it, and it differs in no way from the one drawn up by the holy Council of Trent more than eleven centuries later. Exuperius also wrote to the same Pope Innocent I to learn from him whether holy communion should be granted at the hour of death to obstinate sinners who, after spending their whole life in the disorder of incontinence, asked at the last moment for the grace of reconciliation and the holy Viaticum. The Pope answered that these two great benefits should be granted to penitent sinners, so that by this means they might be freed from eternal death.

Another heresy, which greatly afflicted the heart of the holy Bishop of Toulouse, was that of Vigilantius. Born at Calagorris, later Cazères, chief town of a canton of Haute-Garonne, Vigilantius strove with all his might to bring down, in the two dioceses of Toulouse and Comminges, the cult of the Saints and of holy relics, maintaining that it was idolatry, and celibacy, which he presented as impious and against nature. Exuperius opposed these monstrous errors with great energy. He denounced them to St. Jerome, who hastened to refute the heretic, and he himself forced the innovator to go and hide his shame in Spain.

The fury of Vigilantius was followed by the disasters of the invasion of the Barbarians. The fiercest of them, the Alans, the Suevi and the Vandals, after sacking a great number of the cities of Novempopulania and

leaving behind them nothing but destruction and death, advanced towards Toulouse, the capital of the south, and threatened it with total ruin. The terrified population counted on no human means of repelling these ferocious barbarians. In this extremity the holy bishop implores the help of God; he boldly presents himself before the chief of the Barbarians and, in the name of the avenging God, orders him to raise the siege and spare his city. The Barbarian, seized with a respect he had never known at the sight of the Saint, in whom he thought he perceived something divine, decides to withdraw from Toulouse as if driven back by an invincible force. Thus Toulouse owed its preservation to the holiness of its bishop.

In those unhappy times calamities followed one another with frightening speed. After the Vandals came the Goths. They took Toulouse and made it the capital of their kingdom and a centre of Arianism, to which they were obstinately attached. St. Exuperius therefore had new difficulties to pass through and new anguish to swallow. He had to defend the faith of his people and to struggle against the undertakings of heresy. God willed to reward his labours and his virtues by the conversion of many Barbarians. In spite of these partial successes, the great bishop foresaw the terrible dangers the faith was running in the south of Gaul. This foreboding was a cruel thorn from which his pastor's heart could not free itself for the rest of his life. His austerities, his zeal and the labours he undertook to guard the faithful against the proselytism of the Arian barbarians shortened its course. In spite of his exhaustion he continued to visit the people of his diocese frequently to strengthen them in the faith, until, the hour of deliverance having come, death surprised him in the exercise of his zeal. He was at Blagnac, in the course of a pastoral visitation, when, on the 28th of September, about the year 415, the Lord called him to Himself and brought him into His holy rest.

In the oratory of Blagnac there is to be seen a picture representing the holy bishop standing on the ramparts, accompanied by a cleric. He is clothed in his pontifical vestments, his hand armed with an aspergillum. A soldier, touched by the holy water, tumbles from the top of a ladder set against the walls. The curtain walls and parapets are lined with townsmen hurling missiles at the assailants. These take to flight, leaving several of their number lying in the dust. — A second picture represents him feeding the faithful with the Eucharistic bread. The people throng round the altar on which the Pontiff has just offered the holy Sacrifice. — A third picture shows him clothed in his pontifical garments, mounted on an antique chariot; two of his servants on horseback accompany him. He is hastening away from Toulouse, whose ramparts can be seen in the distance. — A fourth picture recalls the scene of the envoys charged with begging him to return to the head of his flock: in the foreground Exuperius is seen dressed as a countryman, the beret on his head, wearing a smock and driving the plough; he holds a flowering staff in his left hand. The messengers from Toulouse are in the background; one of them is clothed in the pontifical vestments. — The Saint is also seen represented: 1° lying on his funeral bed; his beautiful soul has flown away to the eternal dwellings. At the head of this deathbed a woman overwhelmed with grief can be seen, passionately clasping an arm of the holy bishop: it is his mother; 2° lying on a canopied bed supported, like the beds of the period, by four twisted columns. Two persons are in the space beside the bed; a woman overwhelmed with grief is seated at its head, and in front a man on his knees is at prayer. The bed of the dying Saint is surrounded by sick and infirm people; 3° in pontifical vestments, giving alms in one of the squares of the city adjoining the ramparts; 4° in a surplice, wearing the biretta, surrounded by poor and crippled people to whom he is distributing alms.

CULTE ET RELIQUES.

Cult and Relics.

St. Exuperius was buried at Blagnac, in the oratory to which he loved to withdraw and which was near the house where he had breathed his last. People soon began to honour him as a servant and friend of God. A hundred years after his death, the oratory having fallen down, the faithful lost the memory of the place of his burial. A ploughman bought the site and built a little house on it. He was warned in a dream of the treasure hidden there and received the order to go and inform the clergy of Toulouse; when they refused to believe his

word, he went and told the vision he had had to the monks of Saint-Saturnin, who set out at once for Blagnac, accompanied by a great number of the faithful, and found the body of the holy prelate at the spot the ploughman had shown them. The translation of these precious relics to the basilica was carried out with great solemnity. Since then, on the place where he had rested for a century, still known in the 16th century by the name of the *Desert of Saint-Exupère*, a modest chapel has been built which by its exterior recalls the humility of our Saint.

The monks of Saint-Saturnin placed his precious remains in a silver shrine. The head was later separated from the body and put, with some other bones, in a silver bust given by the liberality of Pierre de Saint-Martial, Archbishop of Toulouse. These holy relics were exposed on the altar of the chapel of the Holy Spirit, and afterwards shut up in a cupboard placed at one side of the altar.

The solemn elevation of his body took place on the 13th of April 1585, by François de Simiane, then abbot of Saint-Saturnin. His bones were placed in a large wooden shrine covered with plates of silver-gilt, and placed behind the altar of the chapel of the Holy Spirit. The relics contained in the bust were successively verified in the month of April 1621, in the month of October 1644 and on the 10th of January 1739. The large shrine was stripped of its silver-gilt plates on the 27th of February 1794, in the presence of the commissioners of the district. The case containing the bones was placed in the sacristy of the holy bodies, where it remained during the Revolution. The authenticity of the relics it contained was verified on the 6th of July 1807 by M. de Barbazan. This last shrine was gilded in 1834 and placed in the cupboard of the chapel of the Holy Spirit, on the Gospel side, as it is seen today. The head and the partial relics of the Saint were carried out of the basilica and carefully kept during the Revolution. On the 23rd of July 1795 they were brought back into the church, and their authenticity was verified on the 15th of June 1807 by M. de Barbazan; in 1817 they were placed in the bust where they still are today.

An inventory of the treasury of Saint-Saturnin, made in 1849, mentions the following objects: a coffin covered with silver and adorned with figures, containing the body of St. Exuperius; the stone of his pastoral ring set in the foot of a small silver reliquary; a large silver arm, containing the arm of St. Exuperius, surrounded with precious stones and wearing a gold ring on the finger; two mitres; a chalice containing fragments of the glass chalice of St. Exuperius.

St. Exuperius being, according to tradition, the son of a ploughman and having himself worked on the land, it is especially for the preservation of the fruits of the earth that his intercession is implored. A great number of people, even in distant regions, place their harvests under his protection, and their confidence has never been shaken. From all the surrounding country Masses are had said in the church dedicated to him at Arreau for the preservation of the fruits of the earth and above all to preserve them from hail. The confidence of the people in this regard even extended into Aragon, and until 1793 the fine lamp that adorns his church was kept supplied with oil by the piety of the Spaniards. This custom has ceased since that time. The people of Arreau still venerate the memory of the Saint with the same fervour and keep a very great confidence in his protection; they invoke him in dangers, in public or private calamities, and especially against the scourges that destroy the harvests.

Two feasts of St. Exuperius are celebrated: one on the 28th of September, the day of his death; the other on the 14th of June, the day of his translation from Blagnac to Saint-Saturnin. Some hagiographers indicate one on the 8th of April without its being known what circumstance this day recalls. In the diocese of Tarbes, in which Arreau is now included, the 22nd of October has been adopted. The office there is from the common of confessor pontiffs; the collect is that of the new missal of Comminges. The Church of Auch honours his memory on the 3rd of October.

The oratory of Blagnac, built on the site of his tomb, keeps of his relics a phalanx of the hand and part of the occiput. A confraternity is erected there under his invocation, and litanies proper to him are sung there.

The parish church of Saint-Exupère in Toulouse likewise possesses some of his relics and a confraternity in his honour. Toulouse formerly had a college under the invocation of St. Exuperius; it was suppressed with several others in 1551 and united to that of the Jesuits.

The body of our Saint goes out once a year from the basilica of Saint-Saturnin together with all those possessed by that church, so rich in notable relics. This solemn procession takes place on the day of Pentecost. Formerly each holy body was carried by the various trade guilds. On the 28th of October 1644, on the occasion of the elevation of the body of St. Edmund, King of England, and of five other Martyrs, a general procession of the holy bodies took place; that of St. Exuperius was carried in it by twelve pastry-cooks, and the head by four Capuchins, two stonecutters, two pelatiers and four potters carrying lighted torches. Likewise on the 19th of November 1653, in another procession held in thanksgiving for the end of a dreadful plague which had laid waste Toulouse and its surroundings the year before, his head was carried by the Capuchins and his body by the doublet-makers.

At Blagnac too there is a spring to which the people attribute the power of curing fever; it bears the name of the Fountain of Saint-Exupère. The Saint had no doubt sanctified it by his presence and use, as St. Bertrand did that of L'Isle-en-Jourdain, St. Genevieve that of Juilly, and several others.

Sometimes a simple niche containing his statue appears by the roadside and recalls his memory to the passer-by who cares to preserve this witness of the veneration of his fathers. Such niches are seen at several points in the country of Comminges, at Arreau, at Cassagne, etc.

The church of Arreau, dedicated to St. Exuperius, possesses a work of art enclosing a notable relic of the Saint: it is a monstrance in the form of an arm which seems to date from the 16th century. The hand is raised and makes the gesture of episcopal blessing. Round the wrist the edge of the alb can be seen, and a little lower the sleeve of the dalmatic. It rests on a pedestal. In the middle of the arm is a square opening through which the relic can be seen. The whole is of silver, except the border framing the square opening, the edge of the sleeve of the dalmatic and a band above the pedestal, which are of gold and represent a garland of flowers intermingled with precious stones. The relics enclosed in it are bones of the right forearm, fragments of the skull and some other slender bones. They have been inspected at three times: on the 28th of September 1647, by Mgr Gilbert de Choiseul du Plessis-Praslin, Bishop of Comminges; on the 10th of September 1668, by Mgr Louis de Guron de Rechigne-Voisin; and finally on the 19th of September 1847, by Mgr Bertrand-Sévère Laurence, Bishop of Tarbes. The official reports of these three visits are enclosed in the reliquary. It is adorned with ribbons fringed at their ends, with silvered braids from the ends of which hang precious stones mounted in silver, with crosses and several jewels. All these objects come from gifts made to the relic by notable inhabitants of Arreau. Before the Revolution it was also adorned with a fine gold cross which likewise contained relics of the same Saint. After the calamities of the Terror, the churches finding themselves without sacred vessels, recourse was had to this cross, which was sold to help buy a chalice, and the relics were placed in a small reliquary which has been carefully preserved. In 1793 some pious persons of the place, MM. Salle, Estradère and Soulé, fearing that the relic might fall prey to the impiety of those times, hid it carefully and restored it as soon as the danger was past.

Beside the church and against the porch is a 16th-century house, of which a few others still remain at Arreau; it bears the name of *House of Saint- Exupère*, because it occupies, according to tradition, the site of the Saint's paternal home. It was rebuilt at the same time as the church and, it is said, with the very materials of the original house. It has always remained communal property and has always been assigned to the public schools of the town. The door bears, with the monograms ISDM IHS. A. M., the date 1554. Everything, door, windows, walls, roof, is of the same period. Inside is seen a large fireplace with jambs and mantel of marble bearing in the middle the bust of a bishop blessing. The one corresponding to it on the upper floor has three blank escutcheons and the date 1555.

The field behind this house, which stretches as far as the apse of the church, bears the name of the Field of Saint-Exupère. It is the one the Saint was cultivating with his father when the deputies from Toulouse came to fetch him.

In completing this biography we have made use of the Histoire de l'Église de Toulouse, *by M. l'abbé Salvan; and of two* Lives *of the Saint, by M. E. P. and by M. Louis de Fiancette, baron d'Agos.*

SAINT FAUSTUS, THIRD ABBOT OF LÉRINS AND BISHOP OF THE FORMER SEE OF RIEZ

493. — Pope: St. Gelasius. — King of the Franks: Clovis I.

> *Qui æquali vestigia tua insequatur gressu; cui datum est soli, loqui melius quam didiceris, vivere melius quam loquaris!*
>
> *Quel homme pourrait te suivre d'un pas égal, toi à qui seul il a été donné de parler mieux que tu n'as appris, de vivre mieux que tu ne parles !*
>
> *What man could follow you with equal step, you to whom alone it has been given to speak better than you were taught, and to live better than you speak!*
>
> *St. Sidonius, Ep. ix, book ix.*

St. Faustus, one of the most remarkable men of his century, was a native of Great Britain. He came into the world about the year 390. His parents had him brought up with great care and left nothing undone to develop the happy aptitude he showed for study and work. Endowed with a subtle and penetrating mind and a quick understanding, Faustus made rapid progress in the sciences; he applied himself above all to the study of philosophy, which was always his favourite science. To a solid and varied education he joined the knowledge and practice of the Christian virtues. He had understood that, in order not to be harmful to man, knowledge must rest on God and have Him alone for its object and its end. Faustus first followed the career of the bar and filled it with honour and distinction. His eloquence, his cogent dialectic and his knowledge of law won him a well-deserved reputation.

Notwithstanding all the advantages the world could procure him, Faustus knew how to keep on his guard against its illusions and the temptations of vainglory. Faithful to the precepts of the divine Saviour, he sought above all things the kingdom of God and His justice. It was in this frame of mind that he formed the generous plan of abandoning the world and burying his talents in solitude. After meditating this design for a long time in silence and prayer, he left his country and his family for ever and turned his steps towards the solitude of Lérins. The high reputation that this famous monastery already enjoyed, and above all the desire to train himself in evangelical perfection under the direction of masters as holy as they were perfect, drew him to this island. He therefore asked, with as much insistence as humility, the favour of being admitted among the simple religious. The holy abbot Honoratus, having recognized in him all the marks of a divine vocation, gave him the monastic habit about the year 420. Under the guidance of Honoratus, of Maximus and of the holy old man Caprasius, regarded as the spiritual father of the community of Lérins, Faustus, already a religious at heart, quickly trained himself in the practice of all the monastic virtues. His humility, his gentleness and his obedience were the admiration of his brethren. He always strove, as far as lay in him, to avoid whatever might have shown him superior to the simple monks in learning, insight and talents. He thought himself very happy and very honoured to live in the midst of this society of Saints, in a place sheltered from all the storms of the world and of human passions. His ardour for penance and mortification was such that it often had to be moderated and held in by the salutary bridle of obedience. Conduct so edifying, and so well fitted to win him the esteem and affection of his brethren, could not escape the eyes of the holy abbot Maximus; through this humility he was able to discern all the treasures of learning and all the resources with which his mind was endowed, as well as his heart. He foresaw from then on how useful this

simple monk might be to his community and to the Church. He therefore put him in charge of the direction of the studies of the monastery, and vowed him for ever an altogether special affection.

But what forms the finest praise of Faustus is the striking testimony given to his virtues and merits by Blessed Maximus when, compelled to accept the bishopric of Riez, he chose himself a successor in the abbey of Lérins. Faustus was pointed out to his brethren as the worthiest and most capable for the government of the monastery; and all with one accord proclaimed him abbot of Lérins (January 434). Raised to this high dignity, Faustus showed himself as humble, as zealous and as penitent as he had been before. During the twenty-seven years that he governed this monastery he worthily upheld its reputation and its regularity by his vigilance and his example. But if he was zealous for the observance of discipline, he was no less so for the defence of the rights of his monastery. A conflict of jurisdiction arose between the abbot of Lérins and the Bishop of Fréjus. The latter, basing himself on the fact that the islands of Lérins belonged to his diocese, sought to claim full and entire jurisdiction over the monks. Faustus upheld the rights of his office with much force and energy: this conduct displeased the bishop, who suspended him from the exercise of his dignity. This act of severity caused some scandal and troubled the peace of that solitude. The holy abbot then showed himself full of respect and humility: he submitted without resistance to the injunction that deprived him of his prerogatives, and waited confidently for the decision of the council that met at Arles to settle the affair. The council opened in fact on the 4th of December 453. Thirteen prelates were gathered there under the presidency of the metropolitan Ravennius. Two of them, Maximus of Riez and Valerian of Cimiez, pleaded the cause of the abbot of Lérins. The council ordered that the Bishop of Fréjus should be content with the satisfaction Faustus would give him, and that the latter should be restored as soon as possible to the government of his monastery. It further ruled that the monks who were not in holy orders should depend solely on the abbot charged with governing them, but that religious destined for holy orders should be ordained and confirmed only by the diocesan bishop. This wise decision restored good harmony between the two parties.

Restored to his monastery, Blessed Faustus continued to be for his religious the model of all virtues. In imitation of his holy predecessor, he gave them frequent instructions which, supported by his example and by the unction and eloquence of his word, made the root of all the evangelical virtues spring up in their souls. It was in the midst of these holy occupations that the holy abbot found himself called to the episcopate. After the death of Blessed Maximus, the clergy and people of Riez judged that no one was worthier to occupy that see than the very man whom our Saint had chosen as his successor in the abbey of Lérins. Faustus accepted in fear and trembling this dignity, of which it has been said that it is a formidable burden even for angels. His election to the episcopate had been prepared by St. Maximus himself, and his acceptance was dictated by obedience to the will of his predecessor and father.

Faustus took possession of his see on the 16th of January 461, and brought to it all the virtues that had been admired in him in the cloister. Ever a faithful observer of monastic discipline, he added still further austerities to it, never drinking wine and usually taking no other food than raw fruit and vegetables. He established in his church the prayers in use at Lérins, that is to say, he regulated the divine office according to the usages of that community. Constantly occupied with the salvation of his flock, he gave all his care to the instruction of his people, to visiting prisoners, to procuring for the poor the food and clothing they needed, and finally to assisting the sick in their last moments. The burial of the dead was also among his good works: he was seen several times loading on his shoulders half-rotten corpses from which everyone drew back in horror, carrying them to the grave and rendering them all the religious rites. Nothing in his dress distinguished him from his priests; only his activity, his fervour and his charity made him stand out in the performance of the holy functions of the priesthood. Giving scarcely a few hours to sleep, on the bare ground or the floor of his room, he frightened the most fervent anchorites by his austerities. Hard on himself to the point of cruelty, he breathed nothing but gentleness, affability and compassion towards others: so he easily

won every heart. A vigilant and faithful pastor, he never omitted any duty of his office, travelling through his diocese to know his sheep, distributing to them the bread of the word and bringing them back to the fold if they had had the misfortune to stray from it.

It was not only in his diocese that Faustus had occasion to display the activity of his zeal for the good of the Church and the glory of religion. He was soon seen involved in all the major affairs that arose in his time, taking an active part in them and settling them. Thus in 462 we find him deputed by the Council of Arles to go to Rome, with his colleague Auxonius, to prosecute the intrusion of Hermes of Narbonne. Pope Hilary VIII then occupied the Holy See. Hilary received them with all the consideration due to their dignity and, having learned the object of their mission, summoned a council of various provinces of Italy at Rome. Faustus attended this council, not as a mere judge, but as representative of his colleagues of Gaul. He was moreover chosen there, with Auxonius, as judge and arbiter in the affair of Leontius of Arles and Mamertus of Vienne, the latter having taken it upon himself to give episcopal consecration to the Bishop of Die without being authorized by the metropolitan of Arles, who had oversight over four provinces. The Pope approved the acts of the council and notified them to the bishops of the provinces of Lyonnese, Viennese, the two Narbonnese and the Maritime Alps by his letter of the 3rd of December 462. On his return to his diocese, Faustus took up again with new ardour his usual works of charity. To renew himself still better in fervour, he often went to visit the grottoes of Moustiers and the other places in the neighbourhood that Maximus had peopled with monks and anchorites. Several times too he went to Lérins: there, laying down as it were the burden of his dignity, he mingled with the religious, joined in all their exercises, rendered them the humblest and most humiliating services and served them with his own hands. Seeing him macerate his worn-out body, one would have said that he had great crimes to expiate, or that he was only beginning to serve God. His visits to the religious were thus a continual sermon on humility, self-denial and renunciation of self.

In the year 470, in the month of July, Faustus received in his episcopal city the visit of the celebrated Sidonius Apollinaris, who from Prefect of Rome had become patrician, son-in-law of the Emperor Avitus, and finally Bishop of Clermont in Auvergne. This illustrious man professed a deep admiration for the virtues and writings of Faustus. He made the journey to Riez expressly to converse with him and pour into his heart the feelings that overflowed from his own. Faustus, a just judge of the merits and virtues of Sidonius, lavished on his guest all the duties of the most generous and respectful hospitality. He took him to the principal places of the neighbourhood, and notably to Moustiers, to visit the monks and the church they had built there in honour of the Virgin Mother of God. It was on the occasion of this visit, and in thanks for all the pious attentions of his host, that Sidonius composed his *Carmen Eucharisticum*, in which, in a concise but stately style, he sings the virtues of the Bishop of Riez. “Whether you live in the burning Syrtes, in inaccessible places,” he writes, “or whether, on the steep summit of the Alps, the abode of an icy cold which yet cannot deaden in your heart the ardent love you bear to Christ, I see you take only a few hours’ sleep on the bare ground, frighten the anchorites by your austerities, and follow the road to which Elijah, John, the two Macarii, Paphnutius and Hilarion call you; or whether you give back to Lérins its first father, Lérins where you often go, though broken by old age, to find rest in serving your disciples; where you give scarcely a few moments to sleep, avoiding cooked food, drinking no wine, fasting ceaselessly and singing psalms, recalling to your brethren how many mountains have soared up to the heavens from the depths of that island, what the holy life of old Caprasius was, with what graces Honoratus their father was endowed, what virtues were practised by that Maximus whose successor you are by a double title, for you govern his Church as pontiff and you governed his monks as abbot; or whether I contemplate you in the midst of the people entrusted to your care, who, following your exhortations, are beginning to despise the ways of their forefathers; or whether I consider your eagerness to provide for the needs of the sick, of pilgrims and of those whose wasted legs give way under the weight of chains; or whether, wholly intent on rendering the last duties to the dead, you do not disdain to carry yourself the livid and foul remains of the poor; or whether, standing on the steps of the holy altars, you speak before the people, who throng round you to hear the law of

God and draw from it the salutary remedies it contains; whatever you do, wherever you may be, you will always be to me Faustus, Honoratus and Maximus." This last touch characterizes, far better than we could do, the high opinion of holiness that Sidonius professed for the pious Bishop of Riez.

Towards the end of the year 470, Faustus went to Lyon at the invitation of St. Patiens to attend the dedication of the church that had just been built. A great number of bishops were gathered there for the same purpose, and for eight days this solemnity was celebrated with extraordinary pomp. Faustus was invited to deliver the customary sermons, which he did to the applause of the whole assembly. It was during his stay at Lyon that he formed an acquaintance and friendship with Gundobad, King of the Burgundians, who on several occasions gave him marks of esteem and respect.

The charity of the holy bishop was put to a severe test in the year 474. The city and diocese of Riez were squeezed in the grip of a terrible famine. In this calamity the pontiff, making himself all things to all, lavished on his starving children every help that the most ingenious charity could suggest to him. Poor himself, he stripped himself further of the little he possessed in order to procure for his people the food they needed. He had great quantities of wheat brought from the neighbouring provinces, and notably from Lyon, which St. Patiens put at his disposal and which he distributed generously to his diocesans. To this help he joined that of his exhortations, his example and his austerities, to avert the scourge and obtain from God its cessation. It was on this occasion too that he instituted in his church the three days of solemn supplications known by the name of Rogations; supplications that continue to our own day and which, for that very reason, should be all the more holy and venerable to us. The Lord heard His servant, and the memory of the terrible scourge only made the pastor dearer to his flock.

The following year (475), Faustus had occasion to show his zeal for the defence of the faith and the conversion of innovators. The priest Lucidus, attached, it is believed, to the church of Marseille, had spread the heresy of predestination, denying the co-operation of free will with grace. Faustus tried to undeceive him in the letters he wrote to him and in the conferences he had with him; then, seeing the uselessness of his efforts, he denounced him to the provincial council which the metropolitan Leontius convoked at Arles, and which was attended by thirty bishops, among them St. Euphronius of Autun, St. Patiens of Lyon and St. Mamertus of Vienne. The council condemned the error, but suspended the proceedings against Lucidus at the repeated entreaties of Faustus, who still hoped to bring the innovator back to the Catholic belief. Our pious prelate again conferred with Lucidus and strove to make the truth enter his heart by ways of gentleness and kindness, supported by the eloquence of his word and the force of his reasoning. The innovator, already shaken by so persevering a charity, then asked to be instructed by some writing. Faustus took this task upon himself too, drawing up, during the very sitting of the council, a long letter which was signed by eleven bishops to give it more authority. This letter made so keen an impression on the mind of Lucidus that he put his signature to it, and, being afterwards called before the council, he solemnly retracted the heresy of predestination by word of mouth and in writing.

As, after the Lord, the settlement of this affair was attributed to the zeal of Faustus and to his letter, the Fathers of the Council of Arles urged him to write against the predestinarian heresy and to set out in order the reasons that had been opposed to it. Faustus willingly complied with their wishes: he composed a work divided into two books, *On Grace and Free Will*. Before he had made it public, a second council was convoked at Lyon against the Predestinarians. This council confirmed the judgment given by that of Arles and condemned the new errors that had been discovered in these sectaries. Faustus, who was among the Fathers of Lyon, was again asked to publish his work and to add to it the refutation of the new errors. These details are recorded in the very preface of Faustus's work, which the author dedicated to Leontius of Arles, his metropolitan.

It is not only in the affairs of religion or of the Church that we find the name of Faustus involved. The high esteem he enjoyed with the princes of the earth marked him out for their choice in the defence of their

temporal interests. The empire, which had often changed masters in a short time, was then governed by Julius Nepos. The Visigoths, having come out from the frontiers of Spain and already established under the leadership of Euric in Novempopulania and at Narbonne, thought the opportunity favourable for extending their conquest. They therefore went to besiege the city of the Arverni, and from there they threatened the province of Vienne and the other neighbouring provinces. In this juncture Julius Nepos, who was in no state to resist Euric, had recourse to negotiation and entrusted it to four bishops, Leontius of Arles, Graecus of Marseille, Basil of Aix and Faustus of Riez. The deputies went to the barbarian king with the mission of treating for peace; but the negotiation was not successful. Euric pursued his conquests. He first made himself master of Arles and Marseille, and from there, spreading like a devastating torrent, he subjected to his laws the whole part of Provence on this side of the Durance. Gascony and the two Aquitaines above all were a prey to his ravages. Provence was less ill-treated; but it had much to suffer from the ruses and violence employed to implant the pernicious heresy of Arius.

In this extremity the zeal of Faustus for the Catholic faith showed itself more brilliantly than before. He thought first of forearming his flock. He was seen going through the towns and villages of his diocese, preaching with extraordinary ardour, demonstrating with as much eloquence as clarity the Catholic truth distorted by the sectaries, and inspiring all with a keen horror of heresy. But it was above all in his episcopal city that he displayed his zeal, gathering his people and his clergy every day, imposing new austerities on himself, and sighing after the palm of martyrdom so that his blood might keep the contagion away from the flock entrusted to his care. This was not enough for him. As pontiff of the Church and guardian of the deposit of faith, he wished to provide also for the needs of all the faithful. To this end he published a great number of letters against the Arians, and his work against the heresies of Arius and Macedonius. He added to it a special treatise on the Holy Spirit. This zeal could not but displease the tyrant: he threatened, but in vain; the holy bishop was only the more ardent in defence of the true faith. Euric then ordered him to be seized and, exiling him from his diocese, assigned him the city of Limoges as his prison.

Persecution is the touchstone of holiness. Faustus relaxed neither his zeal nor his austerities. Those among whom he was condemned to live, witnesses of his example, admired his greatness of soul and were strengthened anew in the faith and the practice of the Christian virtues. The land of exile was a new stage prepared by divine Providence for this generous confessor of the faith. Ruricius, Bishop of Limoges, came often to visit him and softened the rigour of exile by his good offices. He had for Faustus a filial piety, a tender veneration and a blind confidence, guiding himself by his advice and leaving him the direction of his conscience.

King Euric having died, Faustus saw his exile end and was able to return to his church in 484. He was received there with rapture and with all the honours due to a generous confessor of the faith. His great age had not weakened his zeal and his mortification. Absence had only made the flock entrusted to his care dearer to him. His entry was a veritable triumph, and sweet tears flowed from every eye. Feeling his last hour approaching, he prepared himself with all possible fervour to sustain the last combat, awaiting with just confidence the reward promised to his labours and his virtues. At last, after more than 33 years of episcopate spent in all the rigours of the monastic life, he died in peace in his church on the 25th of January in the year 493, aged more than a hundred.

CULTE ET RELIQUES. — ÉCRITS.

Cult and Relics. — Writings.

Faustus was buried in his cathedral church; but his body was afterwards carried, without the reason being known, to Cavaillon, where it is exposed to the veneration of the faithful under the name of Blessed Faustus, abbot of Lérins. At Riez the only relics still possessed were his garments and the pulpit from which he proclaimed the holy word and delivered, among other sermons, the panegyric of his holy predecessor

Maximus. These precious remains were kept in the ancient basilica of Saint-Alban, afterwards called Saint-Maxime. They perished with all the furnishings of that church in the burning and havoc wrought there by the Huguenots in the year 1574.

The public cult paid to Faustus goes back to the remotest antiquity and dates from his death. We find his feast marked with an octave, and written in large characters and in red ink, in the oldest manuscript calendar of the Church of Riez, and the Mass in his honour in an old manuscript missal. In the ancient basilica of Saint-Maxime, which was the cathedral church for several centuries, there was a chapel under the title of St. Faustus. The learned Bollandists, under the date of the 17th of January, and Baronius himself are mistaken when they say that there is in the city of Riez a basilica built in his honour. There has never been a basilica, but only a chapel in the basilica of Saint-Maxime.

The Church of Riez has always celebrated his feast on the 28th of the month of September, under the rite of double of the second class with octave. That of Cavaillon celebrates it on the 21st of May, under the rite of greater double. At Lérins and in the churches of the Order it was kept on the 17th of January, which is believed to be the day of his elevation to the episcopate and of his consecration.

Among the works of Faustus that have survived the ravages of time, we must distinguish: 1° *Homilia de sancto Maximo,* which Doni d'Attichi, Bishop of Riez, had reprinted in Latin and French in 1614 under this title: *Elogium de sancto Maximo*; — 2° *Liber de Spiritu Sancto,* or treatise on the Holy Spirit against the Macedonians. The author proves the divinity, the consubstantiality and the co-eternity of the third person of the Holy Trinity. It has often been printed under the name of Paschasius, who was deacon of the Roman Church under the Popes Anastasius and Symmachus. It is found in the *Bibliothèque des Pères*; — 3° *De gratia Dei et humanæ mentis libero arbitrio libri duo*. It is in this work, directed against the Predestinarians and so variously judged by authors, that Faustus is said to have expressed opinions favourable to the errors of the Semi-Pelagians. It is for this reason that he was censured by the Popes Gelasius and Hormisdas, refuted by St. Isidore and other Fathers, and finally placed among the apocryphal books by a Council of Rome; — 4° *Ad Lucidum epistola*: this letter is found in the *Collection des Conciles de l'Église gallicane*; — 5° *Professio fidei ad Leontium episcopum Arelatensem de Gratia Dei et humanæ mentis arbitrio libero*; — 6° *Libellus de creaturis*. The object of this treatise is to prove against certain heretics that God alone is incorporeal, or has no body, and that creatures are not incorporeal; — 7° *Adversus Arianos et Macedonianos libellus,* or treatise on the unity of nature of the three divine persons; — 8° *Ad Græcum diaconum responsio contra Nestorii errorem*. In this letter Faustus combats the heresy of Nestorius and professes his belief that the Blessed Virgin Mary did not bring into the world a mere man who afterwards would have been united to or clothed with the divinity, but true God in true man; — 9° *De variis quæstionibus ad Paulinum*; — 10° *De Pœnitentia ad Felicem,* or exhortation to the fear of God and to penance; — 11° *Epistolæ ad diversos*; — 12° *Ad Ruricum epistola*; — 13° *Sermo ad Monachos*; — 14° *Six sermons on various subjects*, which were published for the first time by Fathers Martène and Durand in volume IX of the *Collectio amplissima veterum monumentorum*; — 15° Savaron, in his *Commentaries on St. Sidonius*, and Bellarmine, in his *Ecclesiastical Writers*, further attribute to Faustus of Riez the fifty homilies that were falsely published under the name of Eusebius of Emesa and which are found in the *Bibliothèque des Pères*. This opinion is shared by Fathers Stilting, Martène, Rivet, Ceillier, Cave, etc., with this modification however, that some of the fifty homilies are indisputably by St. Maximus of Riez.

Extracted from the Saints titulaires de l'Église de Riez, *by M. l'abbé Féraud. — Cf.* Œuvres de saint Sidoine Apollinaire*; Simon Bartel,* Nomenclature des évêques de Riez, *and* Apologie de saint Fauste*; Longueval,* Histoire de l'Église Gallicane*;* Gallia Christiana*;* Acta Sanctorum, *under the 28th of September; Godescard, under the 27th of November; Tillemont, Baronius, Ceillier, Rivet, etc., etc.*

SAINT WENCESLAUS, DUKE OF BOHEMIA, MARTYR AT BOLESLAW, NEAR PRAGUE

936. — Pope: Leo VII.

La vie des bons est toujours à charge à ceux dont les mœurs sont corrompues.

The life of the good is always a burden to those whose morals are corrupt.

St. Gregory the Great.

There is nothing fixed on earth, and all that is under heaven is subject to inconstancy; even sceptres and crowns, although they are surrounded with guards as if to defend them from the injuries of fortune, are not exempt from the fatal revolutions that so often make peoples groan. Such a one is born in the purple who ends his life in misery and, what is more terrible, sometimes by a bloody and cruel death. We have an example of this astonishing truth in the Saint whose life we are writing. The history of Bohemia tells us that he had for father Wratislaus, duke of that province, a most Christian and most Catholic prince, and for mother Drahomira, a pagan woman who, while concealing the corruption of her mind, nevertheless nourished at the bottom of her heart a mortal hatred against the servants of Jesus Christ. Ludmila, the duke's mother, was well aware of her daughter-in-law's impiety; and so, fearing she would corrupt her son Wenceslaus, who was heir presumptive to the crown, she asked for him so as to bring him up with her and give him the first notions of piety. When he was of an age to learn the sciences, she first put him under the guidance of a very wise tutor named Paul, then sent him to Budex, a town not far from Prague, to complete his studies there. The young prince made marvellous progress there through his grandmother's care, and at the same time gave so many marks of solid and constant virtue that all Bohemia rejoiced in the hope of having him one day as duke. Meanwhile his father died, leaving him still very young, with Boleslaus, his younger brother, who had always remained with Drahomira. This ambitious and cruel woman at once took the regency until her children should be of age; and, seeing nothing more to stand in the way of her fury, she let it burst out against the priests, the religious and all the Christian people. She had the churches shut and forbade, under pain of banishment, prison or death, the clergy to preach the mysteries of the faith to the people and masters to teach them to their pupils. Besides this, she changed the magistrates in Prague and put pagans in their place, who made the Christians suffer every imaginable outrage: if a Christian killed a pagan in self-defence, they were not content with putting him to death, but put nine others to death as well, so as to avenge the death of one pagan on ten Christians.

Ludmila, outraged with grief at seeing this furious princess exercise such great cruelties against the faithful, urged Wenceslaus, her grandson, to take the government of his State as soon as possible, assuring him that his youth would do him no harm at all, because she would not fail to assist him with her counsel. So all Bohemia saw him with joy succeed to his father's authority; but, so that division should not arise between him and his brother, Boleslaus was given as appanage the province of Boleslavia, whither Drahomira, their mother, followed him, because they were in complete sympathy of temper and inclination, or rather of vice and cruelty.

The holy duke, seeing himself in possession of the crown his father had left him, governed his subjects as much by the example of his virtues as by the force of the ancient laws. He was the protector of orphans, the refuge of widows and the father of the poor. He lowered his dignity so far as to carry wood on his own shoulders to needy people whom shame prevented from revealing their misery; this he did in the darkness of night, as much so as not to be recognized as to spare confusion to the persons to whom he did this charity; he did not disdain to attend the burials of people of the lowest condition, and even of the most wretched, at which their own relatives were reluctant to be present. He spent considerable sums in delivering captives from the hands of the infidels; he visited prisoners, helped them with his advice, consoled them with his exhortations and relieved them with his alms. When any criminals were condemned to the last punishment,

his heart was so softened with compassion that he wept hot tears over their death, and he would gladly have pardoned them each time had he not feared to harm the peace of his subjects. However far he was raised above others by his rank as prince, he seemed to forget it and lay it aside when he dealt with bishops and priests. His devotion to the holy Eucharist was incomparable: everything relating to this august mystery inspired him with veneration, and he gloried in contributing to it with all his power. He sowed with his own hands the wheat that was to be used for making the hosts, and pressed the wine intended for the holy sacrifice. He also counted it a very great honour to serve Mass and to present to the priest the bread, the wine, the water and the incense.

At night he made processions round the churches, walking barefoot on the snow and ice in the greatest rigours of winter. He was so little attached to earthly greatness that he deliberated whether to give up his sceptre to enter the Order of St. Benedict. He sent ambassadors expressly to Rome to obtain from the Sovereign Pontiff permission to establish it in Bohemia, and perhaps he would have carried out this plan had he not been struck down by a violent death brought on him by the cruel Drahomira, as we shall tell later.

This admirable devotion, so uncommon among crowned heads, far from lessening his courage, gave him on occasion a surprising fearlessness founded on the perfect confidence he had in God. He gave striking proofs of it in a war he had to sustain against Radislaus, Prince of Gurime, whom some seditious men had called into Bohemia, where he was ravaging the country; he first sent deputies to him to induce him by gentle means to withdraw; having obtained nothing from him, he put himself at the head of a powerful army to go and fight him; but, to spare the blood of his subjects, instead of giving a pitched battle he offered his enemy to decide their quarrel by single combat between them. Radislaus accepted the challenge and presented himself for the duel well armed, mounted on a good charger and holding his lance on his thigh. Wenceslaus, on the contrary, had only a simple cuirass over his hair shirt, with a sabre in his hand, trusting for the rest in the almighty power of God. They both appeared at the head of the two armies, waiting for the signal to clash. As soon as it was given, our Saint armed himself with the sign of the cross and advanced towards his adversary, who for his part came charging at him at full gallop to run him through with his lance; but as he was on the point of doing so, he saw near the holy duke two heavenly spirits who were furnishing him with arms to defend himself. He also heard a voice saying to him: “Do not strike him.” These wonders terrified him so much that, dismounting at once, he threw himself at the feet of Wenceslaus and asked his pardon. Thus peace was restored in the State, to the great satisfaction of the Bohemians, who could not praise enough the divine Goodness for having given them such a prince.

This is not the only time he was seen accompanied by angels. Having been obliged to attend the diet that the Emperor Otto I had convoked at Worms, one day when the assembly was sitting he came late to the chamber, because the Mass he wished to hear beforehand was longer than usual. The emperor and the other princes, who had already arrived, taking it ill that he should keep them waiting, had resolved among themselves that, when he came in, not one of them would rise from his seat to greet him. But as soon as he appeared, the emperor quite changed his mind; for, having seen him between two angels who escorted him and covered him with a golden cross, he rose from his imperial throne, went to meet him to receive him and even made him sit at his side. This favour of heaven won him the good graces of that prince to such a degree that, out of regard for him, he raised the duchy of Bohemia to a kingdom, exempted it from all the subsidies it was obliged to pay to the empire, and allowed him to bear thenceforth in his arms a black eagle on a field of silver. Wenceslaus accepted these last two favours, because they were equally honourable and advantageous to his peoples; but he would never take the title of king, which his modesty could not bear, although the same emperor and the other princes always gave it to him in their letters and in public acts, and although his successors, less humble and less moderate than he, allowed themselves to be addressed as royal majesty. However great these benefits were in the eyes of men, Wenceslaus valued them as almost nothing compared with the gift Otto made him of the arm of St. Vitus, which had been brought from France to the abbey of

Corvey or Corbie, in Saxony, under the Emperor Louis the Debonair, as we said on the 15th of June in the life of the same holy Martyr, and of some bones of St. Sigismund, King of Burgundy, for whom our Saint had a singular veneration because he was of the same country as that prince, originating from the nation of the Vandals. When he had returned to Bohemia, he had a magnificent church built at Prague, in which he placed the arm of St. Vitus, in whose honour it was consecrated by a bishop whom St. Wolfgang sent there.

Such was the life of the prince until his martyrdom, of which his brother Boleslaus and Drahomira, his mother, were the authors, and which we shall now describe. We have put off until now speaking of the cruelty that this new Jezebel exercised against Ludmila, her mother-in-law. The influence this holy princess had with the duke, her grandson, and the zeal she showed for the preservation and spread of the Catholic faith made her wither with spite; she resolved to get rid of her and have her put to death. The execution was not difficult for her. Ludmila learned of her ill will by revelation; but, far from defending herself against it, either by doubling her guards or by keeping always in places of safety, she prepared herself, by the sacraments of Penance and the Eucharist and by the distribution of all her goods to the poor, to receive the blow that was to merit her the crown of martyrdom. While she was in her chapel making her thanksgiving after communion, two assassins sent by Drahomira entered and strangled her with the veil that covered her head. This happened almost at the beginning of the government of Wenceslaus. God did not leave this crime unpunished, for the assassins all died miserably and left to their posterity visible marks of their infamy.

The body of the Saint was buried at Prague in the church of Saint-George; but three years later St. Wenceslaus had it translated to that of Saint-Vitus, which he had just had built. It was found whole and without corruption, and so pleasant a fragrance came out of the tomb that it was easy to judge that the soul which had dwelt in that body was one of the fairest flowers of the garden of the heavenly Spouse. So horrible a parricide still could not sate the rage of Drahomira and Boleslaus; the mother bore a grudge against her son, the brother against his brother. To murder him the more surely they seized the following occasion: Boleslaus held a public celebration for the birth of a son; he invited to it the greatest lords of Bohemia, and he also begged the duke his brother to honour the banquet and the company with his presence. The Saint knew their malice and cruelty well enough; nevertheless he would not fail to be present, so that by giving them this mark of friendship he might soften the hardness of their hearts. But as he had reason to distrust them, he prepared himself for it as if he were going to martyrdom. After making his confession and receiving the holy Eucharist, he went to Boleslaw, where this feast was being held; he gave them every possible token of his tenderness and goodwill. At the end of the meal he withdrew to the church to say his prayers there, according to his custom. It was then that the cruel Drahomira, who had not been able to find the opportunity of carrying out her detestable design, strongly urged Boleslaus to go there and take his life. And indeed he went there in haste, and, finding the duke at prayer and defenceless, he struck him two blows with his sword, from which he fell dead on the spot: this was on the 28th of September, about the year 936. His blood spurted against the wall, where the Roman Breviary says it is still seen. At the same hour the King of Denmark had a revelation of it and a strong inspiration to honour him as a martyr: which he did by founding a church under the name of Saint-Wenceslaus, where God has worked several miracles to enhance the glory of His servant. It is held that he had kept his innocence and the flower of his virginity all his life.

His death was followed by a horrible persecution against the Christians; for the fratricide Boleslaus put a great number of them to death, on the pretext that, being attached to the interests of the dead duke, they might fail in fidelity to his service. He persecuted the priests in particular, being led to it by the counsels of the cruel Drahomira, his mother, who had resolved to exterminate the Christian religion entirely. But this wicked woman did not long remain without receiving the just punishment of her perfidy: for one day, as she was passing through a place where the bones of the martyrs whom she had sacrificed to her fury, and whom she had had deprived of burial, lay scattered here and there, the earth opened and she was swallowed up alive into hell with her carriage and all who were in it and on it, except the coachman, who, having got down at the

sound of the bell to adore the Blessed Sacrament which was passing, was preserved from this misfortune. This terrible example ought to have brought Boleslaus to his senses; but, far from profiting by it, he continued his cruelties; at last he was forced by the Emperor Otto to recall the banished priests and to re-establish the Christian religion in his States.

He is represented: 1° assisting at the baptism of a child whom a priest is plunging into the water; 2° murdered by his brother in hatred of his virtue; 3° on horseback, with an angel above his head holding a crown; 4° standing, armed from head to foot, holding a sword, his hand resting on a shield bearing a kind of lion or leopard.

CULTE ET RELIQUES.

Cult and Relics.

Boleslaus, unable to bear the reports of the miracles God was working every day at his tomb, sent to have his body taken up and carried secretly to Prague, to the church of Saint-Vitus, so that the miracles it worked might be attributed rather to the power of that ancient Martyr than to his merits. But in trying to obscure his brother's glory he served to increase it wonderfully; for the horses drawing the wagon in which this precious relic lay, guiding the driver rather than being guided by him, instead of crossing by the bridges over two flooded rivers, crossed over the water, which wet only their hooves. Having arrived at Prague, before going to the door of the church they stopped at the door of the prison, and it was impossible to make them leave until it was broad day and all the prisoners had been let out. So, when the body was in the church, everyone came to see it; the coffin having been opened, it was found as whole as on the day of its burial, made three years before, and without any wound appearing. Only one ear was missing, which Primislava, the Saint's sister, had found at the door of the church where he had been murdered. She had kept it very carefully; but, having learned what was happening, she sent it back; no sooner had it been put in its place than it joined itself to his head as if it had never been separated from it.

His feast is marked in the martyrologies on the 28th of September, the day of his death. Pope Clement X, at the request of the Emperor Leopold, permitted by a brief of the 26th of July 1670 that his office be said as a semi-double throughout the Church, but without express obligation. The feast of his translation is marked in some martyrologies on the 4th of March.

Acta Sanctorum; History of Bohemia, *by Jean Dubraw, Bishop of Olmütz in Moravia; Aeneas Sylvius; Baillet.*

SAINT ISMÉON OR ISMIDON OF SASSENAGE, BISHOP OF THE FORMER SEE OF DIE, IN THE DIOCESE OF VALENCE

1120. — Pope: Callistus II. — King of France: Louis VI, the Fat.

> *Fidelis in obsequiis, Et justus in judicio, Discretus in consiliis, Pressis fuit præsidio.*
>
> *Fidèle à ses devoirs, sage dans ses jugements, discret à conseiller, prompt à secourir, tel nous apparut saint Ismidon.*
>
> *Faithful to his duties, wise in his judgments, discreet in counsel, prompt to succour: such does St. Ismidon appear to us.*
>
> *Acta Sanctorum.*

Ismidon was born at the castle of Sassenage about the middle of the 9th century. Hector, his father, and his mother, named Gana, discovered in him from the tenderest age seeds of virtue that revealed to their eyes the designs of Providence over this child of blessing. They entrusted him early to Ismidon de Bérenger, prince of Royans, his paternal uncle, who lavished on him for some years the most affectionate care, and had the joy of

seeing him grow each day in age and wisdom, and show more and more in his tastes, his manners and his conduct the inclinations that ordinarily prepare young men for high destinies.

Happy and in some sort proud of this consoling beginning, and not doubting that his nephew was called to the ecclesiastical state, Bérenger sent him to Valence, so that under the direction of able masters he might develop his taste for study and form himself above all in the science of the Saints, for which the young Ismidon felt a particular attraction. Astonishing progress soon made him the object of his fellow students' admiration, and, though still very young, he was judged worthy to receive the clerical tonsure. This unhoped-for favour increased his love of study and gave his zeal for perfection so generous an impulse that from then on he was seen, like the just man of the sacred Books, to go from virtue to virtue; his elevation to the priesthood was soon the reward of his piety, and scarcely had he received holy Orders when he was provided with a canonry in the metropolitan church of Lyons.

The canons of that church then followed an austere rule and formed a community of true religious. Ismidon found among them models of perfection, which he made it a duty to imitate and which he soon surpassed by his angelic fervour. His talents, his virtues, his holiness were not long in drawing to him the eyes and the admiration of the people and clergy of Lyons; his reputation spread far; but in making his merit known everywhere, it hastened the moment that was to tear him from the solitary life of the cloister. There was then on the see of Die a venerated prelate named Bernard, formerly prior of the charterhouse of Portes, whose old age and great infirmities no longer allowed him to bear the burden of pastoral solicitude. Bernard needed a coadjutor. He cast his eyes on the young canon, whose zeal and eminent piety he had many times heard praised. The clergy of Die, informed of this happy choice, showed the liveliest satisfaction at it, and the people loudly blessed heaven, which had inspired it. All voices having thus united in favour of Ismidon, they hastened to inform him. In vain did he appear overwhelmed by this news; in vain did he strive to put away from himself an honour of which he did not think himself worthy; no regard was paid to the alarms of his humility; the bishop used every means to overcome his resistance; the people joined their prayers to those of the prelate, and shortly afterwards, that is to say about the year 1099, Ismidon at last consented to receive episcopal consecration, and set out for Die, which he entered amid the applause of the whole town.

The holy old man who had chosen him as coadjutor was so consoled by his presence, so filled with wonder at his virtues, that he thought of nothing more than preparing for death. God, indeed, called him to Himself before he had been able to appreciate at its true value the treasure with which he had just enriched his Church. Ismidon wept for him as for a father, and was at once raised to the episcopal see, which he was to make illustrious by twenty years of labours and wonders.

Soon the hopes that had been conceived of his great wisdom and his incomparable piety were seen to be fulfilled. Never did prelate have more solicitude and love for his flock; he was more than a pastor, say the historians of his time, he was the best of fathers. His faith, his modesty, his patience, his gentleness delighted everyone; his devotedness worked wonders; his example and his words touched hearts so effectively that the town and diocese of Die soon changed their face. And so Ismidon's flock loved him tenderly: it would have been hard to find at that time, in the Church of Gaul, a people more devoted to its bishop, more docile to his voice, more faithful in imitating all his virtues. The labours and virtues of this blessed bishop excited the admiration not only of his flock but also of all the neighbouring provinces, and everywhere people were so convinced of his holiness that they did not hesitate to place him in the first rank among the most distinguished prelates of his age.

Yet only a few memories remain to us of Ismidon's long episcopate. The documents that were to hand down to us the history of his life perished during the troubles that laid waste his Church in the 16th century. About the time when our holy bishop was raised to the see of Die, most of the French lords, barons and knights had left their castles and their families to go and make war in the Holy Land. The crusade had been resolved upon at the famous Council of Clermont in 1095. Peter the Hermit and Pope Urban II, by their burning eloquence,

had so electrified our valiant nation that from one end of France to the other nothing was heard but this war cry: “God wills it! God wills it!” Dauphiné furnished this expedition with numerous soldiers and illustrious leaders. Adhémar, of the ancient and noble family of the lords of Grignan, was put at their head, and so distinguished himself at the siege of Antioch that all the crusaders attributed to him the glory of taking that city. Isoard, count of Die, showed no less valour in that memorable affair, commanding the eleventh battalion of the Christian army on the day of the last battle, which assured the crusaders the victory. These successes were the sole preoccupation of minds in the West; all eyes were turned towards Palestine.

Priests and bishops, lords and vassals, everyone aspired to the honour of enlisting under the standard of the cross and going to fill the many gaps that plague and the sword of the enemy had made in the ranks of the Christian army. Ismidon was still young at that time; he too burned with the desire to march to the deliverance of the holy Places, and he would then and there have undertaken the voyage overseas had not his parents opposed the carrying out of his plan. He was therefore obliged to obey, and put off his project; but the capture of Antioch, and above all that of Jerusalem, which took place in the very year of his consecration, roused in him anew so violent a desire to take the cross and go and visit the holy sepulchre that he almost regretted having accepted the charge of a Church which imperiously required his presence in its midst. He therefore provided in all haste for the needs of his flock; and as soon as he had made sure that nothing in his diocese would suffer from his absence, he left Die and set out for Palestine, where he arrived safely, in spite of the fatigues and dangers of so long a pilgrimage.

It is easy to imagine the happiness our holy bishop felt when at last he saw the places made illustrious by so many wonders; when, led no doubt by the lord Isoard, his noble diocesan, he visited the tomb of Jesus Christ, whose deliverance had cost the crusaders so dear; when, travelling through the various towns of Palestine, he met at every step so many religious monuments, the sight of which recalled a host of memories, all so fit to touch the heart of a bishop and to console his faith. Ismidon took advantage of his stay in the holy Places, not to gather laurels in the train of the Christian army, but to seek treasures which in his eyes were of inestimable price. He obtained a great quantity of relics, with which he later enriched his cathedral church, and in whose honour he established a solemn feast, which was formerly celebrated at Die on the 7th of the month of September.

The blessed bishop’s return to the midst of his flock was a real triumph, so much had they feared to lose him, so much alarm and regret had his absence caused. From that day his zeal and fatherly devotedness knew no more bounds; his life was nothing but a continual chain of labours, prayers and miracles. To instruct his people, always so eager to hear him; to catechize children and the ignorant; to console and succour the poor; to visit the monasteries; to provide for the needs of all the parishes; to stir up the zeal of the pastors; in a word, to make himself all things to all men so as to win his sheep to Jesus Christ: such, for twenty years, was the conduct of St. Ismidon; and so God was pleased many times to manifest the holiness of His servant by numerous wonders. One day a raging wolf had come down from the mountains in the midst of which the town of Die lies; a child happened to be in its path and was about to become its prey; the cruel animal had already seized him, when Ismidon, seeing it, began to pray and blessed the unfortunate child. Suddenly the wolf, struck with terror, took to flight, leaving him on the ground without having done him the least injury. Another time, an assassin having stealthily entered the episcopal palace, Ismidon came calmly to meet him, and, presenting himself before him, saw him fall backwards, struck with sudden death. Finally, the tomb itself obeyed the holy prelate, for it is asserted that he raised to life two dead men who had already been buried, and whose shrouds were long preserved in his cathedral church as two precious relics.

A life so full of wonders and good works was bound to be crowned by a holy death. Ismidon died, indeed, the death of the just, in the year 1120, amid the tears of his people, who from then on honoured him with a public cult, soon justified by new miracles; for a few days later, a corpse having been let down into the tomb of our Saint, recovered life there by a wonder like that which took place at the sepulchre of the prophet

Eliseus. A church was built in honour of St. Ismidon, and his body was preserved there with care until the year 1567, a time of sinister memory, when the town of Die was sacked by the Huguenots. Those vandals ruined the church dedicated to the holy Bishop, burned his relics and threw the ashes to the wind. Those of St. Stephen, one of Ismidon's successors, suffered the same fate; but this act of mad impiety did not efface from the hearts of the people of Die the memory of the benefits and virtues of their holy Pontiffs. Their feast is still celebrated every year in their cathedral church, and the town that once had the happiness of possessing them as pastors still regards them today as its patrons, and will always invoke them as the most powerful intercessors it has with God.

Extract from the Histoire hagiologique du diocèse de Valence*, by the abbé Nadal. — Cf. Columbi,* De rebus gestis episc. Diensium.

BLESSED LAURENCE OF RIPAFRATTA, REFORMER OF THE ORDER OF FRIARS PREACHERS

1457. — Pope: Callistus III. — King of France: Charles VII, the Victorious.

Boni magistri bonos discipulos facere consueverunt.

Les bons maîtres font ordinairement les bons disciples.

Good masters ordinarily make good disciples.

St. Bonaventure.

On the summit of a little hill washed by the waters of the Serchio, at the foot of Monte Pisano (Tuscany), stands the ancient castle of Ripafratta. During the Middle Ages it protected the frontier of the Pisan territory against the frequent incursions of the people of Lucca and of the Florentines. Even today, when it is falling into ruin, it looks stern and threatening above the village it dominates, which counts barely seven hundred inhabitants. It was there that Blessed Laurence was born, on the 24th of March 1359. He belonged to the illustrious family of the Nobili, which later gave rise to that of the Roncioni, whose descendants still do honour to the city of Pisa in our day. The name of his parents has remained unknown; but if it is true that fine stems produce fine flowers, those who gave birth to this fair lily of holiness must have been admirable models of virtue.

It is probable that Blessed Laurence came to Pisa to study divine and human learning with the aim of devoting himself to the ecclesiastical ministry. At that time the ambitious Cardinal of Geneva had already taken the name and insignia of the sovereign Pontificate, whose possession he disputed with Urban VI. He thus inaugurated that sorrowful era of the Western Schism, which weakened faith, corrupted morals, and opened the way to all the heresies by which Europe was troubled in the 15th and 16th centuries. Chosen souls then took refuge in the cloisters, the better to defend the Church and to take a more glorious part in the combats whose length and stubbornness were foreseen; and meanwhile they steeped themselves anew in prayer, in penance and in tears. Blessed Laurence chose, among all, the Order of Friars Preachers, and took the religious habit at Pisa, about 1379, in the convent of Santa Caterina, which had lately lost its finest ornaments. Blessed Jordan of Rivalta had entered into eternal rest in 1311; Fra Domenico Cavalca had followed him in 1342; and Fra Bartolomeo of San Concordio, no less brilliant a writer than the first two, had died in 1347. Yet one still saw there Father Domenico of Peccioli, whose holiness equalled his learning. This last directed Blessed Clare of Pisa for a long time in the ways of the spirit, and held the office of master of novices for several years; one may therefore believe that Blessed Laurence was formed in piety and religious discipline under the guidance of so good a master.

At that time there came to Pisa Blessed John Dominic of Florence, also of the Order of Friars Preachers and one of the most celebrated orators of Italy. He enjoyed a high renown, and St. Vincent Ferrer, when he was

asked by the Florentines, during his stay at Genoa, to evangelize the towns and villages of Tuscany after his mission in Lombardy and Liguria, was astonished at this invitation; he could not believe that Florence had thought of a stranger when she possessed an orator as great as Blessed John Dominic. Now at the time we have reached, Blessed John had turned all his views towards the restoration of the cloistered life in Italy, and applied himself in his preaching to depicting in the liveliest colours, on the one hand the vanity and inconstancy of earthly goods, on the other the beauty and eternal duration of heavenly goods. No sooner had he come to know, in the convent of Santa Caterina, Father Laurence of Ripafratta and the venerable Father Thomas Aiutamicristo, than he easily brought them to join him in undertaking the most holy work of the reform of the Dominican Institute. The plague which spread its ravages through Europe about the year 1348 had depopulated the cloisters, and the schism which was laying waste the Church and dividing the religious families had thrown these into disorder and an incredible confusion. These two causes together must irrevocably scatter and destroy all the religious bodies: a serious reform was therefore indispensable.

Blessed John Dominic, having met strong opposition to his plans in the two convents of Florence and Pisa, began by reforming that of San Domenico in Venice, and entrusted its direction to Father Thomas Aiutamicristo. This religious succeeded in a short time in getting the reform accepted in the great convent of Venice, placed under the invocation of Saints John and Paul. Father Thomas of Siena had the mission of reforming the convent of San Domenico at Città di Castello in Umbria, where he was joined by Blessed John Dominic, Blessed Laurence of Ripafratta and Father Niccolò Cittalebraccia of Pisa.

Blessed John was not long in recognizing what a precious treasure had fallen to him in the person of our young lord of Ripafratta. Indeed there shone in Blessed Laurence an angelic candour of morals, a very austere life, an ardent zeal for the glory of God and the salvation of souls, an inviolable fidelity to the most minute observances of the life of the cloister: all virtues set off by so profound a knowledge of the divine Scriptures that he deserved to be surnamed the Ark of the Testament, as the great Anthony of Padua had been.

One constant thought occupied Blessed Dominic: to set the recently established Congregation on foundations broad and strong enough for it to be able to live alone, should death or any other event come to separate him from it. He concentrated himself entirely on forming a good novitiate, and his efforts were crowned with success, for in that blessed place, as in a fertile soil, there grew up the future supports and propagators of the new reform. The Blessed founded great hopes on Father Michele Tosi, a young man whom he had converted at Pisa and brought back from the errors of a licentious life to the virtues of an accomplished holiness; but this Father died in the flower of his age, a victim of the charity with which he served his brethren sick with the plague. Blessed John Dominic then turned his eyes to those who remained, and, wishing to choose an able master of novices from among the most fervent religious the Congregation then counted, he fixed his choice on Blessed Laurence of Ripafratta, who seemed to him eminently fit to fill so difficult a ministry. He sent him to Cortona. That town, situated on the borders of Tuscany and the Papal States, under a delightful sky, in a fertile country, offered an admirably chosen abode for the spiritual exercises of a novitiate.

The master of novices' successes were not long in coming. In 1405 a young Florentine, provided with the most pressing recommendations of Blessed John Dominic, climbed the steep and rocky summit on which the town of Cortona is built: he came to prostrate himself at the feet of Blessed Laurence. This young man was St. Antoninus, barely sixteen years old, whom an already illustrious renown for holiness announced as the future glory and support of the Order of St. Dominic. He was followed there by Blessed Peter, of the noble family of the Capucci of Città di Castello; and the latter, after taking the habit of a Friar Preacher and pronouncing the solemn vows of religion in his native town, came to Cortona to complete his religious formation under Blessed Laurence. In the year 1407 two painters from the Mugello, eager for heavenly inspirations, hastened to join the pious colony: they were Blessed Angelico and his young brother, Fra Benedetto, miniaturists of rare talent. One could not express the marvellous skill with which Blessed

Laurence led these young souls along the rough path of religious perfection. In his wisdom he knew how to avoid the usual reefs on which those who train souls for the religious life come to be wrecked. First, he guarded against the excessive gentleness that enervates, weakens souls and makes them incapable of the strong virtue of obedience. But neither did he have the rigour, the inconsiderate zeal, whose almost immediate effect is to provoke in novices a feverish over-excitement, an immoderate fervour that soon leaves them without strength on the road of virtue and allows them only to drag out there useless days full of sadness. And so Blessed Laurence was seen, hard and severe towards himself, adapting himself to the weakness of his young disciples, and leading them gently and safely along the harsh path of holiness. He expected everything from the grace of the Lord. By means of pious and frequent talks he was content to kindle in his novices' hearts a spark of divine love; then he left this light flame to the action of God. And then it grew and became a fire able to consume, down to the root, all the evil inclinations of corrupt nature. Another quality truly worthy of praise in Blessed Laurence was the wisdom and prudence with which he understood the particular genius of each of his pupils. While reminding them of the final end of the Order, he seconded them in the free development of their natural tendencies. To Blessed Peter, whose inclinations were in sympathy with his own tastes, he opened the ways of contemplation; to St. Antoninus, whose vast and solid mind showed itself capable of the most varied studies, he counselled travelling over the infinite field of divine and human learning; he allowed Blessed Angelico and his brother to give themselves to painting. "O my beloved," he said to them, "you to whom God has not given the aptitude for learning, follow the career of painting; you will be no less true Friars Preachers for that; for it is not only by word that we persuade men to love virtue and flee vice, it is also by the example of a pure and spotless life, it is also by the arts, the expression of man's thoughts; sublime arts, among which music and painting hold the first rank. It will surely happen that a great number of sinners, whom the eloquence of your brethren has not been able to move, will, when touched by the sight of the pictures you put before their eyes, confess themselves vanquished. You have an advantage of which the others are deprived: speech cannot reach those who are far away, and the most eloquent mouth utters no oracle in the tomb; but your heavenly compositions will have an immortal influence; they will remain through the course of the ages as authentic witnesses, effective preachers of religion and virtue."

We do not know how long the happy disciples of Blessed Laurence remained under his tutelage; with the exception of Blessed Peter Capucci, who lived and died at Cortona, the others changed residence several times. Blessed Laurence himself, during the long stay he made at Cortona, often went through the surrounding villages to sow there the good seed of the divine word: that word came from his lips sweet and pure, as once from the mouths of the Apostles and the Prophets. At the remembrance of this humble preacher, this incorruptible organ of the law of truth, whose exhortations and counsels had drawn so great a number of souls from the ways of iniquity, St. Antoninus more than once in his writings lets a lively admiration burst forth. He does not fear to compare our blessed Brother to St. Paul for his zeal, his tribulations and the sufferings he imposed on his own body.

After forming in the person of St. Antoninus, whom he had imbued with his spirit, an able master of novices, Blessed Laurence, by order of his superiors, went to Fabriano, a town in the March of Ancona. The convent of the Friars Preachers of that town had just accepted the reform of Blessed John Dominic. At that time the plague was ravaging the town and territory of Fabriano; despising fatigue and danger, our blessed one devoted himself entirely to the service of the plague-stricken, and the people on whom he had lavished his apostolic devotedness kept a lively gratitude for it; after many years they still recalled with happiness the inexhaustible charity of our Brother.

But the shining virtues and profound learning of Blessed Laurence could no longer remain buried in the obscurity of private life. The Congregation of reformed convents, wishing to reward him for the zeal and prudence with which he had laboured to restore the Order of St. Dominic, named him vicar-general. It is

impossible for us to state precisely the years during which Blessed Laurence governed the Congregation. All we can say is that his election must have taken place before the year 1443; for in November 1445 St. Antoninus was already invested with the office of vicar-general. Time, which has covered with a thick veil the life and actions of this illustrious son of St. Dominic, has left us no important memory of the few years he spent at the head of his Congregation. We know only that he established his residence in the convent of San Domenico at Pistoia, where he ended his days. There, as at Cortona, at Fabriano and wherever religious obedience had placed him, he devoted himself entirely to the ministry of souls, preaching to the people, catechizing the poor of the countryside, visiting and consoling the sick, particularly the plague-stricken, who most often saw themselves abandoned by their friends and relatives.

Our Blessed, wholly absorbed in this ministry of love and peace, received the news that his beloved disciple St. Antoninus had just been raised to the archbishopric of Florence (January 1446). In all his difficulties the Saint never ceased to have recourse to the lights of the venerable religious who had formed his youth; and so he did on this grave occasion. He besought his master not to abandon him in the anguish to which the terrible burden just laid on his weak shoulders reduced him. Neither the entreaties of the magistrates of the republic nor the orders of the sovereign Pontiff himself could bring him to accept this heavy charge; and he consented to his elevation only at the express order of Blessed Laurence. At the same time the holy old man wished to fulfil a duty of charity towards the one who had been his disciple by helping him with his counsels and his experience. He did for St. Antoninus what St. Bernard had done for Pope Eugenius III, who from the humble condition of a monk saw himself raised to the supreme pontificate. Following the example of the abbot of Clairvaux, who, to strengthen the virtue of Eugenius III, wrote his admirable book *De Consideratione*, Blessed Laurence strove, by frequent letters full of wisdom, to instruct the holy Archbishop in the dignity and duties of the episcopate. It was truly an admirable thing to see the affectionate and fatherly charity of Blessed Laurence, and the deep humility of St. Antoninus, who, with a wholly filial reverence, lowered his learning, his maturity, his prudence and his wisdom before the whitened hair of his former master. The holy old man was nearing his hundredth year. He was exhausted by the fatigues of a laborious and penitent life, sick with an ulcer on the leg which made him suffer cruelly, and yet he could not bring himself to put an end to his labours. These noble and generous sacrifices were well rewarded. God granted him a rare happiness, the sweetest to the hearts of those who have devoted their care to the education of youth: he saw the young religious whom he had initiated into holiness become, by their wisdom and heroic virtues, the glory, the ornament and the support of holy Church, the model of future generations. Of his disciples, three have been raised to the altars; the others, who have not had that honour, have at least left behind them an imperishable renown.

Another subject of consolation for our blessed Brother was to see the reform of his Order blessed by God and men. This reform grew each day in prosperity and bore fruits of salvation far and wide; it stretched fruitful branches from one end of Italy to the other, and counted with legitimate pride, among its children, religious equally illustrious for learning and holiness. It was indeed in some measure his work, since he had laboured at it courageously from his youth. It remained for him to go to heaven to receive the immortal crown that God reserves for His faithful servants. Having reached the end of his exile, he wished to depart fortified with all the helps of religion. He received them with the marks of the tenderest piety; then, raising himself with an effort on his humble bed, he turned to his brethren, who surrounded him in floods of tears, and exhorted them with words full of fire to the love of God and neighbour and to the observance of their rules. He also recommended them to make themselves examples of holiness for the people, and to give themselves entirely to the salvation of souls, which Jesus Christ has redeemed with His precious blood. Then, with the serenity of the just man who knows he has faithfully accomplished his mission, he rested in the Lord on the 28th of September in the year 1457, aged ninety-eight. God was not slow to reveal to the Church the glory of His faithful servant; his tomb became the scene of numerous miracles, which are related to us by the most trustworthy authors.

CULTE ET RELIQUES.

Cult and Relics.

The people of Pistoia, grieved by this irreparable loss, wished, to calm their sorrow, to raise a monument that would make known to posterity their esteem for the virtues of Blessed Laurence of Ripafratta. At first a modest tomb was built, on which the Blessed was represented with his cope spread out, as if to show that from the height of heaven he covered with his protection the city he had edified by his virtues and consoled by his charity. But this monument seemed insufficient to the inhabitants of Pistoia and unworthy of their gratitude. To bear striking witness to their love for the Blessed, they had a marble sepulchre carved. On the two sides of this sepulchre were two angels; below these angels appeared the image of our Blessed holding a closed book on his breast; at his feet they placed the following inscription, attesting at once the gratitude his benefits had inspired in them and the veneration with which they surrounded this dear and holy memory:

“To Laurence of Pisa, venerable priest of the Order of Friars Preachers and a man of eminent holiness, the people of Pistoia have raised this monument in gratitude for his services. He died on the fourth of the calends of October 1457. He lived ninety-eight years, six months, four days.” When the news of Blessed Laurence’s death was learned at Florence, his worthy disciple St. Antoninus could not contain his sorrow; he wrote to the prior and religious of the convent of San Domenico at Pistoia a touching and magnificent letter, in which, giving free course to his affliction, he drew the finest eulogy of Blessed Laurence that has come down to us concerning this great servant of God. St. Antoninus, to immortalize the memory of his master, also made mention of him in the third part of his *Chronicles*.

The memory of so many virtues has been preserved among the people from the 14th century to our day. The cult rendered to him has suffered no interruption. And so, after mature examination of the facts and on the report of the Congregation of Rites, our Holy Father Pope Pius IX declared Father Laurence of Ripafratta Blessed on the 4th of April 1851. The Order of Friars Preachers now keeps his office on the 18th of February.

Extract from the Année dominicaine, *vol. II.*

BLESSED BERNARDINE OF FELTRE, MISSIONARY, OF THE ORDER OF ST. FRANCIS

1494. — Pope: Alexander VI. — King of France: Charles VIII.

> *Manus pauperis gazophylacium Christi est: quidquid accipit, ne in terra pereat, in cælo reponit.*
>
> *La main du pauvre est la caisse des trésors du Christ : tout ce qu’elle reçoit, elle le dépose dans le ciel, de peur de le perdre ici-bas.*
>
> *The hand of the poor man is the treasury of Christ: all that it receives it lays up in heaven, lest it be lost here below.*
>
> *St. Caesarius of Arles, Homilies.*

This charitable protector of the poor and the unfortunate was born at Feltre (Italy) in 1439, of an honest and very Christian family. After a youth spent in innocence and piety, he was sent to Pavia to complete his studies there. He was cultivating secular letters with success when St. James of the Marches came to preach a mission to the students. Bernardine followed the Saint’s preaching assiduously, and, not content with hearing his public word, he had several private talks with him so as to consult him on his vocation and to rule his life according to the advice of the celebrated missionary. These talks bore their fruit. St. James’s words were aflame with so great a zeal for the salvation of his young disciple, and so keen a desire to see him embrace Christian perfection, that Bernardine was set on fire in his turn and aspired to nothing but the perfect possession of the God who had preserved him until then from the defilements of the world. He resolved,

therefore, to consecrate himself entirely to the service of this Master, so powerful and at the same time so good; and to follow more closely the example of him who had been the instrument of his vocation, he wished to fight at his side under the banner of holy poverty, and to that end took the habit of the Friars Minor.

After his entry into the Franciscan family, Bernardine pursued his studies to their full completion. He also applied himself with great ardour to the theological sciences, and in a short time became very well fitted to exercise the ministry of preaching. But he did not dare to give himself to it, nature having set up barriers to it that seemed insurmountable. Indeed, Bernardine was of so small a stature that his head scarcely rose above the height of the pulpit; moreover, he was so very timid that the effort of speaking in public seemed bound to be for ever beyond his strength. Yet on the other hand apostolic zeal urged him inwardly to the work of the missions, so that he was torn between the desire to proclaim the word of the Gospel and the fear of not being able to succeed in it. His superiors settled the question. Knowing that his learning was as deep as his zeal was ardent, and having recognized in him all the qualities that make the true orator, they judged that his natural defects would be more than made up for, and they laid on him the duty of preaching the Gospel. Their foresight was justified. Bernardine went through the whole of Italy, preaching everywhere and drawing immense crowds round his pulpit. Never was preacher more eloquent or more popular. He excelled above all when it was a matter of pleading the cause of the poor; he could depict their misery so well, and impress it so vividly on his hearers, that tears flowed from every eye and every purse opened in favour of the works whose advocate he had made himself.

The principal aim towards which Bernardine directed his efforts was the founding of the *monts- de-piété*. For a long time the poor who needed some advance of money had had no other resource than to apply to the Jewish usurers, who held them pitilessly to ransom and completed their ruin by making them pay such exorbitant interest that they could never manage to free themselves. Already a Franciscan named Barnabas had founded at Perugia a bank called a *mont-de-piété*, intended to come to the help of the needy; but it was reserved for Bernardine of Feltre to give this work its full development. Moved by the spirit of God, he thundered from the pulpit against the rapacity of the Jews, and when the indignation of his hearers was sufficiently roused, he changed his tone, and, taking the accent of supplication, addressed in the name of the poor to all the rich who were present one of those irresistible appeals of which we have spoken above, which were always followed by their effect. One would have thought oneself in the time of the crusades: the ladies brought their jewels and rich ornaments, the men considerable sums of money; all, in a word, wished to contribute to the establishment of these Christian banks, where the workman was lent money without interest, or at extremely small interest intended solely to cover the costs of administration. Wherever Bernardine passed the Jews were obliged to flee, and at last they saw themselves reduced to abandoning Italy completely. Several times they tried to rid themselves of this troublesome religious by assassination, but our Saint always escaped their snares.

But if Bernardine's apostolic zeal showed itself particularly in the institution of the *monts-de-piété*, it was not wholly confined within these relatively narrow limits. Heretics and sinners felt the force of his word, and numerous conversions followed his sermons. Public morals became pure and Christian; the scandalous vices that so afflicted the Church at that period no longer dared to show themselves, branded as they were by his powerful eloquence. His reputation was so great that every town wished to hear him, and governors and princes applied to the sovereign Pontiff to order the holy religious to come and preach among them. He had a quite special gift for calming civil discords. He was sent several times by the Holy See to pacify cities whose inhabitants were all ready to come to blows. On these occasions his eloquence, without losing any of its usual power, found accents of an ineffable sorrow, and the most embittered hearts could not resist the burning charity of the apostle. And so he succeeded in all the missions of reconciliation entrusted to him by the solicitude of the common Father of the faithful.

Bernardine was not only a great preacher; he was also a great Saint. His mortification was extremely rigorous: he had no other bed than the bare ground, no other food than bread and water. His fasts were almost continual. He had a very lively devotion to the holy Name of Jesus; it was with the invocation of that adorable name that he began and ended his sermons, and he did not hesitate to attribute his marvellous success as an orator to this holy practice. His love for Mary showed itself in a great zeal for the cult of her Immaculate Conception, a dogma always so dear to the Franciscan family. Having attained the most sublime degree of prayer, he was often rapt in ecstasy, and remained a considerable time in this state of anticipated beatitude. Striking miracles attested his holiness and added still more to the veneration the people had vowed to him because of his unceasing labours on behalf of the unfortunate. Besides, his charity towards the poor was not limited to his preaching or to the pious foundations of which we have already told our readers; he visited them and relieved them in their necessities; and if he heard that the plague was raging in any town, he hastened to go there, and nursed the plague-stricken night and day with a devotedness that religion alone can inspire. He even came near to falling a victim to his charity, for he was struck by the terrible disease and was cured of it only by a special intervention of God.

After a life so well filled, Bernardine died at Pavia in the year 1494, having himself foretold the day of his death. The people mourned him as a benefactor and a Saint, and gave him a magnificent funeral. To symbolize his angelic purity, his mortal remains were followed by three thousand children dressed in white; and, so as to recall at the same time his love for God and his charity towards men, each of these children carried a banner on which were embroidered the name of Jesus, which he had so often invoked, and the image of a *Mont-de-Piété*. The Congregation of Rites issued, on the 30th of January 1872, a decree relating to the cause of his canonization. This decree was ratified and confirmed by the sovereign pontiff Pius IX on the 1st of February 1872.

Taken from the Année franciscaine, *revised and corrected.*

BARUCH, ONE OF THE TWELVE MINOR PROPHETS (6TH CENTURY BEFORE JESUS CHRIST)

Baruch, who the historian Josephus says was of an illustrious family of the tribe of Judah and thoroughly versed in the Hebrew language, was the son of Neriah, grandson of Mahseiah and brother of Seraiah, one of the great men of the court of Zedekiah, king of Judah (597–587). He generously renounced the advantages he could hope for in the world in order to follow Jeremiah and make himself the companion of all his labours and all his perils. He became the most considerable and the most faithful of his disciples, and even served him as secretary; for when this Prophet had received the Lord’s order to put in writing the prophecies he had published up to the reign of Jehoiakim, king of Judah (608–597), Baruch wrote them, and, having carried them to the temple, read them to the great men and the people who had assembled there. His attachment to Jeremiah brought on him a number of persecutions, but the Lord knew how to console him and strengthen him more and more in the resolve he had formed never to abandon his master.

In the fourth year of the reign of Zedekiah (593), Baruch was sent to Babylon with his brother Seraiah; he was charged with a letter from Jeremiah, with the order to throw it into the Euphrates after reading it to the Jews who had been carried away into captivity at Babylon under the preceding reigns. Baruch carried out his mission faithfully; then he returned to Jerusalem, charged on behalf of the captives with delivering to the Jews of that city a sum of money and a letter of friendship. Back in the holy city, Baruch kept the same attachment to Jeremiah as before. When the city was besieged by Nebuchadnezzar (588) and Jeremiah had been put in prison, Baruch was shut up with him. Finally, when this Prophet saw himself obliged to withdraw into Egypt some years after the ruin of Jerusalem (587), Baruch went with him there and did not leave him until he had paid him the last duties. He afterwards returned to Babylon, where it is believed he ended his days. The book of *Baruch*, divided into six chapters, immediately follows the *Lamentations* of Jeremiah in

our Bibles; it was written by Baruch himself at Babylon, during the stay he made in that city, after the ruin of Jerusalem and of the temple. The frequent Hebraisms found in this book prove that it was written in Hebrew or in Chaldee; but the original text no longer exists: it was already lost in the time of St. Jerome, and that Father assures us that the Jews did not admit it into their canon, which has not prevented the Church from regarding it as canonical. It has sometimes been attributed to Jeremiah, because formerly the writings of these two Prophets were contained in a single volume, and because, besides, Baruch put into his book not only the prophecies the Lord had inspired in him but also those he had heard from his master Jeremiah and which the latter had not put in writing during his lifetime.

Besides the excellent instructions with which the book of Baruch is filled, it contains a very clear prediction of the incarnation of the Son of God in these words of chapter iii, verse 38: “He was seen upon earth and conversed with men.” It is this text that one reads, in representations of the Prophet, on the scroll he unrolls in his hand.

Baillet: Vie des Saints de l’Ancien Testament*; Dom Ceillier,* Histoire des Auteurs sacrés et ecclésiastiques.

SAINT ANNEMOND OR CHAMOND, ARCHBISHOP OF LYONS, MARTYR NEAR CHALON-SUR-SAÔNE (657)

St. Annemond came of one of the most illustrious families of Gaul. His father, Sigonius, a native of Rome, was prefect of Lyons under the reigns of Dagobert and Clovis II; his mother was named Petronia. Brought up at court with Delphinus, his brother, who was governor of Lyons, Annemond won the esteem of Clovis II by his virtues, and that prince chose him as one of his counsellors. His zeal and piety caused him to be elected, about 650, to succeed Viventius in the see of Lyons, and some historians remark that this choice was so universally approved that several towns were seen to send presents of the greatest richness for his consecration. Having become Primate of the Gauls, Annemond fulfilled with the most scrupulous exactness all the duties of a holy and faithful pastor. He subscribed the privilege of exemption granted on the 22nd of June 653 to the abbey of Saint-Denys in France, completed the buildings of Saint-Pierre and established there a community of nuns, in which his two sisters, Petronilla and Lucy, took the veil and, with their companions, devoted themselves quite particularly to works of charity. He received with great marks of affection and respect St. Benedict Biscop, who, accompanied by the young Wilfrid, afterwards bishop of York, was passing through Lyons on his way from England to Rome. When Wilfrid stayed at Lyons on his return, Annemond attached him to himself and kept him by his side. The holy prelate’s kindness had made him forget his native land so as to remain in Gaul, and the bishop of Lyons, charmed by the virtue and the other brilliant qualities of his disciple, gave him the clerical tonsure and wished to make him his heir. But Wilfrid, after staying three years at Lyons, had the grief of seeing the blood shed of him whom he regarded as his father, and the generosity to follow him to death.

After the death of Clovis II, Ebroin, mayor of the palace, feared that Annemond would raise his voice to make known the vexations with which he was overwhelming the people of Lyons. He therefore resolved to take his life. To this end he had recourse to calumny, and accused him of the crime of lèse-majesté and of an understanding with certain foreign princes to take the sceptre from the young Clotaire III. No sooner had the fierce Ebroin learned that Annemond had escaped his pursuit by flight than he sent officers after him, under the pretext of bringing him to the king. However, as he feared that the venerable prelate would prove his innocence too clearly, he ordered his soldiers to massacre him before he reached the court. This took place on an out-of-the-way road near Chalon-sur-Saône, on the 28th of September 657. St. Wilfrid and the other clerics who accompanied the bishop brought his body back to Lyons and buried it in the church of Saint-Pierre, where his relics were preserved until the time of the Revolution.

The name of St. Chamond has been given to a town of the former province of Forez, today the chief town of a canton in the arrondissement of Saint-Étienne (Loire). There was formerly in Paris a mansion called the Hôtel Saint-Chamond, which the Daughters of the Christian Union acquired in 1683, and where they had a church built which became the principal community of their congregation, and which was dedicated under the invocation of the holy bishop of Lyons. St. Annemond or Chamond is invoked against epilepsy.

Extract from the Gallia Christiana nova, *by Fisquet. — Cf.* Acta Sanctorum, *under 28 September.*

SAINT LIOBA OR LIÈBE,[1] ABBESS OF BISCHOFSHEIM, IN THE DIOCESE OF MAINZ (779)

St. Lioba was a model of Christian perfection both in England and in Germany. She came of an illustrious Anglo-Saxon family, and was born in the country of the West Saxons. Ebbe, her mother, was a near relative of St. Boniface, archbishop of Mainz. A long barrenness had made her lose hope of having children when Lioba came into the world; she offered her to God as soon as she was born, and brought her up in contempt for the things of earth.

Lioba was placed in the monastery of Wimborne (county of Dorset), which was governed by the holy abbess Tette, still more distinguished by her wisdom and her virtues than by the august title of sister of the king of England. There she made great progress in the science of salvation, and there she took the veil of religion. She was a person of great virtue, of angelic countenance, of rare prudence, of a charity prompt for every sacrifice; on her features there constantly shone a gentle joy, full of decorum, equally removed from gloomy sadness and from unrestrained gaiety, which shows itself in laughter. Our young professed nun had knowledge rare in a person of her sex: she understood Latin and even wrote verses in that language, as is seen from her letters to St. Boniface. She read the holy Scriptures assiduously, penetrated their meaning with great sagacity and engraved the most remarkable passages in her memory; to the study of the Old and New Testaments she even added that of the holy Fathers, of the decrees of the councils and of ecclesiastical law. Superior to all her sisters, she thought herself the last of all, and this humility, which she had in her heart, appeared in her whole outward bearing. She practised hospitality with admirable zeal: she served food to all the guests who presented themselves, while she herself was fasting, and washed their feet with her own hands.

St. Boniface, who was in correspondence with her and knew her merit, earnestly begged her abbess and her bishop to send her to him with some other nuns. His aim was to employ them in establishing in Germany a monastery for persons of their sex. Tette consented only with great difficulty to the departure of one whom she regarded as the most precious treasure of her house. Lioba arrived in Germany about the year 748. St. Boniface established her and her companions in the monastery which has since been called Bischofsheim (diocese of Mainz), that is to say *the Bishop's House*. The prudence and zeal of our Saint soon made the new foundation famous. The community became so numerous that it was able to furnish enough nuns to people various monasteries that were founded in Germany. Some time after the martyrdom of St. Boniface, Lioba withdrew to one of these new monasteries, called Schonersheim and situated about two leagues from Mainz. There she continued to live in the practice of fasting and prayer. Charlemagne, who was afterwards emperor, was filled with veneration for her; and Hildegard, that prince's wife, had her come to Aix-la-Chapelle to consult her on several important matters. Lioba strongly resisted the queen's entreaties that she should remain at court; she returned to her monastery, where she died on the 28th of September 779. She was buried at Fulda (Hesse-Cassel), near St. Boniface, and several miracles took place at her tomb.

St. Lioba is represented praying beside a child that has just been found dead in the water. This refers to an infanticide that had been attributed to the nuns of Bischofsheim; St. Lioba's prayers obtained that the real culprit should be obliged to confess her crime; she was an unfortunate woman who was fed at the gate of the

abbey, and who remained possessed by the devil.

Proper of Mainz; Godescard; Acta Sanctorum*; Father Cahier,* Caractéristiques des Saints.

BLESSED SIMON DE ROXAS, OF THE ORDER OF THE MOST HOLY TRINITY FOR THE REDEMPTION OF CAPTIVES (1624)

Simon was born at Valladolid in 1552. His parents, Gregorio Ruiz and Constanza de Roxas, who were fervent Christians, formed him early in piety. They strove to inspire in him a tender love for the Blessed Virgin, and this love always shone in him with a particular brightness to the end of his life. Simon was still young when he entered the Order of the Trinity for the Redemption of Captives; there he gave himself ardently to the study of theology and made rapid progress in learning. He had a precious and always effective means of enlightening his understanding: when he met with some difficulty, he sought its solution in prayer.

Our young professed religious held in succession all the offices of his Order and filled them with prudence and discretion, to the general satisfaction. On the strength of his reputation, the Queen of Spain, Elisabeth, wife of Philip II, chose him as her confessor. In accepting this office Simon gave up none of his labours; he continued to proclaim the word of God, and, to honour the Blessed Virgin in a quite particular way, he established a Confraternity whose members bound themselves to perform every day some practice of devotion in her honour. His reputation only grew with the years, and Philip II, when setting out to take possession of the throne of Portugal, entrusted to him his two sons, Don Carlos and Don Ferdinand. Honours in no way weakened the humility of the servant of God. He exercised the sacred ministry as far as the offices he had to fill allowed him, and devoted to prayer and meditation all the time he could steal from his occupations.

An epidemic disease having broken out, Blessed Simon devoted himself entirely to the service of those whom the scourge struck. To the king, who forbade him to visit the hospitals and prisons for fear that he might bring the contagion into the palace, he answered: “I prefer the service of the poor to that of the court.” His Order owed to him the establishment of a new monastery at Madrid. Warned of his approaching end, he announced it to his religious, and, after celebrating holy Mass with an extraordinary devotion, he expired the following night, at the age of seventy-two (28 September 1624). All the religious Orders of Madrid attended his funeral and celebrated a solemn service for him in the churches of their monasteries. The process of canonization began a short time after his death; more than a hundred witnesses were heard and gave evidence of the virtues or the miracles of the servant of God. Pope Clement XIII inscribed him in the catalogue of the Blessed on the 13th of May 1776.

Taken from the Supplement of Charles Butler, by the abbé Tresvaux.

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[1] These twenty others are, according to the Bollandists: Gurgilius or Gargilius, Mark, Faustinus, Victor, Candidus, Valeria, Longesus, Celerina, Donata or Donatula, Fortelea, Luciosa, Aemilius, Gagilius, Placidus, Victoria, Priscus, Julian or Jules, Christophorus, Nobilis and Secundula. — Father John Stilting, in the *Acta Sanctorum*, vol. VII of September.

[2] Alias: Salon, Salone, Salonne, Salône. Some hagiographers have maintained that Solomon was not Bishop of Genoa (*Genua in Italia*) but of Geneva (*Genua in Gallia*), and that perhaps he was the *first* apostle of the latter city. The Bollandists (*Acta Sanctorum*, vol. VII of September) have published a long dissertation on this subject of controversy; their conclusion is this: “It is very probable that Solomon was bishop neither of Genoa nor of Geneva.” M. l’abbé Ducis, the learned archivist of Haute-Savoie, whom we consulted on this question, wrote to us on the 14th of April 1873: “St. Salonius, sometimes wrongly called Salvianus, is at least the *fourth* well-known bishop of Geneva. Son of St. Eucherius and of Galla, brought up in the most ardent Christian fervour, he was not ten years old when he withdrew into the solitude of Lérins and placed himself under the guidance of St. Honoratus. He then had as masters St. Hilary, Salvian and Vincent. His *Dialogues* on Proverbs and on Ecclesiastes are known. Raised to the episcopate of Geneva, he signed at the Council of Orange in 441. Salvian dedicated to him a work on divine Providence. The martyrology of Ado (followed in this by Baronius) has him die on the 28th of September 469. His episcopate is proved at Geneva by five lists: that of the chapter, that of the Ritual, and those given by three historians, Levrier, Picot and Blavignac. There was at Geneva another Domitianus Salonius, whom Pope John III (560–574), who had been his disciple, invited to come and be consecrated at Rome, and who attended the second Council of Lyon (567) and the fourth of Paris (573). Nothing prevents there having been a Solomon, Bishop of Genoa; but

Geneva is often called *Janua, Janoba, Genua, Genova, Gebenna*, etc., which may have caused it to be confused with Genoa. — As for the evangelization of Geneva and its neighbourhood, the tradition of the diocese, attested in several ancient documents, carries it back to the 1st century and attributes it with certainty to the disciples of the apostle St. Peter. See *Études sur Genève*, by Blavignac, architect."

[3] We shall speak of her on the 30th of September, in the life of her mother, St. Paula.

[4] We have given his life on the 18th of September.

[5] He is represented bound by his four limbs, with his belly opened, from which his entrails are drawn out to be wound on a windlass (winch or capstan). — He is patron of engravers; we do not see the reason for this patronage; Father Cahier (*Caractéristiques des Saints*, page 632) says on this point: "I wonder whether, instead of Thiemo, Archbishop of Salzburg, we should not read St. Thielman (Thillo or Théau), who was a disciple of St. Eligius."

[6] *Alias*: Livette, Liouvette, Liobé, Liobguthe, *Leobgytha, Truthgeba*.

29 September

Martyrologies

Twenty-ninth day of September

MARTYROLOGE ROMAIN.

Roman Martyrology.

On Mount Gargano (Monte Sant'Angelo, in the Capitanata), the commemoration of St. MICHAEL, archangel, a feast that the Church celebrates in memory of the day on which there was consecrated in that place, under his name, a temple of rather ordinary outward appearance but filled with a wholly heavenly virtue. 493. — In Thrace, the feast of the holy martyrs Eutychius, Plautus and Heraclea. — In Persia, St. Gudelia, martyr, who, having converted several pagans to Jesus Christ, and refusing to adore the sun and fire, suffered various tortures under King Sapor, had the skin of her head torn off, and was bound to a stake, where she merited the triumph of martyrdom. 4th c. — In the same kingdom, the holy martyrs Dadas, a near relative of King Sapor; Casdoa, his wife, and Gabdelas, their son; who, after being stripped of their honours, tried by various torments, torn with blows and long detained in prison, were beheaded. 4th c. — In Armenia, the holy virgins Rhipsime and her companions, martyrs, under King Tiridates.[1] About 310. — At Auxerre, St. Fraternus, bishop and martyr.[2] 451. — At Pontecorvo, near Aquino (Terra di Lavoro), St. Grimoald, priest and confessor. About 1140. — In Palestine, St. Quiriacus or Cyriacus, anchorite.[3] 554 or 555.

MARTYROLOGE DE FRANCE, REVU ET AUGMENTÉ.

Martyrology of France, revised and enlarged.

In the dioceses of Angers, Meaux and Paris, the feast of the Dedication of St. Michael and of all the angels, mentioned in the Roman Martyrology of this day. — In the diocese of Trier, St. Ludwin or Luidwin, archbishop of that see and confessor.[4] About 713. — In the diocese of Troyes, St. BOUIN (*Boemius*), priest and solitary, mentioned in the Martyrology of France on the 28th of September. 570. — In the little village of Isle-Aumont (Aube, arrondissement of Troyes, canton of Bouilly), in the diocese of Troyes, St. URSION, parish priest of that parish and superior of the monastery of Notre-Dame in that place. About 375. — At Troyes, the death of Blessed JOHN OF GHENT, monk of Saint-Claude, then hermit. 1419. — In the former Cistercian abbey of Notre-Dame de Longpont (*Sancta Maria de Longo-Ponte*), in the diocese of Versailles, Blessed JOHN OF MONTMIRAIL, religious. 1217. — At Nantes, St. Victorinus, confessor. — In the former Benedictine abbey of Condat (*S. Claudius in monte Jura*), in the diocese of Saint-Claude, Blessed Simon, count of Crépy-en-Valois (Oise), in the diocese of Beauvais, already mentioned in the Martyrology of France on the 25th of September, and whose life we shall give in the month of October. 1082. — At Abbeville (Somme), in the diocese of Amiens, the Venerable Catherine de Vis, virgin of the Third Order of the Minims and a native of that town. She was the eleventh of twelve children whom her father Nicolas de

Vis and her mother Marguerite Billet brought up in the fear of God: the plague of 1596 carried them all off, father, mother and the ten eldest, and Catherine, eighteen years old, remained alone with a still younger sister. The Christian education she had received in her family kept her in the way of good; she embraced the Third Order of the Minims in 1602, and lived to the end of her life in the greatest purity. She died at the age of fifty-six; several miracles have taken place at her tomb. 1634. — In the diocese of Nevers, the anniversary of the Consecration, by Pierre de Cros, bishop of Auxerre, of the church of Saint-Pierre-ès-Liens at Varzy (Nièvre), arrondissement of Clamecy. 1350. — In the Limousin, the Venerable Charles of Blois, duke of Brittany and viscount of Limoges, celebrated for his piety, whose exercises he never interrupted, even on the field of battle. He perished in the famous day of Auray (Morbihan), which put an end to the war of the Breton succession. Popes Urban V and Gregory XI concerned themselves with his canonization; the schism came and suspended it. 1364. — At Saint-Junien (Haute-Vienne), in the diocese of Limoges, the death of the Venerable Pierre David, Dominican, celebrated for his humility, his gentleness, his obedience, his fervour and all the other modest and silent virtues that make the perfect religious. 1311. — In the same town, the death of the Venerable Ithier, abbot of the regular chapter of Saint-Junien; he was a model of monastic discipline. 992 or 993.

MARTYROLOGES DES ORDRES RELIGIEUX.

Martyrologies of the Religious Orders.

Martyrology of the Order of St. Basil. — On Mount Gargano, the commemoration of Blessed Michael, archangel, on the occasion of the church that was consecrated there under his name, and which, though of very ordinary outward appearance, was filled with a wholly heavenly virtue. This feast was celebrated throughout our Order, with a higher rite and with an octave, by virtue of a decree of the Sacred Congregation of Rites, when this glorious chief had been chosen as its illustrious patron and principal titular. 493.

ADDITIONS FAITES D'APRÈS LES BOLLANDISTES ET AUTRES HAGIOGRAPHES.

Additions made from the Bollandists and other hagiographers.

At Atina, a town of the kingdom of Naples (Terra di Lavoro), St. Fulgentius, bishop of that former see and confessor. He was consecrated by Pope St. Clement I (91–100) and governed his Church for thirty-one years, seven months and twenty-eight days. He raised from the ground, to give it a more honourable burial, the body of Blessed Mark, martyr and bishop of Atina; buried, in a little oratory adjoining that of Blessed Mark, the bodies of the holy martyrs Nicander, Marcian, Passicras and Daria; himself fell asleep in the Lord, full of days and virtues, and was buried near the basilica of St. Peter of Atina. 2nd c. — In Thrace, with the holy martyrs Eutychius, Plautus and Heraclea, mentioned in the Roman Martyrology of this day, Saints Placidus, Ambutus, Thracius and Donatus, also martyrs, mentioned in the apographs of St. Jerome. — At Rome, the holy martyrs Salutaris, Possessus, Januarius, Amplius, Celedonius, Justin and several soldiers, companions of their martyrdom, mentioned in the same source. — On the little island of Ufenau, in the Lake of Zurich (Switzerland), Blessed Alaric or Adalaric, first a monk at Einsiedeln or Our Lady of the Hermits (*Eremitarum cœnobium, Eremus Deiparæ Virginis*), in the canton of Schwyz, then a solitary on the island of Ufenau. His holiness, made known by several miracles, made him the object of a great veneration. As he had been porter at Einsiedeln before being a hermit at Ufenau, he is seen represented, in the church of Our Lady of the Hermits, holding a bunch of keys in his left hand; beside him is an angel presenting bread to him; this is to recall the miraculous manner in which he several times received his food on the island of Ufenau, when the overflowing of the Lake of Zurich had made his cell inaccessible. 973. — In the former town (now in ruins) of Forca Palena, in the diocese of Solmona (Abruzzo Ulteriore Secondo), and at Rome, Blessed NICHOLAS OF FORCA PALENA, of the Order of Hermits of St. Jerome of the Congregation of Blessed Peter of Pisa. 1449. — At Philippi, a town of Macedonia, St. Theodota, martyr. Formerly a courtesan, she

was at last touched by grace and became a Christian. The prefect Agrippa having ordered, on the occasion of a feast of Apollo, that the whole town should assemble to offer sacrifice to that so-called divinity, Theodota was accused of refusing to take part in the ceremony. Brought before the prefect, she declared forcefully that she would never commit the sacrilege demanded of her. Her example encouraged seven hundred and fifty Christians, who like her refused to obey the prefect. Theodota suffered prison, the rack and scourging; then her teeth were broken and she was beheaded. Radiant, she flew away to heaven, where the crown of glory awaited her. 318.

FEAST OF ST. MICHAEL, ARCHANGEL, AND OF ALL THE HOLY ANGELS

493.[1] *— Pope: St. Gelasius. — Emperor of the East: Anastasius I.*

Michael clarissima stella angelici ordinis.

Michael, the most brilliant star of the angelic order.

St. Clement of Alexandria.

Si l'orgueil a été le principe de la rébellion et de la chute de Lucifer, l'humilité a fait de saint Michel le prince de la milice céleste et de la milice chrétienne.

If pride was the beginning of the rebellion and fall of Lucifer, humility made St. Michael the prince of the heavenly host and of the Christian host.

The Abbé Martin, Panégyriques.

What gave occasion to this feast was the dedication of the church of St. Michael on Mount Gargano (today Monte Sant'Angelo, in the Capitanata), which was performed in the year 493 in a miraculous manner by the ministry of this prince of the armies of God, just as the church had also been built without men putting their hand to it. However, as the office of this day is not that of the dedication of churches, but a particular office in honour of all the angels, and above all of this same St. Michael, we shall set out what Holy Scripture, the Councils, the Fathers and the Masters of theology teach us concerning these heavenly intelligences, and concerning some of them in particular.

That there are angels is a constant and indubitable truth, to which almost every page of Holy Scripture bears witness, as Pope St. Gregory very well remarked in the thirty-fourth homily on the Gospels. It is true that the Sadducees among the Jews, and some heretics among the Christians, have had the temerity to deny it; but they could not do so without fighting against the Old and the New Testament, and without renouncing Moses and the Gospel. We see in the Old Testament the angels appearing to Abraham, to Jacob, to Joshua, to Gideon, to Manoah, to David, to the Maccabees, and almost without exception to all the Prophets. In the New, Jesus Christ and St. John are announced and proclaimed by angels, and the Apostles, as well as their divine Master, often speak of these sublime creatures. Ecclesiastical history, and above all the Lives of the Saints, furnish us besides with an infinity of testimonies of their existence; and if it is a question of the demons, who are angels depraved by sin, the actions of the possessed, several of which surpass all the forces of nature and must therefore come from a more penetrating and more active cause — such as speaking unknown tongues, or discovering things secret or far off — are also a certain and authentic proof of it. Finally, if there were no angels, the world would lack a kind of creature absolutely necessary to its perfection: which cannot be said, since it is the masterpiece of an infinitely powerful and perfect workman.

As for the nature of the angels, Tertullian, Origen and some other Fathers of the first centuries believed that they were not altogether spiritual and immaterial, but that they had extremely subtle and fine bodies which entered into the composition of their substance. But the Council of the Lateran, under Innocent III, rejected and proscribed this opinion when it said: "We firmly believe that there is only one true God, eternal and infinite, who at the beginning of time drew out of nothing, both together, the one and the other creature, the

spiritual and the corporeal, the angelic and the worldly, and afterwards formed between the two human nature, composed of body and spirit"; for these words show us that the angels have no admixture of body, and that they are most pure forms, subsisting by themselves without being able to be united to a subject. The name of spirit, which the sacred text ordinarily gives them, shows the same truth, since by the word spirit is properly understood a substance that has no body. Finally, the reason that proves the existence of the angels proves also that they are immaterial, since they are necessary to the perfection of the universe only in order that, as there are natures purely corporeal and natures partly corporeal and partly spiritual, there should also be natures purely spiritual. It is true that these spirits have often appeared under sensible figures, and principally under human figures, which has led painters and sculptors, and even Moses, by the order of God, to represent them to us as young men of a grace and beauty without equal; but those bodies under which they appear were not living and animated. They were only bodies of air which they formed for themselves for a little while, so as to suit themselves to the condition and capacity of the persons to whom they were sent; they were not in these phantoms as the soul is in its body, giving it life and making it capable of vegetative and animal operations, but only as a workman is in his machine, which he uses to carry out his designs and to accomplish the works of his art. From this great principle of the immateriality of the angels we must infer, first, that they are indivisible and have neither members nor parts; for only matter clothed with quantity can give parts; and since these sublime creatures have no matter, nor consequently any quantity, it is clear that they are indivisible and are in no way composed of parts. They can therefore put themselves wholly, if one may so speak, into a single point of space, and there is no space in the world so small that all the good angels or demons there are could not be present in it at the same time without incommoding one another. On the other hand, when it pleases them to extend themselves over a great space, by working in it immediately by themselves, they are so wholly in the whole space that they are also wholly in each of its parts, just as our soul is wholly in our body and wholly in each of its members and organs.

We must conclude, in the second place, that the angels are endowed with intelligence and capable of knowing all kinds of objects. For, according to the angelic doctrine of St. Thomas, following Aristotle, it is only the dependence of a form upon matter that can prevent it from being intellectual, from seeing and contemplating itself, and from knowing all that is outside it; thus, the angels having no dependence on matter and being purely spiritual substances, we must necessarily admit that they are capable of all the functions of the intellectual life; and indeed God created them only for these functions — we mean, to know Him, to love Him, to proclaim His greatness, to carry out His orders, to govern this universe, and to watch over the preservation of the species and individuals that it contains. The Latins call them *mentes*, that is to say intelligences, as it were living and subsisting thoughts.

Let us add, as a third conclusion, that the angels' manner of knowing is much nobler and more excellent than that of men; for experience shows us that the more a thing is freed from matter, the more pure, simple, perfect, subtle, lofty and penetrating is its knowledge. Now, although men have a spiritual and immaterial soul, the body nevertheless and matter enter into their composition, and their soul depends on them in its knowledge: what could it know without the help, at least indirect, of the senses? The angels, on the contrary, as we have said, are entirely freed from matter, both in their being and in their operations: they therefore have a manner of knowing far preferable to that of men. Indeed, whereas we need the presence and contact of exterior objects in order to know them, the angels have an innate knowledge of them; and if it is a question of some new and supernatural knowledge, they receive it immediately from God. To know each object in particular we need a particular perception of it, which marks out its properties for us separately, whereas the angels have universal ideas which make them see clearly and distinctly a whole genus with its species and a whole species with its individuals. Whereas we leap, so to speak, from one piece of knowledge to another, which is what we call reasoning and discoursing, the angels penetrate all at once and with a single glance to the depths of each thing, and see effects in their causes, conclusions in their principles, and the properties of each being in the substance that is their source. If at one time we know and at another cease to know, whether

through sleep or simply through inattention of mind, the angels are always applied, always in act; not that their knowledge and their operations are one and the same thing with their understanding, as in God, in whom there is no composition, but because there are objects so present to them, such as their own substance, and God who is its author, that they cannot turn their gaze from them for a single moment. Finally, whereas we easily forget what we have learned, the angels imprint upon themselves so strongly the idea of what they have once seen and known that it can never be effaced from their memory, though it is nevertheless in their power not to think of it actually, nothing forcing them to occupy themselves unceasingly with all the things to which their knowledge and intellectual light extend. This spirituality of the angels also makes us know that they have a free will, indifferent, able to turn towards objects by love or by aversion, according to the lights that their understanding gives them. For there is no being that does not have a bent or inclination proportioned to its nature: the earth has its weight to go down, fire has its lightness to rise, plants have their natural desire to nourish and propagate themselves, animals have their appetite, which makes them seek their good and flee their harm; now the proper inclination of the spiritual and intelligent nature is free will, by which, attaching itself invariably to its end, it turns with indifference to the various means that have no necessary connection with the end. It is therefore a constant truth that these angels have a free and indifferent will, capable of love or hatred, of all the affections, of all the virtues and of all the vices that can belong to the will. From which it also follows that at the time of their creation, and before they had determined themselves, they were capable of merit and demerit, of reward and punishment; as in fact some, by their submission, merited an eternal reward, and the others, by their rebellion, made themselves worthy of punishments that will never end. It must be remarked that, notwithstanding this liberty, the will of the angels is not changeable and irresolute like ours; because, as they know all at once whatever can make them love or hate an object, and no new discoveries come to them any more, they remain so firmly attached to their first choice that they never depart from it. Finally, from the same principle of the spirituality of these sublime creatures it necessarily follows that they are in no way subject to the passions and accidents of bodies, such as cold, heat, hunger, thirst, weariness, old age, sickness and death. Their substance is always the same, their life suffers no change, they are no older now than they were six thousand years ago; their duration, which had a beginning, will never have an end; and whereas we obtain only after a long succession of days and years the perfection due to our nature, they had, from the moment of their production, all the natural advantages of which their being was capable.

These great prerogatives show clearly enough that, according to nature, they are in many ways nobler and more perfect than men; for the perfection of a thing is taken from its manner of being and of operating; now all that we have said shows that the manner of being and operating of these heavenly intelligences is far superior to ours; we must therefore not doubt that they surpass us in excellence and perfection. This is also what the Royal Prophet teaches us in Psalm viii, when, speaking to God of the first man, or even of man in general, he says to Him: *Minuisti eum paulo minus ab angelis: gloria et honore coronasti eum, et constituisti eum super opera manuum tuarum*: “Although You have loaded man with glory and honour, and have made him the head of this visible and corporeal world, it must nevertheless be acknowledged, Lord, that You have set him in a degree lower than that of the angels.” Jesus Christ teaches us this truth when, on the occasion of St. John the Baptist, He declares that the least in the kingdom of heaven — which several Doctors explain of the last of the blessed angels — surpasses in excellence the most perfect of all men. We have said, nevertheless, according to nature and natural properties: for it is certain that by grace and the hypostatic union man has been raised, in Jesus Christ and in Mary, infinitely above all the angels; and that many Saints, such as the holy Precursor, the Apostles and apostolic men, have attained by their merits a greater glory than that of the angels of the lower orders.

There would be admirable things to say of the strength God has given them, of their agility, of the swiftness of their movements, and of the manner in which they speak together to communicate their lights to one another; but these rich matters, which call for a long discussion, are more suited to the schools of theology

than to a work in which we seek only the edification of the faithful. Let us say only, in a word, that their strength is so great that there is no bodily power that can resist them: it is they who make the immense worlds roll through space; a single one killed in one night a hundred and eighty thousand soldiers of the army of Sennacherib, to punish that prince for the blasphemies he had vomited against God. Their movement is so swift that the learned Tertullian does not hesitate to assert that they are everywhere in a moment, and that heaven, earth, hell and all the differences of these places are to them as a single place. Finally, their converse is so ingenious that without any word or exterior sign they explain themselves and make themselves understood by one another by the mere forming and directing of their thoughts. The Council of the Lateran, which we have already cited, teaches us that they were created at the beginning of the ages, together with the corporeal world: *Ab initio temporis simul utramque ex nihilo condidit creaturam spiritualem et corporalem*; which gives us ground to believe that Moses included their creation either under that of the heaven, when he says: "In the beginning God created heaven and earth"; or under that of the light, when he adds immediately afterwards: "God said, Let there be light, and there was light." They were therefore not created from all eternity, as some philosophers have thought, nor at an unknown and undetermined time before the creation of the world, according to the opinion of Origen and of several Greek Fathers, but at the first moment and at the very point of the birth of all things. It is certain that the number of the angels is not infinite, since everything that is created must necessarily have limits; that is why Stephen II, Bishop of Paris, who lived in the year 1272, condemned the proposition of certain theologians who said that "separated substances were actually infinite." But it must be admitted that this number is prodigious and beyond all the imagination of men. Daniel, and St. John in his Apocalypse, speak of them only by thousands. Job says that "this number is without number." St. Denis, in his book of the *Celestial Hierarchy*, chapter xiv, asserts that it surpasses that of all material things. The Angelic Doctor gives as the reason that the perfection of the universe requires that the nobler creatures should surpass in quantity or number those that are inferior to them. Some theologians believe that St. Denis's thought is that there are more of them than there are individuals of all the corporeal species — that is to say, than stones, metals, grains, plants and animals. But St. Thomas limits his proposition to the species alone, so that there are only more angels than there are kinds of corporeal things. In this uncertainty, the most likely thing we can think is that there are more angels of the last order than there ever have been or ever will be men; because each man has his guardian angel, this angel is ordinarily taken only from the last order, and the same angel is never, either successively or at the same time, the guardian of several men. Besides, as these sacred orders are the more numerous the more perfect and exalted they are, one may believe that there are more archangels than angels, more principalities than archangels, more powers than principalities, and so of the other orders: which no doubt brings the number of these heavenly Spirits to a quantity we cannot comprehend.

But what is more admirable is that, according to the doctrine of St. Thomas, in this great multitude of angels there are not two of the same species and quality; they all differ in nature and in specific properties; just as if, in a meadow covered and enamelled with flowers, each of the flowers were different in form, in colour and in scent; or as if, in a royal crown all strewn and enriched with jewels, each precious stone had its own water, brilliance, shape and particular beauty: so the angels are disposed in such a way that, from the last to the first, there is a continual increase of graces, beauty and perfection. Yet this number and this variety are not without distinction and order; for we distinguish among the angels three great companies, which we call hierarchies, that is to say sacred principalities: the higher, the middle and the lower; and in each hierarchy we distinguish again three choirs, making nine choirs in all, namely: in the first, the Seraphim, the Cherubim and the Thrones; in the second, the Dominations, the Virtues and the Powers; and in the third, the Principalities, the Archangels and the Angels. The hierarchies are distinguished according to the different applications of the three hierarchic acts, which are to purify, to enlighten and to perfect. For the angels of the first hierarchy are those who, being purified, enlightened and perfected by no other creature superior to them, but only by rays emanating immediately from God, have the prerogative of purifying, enlightening and perfecting the lower

angels. The angels of the second are those who receive these favours from the angels of the first and communicate them to those of the third. Finally, the angels of the third are those who are purified, enlightened and perfected by the higher angels, but who do not produce these acts throughout the whole circumference of the angelic nature. To purify, to enlighten and to perfect means to communicate a divine light which, banishing the lack of knowledge, leads to the penetration of truth; so that these are not properly three acts but a single act that has three relations and three different functions; and the impression of this act is not contrary to the perfection of the angels; for, although they all have admirable knowledge, there are nevertheless supernatural truths that are hidden from them and of which they need to be instructed, either immediately by God or by the illumination of their superiors.

As for the three choirs of each hierarchy, they are distinguished according to the different relations of these spirits either to God, or to the general government of the world, or to the particular government of States, communities and persons. In relation to God, those who excel in charity are called Seraphim, from the Hebrew word *seraph*, which means to set on fire, to burn, to consume. Those who excel in light and wisdom are called Cherubim, from the Hebrew word *cherub*, which St. Jerome and St. Augustine interpret as fullness of wisdom and knowledge. Those who by their strength uphold the splendour of the greatness and majesty of God are called Thrones, and sometimes *sedes Dei*, "the seats of the Almighty"; the throne is the place where the prince shows himself in all the splendour of his glory. In relation to the general government of the universe, those who distribute to the lower angels their functions and ministries are called Dominations, because it belongs to masters and sovereigns to declare to their subjects what employments they must occupy themselves with. Those who carry out the great actions touching the universal government of the world and of the Church, and who for that purpose work prodigies and extraordinary miracles, are called Virtues, because they share in a particular manner in the invincible strength and virtue of God. Those who maintain in creatures the order of divine Providence, and effectively prevent it from being disturbed by the efforts of the demons and of every other malignant cause, are called Powers, because it is an effect of great power to repress the fury of those wicked and crafty spirits. Finally, in relation to the particular government of States, communities and persons, those who preside over kingdoms, provinces and dioceses are called Principalities, as having a wider and more universal charge. Those who are sent by God in affairs of greater importance and who bear considerable messages are called Archangels, a name that signifies the pre-eminence of their missions; and those who have the keeping of each man in particular, to turn him from evil, to bring him to good, to defend him against his enemies visible and invisible, and to lead him in the way of salvation, are called Angels, by appropriating to them in particular the name common to all the heavenly spirits. On which it must be remarked, with Pope St. Gregory, that the name of angel does not signify their nature, which is to be pure spirits, freed from matter, capable of knowing and loving God, but only their employment and office, which is to be sent for the help of men or for the good of the whole universe.

There is, however, a difficulty: namely, whether all the glorious intelligences are sent immediately here below to procure the salvation of the children of God, or whether only those of the lower choirs are subject to these missions, while the others, which are called *assistant*, remain perpetually about the throne of the divine Majesty. St. Denis the Areopagite, Pope St. Gregory, the Angelic Doctor and several others hold that only the lower angels are sent in this way, even in extraordinary cases; and that when we see in Scripture a Seraph purifying the lips of the prophet Isaiah, a Cherub holding a flaming sword at the gate of the earthly paradise, and above all the great St. Michael, whom Daniel calls one of the first princes, so often occupied in the protection of the people of Israel, we must not believe that angels of the first choirs came down to earth to perform these functions, but only that they performed them through lower angels who represented them and for that purpose bore their names; just as he who appeared to Moses on Mount Sinai said that he was the God of Abraham, and he who appeared to Jacob in Mesopotamia said that he was the God of Bethel, because they were the nuncios of God and represented Him on those occasions. Other Doctors consider that there is no angel, of whatever hierarchy and whatever choir, who is not liable to be sent here below immediately, at least

by dispensation and for affairs of the highest consequence; which they support by these words of St. Paul to the Hebrews, chapter i: “They are all ministers of the Almighty, sent for the service of those who are to inherit eternal life.” Both these opinions are probable; but we must not doubt that, as Jesus Christ is the Lord and Head of all the angels, and the same God whom they adore in the splendours of eternal glory, they all without distinction came down to earth, whether to pay Him homage at His birth, or to serve Him in the desert, or to accompany His triumph in His Resurrection and in His Ascension.

So far we have spoken only of their natural state and of the advantages that belong to them by right of their creation. We learn from

St. Augustine that their sovereign Author, in giving them the being of nature, enriched them also with the being of grace: *Simul in eis et condens naturam et largiens gratiam*. To which St. Basil and St. Damascene add that He gave them grace in proportion to their natural perfection, that is to say that He gave more grace to the more eminent, and less grace to those whose dignity and excellence were less. However, He did not yet give them eternal glory and beatitude, but put them in the state of wayfarers, and, having adorned them with the supernatural virtues that are the endowments of this state — we mean Faith, Hope and Charity — He also conferred on them the helps necessary to merit that beatitude. This state, nevertheless, was not to be long: a moment sufficed them to make themselves worthy of the reward that was set before them, and a longer space would have been useless to them, since they are of a nature so penetrating, and consequently so attached to the choices they have made, that they never depart from them.

It was in that moment that there took place a great havoc and a terrible division in heaven. The prince and the most beautiful of all these spirits — he who had received a more perfect being and a more abundant grace, he who was bound to be more grateful to the goodness and magnificence of his God — grew so proud in the consideration of his perfections, and was so intoxicated with the love of his own excellence, that he would no longer depend on God for the consummation of his happiness, persuading himself that he was sufficient to himself and could be happy without this submission. He made every effort to persuade the other Spirits of the same thing, and at the same time inspired them with rebellion against the Creator; and in fact there were many who attached themselves to him and followed his party. It is believed that their number rose to a full third, according to these words of St. John in his Apocalypse, chapter xii: *Cauda ejus trahebat tertiam partem stellarum*: “His tail drew with him the third part of the stars.” But the glorious St. Michael, who was the second of the Seraphim and who became the first through the apostasy of this rebel, resisted him with an admirable strength and vigour, opposing to him that powerful question which is contained in the meaning of his name: *Quis ut Deus?* “Who then is like to God?” And his generous resistance strengthened the rest of these heavenly intelligences and kept them in duty and obedience.

This victory was at once followed by punishment and reward. Lucifer and his adherents were cast down into hell, to be punished there eternally; and St. Michael, with all the companies of the faithful angels, was raised to the intuitive vision of God, to eternal beatitude and to the happy possession of the sovereign good. Thus, according to the word of Moses in the first chapter of Genesis, “God divided the darkness from the light”: *Divisit lucem a tenebris*; and, banishing the spirits of darkness, He filled the children of light with the splendours of His divinity.

It is of these angels of light — distinguished, by the grace of God and by their own fidelity, from those whom St. Paul calls Princes of darkness — that we celebrate today the victory, the triumph and the happiness; and we do so with all the more justice because we have received from them, and receive from them every day, inestimable favours and benefits. For, without speaking of those conferred on us by our guardian angels, of whom we shall speak soon on their own feast, it is by the ministry of the angels that God preserves and governs this whole universe, that He makes the heavens turn, regulates the movement of the stars, orders and dispenses their influences, maintains the elements, makes the seasons follow one another unfailingly, gives fruitfulness to the earth, to the sea and to the animals that serve for our food, and turns away an infinity of

evils with which the demons, our enemies, would overwhelm us if we were not under their protection. It is also by their ministry that He founds States, prevents their desolation and ruin, maintains subordination and justice in them, keeps off war, famine, plague and the other scourges, and that they are filled with goods and riches. It is above all by their ministry that He guides His Church, communicates His truth and His strength to the Sovereign Pontiffs, presides over general Councils and gives them His infallible assistance, governs dioceses and particular churches, enlightens doctors, inspires bishops, fills preachers with zeal, upholds the religious Orders, purifies virgins; in a word, that He maintains the whole ecclesiastical hierarchy, which is an image of the angelic hierarchy. With this in view, St. Sophronius salutes all the angels in these terms: "O blessed Spirits, heavenly Companions, invincible Battalions, immense Multitude, Army without number, Height without equal, incomprehensible Greatness, Subtlety without measure, inconceivable Swiftness, Glory that cannot enter the mind of man, Virtue above all virtue, Ministers of the sovereign Master of all things: you are eminently Winds, Rains, Mountains, Hills, Clouds, Torches, Princes, Captains, Deacons, Apostles, Preachers, Prophets, Evangelists, Interpreters of the holy Mysteries, Presidents, Guardians, Preservers, Guides and Protectors. It is you who pass in a moment from one end of the world to the other; who fill with your substance the whole extent of heaven and of the air; who leave no man without guarding and accompanying him; who are perpetually attentive to the commandment of your Creator, and who carry out all His wishes at the appointed moment. I beseech you, therefore, to assist me at the hour of my death, and so to regulate the balance of my judgment that you may mercifully lighten the scale of my crimes, which I have loaded and weighed down by all the actions of my life."

Holy Scripture often makes mention of seven particular angels who stand before the throne of the Majesty of God. St. Raphael, in the book of Tobit, chapter xii, says of himself that he is one of these seven. St. John, in his Apocalypse, speaks of them no fewer than eight times. These angels must no doubt be among the greatest. And indeed St. Clement of Alexandria, in his *Stromata*, Book vi, calls them *Primogenitos Angelorum principes*: "the first princes of the heavenly hierarchy." They are therefore of the order of the Seraphim, and even the most perfect and eminent of that Order.

The same St. John, in chapter vii of his Apocalypse, speaks of four angels who will have charge, at the end of the world, to hurt the earth and the sea. Yet in all Scripture there are only three angels to whom particular names are given: St. Michael, St. Gabriel and St. Raphael. As for the names of Uriel, Salathiel, Jehudiel and Barachiel, which some authors give to the four others of the seven of whom we have spoken, they are not received by the Church. We read in the Roman Council held under Pope Zachary that the heretics Albert and Clement were condemned and struck with anathema for having, among other things, made this prayer: "I beseech you, angel Uriel, angel Raguel, angel Jubiel, angel Michael, etc."; because, say the Fathers of that Council, except for the name of Michael, all the others are rather names of demons than names of good angels, and Scripture and the apostolic Tradition recognize only three angels by their names, namely St. Michael, St. Gabriel and St. Raphael.

As for St. Michael, we learn from St. Denis the Areopagite, in his book of the *Celestial Hierarchy*, chapter ix, that he was the prince and protector of the Synagogue. Indeed, we have four celebrated testimonies of it in the sacred Text. The first is in the canonical Epistle of St. Jude, where it is said that "St. Michael disputed with the devil about the body of Moses." The devil wished to reveal it to the Israelites in order to lead them into idolatry; and St. Michael, on the contrary, who knew the inclination of that people to idolatry, held firm to prevent its being discovered. The second is in chapter x of Daniel, where the Prophet shows him to us effectively upholding the interests of the Jews against the angel protector of the kingdom of Persia. The third is in chapter xii of the same Prophet, where he assures us that St. Michael will come in the time of Antichrist to fight against hell on behalf of the people committed to him. Finally, the fourth is in chapter xii of the Apocalypse, where St. John admirably describes his victories over the dragon and his adherents: which must be understood not only of the one he won in heaven before the creation of man, but also of an infinity of

others he has gained throughout the whole course of the ages.

Other effects and very remarkable appearances of this great prince of the armies of God are also attributed to him in the Old Testament. Pantaleon, deacon of the church of Constantinople, says that it was he who encouraged and instructed Adam, our first father, after his sin; held back the hand of Abraham so that he did not sacrifice his son Isaac; delivered the Israelites from the captivity of Egypt and led them dry-shod through the midst of the Red Sea; appeared to Joshua after the crossing of the Jordan, and made him master of Jericho by the sudden and miraculous ruin of its towers and walls. Others add that it was he who, by God's order, brought all the animals to Adam before his disobedience, to receive their names from his mouth; carried Enoch into the earthly paradise, there to await the end of the world and the time of the last judgment; preserved Noah's ark after filling it with animals of every kind; wrestled with Jacob, blessed him and preserved him from the snares of his brother Esau; gave the law to Moses on Mount Sinai; destroyed Korah, Dathan and Abiram for having murmured and risen up against Moses; prevented the false prophet Balaam from cursing the people of God; showed himself to Gideon and roused him to fight against the Midianites; foretold to Manoah and his wife the birth of the strong Samson, their son; made David victorious over Goliath and delivered him from the persecution of Saul; struck the people with plague to punish an act of vanity of that prince; carried off the prophet Elijah in a chariot of fire, to keep him for the time of the consummation of the ages; appeared in the midst of the three children in the furnace of Babylon; carried the prophet Habakkuk by the hair, with the dinner he had prepared for his reapers, to the lions' den, to feed there the prophet Daniel, whom the king of Persia had had shut up in it; ordered St. Gabriel to explain to the same Daniel the mystery of the perpetual sacrifice; preserved the purity of Judith in the camp of Holofernes, and made that illustrious widow victorious over so formidable an enemy; delivered the Jewish people from the captivity of Babylon; drove out of the temple with strokes of the scourge the sacrilegious Heliodorus, whom King Antiochus had sent there to carry off its treasures; strengthened the Maccabees in the great battles they had to sustain against various kings of Syria and Egypt; and finally that it was he who came down from time to time into the sheep-pool to make its waters salutary and give them the power of healing whoever threw himself in first. Perhaps he did not do all these things immediately by himself; but that fine word of chapter xii of Daniel: *In tempore illo consurget Michaël, princeps magnus, qui stat pro filiis populi tui*: "At that time shall Michael rise up, that great prince who upholds the cause and the interests of the children of thy people" — that word, we say, makes us believe that there is none of these actions over which he did not preside, and which was not done at least by his order.

If St. Michael was the protector of the Synagogue, he is no less the protector of the Church of Jesus Christ, as St. John Chrysostom establishes in the second Oration against the Jews, and St. Gregory in Book xvii of his *Morals*; and he did not fail to declare it himself in his Apparitions, which we have related at some length on 8 May. And so several authors hold that it was he who visited and consoled Our Lord in the garden of Olives; announced His resurrection to the holy women, and above all to Mary Magdalen; commanded St. Philip the deacon to approach the chariot of the Ethiopian eunuch in order to instruct him, and afterwards carried him to Azotus; appeared to Cornelius the centurion and ordered him to send for St. Peter; delivered that great Apostle from the prisons of Herod and restored him to the tears of the desolate Church; and often appeared to St. John to reveal to him the mysteries of the Apocalypse. It is of him that the priest speaks at Mass when, after the consecration, he asks God that his sacrifice may be borne before His divine Majesty by the hands of His holy angel. It is he whom the Church invokes at the death of the faithful, who receives their souls at the moment of their separation, who defends them at the judgment of God against the unjust accusations of the prince of darkness, and who carries them into the bosom of Abraham to enjoy there the delights of eternal life. Finally, we have in ecclesiastical history so many miracles of this great prince, so many effects of his help and protection, so many vows made to merit his assistance, so many churches built in his honour in the places of his apparitions and in thanksgiving for favours obtained through him, that it cannot in any way be doubted that he is one of the universal causes of the good things conferred on the Church and on the whole

human race.

France also acknowledges him as one of her principal patrons and guardians; and indeed the favours she has received from him through the celebrated pilgrimage to Saint-Michel de la Tombe, of which we spoke on the day of his apparition, cannot be esteemed enough. We had in the kingdom five fine abbeys of his name; and King Louis XI, who regarded this prince of the armies of God as the invincible chief of his own troops, instituted in his honour and in his name, in 1469, an Order of knights which still subsisted in the 17th century, although the Order of the Holy Spirit, established by King Henry III in 1578, had become more considerable.

Let us say finally, to conclude all this discourse on the excellences and prerogatives of St. Michael, that, being the second of the angels, he became the first and the chief by the fall of Lucifer. Scripture declares this truth clearly enough in the Apocalypse, chapter xii, when it says that "St. Michael and his angels fought against the dragon": for by these words it makes known to us that St. Michael is the captain and that the angels are soldiers. We can also infer it from these words of Daniel: *Michael unus de principibus primis*, "Michael, one of the first princes." For *one*, in that place, means *first*, putting the cardinal number for the ordinal, just as in the first book of *Genesis* the words "The evening and the morning made one day" mean "made the first day." The Church, in a prayer of the recommendation of the soul, supports the same truth when she asks God "that St. Michael, His archangel, who has merited the principality of the heavenly host, may receive the soul she commends to him and which is about to be separated from its body." Finally, Cardinal Bellarmine proves this opinion in chapter i of the *Sovereign Pontiff* by the testimony of several Fathers, such as St. Bernard and Blessed Laurence Justinian.

As for St. Gabriel, his dignity appears clearly enough from the admirable commissions he received for the accomplishment of the mystery of the Incarnation. Cardinal Marco Vigerio even wished to prefer him to St. Michael in his book entitled *Decachordum Christianum*; but his proper rank is to be the second of the Seraphim. Besides the messages that the Gospel attributes to him in express terms, to St. Zachary and to the Blessed Virgin, it is believed that it was he who appeared three times to St. Joseph: to announce to him the conception of Our Lord, to warn him to flee into Egypt, and to make him return to Palestine; as long before he had appeared to Daniel to assure him that the Messiah would be born after seventy weeks of years. Some authors also believe that it was he who consoled Our Lord in the garden, though others attribute this great action to St. Michael, as to the worthiest and the first of all the angels.

Finally, as for St. Raphael, we could add nothing to the things related in the book of Tobit, which are so full of wonder and sweetness that one cannot read them without shedding tears of devotion. Both these angels are invoked by the faithful: St. Gabriel as the strength of God, St. Raphael as the medicine of God; and many have received miraculous help through their intercession: such as Hubert, treasurer of a king of Poland, who was preserved from hell by St. Gabriel, for whom he had an extreme devotion; and a citizen of Orléans who, on his way to Santiago in Galicia, was delivered from robbers by St. Raphael, whose help he had implored. The angels do not seem to have been introduced into the composition of Christian pictures before the 4th century; they even appear very rarely with their particular attributes in the various monuments of underground Rome. — Here are the principal attributes that Christian art assigns to the angels: 1° the human form, so that the faithful may understand how disposed these heavenly intelligences are to help men and how always ready to carry out God's orders in our favour; — 2° wings, for the same reasons; — 3° a censer, because they offer our prayers to God, according to what is written in the Apocalypse: "And another angel came, and stood before the altar, having a golden censer; and there was given to him much incense, that he should offer of the prayers of all saints upon the golden altar which is before the throne of God"; — 4° youth, because this is required both by their immortality, which is nothing else than an eternal youth, and by the nature of their functions, which they would seem less fit to fulfil if they were either children or old men; — 5° beauty, for such is the type that Holy Scripture furnishes us; — 6° sometimes nakedness, which in fallen

man produces shame, but in the angels is a mark of holiness, chastity, immortality and innocence; — 7° military attributes: it is thus that the history of the Maccabees represents them to us: “There appeared before them a horseman in a white robe, with golden armour, brandishing his lance”; — 8° white garments, a sign of innocence and joy, and the priestly colour; — 9° a girdle, to show that they are ready to carry out the orders entrusted to them; the girdle is also the symbol of chastity; — 10° ornaments of precious stones, symbol of the brilliance of their various virtues; — 11° sometimes wrapped in clouds, because their proper dwelling is in the heavens; — 12° bare feet: the ministers of God have ordinarily abstained from footwear, as we see from the example of Isaiah, of Moses and of the Apostles. — Various instruments are assigned to the angels which recall to us sometimes the anger of God, of which they are the ministers, such as the sword; sometimes His mercy, of which they are the organs in our regard, such as the instruments of the Passion; sometimes the justice they exercise in His name, such as the balance. The trumpet awakens the idea of the last judgment, and the other musical instruments that of the holy delights of the heavenly abode.

As for the archangel St. Michael in particular, he is seen represented: 1° overthrowing the demon; 2° presenting scales to the Child Jesus: in the pans are the souls of the just; 3° fighting the rebel angels; 4° standing on a rebellious angel: on his breastplate are figured the sun, the moon and stars; on his baldric a Zodiac is represented; he holds a palm and points in the sky to a Hebrew word meaning *Quis ut Deus?* 5° weighing the souls of those guilty of innocent blood; 6° appearing to a bishop who receives from the archangel the order to build a church on Mount Gargano; 7° holding in his hand a kind of labarum, as prince of the heavenly host, or a simple knight’s sword, to recall his struggle with Lucifer. The archangel St. Michael is the patron of scale-makers, hosiers, hatters, fencing-masters, bath-house keepers, makers of wafers and waffles, mercers and grocers, measurers, painters, glaziers, gilders, plasterers. He is also invoked for a good death. The inner reasons for these various patronages are rather difficult to penetrate: some of them leap to the eye;[2] we leave it to quick-witted intelligences to grasp the others. A great number of States, such as England, France, Spain, Bavaria, etc., and of towns, such as Benevento, Brussels, Le Puy, Madrid, etc., have placed themselves under the special protection of St. Michael.

CHAPELET ANGÉLIQUE EN L’HONNEUR DE SAINT MICHEL ARCHANGE.

Angelic Chaplet in honour of St. Michael the Archangel.

According to a pious tradition, the archangel St. Michael declared to a religious person that he would see with pleasure a particular prayer put into use in his honour and in that of all the angels of heaven, and that he would reward those who practised this devotion with special favours in public needs, above all those of the Catholic Church: then it came about that a Carmelite of the monastery of Vetralla, in the diocese of Viterbo, who died in the odour of sanctity in the year 1751, made this form of prayer, commonly called the Angelic Chaplet, her delight. At the request of the nuns of that monastery, His Holiness Pius IX, by a decree of the Sacred

Congregation of Rites of 8 August 1851, granted the following indulgences:

1° Whoever recites this chaplet shall gain each time seven years and as many quarantines of indulgence.

2° Whoever carries this chaplet on his person, or merely kisses, on any day whatever, the medal bearing the image of the holy Angels that is attached to it, shall gain an indulgence of a hundred days.

3° Those who recite this chaplet daily shall obtain a plenary indulgence once a month, on the day on which, having gone to confession and communion, they pray particularly for the exaltation of our holy mother the Church and for the preservation of the Sovereign Pontiff.

4° Those who practise the works enjoined above shall gain a plenary indulgence on the feasts of the Apparition of St. Michael (8 May), of the Dedication of the holy Archangel (29 September), of the archangel St. Gabriel (18 March), of the archangel Raphael (24 October), and of the holy Guardian Angels (2 October).

To gain these indulgences one must use a particular chaplet: it consists of nine *Pater noster*s, with three *Ave Maria*s after each *Pater noster*, of four other *Pater noster*s at the end (the first to St. Michael, the second to St. Gabriel, the third to St. Raphael, the fourth to our guardian angel), and of the recitation of corresponding salutations, with a proper Antiphon and final Prayer.

These chaplets must be blessed by the confessor *pro tempore* of the monastery of Vetralla, or by priests who have obtained the faculty.[3]

What we have said of these glorious Spirits we have drawn from St. Thomas; from the theologians who have written on the first part of his Summa*; and from some authors who have made express treatises on them, above all from the* Chronique des grandes actions de saint Michel, *by Michel Naveus, canon and archdeacon of the church of Tournai, and from the* Histoire abrégée des Anges, *by the Rev. Father Boniface Constantin, of the Society of Jesus. — The iconography has been drawn from the* Dictionnaire des antiquités chrétiennes, *by the Abbé Martigny, from the* Dictionnaire hagiographique *of the Abbé Migne, and from the* Caractéristiques des Saints, *by Father Cahier.*

SAINT BOUIN, PRIEST, SOLITARY NEAR SAINT-MARDS-EN-OTHE, IN THE DIOCESE OF TROYES

570. — Pope: John III. — Kings of France: Sigebert I; Guntram; Chilperic I.

> *Solitudo virtutis fructus uberrimos germinat.*
>
> *La solitude est une source intarissable de vertus.*
>
> *Solitude is an inexhaustible source of virtues.*
>
> *St. John Chrysostom.*

An ancient tradition tells us that St. Bouin (*Boëmius*) was born in Champagne, perhaps even in the diocese of Troyes; but the data are too uncertain for anything to be stated precisely. What can be affirmed is that this Saint, after spending his early years in the world, felt himself keenly urged to bid it an eternal farewell and to withdraw into solitude. He therefore sought a wild and deserted place where, far from human eyes, he might give himself up to the practice of penance and to the sweetness of contemplation. A little valley surrounded by woods, between Saint-Mards and Maraye-en-Othe (Aube, arrondissement of Troyes, canton of Aix-en-Othe), seemed to him to be the spot that divine Providence had destined for him. He settled there and built himself a little chapel and a cell beside a spring. It was there that, according to the profound saying of St. Gregory of Tours, he dwelt with himself, *habitavit secum*; that is to say, he joined solitude of soul to that of the body; he detached his heart from earthly things and concentrated himself wholly in the knowledge of God and of himself. Imposing absolute silence on all the faculties of his soul, he possessed it in continual recollection, purified his affections and set them on fire by the contemplation of the sovereign good. How fervent were his aspirations towards heaven! “As the thirsty hart,” he would often cry with the Prophet, “pants after the coolness of the fountains, so my soul sighs after Thee, O my God!” His heart ceaselessly lifted up to the Lord, he could have said further with St. Paul: “Our conversation is in heaven.” And so how he groaned when, after his ecstasies of love, he came back to himself and saw himself still bound to the earth by the bonds of his body; when, reflecting on human frailty, he thought that men holier and stronger than he had fallen into sin! The mere shadow of a slight fault made him tremble, and he often thanked God for having called him to a life which, though not exempt from temptations and dangers, nevertheless allowed him to foil the wiles of the devil more easily. But, in order to make sure of the victory, he took up the unfailing weapons pointed out by St. Paul: prayer, vigilance and fasting. His bed was the bare earth; his food, bread, salt and roots; his drink, the pure water of the spring. And what shall we say of his other austerities? With what pitiless rigour he treated his body, to bring it under the yoke of the spirit and to triumph over his senses! And so he reached a sublime degree of perfection and holiness which, while making for him a

treasure of merits for heaven, drew upon him even here below the respect and veneration of the surrounding country. He had not been able to hide himself so well that his retreat was not discovered in the end. People hastened to him as to a man of mighty credit with God, and this confidence was never deceived. As his solitude was not far from inhabited places, not a week went by without his receiving a visit from the villagers, who took it as an honour to supply him with the necessary provisions. He never refused their offerings; but he kept them to distribute to the poor, who, knowing his austere and charitable life, did not fail to turn to him as to their foster-father. The work of his hands also became the material of his alms, and no unfortunate person ever left his hermitage without having obtained some relief for his misery. Our Saint took advantage of these visits to remind all who came to him of their duties towards God, the sweetness of the yoke of Jesus Christ, the nothingness of the goods of the earth, and the necessity of acquiring those of heaven, the only true ones. His words made the most salutary impression, and those who had heard him always went away with the desire to be better.

Thus did St. Bouin spend his long career in the exercise of the finest virtues; and, full of days and good works, he fell asleep in the Lord on the 29th of September 570.

CULTE ET RELIQUES. — PÈLERINAGE.

Cult and Relics. — Pilgrimage.

The monks of the abbey of Saint-Martin-ès-Aires, at Troyes, took over the hermitage of St. Bouin, and every year they celebrated his feast on the 28th of September. Though deprived of the bodily presence of the Saint who had come to settle near their dwellings, the inhabitants of Saint-Mards did not on that account lose the memory of his virtues. They even wished to possess some of his relics, and for this purpose applied to the Benedictine abbey of Moutier-la-Celle (*Cella Bobini*, in the diocese of Troyes), which kept them devoutly. On the 2nd of October 1779, Dom J. Cajot, keeper of the treasury of the conventual church of Moutier-la-Celle, took from the Saint's shrine the lower jawbone, with six other small bones, and gave them to M. Charles Bercaire Mutel, parish priest of Saint-Mards, who exposed them to public veneration. The presence of these precious relics thenceforth became the occasion of pious demonstrations in honour of the Saint. Every year, on his feast day, the sacred bones were carried in procession from the parish church to the chapel built under the invocation of St. Bouin, in the district that bears his name; and not long ago old men still recalled with emotion the extraordinary pomp displayed on these occasions, above all in the year 1788.

Even today, on Easter Day, people go on pilgrimage to the spring of St. Bouin and invoke this great servant of God there with confidence.

In 1793 some pious persons hid the relics of the holy solitary; and, after conscientious inquiries, Mgr de Séguin des Hons proclaimed their authenticity on the 17th of February 1834.

Extract from the Vie des Saints du diocèse de Troyes, *by the Abbé Defer.*

BLESSED JOHN OF MONTMIRAIL, RELIGIOUS OF THE ORDER OF CÎTEAUX

1217. — Pope: Honorius III. — King of France: Philip II, Augustus.

> *Regnum cœlorum vim patitur, et violenti rapiunt illud.*
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> *Le royaume des cieux souffre violence, et il n'y a que ceux qui savent se faire violence qui l'emporteront d'assaut.*
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> *The kingdom of heaven suffers violence, and only those who know how to do violence to themselves will carry it by storm.*
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> *Matt. xi, 12.*

Blessed John was the son of André, lord of Montmirail and of La Ferté-Gaucher, and of Hildiarde d'Oisy, who was allied to the counts of Flanders and to the house of Béthune. He was born in 1165 in the castle of Montmirail. Never was a child seen more beautiful, more lovable, more gracious, more submissive, more respectful, or endowed with a happier character. A smile of gaiety, or rather the smile of an angel, played constantly on his lips. From his earliest age his tender hands were always ready to do good and to give to the poor; his heart was already sensitive to every misery. John was the consolation, the joy, the glory, the pride, the delight of his parents; but this happiness was not of long duration. Hildiarde having died, André, seeing his son deprived of a mother's care when he most needed it, feeling the full importance of education even in infancy, and not wishing to entrust it to hired hands, sought to replace worthily the wife whom heaven had taken from him. He took as his second wife a woman whose name is unknown, but who was rich in talents and still more in virtues. Having no children, she loved Hildiarde's son as if he had been her own. She lavished on him the most delicate, the most assiduous, the most intelligent, the most tender care. As she had true piety, she applied herself above all to sowing in his heart the seeds of every virtue. With what love she cultivated this young plant, destined to produce so many excellent fruits! This plant grew, so to speak, of itself. John had a soul naturally Christian, which inclined to good of its own bent. The countess filled him above all with the fear of the Lord, which is the beginning of wisdom, inspired him with a sovereign horror of sin, and taught him to love God with his whole heart. She often gave him this lesson, which she drew from the Gospel, which her adopted son never forgot and which formed as it were the foundation of his character: "My son, the conquest of heaven is difficult for the rich; but they have a sure road to reach it, poverty and almsgiving." These words were engraved deeply in the memory, and still more in the heart, of young John.

Faith acted powerfully on this young lord from the first years of his life. It was the ark that saved him, like another Noe, from the waters of the flood, that is to say from the corruption of the world, where so many souls perish every day. The devil, the world and the passions surrounded him with reefs in vain, and in vain united their efforts to swallow him up in shipwreck. Faith drew him out of the abyss into which he was beginning to sink. Faith was a shield with which he vigorously repelled all the fiery darts of his enemies. Faith raised him to the highest virtues, and made him find happiness in all that revolts man's delicacy: in vigils, fasts, labours, mortifications of every kind, humiliations, insults, calumnies, persecutions. Of what is a man of faith not capable? "He can," says Jesus Christ, "move even mountains." God had given John a heart endowed with the most excellent qualities. Without faith these qualities would have been lost, and would even have become the sources of the greatest disorders, of which we constantly have sad examples before our eyes; but, made fruitful by faith, they produced abundant fruits of justice. With what docility and what holy eagerness John gathered up all the lessons he was given! The study of religion, far from harming the study of letters, on the contrary favoured it, developed it, quickened it, kindled it, gave it a truly prodigious impulse.

John profited remarkably from the lessons of his masters. Without being a profound scholar, he possessed all the knowledge befitting his high position in the world. He was no orator, and did not know all the subtleties of the rhetoricians of Athens and Rome; but he spoke with ease, with nobility and with wit. He was obliged to study another science, which had less attraction for him and was more necessary. The lords, as high justiciaries, were charged with rendering justice. André wished his son to be instructed in Roman law, in the customary law of Cambrai, and in the customary law of Vitry-en-Perthois, which governed Montmirail and part of his vast domains. John soon became an accomplished lord in every respect. André therefore could not avoid presenting at court his son, who was of the same age as Philip, son of Louis VII. The young lord of Montmirail, who was gay, lively, sparkling with wit, as ardent at play as at work, was welcomed there with extreme kindness, and even with enthusiasm. In spite of his martial temper, John made himself beloved by everyone. His features breathed amiability. He was upright, frank, liberal, obliging, tender and sensitive to the afflictions of his friends. He was always found ready to render service to the great, and still more to the lowly. He guessed people's desires and hastened to satisfy them without waiting for them to be expressed. He preferred giving to receiving. And so Philip Augustus, touched by the rare goodness that was the

foundation of his character, called him not John of Montmirail, as the lords of his court did, but John Goodness, *Joannes bonitas*. Other authors say: *Joannes probitas*.

His credit was immense. Far from abusing it, he used it only to make people happy and to obtain favours for lords who showed themselves worthy of them. By this he made himself loved by his sovereign and admired by the great. It may be said that he was the glory, the delight and as it were the idol of the court. What must be regarded as a prodigy is that he had no one envious of him, so well had he won all hearts. By this compassionate charity he not only gained the good graces of men, but secured still more those of heaven. Whatever is done to the least of God's servants is done to God Himself. But this good Master never lets Himself be outdone in generosity, and always returns a hundredfold. John made himself far more beloved by his king than by the courtiers. Philip had taken him as his confidant, shared all his joys with him, and laid all his troubles in his bosom.

The favours of the world cannot fail to produce their effects. All the pleasures run to meet John and seduce his heart. Who could resist their treacherous lures? One can triumph over them only by flight; but the baron of Montmirail is held at court by bonds so sweet, so many and so strong that a divine hand alone will be able to free him from them. The countess of La Ferté-Gaucher sees with dread that he is bringing his lips near the enchanting cup of Babylon. She wishes to tear him from the dangers that surround him, and proposes that he contract an alliance with a woman worthy of him by her birth, her qualities and her education: she was called Helvide de Dampierre, and was the third sister of Guy de Dampierre and de Bourbon. The countess of La Ferté-Gaucher's hope was disappointed. This alliance, by giving John greater consideration at court, only attached him the more to the vanities of the world.

John possessed everything fitted to make him beloved by the world: an ancient lineage, an immense fortune, a brilliant education, a spotless renown, bravery and liberality. Young, tall, robust, tireless at work, trained by the ablest masters in all bodily exercises, of a lively, eager, penetrating mind, initiated into all human knowledge, John had only one passion: glory. As an incredible luxury reigned at court, the baron of Montmirail wished to surpass all the lords in magnificence. His equipages were of unheard-of richness. Gold and precious stones sparkled on his sumptuous garments.

John was the type par excellence of the great lord of the Middle Ages; he often distinguished himself in the armies in the service of his sovereign. Above all he did wonders and won the prize for valour on the day of Gisors, when Philip rode over a flourishing army of English that had come to take him by surprise. John had reached the summit of honours, riches and joy; everything smiled on him. The world charmed him with its enchanting spells, surrounded him with all its pomps, intoxicated him with delights. But God in His mercy raises up for him a true friend who, far from flattering him like the courtiers surrounding him, never ceases to warn him wisely about his salvation. This vigilant, disinterested, courageous and prudent monitor is a canon regular of Saint-Jean-des-Vignes at Soissons, prior of Saint-Étienne at Montmirail, named Jobert. John's natural goodness and the Christian education he had received in his youth give the prior easy access to him. This excellent pastor takes advantage of it to say a few edifying words to him, to make him feel very skilfully the futility of the world's grandeurs, and to cast a salutary disquiet into his heart.

In spite of his warlike temper and his passion for noisy pleasures, John listens with goodwill, with humility, with religious attention, and even with the docility of a disciple, to the wise lessons of his spiritual physician; then he carries them out with the fidelity of a servant. Little by little, and in an admirable way, he tears himself from his old habits, comes down from the height of worldly grandeur, abases himself in his heart before the supreme majesty, conceives a profound contempt for himself, and rises by the different degrees of humility from virtue to virtue.

This progress of grace was swift in him. The respect with which he receives the salutary counsels heaven gives him through the prior's mouth earns him helps so effective that he breaks his chains for ever. So

marvellous a transformation takes place in him that no example of it is found either among the sages of paganism, or among the modern philosophers, or in the thousand sects of Protestantism, or in the Greek schism. The most advanced civilization and science carried to its last point will produce nothing like it. Catholicism alone is capable of working this miracle, because Catholicism alone is the true religion and a divine sap flows in it.

John's conversion was so swift, so complete, so solid, so surprising, that the finger of God must be recognized in it. There was no inconstancy in him. Having put his hand to the plough, he never looked back. Once he had entered on the so difficult path of salvation, he runs along it, he flies. He tramples underfoot without hesitation all human respect, which shows a prodigious strength of soul. He rises above the judgments the world may pass on his conduct, walks boldly between honour and ignominy, between evil report and good report, and does not fear to offer himself up to public derision. The battles he is preparing to wage against self-love will be infinitely more heroic than his incredible struggles against the Turks and the English. To understand how great and how admirable this change of life was, let us report the testimony of Gaucher, who was first abbot of Longpont and then of Cîteaux: "He was entirely detached from himself in the midst of the world. He no longer regarded as anything but mud all that he possessed, his castles, his vast domains, his houses, his farms and all the pomps of the world. He applied himself to imitating in everything Jesus Christ, whose grace had gone before him, who had torn him from the vanity and display of the world, who in His mercy had made him a faithful observer of His commandments, and had made him hear this word of the Gospel: 'If any man will come after me and be my disciple, let him deny himself and take up his cross.'"

Never was such a prodigy of self-denial, of contempt of self, of love of mortifications seen. John passed all at once from the height of pride to the height of humility. As much as he had sought honours, so much and more does he now seek abasements; as much as he had wished to surpass all men, so much does he strive to be the last of all. Pride had been his dominant vice. Now humility is to become his capital virtue, his own virtue, which will constitute the whole foundation of his character, which will be the principle of all his actions, which will form the source from which all his other virtues will flow, which will distinguish him from all the great personages of the Middle Ages, and will earn him a unique title.

The mark of a sincere conversion is the flight from occasions: "He that loveth danger," says Scripture, "shall perish in it." John arms himself with courage to follow this counsel of eternal wisdom. He tears himself from the court and all its enchantments, leaves even Philip Augustus, to whom he was attached by such sweet bonds, and withdraws to his lands. He leaves the abode of grandeur, joys and delights more promptly than he would a place infected with the plague. He swears an eternal divorce with the world, and enters on the narrow way of the cross, a way horrible to nature, but empurpled with the blood of a God.

The virtue John practises after humility is temperance. He sets a guard of circumspection on all his senses. Not only does he wean himself from the pleasures and joys of the world, not only does he renounce vainglory, dignities, honours, flatteries, praises, the comforts and delights of this life, but he also crucifies all the disordered desires of the heart. He has heard this word of the Gospel: "The kingdom of heaven suffers violence, and only those who know how to do violence to themselves will carry it by storm." With what ardour John advances from virtue to virtue! He does not begin with the easiest so as to arrive slowly at the most heroic. Like a soaring eagle, he rises at the first flight to the highest. He sets himself to fulfil, with an ever more burning zeal, all his duties as a Christian without omitting a single one: his duties towards God, towards the monarch who holds His place on earth, towards his family, towards his subjects, towards himself, towards the churches, towards all the wretched. Then, when he had thus gone about doing good and had fulfilled his mission in the world, he tore himself from everything for ever, shut himself up in a monastery, wished to be the last of the religious, gave himself entirely to God alone, and began on earth that divine life which he is to continue for all eternity.

Until then John had served only the king of the earth; now he wishes to serve more worthily the King of heaven. He attends divine service with exactness and deep respect. He knows that the surest means of not perishing with the wicked is to love the place where the glory of the Lord dwells, to come there often to pour out his soul before God, and to say with the Royal Prophet: “Lord, I have loved the beauty of thy house.” Cowardly human respect no longer has any power over him. John has trampled it underfoot for ever. No personage, whatever his rank, can make him miss the holy offices. When the bell rings, he leaves everything to obey this voice from heaven. As prodigal as he once was for tournaments, so magnificent does he become for the churches. It is an ineffable consolation for him to contribute to their embellishment. He gives for their decoration what he used to spend so foolishly on tourneys. He recognizes that he must before all else pay homage to God for the immense riches he holds from His munificence. People hasten to accompany him into the holy temple, to contemplate the fine order he has established there, the rich ornaments he has given, and still more his deep piety before the supreme Majesty. The example of men in high position is a silent preaching that often has more effect than the most eloquent discourses. And so John’s whole court is promptly changed. The people themselves wish to imitate their prince. But no one can attain the degree of perfection to which he has reached.

Let us cite two extraordinary features of John’s devotion, which will make a host of Christians blush. John understands that man’s greatest need is prayer. That is why he never fails to rise every night and go down to the church, even in winter and in spite of the rigour of the season. He is clad only in his hair shirt and an old-fashioned cape; he attends Matins, which the canons of the priory of Montmirail sing every night, applies himself to prayer without anything being able to distract him, remains prostrate on the ground and waters the pavement with a torrent of tears, so as to be able to produce more abundant fruits of justice. He imitates the Royal Prophet and cries out with him: “My soul hath cleaved to the pavement: quicken thou me according to thy word.” In this posture he sobs and sends up groans to heaven. Jeremias had no more mournful accents: “Who will give water to my head, and a fountain of tears to my eyes, and I will weep day and night.” Odo, his chaplain, his inseparable companion and constant witness, attests that he had very thick calluses on his knees because of the multitude of his genuflexions, and a swelling on his forehead from having so often prostrated himself with his face to the ground. He often saw his callused knees and this swelling on his forehead. Thomas, abbot of Cantimpré, affirmed on oath that if anyone had tried to drive a needle into his knee, the needle would have broken rather than penetrate, because of the hardness of his knees.

All this was still not enough for John of Montmirail. He found that on feast days, in his castle of Montmirail, his mind was not free enough, recollected enough, disengaged enough from the images of the things of the world. As much as he once sought to appear and to shine, so much does he now love to withdraw into solitude. How he already burns with the desire to bury himself in it for ever! To satisfy this desire of his heart as far as he can, he established in 1200 a hermitage in the forest of Beaumont, *Belli montis*, half a league from Montmirail. There he will give free course to the outpourings of his piety. John places there a priest named Bonnel, a religious of the abbey of Cantimpré in the Cambrésis, which Hugh III, his uncle, had founded. On the eve of the greatest feasts he would rise in the middle of the night and withdraw to this religious house, which was called the Wood, *Boscus*, to give himself to pious meditations, to occupy himself only with eternal truths, and to consecrate the day of the solemnity more entirely to the Lord. By this he prudently avoided the company of the lords who came to visit him and the tumult of a numerous household. The more he had given himself to the noisy pleasures of the world, the more he had drunk of its poisoned cup, the more he feels the charms of this solitude. There he is all prayer, all contemplation, all compunction, all love of God. If it were given us to lift the veil that hides from us this spiritual life, hidden, humble, silent, penitent, recollected in God, we should present admirable things worthy of the eternal respect of men and angels; but all is wrapped in impenetrable obscurity. There John was already dead and buried in the forgetfulness and ignorance of all creatures. He constantly repeated with the Royal Prophet: “My only happiness is to live with God in an intimate and perfect union.” How he would have wished to be able to stay

always with the holy hermit! But the moment had not yet come for him to leave the world. He owed it great reparations.

God had blessed his alliance with Helvide de Dampierre and had given him three sons and three daughters. But in the intoxication of pleasures he had not taken enough care of their education; he had left them to his wife and to hired hands without troubling himself much about them. He had, however, taken care to give them an education worthy of the part they were one day to play. But it now seemed to him that their religious instruction had been neglected. He wished to set about forming them in piety by his words and his example. It was going about it rather late. His eldest daughter, Elisabeth, alone showed herself docile at first. His other children often only mocked his lessons, and still more his actions. The good lord will even receive cruel outrages from them, which he will bear with invincible patience. Such are the bitter fruits of an education not sufficiently founded on religious principles. Yet the good seed he cast into the hearts of these ungrateful children will not be entirely lost. It will even bear abundant fruit when God manifests the holiness of His servant by striking signs. John was more fortunate in the care he gave to his vassals.

While he shone at court and was its delight, he charged his bailiffs with fulfilling his functions on his lands. But the bailiffs, not being under the master's eye, did not always perform their duties with exactness. When he was touched by grace, he then understood the full greatness of his obligations. With what zeal he sets about going through his domains, righting everywhere the wrongs of his officers, and giving each his due! As kind as he is to the weak, so much does he arm himself with severity against the strong, the wicked and the criminal. He displays a tireless zeal to prevent scandals, to stop the course of abuses, to destroy evil, to overthrow the reign of the devil, to establish that of Jesus Christ in souls, to provide for the needs of the peoples entrusted to his care, and to make justice flourish everywhere. His vigilance is so great that it knows no rest. Like the Royal Prophet, he always keeps his eyes open, so that the enemy of salvation, who watches unceasingly for the ruin of souls, may not take him by surprise.

One of the principal prerogatives of the lords was the administration of justice. It was a very important function, very laborious and extremely delicate. Among the lords who won admiration as great justiciaries, none can be compared to John. This prince gave all his care to so difficult an office. It may be said of him that he was occupied only with what concerned the service of his vassals. Indeed, he finds his rest, his joy, his delight only in what concerns their happiness. He knows that he will be treated as he has treated others, and that he will be measured with the same measure he has used; and so it is always with a holy dread that he mounts his judgment seat. Like the sovereign Judge whom he represents, he is no respecter of persons. Yet he lends a more attentive ear to the widow, the orphan, the weak, the innocent, above all to the poor. But he arms himself with a holy rigour against bold offenders and the robbers of other men's goods. How his heart bled when he was obliged to apply the harsh laws of the time!

John extends his solicitude over all. He restrains by salutary advice the passions of ardent youth. With what tenderness he consoles misfortune and relieves misery! What zeal he displays in settling the least disputes, preventing divisions in families, reconciling father with child, husband with wife, neighbour with neighbour! In a word, he says to all what St. Paul wrote to the Hebrews: "Strive, my dear children, to have peace with all men, and to acquire holiness, without which no man shall see God." He is the man of the law; he knows only the law. Yet he applies it with so just a temperament that gentleness does not fetter justice, nor does the zeal that animates him for the observance of the law overstep the bounds of moderation. He knows that too much indulgence emboldens crime, and that too much rigour irritates the guilty and does not amend them. He unites gentleness with severity so happily that he makes himself feared and loved at the same time. He is truly a father in the midst of his children. And so his name is on every lip, and still more in every heart. All his vassals are devoted to him as sons are to the author of their days. He has a boundless confidence in the infinite goodness of the Lord, and his confidence will not be disappointed. The more obstacles and dangers surround him, the more he hopes in the God of mercies. About the year 1200, Baldwin, count of Flanders,

who later became emperor of

Constantinople, had allied himself with the English against the French. He assembles a fairly considerable army and suddenly comes to besiege the castle of Oisy. The soldiers John had placed in that fort to defend it are seized with fear, because their lord cannot procure them any help from his other domains. The army of Flanders surrounds them on every side. But the man worthy of God, armed with faith, leaves the fort with three soldiers and his chaplain, goes to the abbey of Vaucelles, addresses the abbot, and says to him: “Lord abbot, I commend my castle of Oisy to you.” The abbot, astounded at these words, answers him: “My lord, what are you saying? You cannot defend it, and how could I? I cannot even protect my own house against the attacks of the enemy.” John answers: “I want you to keep my castle for me.” The abbot, not yet understanding his faith, is more and more astonished at his words. John, whose faith grows ever firmer, says to him at last: “I know that, if you will, you can very well preserve my castle for me, and that it can be saved only by you.” At length the abbot, understanding what his faith desires, has a Mass of the Holy Ghost sung the next day by every priest. At once there rises from the earth a fog so thick that the count’s men can no longer see one another. And so in their stupefaction they think of taking flight; but the count holds them back and prevents them from carrying out their intention, until God, in reward for His servant’s faith, sends down so abundant a rain that it causes a great flood. The enemy flee in all haste and tremble for their lives.

Our Blessed practised mortifications of body and mind with incomparable courage, and he practised them from supernatural motives, which raises them infinitely in the eyes of God and men. He wishes to give back to his soul the dominion the flesh had usurped. In his eyes it is the height of ignominy that the noblest part of man should be enslaved to vile mud. He recognizes that he has nourished this body of corruption too delicately. He had procured it every comfort and flooded it with delights. But this flesh, which he had so flattered, for which he had had an extreme indulgence, and which he had, so to speak, adored, exercised so baneful a tyranny over him that it dragged him into an infinity of sins. But now he wishes to punish it for the faults it made him commit. The more he caressed it, the more he strives to crucify it. Like the Apostle, he applies himself to bringing it into subjection by a continual mortification of all his senses, so that it may no longer revolt against the spirit. He puts all his care into blunting its terrible sting.

The body is a rebellious, untamable slave. The more food you give it, the more strength it acquires, the more it revolts against you and the more it subjects the soul to its brutish instincts. Do not hope to soften it by humouring it. Either you must master it or it will master you. Either you must weaken it by fasting or you will be its slave. This is what St. Augustine teaches us in these fine words: “Carry continually the mortification of Jesus Christ in your bodies. If you do not wish to sink into the mire of vice, never come down from the cross of Jesus Christ.” A truth with which John was penetrated, and which the world cannot understand, is that those who mortify their body truly love it, while those who grant it all it asks are its real enemies. For to live according to the flesh and satisfy all its desires is to inflame its passions, to prepare diseases for it, and to fatten it like a victim to be devoured by the eternal flames of hell. St. Paul has declared it: “If you live according to the flesh, you shall die.” Is that loving one’s body? Is it not rather hating it and becoming its cruellest enemy? But what goods, on the contrary, does one not procure for it by mortifying it! One deadens its evil inclinations, cures it of its diseases, preserves it from a thousand pains, keeps it in ever flourishing health, extinguishes in it the seeds of death, guarantees it against the infinite evils of hell, and prepares for it the eternal delights of paradise. Is that not truly loving it? This is St. Augustine’s thought: “When one resists the desires of the flesh,” he says, “one loves one’s flesh, because one heals it.”

John hears constantly ringing in his ears these terrifying words: “Do penance; for unless you do penance, you shall all perish”… Far from seeking to evade this law or even to soften it, he submits to all that is most rigorous in it. He cannot read the parable of the wicked rich man without being frozen with terror. He learns from it that a soft life spent in joy, in feasts, in amusements, in honours, in the magnificence of luxury, in the delights of the world, without labour and without penance, is enough to exclude us for ever from the

kingdom of heaven, even if it were free from every other crime. What completes this parable is the formidable sentence God pronounces in the Apocalypse against effeminate men: “As much as she hath been in delicacies, so much torment give ye to her.”

Faith also teaches him that the supreme Judge demands of each an exact account of his whole life, that He weighs everything in the balance of the sanctuary, that He lets nothing pass, that He judges even justices, and that His angels have not been found spotless before Him. The thought of the rigours of divine justice leaves him neither day nor night, and makes him say with the penitent king, striking his head against the ground: “I am become miserable and am bowed down even to the end; I walked sorrowful all the day long. I am afflicted and humbled exceedingly: I roared with the groaning of my heart.” Only after overwhelming his body with mortifications, only after shedding torrents of tears, only after setting no limit to his sorrow to appease divine justice, is he entitled to say to God with the Royal Prophet: “See my labour and my toil, and forgive me all my sins.” John wishes to preserve himself not only from the pains of hell, but also from the torments of purgatory, torments in comparison with which St. Augustine tells us that those of this life are almost nothing. He addresses to God this prayer of the great doctor: “Make me pass on earth through the cruellest trials, so that I may be spared that fire which purifies.” He infinitely prefers to do penance in this world rather than to undergo it in the horrible place of expiation, where one must pay one’s debts to the last farthing.

After bodily mortification, spiritual mortification became the sole motive of all his actions. As much as the love of glory had been his capital vice, so much did the love of abasement become the foundation of his character, and earn him the unique surname of John the Humble. Every act of his life was, so to speak, an act of humility. Hard beds, hair shirts, vigils, prostrations, fasts, disciplines and a thousand other cruel inventions were his delights. John was not content to lie on the bare ground when he found poor people to whom to give his bed; he did so even when he had not been able to find any. His officers more than once surprised him on this couch, which was far from soft, and bore witness to it. The love of penance burning ever more fiercely in the lord of Montmirail, he became so insatiable for abstinences and fasts, and gave himself to them with such ardour, that his zeal had to be moderated when he entered religion. God in His mercy came to his aid and seconded his pious eagerness for suffering. He sent him a pain of a new kind, an unusual pain, very sharp, involuntary, and for that reason more meritorious than all the penances he imposed on himself. John underwent a temptation and made a sad experience of his weakness. God sometimes allows the greatest souls to waver, so as to strengthen them the better. It happened one day that the military glory which had once made our hero so famous presented itself importunately to his memory. As this thought turned over for some time in his mind, he at last ordered his armour to be brought, which was done. But after looking at it for a few moments he perceived his fault, set about punishing it on himself with great severity, and could not shed tears enough for having consented to such a temptation.

At this time our Blessed set out for Soissons. He asks his host whether there is not in the town some person of holy life whose pious conversation might edify him. “Indeed,” the host answers, “there is a woman of great reputation who has been enclosed for several years in a very narrow lodging for the name of Christ, and whom many people go to visit because of her holiness.” She lived under a little lean-to adjoining the church of Notre-Dame at Soissons. John thinks it fitting first to go into the church to pray to the Virgin Mary. He kneels before her much venerated image and expresses to her the desire to have a great contrition for his sins. But it seems that his heart has never been so hard. Quite confounded, he raises his eyes to the image of the Mother of mercy and addresses to her this prayer: “O Queen of angels and refuge of sinners, could I not, a wretched sinner, your servant, now obtain from you by my prayers that you would deign to open your mouth and tell me that I ought not to possess your Son, but that nevertheless this word shall in no wise be fulfilled, and that at least my heart shall be so touched that its hardness may happily be softened?” Scarcely has he made this prayer when he feels himself struck with an indescribable pain in the side. This pain becomes so

violent that he believes God has delivered him to the devil because he had made an indiscreet prayer in desiring that the Virgin Mary should speak to him herself, which he ought not to have done. He thinks, therefore, that in punishment an evil spirit has received such power over him by a divine judgment. This incident took away the thought of going to see the recluse; he endured this terrible ailment for four years, and obtained his cure from it in a most unexpected manner.

John, understanding the usefulness and even the necessity of religious communities in Christian society, the work of regeneration they are called to accomplish, the spiritual and even temporal advantages they procure for peoples, the salutary examples they give and the abundant blessings they draw down, showed himself holily lavish, both in making donations to existing communities and in founding new houses of prayer. As he had a tender devotion to Mary, the august Mother of God, he made in 1202 several donations to the church of Blessed Mary of Cantimpré. He showed himself equally generous to the priory of Notre-Dame du Charme, of the Order of Fontevrault, in the diocese of Soissons. His munificence extended even to the capital of France. As he had lived in Paris for a fairly long time during his youth and his worldly life, he wished to contribute to a charitable establishment founded there about 1202. In 1203 he made two more donations: one to Val-Secret, an abbey of the Premonstratensian Order in the diocese of Soissons; and the other to Jouy, an abbey of the Order of Cîteaux in the diocese of Sens. The same year he built at Montmirail, for his eldest daughter Elisabeth, the abbey of Mont-Dieu, which later took the title of Amour-Dieu.[1] He wished it to be a monument worthy of his power, his fortune, his piety, his tenderness and his beloved daughter. He chose a very favourable site in the lower town, and raised a spacious building on the Place Champeaux, facing the ancient house of the bailiff, not far from the magnificent Porte Pommesson, on a high point from which the eye wanders with delight over the western valley of the Petit-Morin.

Piety flourished in this holy house for several centuries, and St. Vincent de Paul worked there, a fairly long time after his death, in 1720, one of his greatest miracles. Knowing the price of souls, and knowing that they cost all the blood of a God and that to save a soul is worth more than to gain the whole universe, John laid on his daughter and her companions a sublime mission: he wished them to devote themselves to the education of girls.

Blessed John wished to follow St. Paul’s counsels in everything. That great Apostle calls the poor saints: “Relieve,” he says, “the necessities of the saints.” Not only does he hasten to provide for their needs, but he gives them his heart as well; he shares all their troubles, consoles them in their afflictions, revives them in their reverses, visits them in their illnesses, loves them as his children, venerates them as the noblest members of Jesus Christ. The alms he gives them is no gift wrung from avarice, but an effect of the purest charity. Above all he strives to give it as St. Paul prescribes, that is to say with simplicity. He does not seek the praise of men, but solely the glory of God and the relief of the unfortunate. He takes care that the left hand should not know what the right hand gives. His sweetest enjoyment is to pour out his riches into the bosom of the unfortunate. What fills him with consolation is that by this he acquires in heaven a treasure which will never be exhausted, which rust cannot consume, which thieves will not be able to take from him, and which death itself will not take away. When faith animates charity, what wonders must spring from these two divine sources! Charity in John knows no bounds; it becomes the fullness of the law. Like the Apostle, he devotes and sacrifices himself entirely for his dear sick, who are sacred persons to him; he kneels before them, kisses their hands, sets his lips on their most hideous sores.

Let us now cite some features which the humility of the servant of God has not been able to wrap in its veil. He loved to converse with the poor and preferred their company to that of the rich; he even made them eat with him. One day he received a singular reward for his charity. As he was in his town named Crèvecœur, where he had gathered a great multitude of lords at his table, he had, according to his custom, admitted many poor to the meal. When they had eaten their fill, one of them, who was blind, began to give a thousand thanks for the benefits with which John had loaded him, and, blessing God, he said: “You deserve to receive the

blessing of the sovereign King, venerable John, you who have treated us so well today; for I have already received from you so many other favours that I could not recount them."

An officer of the household, astonished at the blind man's words, comes up to him and asks him how his master could have procured him so many benefits. The blind man answers: "As I was a thief, a murderer, an adulterer, a sacrilegious man, as I was defiled with many other crimes and was disposed to commit still greater ones, your lord John, blessed of God and most just judge, had my eyes put out, which were the usual guides of my misdeeds. I thank him for it every day, for by this act of justice he drew my soul from the road to hell and delivered it from eternal death." The officer who had heard this speech hastened to go and tell his master of it. The servant of God, much grieved at what he has just learned, rises from table so promptly that all the guests are surprised, prostrates himself at the blind man's feet, and asks his pardon with great compunction of heart and with tears. The blind man, quite confused, answers him: "You have no reason, my lord, to ask my pardon. I beg you to believe that I am infinitely more obliged to you than you can conceive for this act of just severity that you exercised towards me; for if you had pardoned me when my crimes wrung from your hands the punishment that troubles you, I should long ago have been condemned to the gallows, and my dried-up body would be swinging in the air at the will of the winds." This answer of the blind man much consoled and edified the servant of God, who relieved his misery with an abundant alms. In 1207 he founded for the unfortunate a hospital (*hôtel-Dieu*), which he richly endowed. It was situated between the great bridge over the Morin and the bridge over the meadow brook, in La Chaussée, a suburb of Montmirail, in the diocese of Troyes. The church, under the invocation of St. John the Evangelist, patron of the lord of Montmirail, occupied the east side; it was very remarkable for its construction.[2]

Our Blessed, having laid down the shield he used to carry in the warfare of the world, was in no way ashamed, in his apprenticeship to the warfare of Christ, to carry the dead, and, like another Tobias, took every care to render them the last duties. But the living were still dearer to him than the dead. And so he performed towards them acts of charity far more surprising. He carried the sick on his own shoulders wherever it was necessary, and served them in everything with the most pious affection. What inspired in him this incredible ardour, this more than maternal tenderness, was that he saw Jesus Christ Himself in each sick person. He approached them only with pious veneration.

As he grew more disgusted with the world every day, he reflected within himself on what he ought to do. A thought came to him which he believed to be an inspiration from heaven. At that time the Albigensians were spreading their errors in the south of France with fire and sword. To put an end to their devastations, Pope Innocent III was forced to have the crusade preached against these raging sectaries. The French nobility were meeting in the provinces laid waste by these heretics to shed their blood there. This war began about 1206. The lord of Montmirail resolved to take part in it. Wishing to take with him a large sum of money, so as to provide more abundantly for the needs of the poor during his journey, he set out for the province of the Cambrésis. He expected to obtain seven thousand livres from the sale of a certain portion of woodland. But divine Providence allowed John to be unable to carry out his pious plan, because it destined him for a far more excellent warfare, in which he would win infinitely more brilliant triumphs. The crown of John's charity was the care he lavished on the most forsaken, the most hideous and the lowest of the wretched, the lepers. He opened to them all the treasures of his heart. The venerable servant of God, before taking the religious habit, had come to live in his castle of Oisy. A great multitude of gentlemen, his vassals, were gathered there. He leaves the castle, accompanied by all these horsemen, to go to Aclimont, where some business he had to deal with called him. On his way, near the village called Sancy, he meets twenty-five lepers. When these unfortunates learned that he was there, they were very joyful and began to beg the benefits of his inexhaustible charity. John at once leaps from his horse to the ground, eagerly takes his money from the hands of the officer following him, leaves behind all his escort, who are frightened by the foul smell of the lepers, and, burning with the fire of divine love, rushes ardently into the midst of these wretches. Then

he bends the knee before each of them, devoutly kisses their hands and gives alms to them all.

As one day he was going round the holy places, that is to say the huts of the lepers, he met almost an army of knights who were of his family. Seeing him make his pious genuflexions before the lepers, they all began to blame him. “My lord,” they said to him, “as you are the head of our whole race and hold the first rank over us all by the number of your dignities, you are doing things that are not fitting; for by your conduct, worthy of all contempt, you are a disgrace to us who are your blood, and you cover us with confusion.” The holy man answers them: “Please God, my well-beloved kinsmen, that I may come to the possession of the Lord Jesus by the road of any ignominy whatever!” O words worthy of the admiration of all ages! This world, for which the cross is a reproach and a folly, this world which is nothing but vanity, which understands neither the mysteries of charity, nor anything that comes from God, nor anything that leads to God, this selfish, cowardly, corrupt and corrupting world could inspire nothing but a sovereign disgust in John. And so this great servant of God sought more and more the means of leaving it. He had heard the voice of Jesus Christ saying: “If thou wilt be perfect, follow me.” John wishes to follow Him, whatever it may cost him. It is no longer enough for him to be a perfect Christian; he wishes to reach the highest degree of perfection that man can attain; he wishes to be a perfect religious.

The war against the Albigensians flaring up again on every side, John seized this occasion and pretended that he wished to take part in it. He takes every care with the preparations for his journey. How he rejoices in his heart at being able to flee the passing dignities of earth to merit the eternal glory of heaven! He therefore assembles his vassals to announce his departure to them, speaks to them of their salvation with unction, and urges them to make unceasing progress in virtue. He bids them farewell and embraces them all with the tenderest affection. Nothing is heard on every side but sobs. The good lord takes few companions with him and makes for Longpont, an abbey of the Order of Cîteaux, there to serve the Lord. He was at first admitted only as a novice. He gave up to his wife the land of Montmirail and some others. But he kept that of Oisy, so as to reserve to himself the power of making some further pious donations, and above all to be able to repair all the wrongs, even involuntary, that he and his officers might have committed. His novitiate lasted two years.

His entry into religion was regarded as a baseness that dishonoured his race and was without example. His practices of devotion and his excesses of charity had already earned him the censure of his kinsmen and the mockery of worldly people. But when it was known that, instead of going to display his courage against the Albigensians, he had taken the religious habit, there was a universal outburst against him. His wife became furious at it; his children were transported with anger and could not heap enough outrages on him. His friends regarded him as nothing but a madman. The writers of the reign of Philip Augustus, Rigord, Le Breton and Matthew Paris, would not even mention his name in their works, although they spoke very fully of the other lords of the court of that time. John had covered himself with so much opprobrium in the eyes of his contemporaries that they would have thought themselves dishonoured in relating even the glorious actions of his early years. That was all he desired. He wished to be reputed as nothing, to be treated as a fool, rejected as the refuse of the earth, trampled underfoot and forgotten by the whole world. Far from being shaken by contempt, he says with the Royal Prophet: “My heart hath expected reproach and misery.”

The first virtue John practises is mortification of the body. This lord, who lived in sumptuous castles, who had been brought up with so much delicacy, whose table was always laden with the most exquisite dishes, and who drank only the finest wines, imposes on himself an abstinence so astonishing that he restrains his appetite even in the meanest foods and refuses to eat as much as nature can allow. He never fails to pour cold water on his food, for fear of feeling the least satisfaction in taking it. The abbot, having learned that he was indiscreetly inflicting too rigorous abstinences on himself, sends for him, reprimands him severely, and expressly orders him to eat at least as much bread as he could. John feels himself bound by this command. For fear of falling into the sin of disobedience, he eats, not without extreme difficulty, the whole portion of

bread set before him that day, without leaving any. But feeling that he cannot bear the rigour of this prescription any longer, he goes to find the abbot and begs him in a suppliant voice to revoke this order, which is beyond his strength, or to moderate it somewhat so as to make it easier to carry out. The abbot answers him: “Since you ask me, I shall confine myself to prescribing that you eat only one loaf a day. But for the rest, if you can eat more, do not fail to do so.” John answers him: “I beg you, as earnestly as I can, do not leave me in the hands of my own will; but rather command absolutely.” The abbot, overcome by his entreaty, settled what he should do from then on, and John observed it all faithfully. As much as worldly people seek to flatter their bodies, so much does the servant of God strive to mortify his own; he even uses pious stratagems.

St. Augustine says: “It is something great to be faithful to God in little things, all the more since self-love cannot attach itself to them as to a great sacrifice.” John, penetrated with this truth, seized every occasion of mortifying his senses. One presented itself which was very useful both to himself and to the religious. He wishes to prove, as the Apostle says, that although he was still in the flesh he did not walk according to the desires of the flesh. The religious go out of the monastery one day to go to work; the servant of God, John, was with them. On their way they come upon the carcass of a dead animal, which spreads an unbearable stench far and wide. Each puts his hand or his sleeve before his nostrils to protect himself from it: the charitable John wishes to render service to the community, goes up to the dead beast, and drags it so far from the road that his brethren can no longer be inconvenienced by it. This action, done by a lord brought up in delights, who considers himself the servant of all and overcomes without hesitation all the repugnances of nature, shows in him a great fund of holiness.

His patience under insults is still more admirable than his humility. God treated him according to the inclinations of His grace, fed him with the bread of anguish, and made him receive insults in the very places where he had appeared with the greatest magnificence. John was at Cambrai, of which he had formerly been lord. He had as companion Gilon, cellarer of the monastery of Vaucelles, of the same Order of Cîteaux, which had been founded by the lords of Oisy, his ancestors. They had the devotion to go and visit a recluse. On the way they come to a place where a great number of navvies were working in the ditches of the town. These wretches, seeing the two religious pass, all begin to hoot at them with one voice. Surprised at this kind of greeting and quite ashamed, the cellarer hastens his step. But John, disposed to suffer every affront for Jesus Christ, turns towards the mockers and says to them: “I am the wretched John of Montmirail, a great sinner, who deserves every insult and whom one could never cover with enough confusion. I beg you, repeat your insulting cry against him for a long time.”

These insults from unknown people prepared him to endure those of his own family. These last were so many piercing darts that went to the bottom of his heart, and became all the more useful to him. The servant of God had given in alms to the monastery of Longpont a house situated in the market town called Gandelus. The custom then was that children had to consent to such donations by their fathers and mothers, lest after the donors’ death the recipients should be troubled by the heirs. Now John II, the eldest son of John of Montmirail, had refused his consent to the donation of this house at Gandelus, and when his father had withdrawn to Longpont, he had the impudence to thwart the religious in their possession of it. He did not allow them to exercise their rights in this house, nor even to carry out the most urgent repairs there. When the servant of God learned of all these vexations, he felt great sorrow at them. He goes himself to Gandelus to repair the house, takes workmen with him, and sets to work with them as their companion. He himself humbly carries on his own shoulders, up to the top of the building, the tiles needed to cover it. The son wished to take revenge, which gave a new lustre to the father’s patience. John had also granted the small tithes to the church of Longpont. It was then the time to levy them. But John’s eldest son often prevented their collection through his servants, and tormented the religious in a thousand ways. John is informed of it, and comes again to Gandelus to gather the tithe himself. Interposing himself like a wall between the monks,

his brethren, and his son, he wishes to test whether, out of respect for a father, John II will desist from his undertaking. Above all he prefers to bear the insults of his son rather than let the religious be unjustly molested. He sets about going through the streets and public squares, goes from house to house to levy the tithe, and carries it himself in a basket on his shoulders.

He underwent yet another mortification, which was far more painful to him. Having had occasion to come to Montmirail in company with the prior of Longpont, he went to his own house to lodge there, found there the servants of his eldest son, and told them humbly that he wished only to spend the night there. But these officers, seizing the occasion, make him a thousand impertinent excuses and refuse him hospitality. The prior accompanying him, seeing this affront, offers John the shield of patience and says to him: “Do not be disturbed by this; the Lord came unto His own, and His own received Him not.” These words of the Gospel pour a divine balm into the soul of the servant of God, who rejoices at being able to apply them to himself; he gives thanks to the Lord for it. The two religious withdraw, well satisfied at having made this spiritual gain, and are received by strangers with great veneration. Having been obliged another day to come to Montmirail on business, he again presented himself at his own house. A servant of the lady of the castle, formerly his wife, seeing him come, hastened to inform his mistress. Having received an answer from her own mouth, he comes back to the servant of God and says to him: “My lady is in her bath, and so you can neither see her nor speak to her.” The man of God answers humbly: “Please the Lord that the bath may do her good!” Driven away with such insolence by his own family, John leaves the castle without opening his mouth to murmur, and withdraws. He continues on his way to the stronghold called La Ferté-Gaucher, and presents himself at the house of his stepmother, who receives him with honour and a joyful face.

John was endowed with so robust a constitution that he could have prolonged his life beyond the ordinary bounds; but by the pious excesses of his mortifications he shortened the days of his exile. In a few years, according to the words of Wisdom, he ran an immense course and amassed infinite merits for heaven. He crucified his flesh by so many austerities, he so many times put to death the carnal man in himself, that it may be said of him that after draining the cup of martyrdom he went to drink of the river of eternal life. His death occurred in 1217, on the 29th of September, the day dedicated to the memory of the archangel St. Michael. Hugh, his prior, and Gerard, a lay brother, had a revelation of his glory by a bright light which they saw rise from a great multitude of candles and go to shine in heaven.

He is represented: 1° in knight’s costume, clad in his full armour, sword at his side, helmet on his head and visor raised; 2° laying down his arms to take the habit of a penitent; 3° lying down and dressed as a religious. Angels present palms and crowns to him.

CULTE ET RELIQUES.

Cult and Relics.

The memory and relics of John of Montmirail, also called John the Humble, who died in the odour of sanctity in the abbey of Longpont, have been until now the object of a constant cult. Scarcely had he been buried in the common cemetery when a great number of people were frequently seen coming to kneel on his grave. Many miracles having taken place one after another through the intercession of this pious religious, his body was raised from the ground, and the grateful faithful surrounded with ex-votos the places in the monastery where his bones were afterwards laid.

In the annals of Cîteaux of Ange Maurique one reads that in 1236, that is to say only nineteen years after John’s death, the people, full of confidence in his power with the Most High, asked that a special feast be established in his honour. Pope Gregory IX, who reigned from 1227 to 1241, ordered inquiries into John’s holy life and into the credit that could be given to the wonders attributed to him. Maurique asserts that the office and feast requested were granted by that Pontiff. What is at least certain is that the calendars, missals, menologies or martyrologies of Cîteaux and of the Benedictines indicate the 29th of September as the day

consecrated to his memory.

Round his tomb, lamps and candles to the number of thirteen or fourteen burned day and night. On a very old board placed near it were written antiphons and prayers taken from his office, which the pilgrims recited.

The cult of John of Montmirail grew still more when, about 1250 or 1251, one of his daughters, Marie de Montmirail, lady of La Fère and of Saint-Gobain, wife of Enguerrand III, sire de Coucy, raised to him, on the left side of the sanctuary, an elegant and magnificent open-work mausoleum adorned with slender columns in the pointed style of the period.

Ever since Pope Urban VIII (1623–1644) decreed in 1634 that beatifications and canonizations should be reserved to the Holy See, the bishops of Soissons have always pressed the court of Rome to obtain the confirmation of the cult of John of Montmirail. The official report drawn up by Simon Legras on the 2nd of May 1639, in the presence of the religious and among others of the chronicler Muldrac, bears witness both to the holiness of Blessed John and to the desire to have his cult and feast recognized and approved by the Holy See. King Louis XIII was pleased to join his prayers to those of the religious and the bishop, and to that end he addressed to Pope Innocent X (1644–1655) a reasoned letter asking His Holiness to grant the religious of Longpont permission to say the Mass and celebrate the office and feast of John of Montmirail on the 27th of September, with an octave.

In the official report drawn up in several sessions in 1657 by the bishop of Soissons, Charles de Bourlon (1653–1685), it is said that the prelate went to the abbey of Longpont to carry out the translation of the holy body of Blessed John of Montmirail… and of six other bodies. The parchment enclosed in the reliquary containing his head bore these words: *Caput sancti Joannis de Monte-Mirabili*. In showing this head to the people, the bishop said that he was a man of holy life and probity, and that because of his good life he was believed to be a Saint. And he gave the head to be kissed by several infirm, sick and other persons. He added that his relics could not be exposed for veneration, that it was necessary to suspend and wait… until it had been maturely and holily deliberated what was to be done.

In 1677 the prior of the abbey of Longpont, having been sent to Rome on the affairs of his Order, under the pontificate of Innocent XI (1676–1689), presented his request for authorization to celebrate the office of John of Montmirail. He was told that proof of his canonization must first be established, and that the report of Bishop Simon Legras could not serve to hasten the authorization of the cult, because he had not acted by virtue of a delegation from the Apostolic See.

In the report of Dom Brulart, in 1697, John is called a Saint. In the *Année bénédictine* he is given the title of Confessor.

Mgr de Simony, in 1845, when having the relics of Blessed John handed over to the duchesse de Doudeauville, showed himself very reserved: “These relics,” he wrote, “must not be honoured with any cult, since the Church has not yet authorized it by a canonical judgment.”

Mgr de Garsignies (1848–1860) was not so moderate. On the 1st of October 1859 he addressed a few words to the assembled parish “on the importance,” he said, “and the consequence of our step, as an attestation of the immemorial cult rendered to Blessed John of Montmirail; we have ourselves venerated these remarkable relics with the members of our clergy present at the ceremony, have then sealed them with our seal and replaced them in the church, reserving to ourselves to solicit from the court of Rome the decree bearing confirmation of immemorial cult.”

Immediately afterwards the drafting and sending of the petition was taken in hand; it was sent to His Holiness Pius IX on the 1st of September 1860, accompanied by a dossier of a hundred and sixty-two quarto pages containing twenty-one documents relating to Blessed John: official reports, inquiries, extracts from chronicles and lives of the Saints, letters, charters, experts’ judgments and various other pieces of

information.

The abbey of Longpont has always, and without interruption, possessed the relics of John of Montmirel or Montmirail. The burial of the body took place first in the common cemetery; but the miracles that took place at his grave led to its being raised from the ground in the presence of the abbot of Cercamp. (This ceremony was often regarded in those ancient times as equivalent to a canonization.) The body was put into a marble tomb, which was fixed in the inner wall of the cloister (1217 to 1231). One of his bones was carried to Voutiennes (Voties), which is called in the old deeds the Valley of Miracles. Great honours were rendered to this relic, and inestimable benefits were drawn from it.

The second translation took place about 1250, in the presence of several archbishops and bishops, when Marie de Montmirail, his daughter, raised a magnificent mausoleum to him in the choir.

The third translation brought to Longpont a still greater number of prelates, abbots and people. Blessed John's reliquary was placed behind the high altar among the other holy relics of the abbey.

But as the pilgrims could not easily, in that sacred place, satisfy their devotion and approach the reliquary as often and as closely as they wished, the religious decided that it should henceforth rest in a cupboard in the sacristy. His bones were then enclosed in a long wooden box covered with a sheet of copper, a morocco skin, gilt nails and numerous medallions bearing the arms of the great families of the time. The head was put apart in a reliquary of gilt wood, which disappeared in the revolutionary storm of 1793. That is the fourth translation.

In spite of the precautions the religious took to preserve their precious trust, the remains of John of Montmirail more than once ran the risk of being carried off or profaned: in 1355 by the English; in 1414 by Pierre de Tours at the head of his soldiers, already masters of Soissons; in 1567 by the Huguenots. But God always allowed them to be withdrawn from the rapacity or impiety of the profaners, sometimes by having the abbey guarded by strong detachments of foot and horse, sometimes by putting the reliquary in safety in a neighbouring fortress (La Ferté-Milon).

In 1639, at the request of the religious, the bishop of Soissons, Simon Legras (1623–1656), the same who consecrated Louis XIV, proceeded to the opening of the reliquary as well as to the recognition of the bones and the examination of the documents attesting their authenticity. In 1657 Bishop Charles de Bourlon, nephew of the preceding and at first his coadjutor, continued what his uncle had begun and made a new recognition of the relics of Blessed John. A doctor of medicine named the bones found in the reliquary (tibia, humerus, shoulder blade, ischium, ulna, clavicle, vertebra and several others besides).

The relics of Blessed John were examined again in 1697 by the visitor of the Order of Cîteaux, Dom Brulard, abbot of Vauclair. We extract the following details word for word from the official report:

"Dom Brulard had drawn from the reliquary of gilt wood hanging beneath the vault of the tomb of saint (*sic*) John of Montmirel… a casket or chest of wood covered with painted leather, two feet two inches long and loaded on all sides with ancient enamelled escutcheons, and had the said chest opened, in which, according to and in conformity with the reports of our Lords the bishops of Soissons, messire Simon Legras and messire Charles Bourlon, of the years 1639 and 1657, there were found bones of saint (*sic*) John of Montmirel, decently arranged and wrapped in a taffeta and a very clean linen cloth, and above them a purse, in which was enclosed a double charter of parchment in ancient writing, which was taken to Paris and presented to the Father Dom Jean Mabillon… and on the 25th of the said month and year, everything was put back in the state in which it had been found; and the said casket was put back in the reliquary of gilt wood from which it had been drawn. In witness whereof, etc."

The abbey of Longpont remained in peaceful possession of these relics until the French Revolution. At that disastrous time, when everything connected with worship was stolen, broken, demolished, burned and

profaned, serious fears had to be entertained for the fate of Blessed John's remains.

It was a lay sacristan of the abbey named Lebeau who saved them. Affecting the most extreme revolutionary sentiments, he was appointed mayor of the place, which gave him every facility for hiding, in concert with some municipal officers, the Blessed's reliquary in one of the vaults of the conventual house without arousing the suspicions of the demagogues. When worship was restored, the sacristy having been designated to serve as a church after the destruction of the magnificent basilica, Lebeau hastened to return the reliquary to the priest charged with serving the parish of Longpont.

In 1839 the abbé Lebrun, then parish priest of Corcy and Longpont, having obtained authorization from Mgr de Simony, bishop of Soissons (1825–1848), opened the reliquary and found everything there entirely in conformity with what had been mentioned in the report of 1697.

In 1845 the same Mgr de Simony had given to Mesdames the duchesse de Doudeauville and the duchesse de Liancourt four small bones, two of them teeth held in a portion of the lower jaw, and two others somewhat larger.

In 1855, in concert with M. Corneau, parish priest, the owner of the château, the comte Henri de Montesquiou-Fezensac, and his son, the vicomte Fernand de Montesquiou, undertook the restoration of the reliquary. The relics were withdrawn from it for a time and duly provided with several seals. The casket (seventy-one centimetres long by eighteen wide) was recognized by able antiquaries "as being a work executed at Limoges towards the end of the reign of St. Louis, preserving its original appearance and having undergone no later alteration." — "The enamelled escutcheons, fifty in number, placed on the four faces of the reliquary, represent the coats of arms of the royal family of St. Louis and of the greatest personages of that time, such as St. Louis, Queen Blanche of Castile, Queen Margaret of Provence, the count of Poitiers, brother of St. Louis, the duke of Burgundy, the count of Dreux, the sire de Coucy, Raoul de Nesle, count of Soissons, the lord of Montmirail, etc."

Finally, on the 1st of October 1859, Mgr Cardon de Garsignies (1848–1860), ninety-fourth bishop of Soissons, having gone to Longpont, recognized the identity and authenticity of the relics of John of Montmirail, closed and sealed the long casket in which these bones have been preserved for six centuries, enclosed the said casket in the gilt-wood reliquary that had contained it since 1657, and replaced it in the church, where everyone can easily see and venerate it.

Taken from the Acta Sanctorum*; from his* Life*, written by the Rev. Father Machault; from the* Histoire du bienheureux Jean*, by the abbé Boitel; and from the* Notes locales *(local notes) supplied by M. Congnet, of the chapter of Soissons.*

BLESSED JOHN OF GHENT, MONK, CALLED THE HERMIT OF SAINT-CLAUDE

1419. — Pope: Martin V. — King of France: Charles VI, the Well-Beloved.

> *Nihil certe bono monacho felicius, nihil laboriosius, nihil fortius.*
>
> *Il n'y a rien assurément de plus heureux qu'un bon religieux, rien de plus actif, rien de plus généreux.*
>
> *There is assuredly nothing happier than a good religious, nothing more active, nothing more generous.*
>
> *John Trithemius, Hom. ad monachos.*

The Benedictine abbey of Saint-Claude (*Condatescense*, in the Jura) no longer had, in the fifteenth century, the fervour of its first days. Several times the sovereign Pontiffs, and even princes, had had to intervene to restore or maintain regular observance there. The revenues of this monastery had increased considerably through the liberality of emperors, of kings and of several lords, and for a long time already none but

religious belonging to the highest nobility had been received there. But this worldly glory had been fatal to the austerity of monastic discipline. Several of these great lords, hidden under the cowl, kept the tastes of the world, giving themselves eagerly to the exercises of the chase, wearing secular dress and keeping neither enclosure nor stability. This laxity, however, was far from universal. Beside the worldly and irregular religious, others, pious and fervent, reproduced in the abbey of Saint-Claude the virtues of former days. Such was a nobleman named John of Ghent, better known in his own time by the name of the Hermit of Saint-Claude. Blessed John of Ghent was a monk or hermit at Saint-Claude under the government of Abbot Francis II, who administered this monastery from the year 1412 to the year 1425. He lived there with the most edifying regularity, and it even appears that the dissipated life led by some religious moved him to leave the abbey and withdraw to some modest priory of the Jura dependent on Saint-Claude, in order to practise the religious virtues there more freely. This is what caused him to be given the name of Hermit, under which he is designated in the ancient records. One author asserts that he withdrew to the priory of Mouthe, to live there in the practice of penance and prayer, in imitation of Simon of Crespy-en-Valois, whose virtues had perfumed that solitude. André du Saussay speaks of Blessed John of Ghent's stay in the Jura in somewhat different terms. According to him, this holy man had a great devotion to St. Claude, whose tomb he often visited with much piety. He had a little hermitage built for himself near the monastery, and there he spent his days and nights in great purity of soul, honouring God by fasting, meditation and prayer.

These things took place at the beginning of the fifteenth century. France was then given over to the most deplorable dissensions. The war begun in 1337 between Edward III, king of England, and Philip of Valois, king of France, had continued under their successors amid an unbroken succession of crimes and misfortunes. France had reaped some glory from it, but many reverses, and the battles of Crécy (1346), Poitiers (1356) and Agincourt (1415), won by the English, had inflamed their pride and their pretensions. The madness of King Charles VI and the implacable hatreds of the Burgundians and the Armagnacs were added to the disasters of the foreign invasion, to hurl France into the abyss and deliver her to her enemies.

But it seems that God was trying this kingdom only to raise it up again in an unexpected manner. "Something miraculous, in misfortune as in prosperity," says Chateaubriand, "mingles with the history of those times." The pious Hermit of Saint-Claude, lamenting in his retreat the calamities that weighed upon France and the still greater evils that seemed to threaten her, felt himself urged by a divine inspiration to work for the restoration of peace. Every day, prostrate before the Lord, he prayed ardently for the reconciliation of the kings of France and England. One day, when he was in contemplation, he was warned by a revelation from on high that God commanded him to leave his desert and go to the two enemy kings to conjure them, in the name of heaven, to make peace at last.

Charles VII, though only dauphin, was then the real head of the kingdom. He had just taken the title of regent and had gathered at Poitiers the faithful remnants of the bodies of the State, to form of them a kind of parliament. It was about this time (1419) that John of Ghent left his hermitage of Saint-Claude to go and speak to the young prince. The prince received him kindly; and when the pious hermit exhorted him, in the name of heaven, to procure peace for his people, Charles answered that he was more grieved than anyone at the evils the war was causing, and that he desired peace with all his heart. "God will bless your good will," John of Ghent said to him, "and I foretell to you in His name that within a few years He will give you a son according to your desires." This son was in fact born four years later and was king of France under the name of Louis XI. The blessed hermit also announced to the prince that God would give him victory over those who were troubling the kingdom. When he had accomplished his mission of peace to the dauphin, he made his way toward Normandy, where the king of England, Henry V, was pursuing the course of his conquests, so fatal to France, and was taking the city of Rouen. Success had made him presumptuous, and when the holy man spoke to him of peace, Henry repulsed him with contempt and even had him shamefully ill-treated. The servant of God then spoke to him with that truly apostolic freedom which is not frightened by threats, and

foretold to him that in a short time God would call him before His judgment seat and would make the English feel the arm of His vengeance by driving them from French soil. It is well known how another envoy of heaven, Joan of Arc, soon fulfilled the pious hermit's prediction by driving the English from Orleans.

John of Ghent, having accomplished his mission, at once took the road back to Burgundy to return to his hermitage of Saint-Claude. Several times already he had gone to Charles VII to help him with his counsels and assure him of his devotedness. He always took advantage of his journeys to sow the good seed of the divine word in the places through which he passed. His life was that of a penitent, for he mortified himself by the habitual practice of fasting, wore a rough hair shirt and an iron girdle, and often spent the night in prayer. His humility equalled his gentleness, and he knew how to command the movements of his heart and to bear insults with patience. And so, even in his lifetime, he was called the holy Hermit of Saint-Claude, because everything in his words and actions breathed holiness.

On his way back he came to Troyes in Champagne, where he had already appeared several times, and lodged, as was his custom, at the inn of the Three Moors. He never failed, when passing through that city, to visit the Dominicans in order to attend their religious exercises. A few days after his arrival at Troyes he fell ill at the inn and soon saw that his end was approaching. He then sent for a holy priest named Gauthier Garnot, parish priest of Torvilliers, on the outskirts of Troyes, and begged him to procure for him the helps of religion. The pious hermit received the last sacraments with the most edifying fervour and expressed the wish to be buried in the convent of the Dominicans. Death did not frighten him, because he had lived well. He gave up his soul to God on the 29th of September 1419, stretched on a bed of straw, and regretting nothing of this world, because his treasure was in heaven. As long as his body remained in the inn where he had breathed his last, a column of fire was seen to appear over his lodging, a marvellous symbol of his charity before men and of his glory before God.

CULTE ET RELIQUES.

Cult and Relics.

Blessed John of Ghent was buried in the church of the Dominicans of Troyes: over the place of his burial was laid a small white tombstone of hard stone, measuring two feet and four fingers in width, on which he was seen represented with a long beard and long hair, his joined hands holding a rosary. The memory of the pious hermit remained in veneration, not only in the city of Troyes but above all at the court of France, where he had appeared in such unhappy times to bring counsels of peace and words of hope. Sixty-two years after his death (1482), Louis XI, whose birth he had foretold, wished to honour his memory and to have his canonization undertaken. He first wrote to the Dominicans of Troyes to obtain from them all the documents relating to the life and death of the pious hermit; he then had it decided that the body of John of Ghent should be exhumed and placed in a more fitting spot. This ceremony took place on Wednesday the 13th of November 1482, in the presence of the bishop and a great concourse of people. The coffin was carried into the choir of the church and opened under the eyes of the bishop, who carried out the recognition of the relics and had them laid in a sarcophagus, which was placed in an opening made in the wall of the nave of the church, with iron bars set before it. It was there that the people thenceforth came to honour his tomb and to invoke him as a Saint.

The cult of the blessed hermit was not yet solemnly authorized by the Church. But the people of Troyes and its neighbourhood honoured him publicly, and the numerous miracles worked at his tomb only increased the veneration in which he was held. These miracles were established by official reports drawn up in due form, which were to serve in the process for the canonization of the Blessed that Louis XI had solicited from Pope Sixtus IV. These documents, made public, produced the best impression: the venerated relics of John of Ghent were visited by a crowd of pilgrims who came from every part of Champagne. Torches, altar cloths and other objects of devotion were offered in his honour. The objects that had belonged to him were carefully

gathered at the convent of the Dominicans, his hair shirt, his iron girdle and his rosary of oak mistletoe, which were sent to King Louis XI to satisfy his devotion to the pious hermit.

We do not know what was done at Rome for the canonization of John of Ghent; while the matter was being pursued, Louis XI died (30th of August 1483); Pope Sixtus IV soon followed him to the grave (1484), and the plan for the canonization of John of Ghent remained indefinitely suspended: it has not been taken up again since that time; nevertheless the holiness of his life and the miracles worked at his tomb have caused the title of Blessed to remain attached to his name ever since.

His relics and his tomb have disappeared since the French Revolution.

This biography is an abridgement of those given of him by the professors of the college of Saint-François-Xavier at Besançon, in the Saints de Franche-Comté, *and by the Abbé Defer, in the* Saints de Troyes.

SAINT URSION, PARISH PRIEST OF ISLE-AUMONT, IN THE DIOCESE OF TROYES, AND ABBOT OF THE MONASTERY OF THAT PLACE (ABOUT 375)

A few kilometres from Troyes lies the village of Isle-Aumont, which may remember with a holy pride that it was once the retreat and the nursery of a great number of Saints. The monastery, witness of their virtues, hidden from the eyes of men but precious before the Lord, was happily placed under the invocation of Our Lady. One of the first holy priests who governed it, together with the parish of Isle, was named Ursion, a native of the diocese of Troyes. Under his direction, as zealous as it was prudent, this blessed land had nothing to envy the deserts of the Thebaid and the East. The religious it bore, like the Christians of the primitive Church, all had but one heart and one soul, and led the most edifying life in the recollection of contemplation and in the exercise of manual labour. The Gospel with its counsels and precepts, and the orders of the abbot who presided over them: such was the sole rule they followed with exemplary punctuality. Fasting, psalmody, contempt of the world and its delights, the bearing of insults, and benefits of every kind multiplied beneath their steps caused them to be regarded as angels come down among men.

It is easy to understand that if the disciples were so perfect, their head must have been of eminent holiness. And so, when, after long years spent in the exercise of the most sublime virtues, it pleased God to give St. Ursion the well-merited reward of his labours, the voice of the people joined that of the clergy to proclaim him Blessed, and the miracles worked at his tomb, confirming these homages, came to reveal to his brethren on earth the glory he enjoyed with his brethren in heaven. A church was built under his invocation near the brook of Hozain, and his feast was celebrated every year on the 29th of September, which is believed to be the day of his death. Later the body was carried to the monastery of Moutier-la-Celle, and the memory of this translation was kept on the 26th of April.

Nothing remains of the pious abbot but some fragments of the sacred bones and a precious fabric that wrapped his mortal remains. This fabric, or rather this fragment, in which magnificent designs can still be made out, appears to belong to the weaving of the thirteenth century. In 1700 the Benedictines of Moutier-la-Celle wished to assure the veneration of the ages to these relics by the following inscription: *Sudariorum et ornamentorum sacrorum fragmenta Sancti Ursionis. 1700.*

These objects are preserved, with as much care as piety, in the fine church of Saint-André, near Troyes.

Extract from the Saints de Troyes, *by the Abbé Defer.*

BLESSED NICHOLAS OF FORCA PALENA, PROPAGATOR OF THE ORDER OF THE HERMITS OF ST. JEROME (1449)

Blessed Nicholas was born in 1349 at Forca Palena, a village which no longer exists today and was formerly in the diocese of Solmona (Abruzzo Ulteriore Secondo). His parents, of noble descent, had him given an education in keeping with their rank; the young Nicholas quickly made serious progress in the study of divine and human letters; he then devoted himself to the ecclesiastical state and received the order of priesthood.

Forca Palena was for some years the happy theatre of his fine deeds; but our young priest, pained by the veneration and respect his fellow countrymen showed him, left his native land, resolved to lead a wholly hidden life. He knew that the desert offers a refuge against the persecutions of the world; that it is the rest of the weary, the consolation of the afflicted, the wholesome shelter against the heats of the world, the place where sin has no access and where the soul finds true freedom. Joyfully he hastened to Rome and presented himself to some hermits who lived in community near the little church of San Salvatore. Admitted into their company, he settled among them and later became their superior.

Domenico Capecio, a Neapolitan hermit, had formed a sincere friendship with Blessed Nicholas in the convent of San Salvatore; on the point of death he bequeathed all his goods to him, expressing the wish to see them used for the building of a little hermitage in the countryside of Naples. No sooner had Nicholas closed the eyes of his generous friend than he went to that city (1417) and founded the hermitage requested: it still existed in the last century under the name of Our Lady of Graces.

Later Nicholas came back to Rome and set about looking for a deep solitude where he could establish a new hermitage and settle without return. His choice fell on the Janiculum hill; there he had a few cells built and a chapel, which was dedicated to St. Onuphrius and is today a cardinal's title. Disciples were not slow to come; in a few years the solitudes of the Janiculum were peopled with anchorites. Nicholas, though past eighty, did not cease to direct them; he even wished to give them a Rule, and made the journey to Rome to ask Pope Eugene IV to unite his community to the Congregation of the Hermits of St. Jerome. The sovereign Pontiff approved this union and confirmed it by a special bull dated 1446.

Blessed Nicholas governed his community until the age of a hundred, when it pleased the Lord to put an end to his long career (29th of September 1449). He was buried in the church of his hermitage, and his tomb became famous for the miracles worked there. The village of Forca Palena obtained relics of the Blessed and chose him as its patron (1638); Pope Clement XIV approved his cult (24th of August 1774).

Acta Sanctorum. — Cf. Continuators of Godescard.

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[1] See some details on the following day. (Additions of the Bollandists.)

[2] It is believed that St. Fraternus is the same as St. Saturnus, to whom St. Germanus (418–448) entrusted the care of his diocese during his absence, and who was priest of the Oratory of Saint-Maurice. He was ordained on the 26th of September 448. In 451 the Huns, led by Attila (432–453), passed through the town of Auxerre and put St. Fraternus to death (29 September). He was buried in the Oratory of Saint-Maurice, where the crypts of the former abbey of Saint-Germain still preserve the martyr's tomb. — *Gallia Christiana nova.*

[3] Cyriacus was born at Corinth, a town of the present kingdom of Greece (Argolis), and left his native country early to withdraw into the desert. After visiting the holy places of Palestine, he settled at Jerusalem and entered as a monk the laura then governed by the holy abbot Eustorgius. When he had been formed in that house in the practice of all the monastic virtues, desiring to lead a more perfect life, he travelled through the immensity of the deserts, and in turn perfumed with the fragrance of his holiness those of Suca, of Natuph, of Ruban and of Susac. It is asserted that he was bound by a great friendship with St. John the Silentiary, and that together with him he strongly opposed the Origenist monks, who had Leontius and Nonnus for leaders. Cyriacus reached a very advanced old age and fell asleep in the Lord at the age of a hundred and seven. — *Vies des Pères des déserts d'Orient*, by the Rev. Father Michel-Ange Marin.

[4] He is also called Leodowin, Lutwin, Luitwin, Leotwin. — He came of one of the most illustrious families of Austrasia and was brought up at Trier by St. Basin, his uncle, who was its archbishop. His parents engaged him in the bonds of marriage, and he had a son named Milo. As soon as the death of his wife had given him back his freedom, despising the vanities of the world, he built at his own expense the monastery of Metloc or Mithlac (*Mediolacus*, Order of St. Benedict), on the Saar, and there embraced the religious life. His virtues drew him from the shade of the cloister and raised him, after the death of Basin, to the archiepiscopal see of Trier (698), which he held until his death, which occurred in 713. Some authors have wrongly claimed that he also governed the Churches of Reims and Laon. He was buried at Mithlac, where his relics are kept. — *Acta Sanctorum*, 29 September.

[5] This date is that of the dedication of the church of St. Michael on Mount Gargano.

[6] As angel of justice, St. Michael is naturally the rightful patron of the dying, of scale-makers and of measurers; as patron of Michelangelo he is, by extension, patron of his more or less immediate disciples, the painters, gilders, plasterers, glaziers.

[7] For further details, and in general for everything relating to confraternities and religious associations, see the *Manuel* of the Abbé Verry, priest of the diocese of Verdun. — Bar-le-Duc, Louis Guérin, 1873.

[8] This convent still exists in part. The abbot's house serves as lodging for the gendarmerie brigade, and the town prison has just been built in the courtyard. It is a very different kind of convent. Physical force replaces moral force. The abbess's dwelling has been turned into a billiard room and a dance hall. The nave of the church, which was intended for the public, the sanctuary, the sacristy and the belfry were demolished in 1824 and replaced by private houses. The Ladies' choir has been turned into a barn. Only the west wing of the convent remains, and even its interior has been altered in a deplorable way to house several households. The north wing no longer exists; some bathrooms have been built in its place.

[9] Of the hospital only the church remains; it has undergone a strange transformation. The porch, which is so beautiful, serves as a sheepfold, the nave as a barn, the sanctuary as a stable and a dwelling for the farmer.

30 September

Martyrologies

Thirtieth day of September

MARTYROLOGE ROMAIN.

Roman Martyrology.

At Bethlehem of Judah, the death of St. JEROME, priest and doctor of the Church, who, having become skilled in the knowledge of letters and having imitated the life of the most perfect solitaries, struck down several monsters of heresy and pierced them with the sword of his doctrine; at last, having lived to the age of decrepitude, he died in peace and was buried near the manger of the Lord; afterwards his body was carried to Rome and placed in the church of St. Mary Major. 420. — The same day, St. Leopardus, martyr, one of the officers of the household of Julian the Apostate, who was beheaded at Rome, and whose body was afterwards carried to Aix-la-Chapelle.[1] 362. — At Solothurn, in Switzerland, the martyrdom of St. Victor and St. Ursus, of the glorious Theban legion, who under the emperor Maximian were first subjected to horrible tortures; but a heavenly light having shone above them, the executioners fell to the ground and the Martyrs were delivered from their hands; they were then thrown into the fire, where they remained without suffering harm, so that they had to be finished off by the sword.[2] 286. — At Piacenza, St. Antoninus, martyr, of the same legion. 286. — The same day, St. GREGORY, bishop of Greater Armenia, who, after suffering much under Diocletian, died in peace. About 323. — At Canterbury, in England, St. Honorius, bishop and confessor.[3] 653. — At Rome, the birthday in heaven of St. Francis Borgia, of the Society of Jesus, whose feast is celebrated on the 10th of October.[4] 1572. — Also at Rome, St. Sophia, widow, mother of the holy virgins Faith, Hope and Charity.[5] 138.

MARTYROLOGE DE FRANCE, REVU ET AUGMENTÉ.

Martyrology of France, revised and enlarged.

In the dioceses of Cologne, Meaux, Paris and Saint-Dié, St. Jerome, doctor of the Church, mentioned in the Roman Martyrology of this day. 420. — In the diocese of Meaux, the memory of St. Antoninus, third bishop of that see and confessor. It is believed that he was a disciple of St. Sanctinus; his relics were preserved in the cathedral church, but they were burned by the Calvinists in 1562. — In the Limousin, St. Victurnian (Vertunien and Victôre), hermit. He was born, it is said, in Scotland, of a family in which piety was hereditary. Having reached adolescence and desiring to serve God in complete freedom, he generously left his country and his parents and passed into Aquitaine, to seek there a place where he could withdraw entirely from the sight of men. A frightful desert, replaced today by a rich and fertile valley in the midst of which rises gracefully the township of Saint-Victurnien (Haute-Vienne, arrondissement of Rochechouart, canton of

Saint-Junien), fixed his choice. After leading there for long years a life full of virtues and good works, a life more angelic than human, he fell asleep there in the Lord, bowed down with old age and laden with merits. His body was buried in the township that bears his name, where he is still honoured in our own days by a great concourse of people.[6] 7th c. — In the former diocese of Cornouaille (Finistère), the present diocese of Quimper and Léon, St. Moriz or Maurice, abbot of the Cistercian monasteries of Langonnet and Carnoët. He is already named in the Martyrology of France of the 20th of September, and we shall give his life on the 5th of October, which is the day of his death. 1191. — At Vermand (Aisne), in the diocese of Soissons, St. Simon, count of Crespy-en-Valois (Oise), monk of Saint-Oyend and founder of the priory of Mouthe. He is already mentioned in the Martyrology of France of the 25th and the 29th of September, and we shall give his life on the 5th of October. 1082. — At Paris, the solemnity of the reception of the holy relics with which Louis IX enriched the Sainte-Chapelle. 13th c. — At Châlons-sur-Marne, St. Lumier, eighteenth bishop of that see and confessor, whose life we shall give on the 3rd of October. 626. — In the former diocese of Saint-Bertrand-de-Comminges (*Lugdunum Convenarum*), the present diocese of Toulouse, St. Gaudens (Gaudeins, Goins, Gauzens), martyr, whose life we gave on the 30th of August. 475. — At Moissac (Tarn-et-Garonne), in the diocese of Montauban, St. Ambert or Ansbert, chorepiscopus, abbot of the Benedictine monastery of Saint-Pierre of Moissac (*Musciacum*) and confessor. About 680. — In the former Cistercian abbey of Villers-en-Brabant (*Villarium*), in the diocese of Namur, Blessed Conrad, ninth abbot of that monastery. He was successively canon of Saint-Lambert at Liège, abbot of Villers, of Clairvaux and of Cîteaux, cardinal-bishop of Porto, and legate of the Holy See in Languedoc.[7] 1227. — In the same abbey of Villers, Blessed William of Brussels, eleventh abbot of that monastery and confessor. He was afterwards abbot of Clairvaux and died in Germany, where he had gone to defend the liberty of the Church and where he was thrown into prison by order of the emperor Frederick. About 1236. — At Saint-Malo (Ille-et-Vilaine), in the diocese of Rennes, St. LÉRY (*Laurus*), priest and abbot. 7th c.

MARTYROLOGES DES ORDRES RELIGIEUX.

Martyrologies of the Religious Orders.

Martyrology of the Order of St. Jerome. — At Bethlehem of Judah, the death of our Father St. Jerome, priest and doctor of the Church, who, having become skilled in the knowledge of letters, became also the imitator of the most perfect solitaries, and used his doctrine as a sword to strike down several monsters of heresy. At last, having reached an extreme old age, he died in peace and was buried near the manger of the Saviour. Afterwards his body was carried to Rome and placed in the basilica of St. Mary Major. 420.

ADDITIONS FAITES D'APRÈS LES BOLLANDISTES ET AUTRES HAGIOGRAPHES.

Additions made from the Bollandists and other hagiographers.

At Bethlehem of Judah, St. PAULA, widow, mentioned in the Roman Martyrology of the 26th of January. 404. — In Armenia, a region of Western Asia, with St. Gregory the Illuminator, mentioned in the Roman Martyrology of this day, the holy Rhipsime, Gaiana and their companions, virgins and martyrs. Gaiana had grown old in the practice of the purest virtues, instructing young Christian women and training them in the devout life, leading them in the ways of a perfect spirituality and teaching them to consecrate their virginity to the Lord. Her pious companions were very numerous; among them Rhipsime had been endowed by heaven with an extraordinary beauty. Diocletian coveted the young Christian and asked King Tiridates to deliver her to him. As she energetically refused to betray her chastity, the barbarian had her tongue torn out; she was then stripped of her garments and bound to a stake, where she was burned all over her body with torches; Tiridates also had her eyes put out, her belly slit open and her entrails removed. Thirty-three companions of the holy Martyr were massacred with her, and Gaiana, with two others, was reserved for new tortures: the next day, when they had been stripped of their garments, they were nailed to the ground and

flayed alive; after which their heads were struck off. Later King Tiridates, having been converted to the true faith by the ministry of St. Gregory the Armenian, had search made for the remains of these holy victims of his hateful tyranny; a superb temple was dedicated under their invocation, and their relics were placed in shrines to be exposed to the veneration of the faithful. About 310. — At Piacenza (*Placentia*), a fortified town of Italy, the holy martyrs Castus and Desiderius, whose precious relics are preserved in that town and enrich the church of

Sant'Antonino. — At Pesaro (*Pisaurum*), a fortified town of Italy, chief town of the former Roman delegation of Urbino and Pesaro, Blessed Felicina of Meda or of Milan, virgin and abbess. She was born about 1378 of an illustrious and Christian family. From her earliest years her artless piety and precocious qualities made her loved by all who knew her. After the death of her parents, whom she had the grief of losing early, she resolved to embrace the monastic life and withdrew, with her sister, Blessed Seraphina, into the convent of St. Ursula at Milan (1400). For twenty-five years she gave there the example of every virtue and deserved to be held up as a model to the other religious. And so she was judged worthy to become abbess (1425). Under her wise direction her monastery became flourishing and furnished illustrious members. The renown of the superior spread far and wide, and in 1450, the pious Battista Malatesta, together with her virtuous daughter Elisabetta, having built a monastery of Poor Clares at Pesaro, Felicina of Meda was elected its superior. God was calling her there: she obeyed, but the devil raised up numerous persecutions against her. They served only to purify her the more, and when she had reached the end of her course, white and pure as the lily of the fields, she flew away to heaven, carrying with her the regrets of her weeping religious. 1444.

SAINT PAULA OF ROME, WIDOW, DISCIPLE OF ST. JEROME, FOUNDRESS OF MONASTERIES

404. — Pope: St. Innocent I. — Emperor of the West: Honorius.

> *Ce n'est pas seulement la mort pour la foi qui fait le martyre : la vie immaculée d'une âme qui sert Dieu avec amour et pureté en est un aussi, et de tous les jours. Que l'on triomphe pour Dieu dans les combats sanglants ou dans les luttes du cœur, on est également couronné.*
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> *It is not only death for the faith that makes martyrdom: the spotless life of a soul that serves God with love and purity is one also, and a martyrdom of every day. Whether one triumphs for God in bloody combats or in the struggles of the heart, one is equally crowned. St. Jerome.*

The great St. Jerome, writing to the virgin Eustochium, daughter of St. Paula, praises our Saint thus: "Were all the members of my body to be changed into so many tongues and to take on so many voices, I could still say nothing worthy of the virtues of the holy and venerable Paula. Noble by birth, nobler still by holiness; powerful once by her riches, more illustrious now by the poverty of Jesus Christ; descended through Rogatus, her father, from the famous Agamemnon, who took the renowned city of Troy after a ten years' siege, and through Blesilla, her mother, from the Scipios and the Gracchi, who are among the most illustrious of the Romans, she preferred Bethlehem to Rome, and to gilded palaces the lowly roof of a poor dwelling."

Paula was brought up by her mother in a spirit of love for religion and of deep aversion for the things of paganism, and in the gravity of life befitting a patrician and a Christian. Carefully kept in the shade of the domestic hearth, she was never seen at the circuses or the theatres. She passed with disdain before those places resounding with the mad joys of pagan life, accompanying her mother, according to the custom of the time, to the basilicas and to the feasts of the Church, and also to the tombs of the martyrs and to the catacombs. She loved to go about those places where the faith, now triumphant in the world, had so long lain hidden; to venerate the still recent traces of so many martyrs; to breathe, so to speak, the fragrance that rose from their tombs; to contemplate those simple paintings and pious symbols in which we find again today, with so much emotion, half effaced, the thoughts of primitive Christianity and of the persecuted faithful, those hopes of immortality in death, and all the detail of the dogmas of the Christian creed. Acts of charity,

together with pious practices, had their share in her religious education. Into the soul of the young child were cast the seeds of that tenderness for the unfortunate which we shall soon see reach in her the state of a sublime passion.

This strong moral and Christian education was crowned by the serious and solid cultivation of the mind which was also traditional in the great families of Rome. Besides the sacred books, which were her first reading, Paula's studies, brilliant and wide, embraced both the Latin and the Greek literatures; having Greek as well as Roman blood in her veins, she was bound by a special title to cultivate the letters of Athens as well as those of Rome, and she spoke both languages equally well. She read the historians, the poets, the philosophers. We shall see later of what use this profane culture would be to her for the admirable Christian life to which she was one day to rise. Meanwhile these studies developed in her the rich gifts she had received from nature, a sound judgement, a firm mind, a lofty reason; a precious balance was thus established between her intelligence and her character.

In time, however, the age came when the brilliant patrician had to receive a husband from her parents' hands and add to all the advantages of her birth and her qualities the lustre of an illustrious alliance. She married a young Roman of Greek origin named Toxotius, who belonged through his mother to the old family of the Julii, which boasted that it went back to Aeneas. Toxotius did not share the faith of his young wife. He does not, however, appear to have been unworthy of the young Christian he had married, and the extraordinary affection Paula always had for him, and the inconsolable grief with which she mourned him, show that their union was one of those the world calls happy. God blessed this union. Four daughters were born to Paula one after another. The eldest, named Blesilla, seemed endowed with all the liveliest and most amiable gifts of mind: a frail and delicate health, but a rich and fine nature which from her tenderest childhood promised everything, in the hands of a mother like Paula, in charm of intelligence and in qualities of soul. Paulina, the second, also had a most happy nature, but wholly opposite to Blesilla's. She was not, like her sister, a flame; but, with fewer brilliant flashes of wit and less lively spontaneity of character, she gave every sign of exquisite good sense and sure judgement, and she promised to have in solidity all that her elder sister had in brilliance. As for the third, called by a graceful name borrowed from the Greek, Eustochium (rule, uprightness), a gentle child, modest, reserved, timid, she was like a flower hiding its fragrance within itself; but that fragrance was sweet, and on looking closely one could already suspect in this young soul treasures that would astonish on the day of their unfolding. The fourth was named Rufina.

Paula, at this period of her life, did not guard herself enough against the luxury and softness of her time. Like all patrician ladies, she passed through the streets of Rome carried by her slaves in a gilded litter; she would have feared to set foot on the ground and touch the mud of the streets; the weight of a silk gown was a burden to her delicacy; a ray of sunlight slipping through the thick curtains of her litter would have seemed to her a conflagration. She made use, like the women of her rank, of what she was one day to reproach herself with so much; she did not refuse herself the delights of the bath, which had so great a part in Roman life; she spent, according to common usage, the winter in Rome and the summer in some villa, where the countryside, her friends and a choice library shared her day. Yet in the very midst of this luxury Paula, though still far from the virtues she would one day practise, was known and respected as a woman of altogether irreproachable dignity of bearing and conduct. Not a voice was ever raised in Rome against her virtue. On the contrary, she was cited as a Roman of the old stock, recalling the women of former days who by their strict chastity had been the honour of the republic; and when it was desired to offer the young patrician ladies of the time a model in this respect, Paula was named. There was in this, no doubt, the pride and dignity of the old Roman blood; but there were above all the inspirations and higher views of faith. It was under this surer guard of the Christian spirit that Paula passed through all this opulence, fatal to so many others, without perishing in it; and if, in those brilliant and happy years, the young wife of Toxotius did not always keep present enough to her mind the maxim of the Apostle, which is to use the things of the world as though not using them, simply

to lend oneself to the world and not to give oneself to it; if she happened to relish too much those dangerous enjoyments and vanities, there was in the trials that soon came upon her an ample compensation for this softness, and in the austerity of her penance a superabundant expiation.

Paula was not only a woman of untarnished reputation and strict honour; to this trait of virtue, at once Roman and Christian, St. Jerome adds a second, exclusively Christian: she was, he says, “the gentlest and kindest of women towards the lowly, towards the plebeians, towards the slaves.” The natural elevation of her soul, and still more the grace of Jesus Christ and the labour of virtue, had entirely preserved her from the dryness and haughtiness, the impatience and disdain which pride of blood and of wealth breeds in hard or small souls; she had that necessary complement of nobility and beauty, that sign of a natural distinction and a superior merit, goodness; and these, with her austere honour, were the two traits whose contrast formed the charm of her countenance. One can understand how a woman of this character and this virtue must have fulfilled the delicate duties imposed on her by the mixed society in which she lived. Her relations were of two kinds: she was bound to the women most eminent for piety in the Church; the foremost Christian women of Rome, such as Marcella and Titiana, were her intimate friends. She also had relations with the pagan part of the patriciate, whom she received in her house and by whom she was received. This was all that was most considerable in Rome, and also most pagan. Relations with such a society evidently called for much reserve, dignity and propriety; it was above all the duty of Christian women, then as now, to be among unbelievers, by the amiability of their intercourse and the superiority of their virtues, the living demonstration of their faith. They thus opened the ways to truth in more than one soul more effectively than by controversy, and it is permissible to believe that they often had much to do, without appearing to, with the recruits Christianity was incessantly gaining in the bosom of the patriciate. In her domestic hearth Paula was the happiest of wives and mothers. Her young family grew up joyfully around her, giving the fairest hopes. Toxotius, however, had one regret. He would have liked an heir to his name, and he had none. This desire was at last granted: a fifth child was born to Paula, who was a son and received, like his father, the name of Toxotius.

Paula was only thirty-one when God sent her the great trial of widowhood. This unexpected blow, which came to surprise her in the midst of all her happiness, was terrible for her: it was the moment God chose to break everything in that unexpectedly opened tomb. Paula was at first crushed and without strength against this grief, so much so that her life was feared for. Nothing could stop her tears. Never was husband more mourned; never did a blow penetrate deeper into a soul. In breaking all the fetters that held her back in the ordinary ways and kept her from rising to the great virtues, God was making her a call which she was free to follow, but after which, heeded or ignored, her life was to be fixed for ever. Widowhood is a sacred thing. Apart from the supernatural merit faith discovers in it, there rests upon the widow who is truly a widow the triple consecration of grief, of fidelity and of virtue. The virgin is faithful only to God and to herself; the widow is faithful besides to him whom she has loved and lost: it is for him also that she henceforth keeps the integrity of her heart, making of his dear memory a cult and a life; and such is the shade that distinguishes the widow from the virgin, two admirable creations of Christianity, two flowers born on the same stem, which mingle their fragrance in the Church without confusing it. If there is something purer in the virgin, there is something more august and more touching in the widow, because sufferings and tears and sacrifice have passed that way. Paula understood what God wanted of her; recovering the freedom of her soul and withdrawing from the world, she resolved to walk generously in the way to which God was calling her. Happily she found around her examples, a society, souls that had entered on the same way and were a spur and a help to her. This society had its centre on the Aventine; it was formed of widows or virgins belonging to the first families of Rome, who were then giving the Church, under the eyes and at the impulse of Pope Damasus, a great spectacle of virtue.

There came about suddenly an admirable blossoming of virtues in her soul. The transformation was sudden and complete. A kind of abyss was dug between her and the world; but this break was only a deeper flight

into God. It was a second freedom and a new need that widowhood brought her. Feeling that nothing could ever fill the immense void that had just opened in her; seeing that everything breaks and flees from us here below, that God alone does not escape, and that in Him one finds everything again, she threw herself back toward God with a kind of passion so ardent and a joy so full that one would have said that the death of Toxotius, so much mourned by her, was in her eyes only a deliverance. And this love in which she now plunged herself wholly, while it brought her the true and solid consolations, created in her soul wonderful ascents, admirably indicated by St. Jerome.

The first degree to which she rose was a new and greater love of prayer. She felt powerfully and sweetly inclined to it. For the more a heart closes on the side of earth, the more it opens on the side of heaven. Having renounced the joys of worldly life, Paula relished all the more those of assiduous intercourse with God. And so her prayer was prolonged far into the night, and more than once the sun surprised her still kneeling and praying. Her great happiness was to go to the oratory on the Aventine to sing psalms with Marcella's virgins. Holy Scripture became her daily meditation. Thus, while great sorrows only darken certain souls and cover them as with darkness, they had on the contrary filled Paula's soul with more light and unveiled to her, wider and more radiant, the horizon of eternity. In this brightness that now illumined her, her love of God and of heavenly things growing every day, her soul rose to a second degree, namely an exquisite delicacy of conscience and an extraordinary desire for absolute purity of heart. In so fine a disposition, to secure herself a freer flight toward God and to keep her heart more intact and better defended, she not only surrounded herself with a strict guard, but also embraced with heroic courage the most austere practices of Christian mortification. All the delicate habits of former days, all the comforts of life, were suppressed. This patrician lady now slept only on hair cloths thrown on the bare ground, and vied in abstinences and fasts with the ascetics of the desert. In this fervour the remembrance of her less perfect life of former days and of the concessions made to the world filled her with confusion and grief and opened in her a fountain of tears. And these tears, the fruit of so pure a love of God, mingling with those which the ever-living memory of Toxotius also made her shed, just as these two affections had mingled and blended in her soul, flowed unceasingly from this double source with such abundance that they wearied her eyes to the point of making her sight feared for. Night itself did not stop them, as if Paula, says St. Jerome, had taken literally for her own part this word of the Psalmist: "Every night I will wash my bed with my tears; I will water my couch with my weeping."

These holy rigours did not only raise Paula to an admirable purity of soul; they had another fruitfulness besides: they kindled in her, as always happens, an ardent flame of charity. Her heart, at the same time as it turned thus to the love of God, found another sublime outpouring in the love of the poor. And certainly the field open to her activity was vast; for in the bosom of that people-king which thought it beneath its dignity to work, destitution was frightful. All her revenues went in alms. Her charity knew no measure and could not stop; and never did a poor man come away from her empty-handed. She gave everything, and when she had nothing left she borrowed in order to be able to give again, sometimes putting herself under the necessity of borrowing once more to repay her loans. Not content with lavishing all she had, she did more: she was not afraid to make herself importunate for the poor and to put at their service the connections her birth and her great name had given her in Rome; an apostle of charity, as she was its model.

For two years already Paula had been giving herself, as we have just said, with her holy friends, to the practice of these generous virtues and giving patrician society these fine examples of edification, when suddenly there spread through Rome a piece of news which brought the liveliest joy into the little cenacle of the Aventine and into the whole group of generous women who had entered the same movement. The West was to have its great council as the East had had its own. Pope Damasus had summoned all the Catholic bishops to Rome for the year 382, and venerable bishops whose virtues fame proclaimed were expected from the East. Paula and her friends did not fail to profit by the three months the holy bishops stayed in Rome.

They could not weary of seeing and hearing them; Paula above all, who had the happiness of having Epiphanius in her palace, pressed the venerable bishop every day with her piously curious questions. She wanted to know everything about the admirable life of the Fathers of the desert. Epiphanius and Paulinus related in detail all the marvels they had seen. These accounts threw Paula into rapture. It was in these daily conversations with Paulinus and St. Epiphanius that she felt born in her soul the first inspiration of the design she was one day to carry out. On hearing of the Anthonys and the Hilarions, of the wonders of the Thebaid, and of those women and virgins who on the banks of the Nile vied in austerities with the solitaries, her disgust with Rome and the world, already so deep in her, grew in such proportion, and the attraction toward a life still higher than the one she was leading, the life the Fathers of the desert had created for themselves and whose ideal had just appeared to her so close at hand, seized her so keenly, that there were moments when, losing the memory of her house, her goods, her children and her family, she would have wished to go off on the spot, had it been possible, for ever into the solitude of the Anthonys and the Pauls.

Paula and Marcella and their holy friends keenly desired to enter into relations with the companion of the two Eastern bishops who had remained in Rome, St. Jerome, and to profit, at the same time as the Pope, by the lights of this austere and learned monk who bore, so to speak, the desert on his face, and in whom they foresaw a necessary support for their manner of life, already so much opposed, and an incomparable master in Christian learning and Christian living. Jerome decided to give readings and explanations of the sacred books on the Aventine. He soon recognized what disciples he had in these highly cultivated women. “What I saw in them,” he wrote later, “of mind and penetration, together with ravishing purity and virtue, I could not express.” Understanding, then, what he could do with souls so disposed, and how far they could go with a guide who knew how to lead them, he resolved not to fail in such a work; and nothing is more touching than the familiarity full of confidence and respect, the illustrious and pure friendship, that was formed between them and him; their astonishing ardour, their admirable docility in following the direction of this great master, and the active solicitude and devoted care of the austere monk to reveal to them the treasures of the sacred Books and sustain them in their heroic life.

Paula found so fully in this divine source of Scripture all that her soul needed, consolations, strength and light, that she plunged into it, so to speak, with the energy and courage she put into everything, and all the more now that she could have a solution to the difficulties the sacred text constantly presents. She discovered in it, delighted, things she had not perceived there before. Understanding that the true golden key to this treasure of the Scriptures is the language in which they were written, she wished to read them in that language, and was not afraid of the formidable study of Hebrew which had cost Jerome so many labours. Paula drew St. Jerome’s gaze the most. The closer he saw her, the more he admired her. Her soul seemed to him more beautiful still than her mind. He perceived in her wonderful aspirations and a courage that was frightened by nothing. Of all the souls of whom God made him the guide, none had more affinities and secret harmonies with his own soul or was better made to follow his strong direction; but to none was this support more necessary. Having passed, barely two years before, from the most opulent patrician existence to this life veiled in mourning and penance, and still under the blow of her recent grief, she had particular need of being sustained. And then, she was not alone. Jerome saw at her side the young Eustochium, a flower still so tender and delicate, and those four other children, Blesilla, Paulina, Rufina and the little Toxotius, who had to be brought up and directed: a great burden for a young mother. Lastly, besides the general opposition that was already beginning in Rome against the manner of life Paula had embraced, and that was going to grow, Jerome foresaw in Paula’s own circle, above all on the part of the pagan members of her family, special difficulties and the storms that were soon to break. For all these reasons he understood that there was a fine work to be done there in particular, the direction of Paula, and he devoted himself to it. It was a great thing, and quite new in the world, this direction of souls created by Christianity. St. Jerome, whatever his knowledge of the Scriptures, was a still greater master of the Christian life, and no one, by the temper of his character as by the views of his mind, was better made for this ministry of direction that was to fall to him

with Paula and her holy friends, as we have seen in his life.

Paula, however, was a mother, and the extraordinary ardour with which she gave herself, under St. Jerome's impulse, to this life of austerities, study, prayer and charities could not make her forget what she owed to her young family, to those five orphaned children who were growing up around her.

But the pearl of her children was her third daughter, Eustochium, who was gentleness and candour itself, innocence and piety. The trait that above all distinguished her was her love for her mother. She never left her, thought and saw only through her, let herself be wholly directed and formed. When Marcella, seeing this young girl's admirable dispositions for piety, had wished to have her near her and had asked Paula for her, to bring her up for some time with the virgins of the Aventine, Eustochium had gone there with happiness, and Marcella had kept in her own room and, as it were, brooded under her wings this child of her friend; and when she gave her back to Paula, Eustochium became still more attached to her mother, as the young vine, as it grows, clings more closely to the elm that serves it as a support. She was never seen to take a step without her, and her joy was great to accompany her on her visits, whether to the catacombs, to the basilicas or to the poor; and the innocent child had but one desire, to imitate her mother and to consecrate herself like her to the pure and full service of God in holy virginity. Gentle and silent, but hiding beneath this veil of modesty a choice intelligence, and in her pure heart, beneath a frail appearance, a strength capable of the greatest things: such was Eustochium. She was not yet fifteen at the arrival of St. Jerome, and, like a flower beginning to open, she already let her treasures be guessed. It was a matter of bringing this evident vocation to its fulfilment and of keeping for Jesus Christ a young virgin whom He manifestly wanted for His spouse, but who was to be keenly disputed with Him.

Eustochium, however, followed her way perseveringly. "This flower of virgins," as St. Jerome calls her, continued to blossom under her mother's hand and heart. In vain did she see her two elder sisters shine in rich attire and wear gold necklaces and jewels; her taste for the virginal life declared itself more and more. Before an attraction so spontaneous, so deep, so persevering, Paula had not hesitated, and at a date which is not known, perhaps even before the arrival of St. Jerome, she had presented her to Pope Damasus to receive from him the veil of virgins; and the pious child had come back to her mother's palace happier and more radiant under her *flammeum* and her brown robe than Blesilla on the day she had entered the palace of the young Furius in that brilliant wedding attire so soon changed for a robe of mourning. Eustochium's step caused a great stir in Rome and redoubled the irritation of Paula's family. Hymetius, upset in the plans of marriage he dreamed of for his niece, and embarrassed by the smiles and jests of Praetextatus and his other pagan friends, was deeply wounded. But Paula was delighted with her daughter's dispositions and growing fervour. In spite of her youth, none among the virgins of the Aventine surpassed Eustochium in assiduity at prayer and the chanting of psalms, and in ardour to follow St. Jerome into that meadow of the Scriptures he had opened to them; even the study of Hebrew had not frightened her; and St. Jerome had conceived for this child, as for her mother, a singular respect and devotion. Yet with this joy of Paula's there mingled keen anxieties for the future. For, besides the opposition she already met in her family, she saw a storm gathering, not only against her but against the whole movement toward the monastic life which had been going on in Rome for some time and into which Jerome was calling the patrician ladies in crowds. It was the inner struggle of the family and the public struggle of the world against the religious life that were beginning.

At the news of the conversion of Blesilla, Paula's eldest daughter, the anger of the whole pagan and worldly part of Paula's family reached its height; Hymetius above all broke out in harsh words against his sister-in-law and called Jerome a seducer. The whole patriciate, and even the people, shared this excitement. People were beginning to take fright at this progress of monastic ideas. Paula having begun to go about the poor quarters of Rome with more solicitude than ever, accompanied now not only by Eustochium but by Blesilla, glad to associate this doubly cherished daughter with the sweetness of charity, her alms, already so considerable, grew still more; and as her revenues, vast as they were, no longer sufficed her, she went so far

as to sell part of her patrimony to increase her resources. And when, to moderate these holy prodigalities, people spoke to her of her children, “What better patrimony can I leave them,” she would say, “than the inheritance of the blessings of Jesus Christ?” — not esteeming the preservation of her immense fortune in all its opulence an advantage for her children comparable to the treasure of heavenly graces she hoped to merit for them by alms which in any case still left them rich enough. But these lofty views of a lively faith, this higher confidence in God, could not be to the taste of everyone in her family, and the murmurs her charities had long been arousing at last brought on a storm. A violent scene took place between her and Hymetius. He flew into a passion and harshly reproached his sister-in-law with forgetting her duties as a mother and stripping her children. It was then that Paula, to silence all these reproaches and regain more freedom, decided, in a heroic inspiration, on a great act, related unfortunately too briefly by St. Jerome. “Already dead to the world before dying,” he says, “she distributed all her goods among her children.”

This great act accomplished, she began to speak without mystery and to announce openly her plan of leaving for the East and the holy places. Such an announcement again caused great commotion in her family. People were exasperated. It was thought that if she once went to the East she would stay there; it was foreseen, moreover, that Blesilla perhaps, and Eustochium certainly, would accompany her. Hymetius, in his vexation, believed that a decisive effort must be made, and that everything would be broken off if they succeeded in winning Eustochium back for the world. With this in mind, a plot was organized by him to shake the young girl’s vocation, and his wife was charged with carrying it out. Under a pretext St. Jerome does not give, Paula was induced to have Eustochium taken to her aunt, who loaded her with caresses. Then suddenly, at a certain moment, Eustochium found herself surrounded by slaves; her veil and her woollen robe were taken from her, her hair was let down and plaited in the fashion of girls of the world, her face and eyes were painted, she was made to put on magnificent silk gowns; then, thus adorned, she was presented to the whole company gathered at Hymetius’s house, and everyone vied in exclaiming over her graces and her beauty and in pitying her for the violence which, it was said, her mother was making her suffer. It was hoped that this finery and the poison of these praises and speeches would reach the young girl’s heart; they were mistaken. Eustochium, gentle and calm, bore it all; then, when evening came, she put on her brown robe again and went quietly back to her mother.

The generous young girl, like her sister Blesilla, was only the more confirmed in her manner of life. Their fervour redoubled. In spite of everything the two sisters went on, joyful and valiant, with their way of life, laughing at obstacles and protesting that nothing could shake them. Paula, Blesilla and Eustochium advanced every day further and further in the life of sacrifice and immolation. The generous love of God consumed all three alike; Holy Scripture was more than ever their delight, and Jerome could not keep up with the labours asked of him, above all by the ardent Blesilla. It was she also who now pressed most for that great journey to the East which her mother and sister had so long cherished the desire of. The time seemed to have come to carry out this plan; but God had other thoughts, for Blesilla at least: the death of Blesilla, which came unexpectedly in the midst of all these plans for pious pilgrimages, struck Paula again at the most sensitive point of her soul and reopened all her wounds.

Blesilla’s passing left a void in her heart that nothing could fill. Her eyes sought her and saw her everywhere; but she was nowhere. Everything recalled her memory, but nothing gave her back. And so, in the immense sadness this loss left her, Rome became more unbearable to her than ever. She needed what is usually needed in great sorrows, a great diversion. The journey to the East, suddenly halted by this unforeseen death, and although it had lost a great charm for her since Blesilla would no longer be of the party, could alone distract this broken soul by powerful emotions; and piety and grief now joined in counselling it. The very opposition it met with in her family was for her one more reason to undertake it. Paula’s decision was therefore taken irrevocably. Her heart had too great a need to seek near the places where the Saviour had died an outlet for her grief and her piety, and the inner attraction that drew her there was too powerful.

When the preparations for departure were finished, she went with Eustochium and the companions of their great journey to the shore, where a ship awaited them. At the moment of saying farewell to her children and her kindred, “her heart was torn,” St. Jerome tells us; “it seemed to her that her limbs were being wrenched from her; but she fought against this torture, and her heroism had this admirable quality, that it triumphed over a great love. She was seen in this supreme struggle leaning, so as not to faint, on the tender and courageous Eustochium, the companion of her sacrifice and her departure. Meanwhile the ship ploughed the waves and made for the open sea, and all the passengers fixed on the coast that long last look so dear to all who see their native land fleeing behind them. Paula alone turned her eyes away from the shore, for fear that her heart would break at the sight of those the sight of whom was rending her soul.”

Paula stopped in Cyprus to see St. Epiphanius, whose words, three years before, by casting into her soul the first sparks of the flame that now consumed her, had had so decisive an influence on her life. The venerable bishop was waiting for her on the shore, happy to return to her something of the noble hospitality he had received from her in Rome. As soon as Paula saw him, she threw herself, deeply moved, at his feet, shedding many tears. Epiphanius, seeing her wearied by such a crossing and destined to still greater fatigues on the long journey she was undertaking, wished her to stay some days at Salamis to rest. Paula wished to profit by her stay on the island to visit all its monasteries and see at close hand the life she was going to study at its source in the East; and wherever she went she marked her passage by pious largesse. Ten days passed thus in pious excursions and long conversations with Epiphanius; then she embarked again and quickly reached Seleucia, and from there, going up the Orontes, landed at last at Antioch, where the former companion of St. Epiphanius in Rome, the venerable bishop Paulinus, received her with the same joy and the same respect as the bishop of Salamis; and it was in his house that Paula found again the admirable guide Providence was keeping for her pilgrimage to the holy places, St. Jerome, whom Paulinus had taken in with all his companions on their arrival from the West.

After some stay in this city the departure was organized, and the whole pious caravan, of which St. Jerome and his friends formed part, followed the Roman road that ran along the whole coast of Syria, Phoenicia and Judaea. The first town of Judaea it came to was Sarepta, in the ancient tribe of Asher, then Tyre, Ptolemais, the fields of Megiddo, Caesarea, the plain of Sharon, Antipatris, the ancient Lydda, then called Diospolis; turning back a little, she visited the famous Joppa, Emmaus, Beth-horon, the site of a town razed to the ground called Gibeah, and arrived at Jerusalem. The proconsul of Palestine, who knew her family well and had been told of her arrival, had sent an escort to the gates of the city to meet her, to receive her with honour and take her to a lodging he had had prepared for her in the praetorium. But from a feeling of deep Christian delicacy Paula obstinately refused the palace offered her, and went to lodge with all her suite in a modest house not far from Calvary; then, without giving herself time to rest from her fatigues, she prepared to visit the holy places. She went first into the church of the Cross; but, wholly taken up with the thought of the great mysteries these places recalled, she scarcely gave a glance to the splendour of the basilica. The cross of the Saviour was what her eyes and her heart sought above all. When the sacred object had been exposed before her, the faith and love that filled her soul overflowed, so to speak, and threw her into a kind of rapture. She prostrated herself with her brow in the dust, adoring the sacred wood, or rather Christ fastened to this wood, whom her lively faith saw as if He had been present. She could not weary of contemplating this spectacle and of picturing to herself one by one all the circumstances of the Passion. After this long adoration she passed into the church of the Sepulchre; there her emotion was greater still. When she had made her way to the very rock that had received the lifeless body of the Saviour, she could not contain herself, and, falling on her knees, she first broke into tears and long sobs. Then she was seen to approach the stone, cover it with kisses and press her lips ardently to it, as though she were drinking there, to quench the thirst of her soul, at waters long desired. “What tears she shed upon that stone, what groans she uttered there, what grief she showed there,” says St. Jerome, “the whole of Jerusalem was witness, and You also, Lord, who gathered at Your divine feet this rain of her weeping.” The Christians of Jerusalem who witnessed this spectacle were deeply

edified by this admirable piety. From Calvary Paula went to Sion. “She wished to see everything,” says St. Jerome, “and she could be torn from one holy place only to be taken to another.”

After visiting and venerating all the holy places of Jerusalem, the pilgrims thought of going through the Holy Land itself. They visited Bethlehem first; Paula, at the sight of the manger, gave free flight to her soul and cried out: “Hail, O Bethlehem! Thou art truly the house of bread, since thou hast given to the earth the bread that came down from heaven; hail, O Ephrata! Thou art indeed a fruitful land, since the fruit of thy fruitfulness is a God.” Entering then into a sweet meditation, she began to go over in her memory the passages of the Prophets relating to the birth of the Saviour. “Is it really true?” she cried; “what! I, a wretch, a sinner, God has deigned to allow me to lay my lips on the manger where His Son was born, to pour out my prayers in the grotto where the Virgin Mother brought Him forth!” After these words, no longer able to hold back the flood of her tears, she let them flow abundantly; and at last, the love of Our Lord taking victorious possession of her whole soul, she felt born in her, like a heavenly inspiration, the thought of fixing her abode there, near the holy and beloved grotto, and of never leaving it; and she was heard to cry out, with an inexpressible accent, applying to herself the Prophet’s oath: “Well then, henceforth this is the place of my rest, for it is the cradle of my God. Here will I dwell, because the Lord has chosen it. Here my soul shall live for Him.” She stopped; then, looking at Eustochium, she finished the verse: “And my seed shall serve the Lord there.” Such were Paula’s holy emotions in the grotto of Bethlehem.

The cry that had just escaped her lips, “This is the place of my rest,” was not an idle word, the fruit of a passing emotion, but a serious resolution that sprang up in her soul under the deep and sweet impression of the mysteries of Bethlehem, and that was to be fulfilled. We shall see, indeed, that Paula, when she has finished her pilgrimages, will return to Bethlehem and be unable to part from it any more; she will live and die there with Eustochium. Jerome too will end his life there; and in the course of the ages the pilgrim who visits Bethlehem will see, a few steps from the grotto of the Saviour, another grotto that will be called the grotto of St. Jerome, and there two tombs, one of which will be the tomb of Paula and her daughter, and the other that of their holy friend.

From Bethlehem Paula went to the tower of Eder, or of the Flock, to Gaza, to Beth-zur, to the valley of Eshcol, or of the Cluster, and to that of Hebron, which was, after Jerusalem, the most venerated place in the Holy Land. This excursion over, the pilgrims returned to Jerusalem through the fields of Tekoa, the native place of the shepherd and prophet Amos; but they did not rest there long, and soon set out again for Jericho and the Jordan. The way there passed by the Mount of Olives and the village of Bethany. How many varied emotions all these places still promised! The pious caravan crossed the valley of Jehoshaphat, passed over the Kidron, and, climbing the hill, made for the garden of sorrows. Paula prayed long, kneeling on that stone soaked with the bloody sweat of the Son of God. But to the tears she shed there succeeded a sweeter and almost triumphant feeling when, after rising, she saw shining in the air on the summit of the Mount of Olives that cross which had once been ignominiously planted on the other side of the city on Calvary. This cross surmounted the church of the Ascension, built by St. Helena on the very spot from which Our Lord had gone up to heaven.

After passing through the little village of Bethphage, where the colt had been taken on which Our Lord rode to make His entry into Jerusalem, Paula arrived at Bethany, the place beloved of the Saviour. She entered with pious tenderness the dwelling where Jesus had so often received hospitality, where Martha had served Him, where Mary had sat at His feet listening to His divine word: Mary, who a few days before His death, in the house of a Pharisee, poured on His feet that ointment of great price. Paula stayed some time in this house, all fragrant, to her lively faith, with the perfume of Magdalen. She wished also to see, a few steps away, the tomb of Lazarus. From Bethany she went to Jericho. The day after her arrival, setting out before dawn to avoid the heat of the day, she resumed her march toward the Jordan. At the sight of it she cried out: “Behold the marvel: this element of water, which once drowned the human race in the flood, is now the very thing

that, purified by the touch of the Son of God, regenerates us in baptism." Such were Paula's lively emotions and holy enthusiasm on the banks of the Jordan. Thus she felt the different impressions of the different places she visited; her soul, like a harmonious harp, resounded according to the breath and the memories that touched it. After thus exploring Judaea, Paula visited Samaria, Galilee, Nazareth, the lake of Tiberias, Capharnaum, all those places that were the centre of the preaching and the theatre of the principal miracles of Jesus Christ.

Returned from these pilgrimages, and happy in the holy emotions her heart had felt there, filled moreover with that inner joy, superabundant but deep and restrained, which she had tasted since her departure, Paula prepared to leave for Egypt. The caravan reached the mountain of Nitria safely. But the news of her arrival had gone before Paula into those deserts, and the bishop of Heliopolis, a town on the banks of the Nile on which the convents of Nitria depended, had gone there to receive the noble stranger, surrounded by a great crowd of cenobites and anchorites. He first led the pious troop to the church situated at the top of the mountain; then, with that cordial and simple hospitality which is still today the virtue of the solitaries of the East, the travellers were installed in the buildings put up outside the convents and intended for strangers; water and linen were brought them to wash and dry their feet, and fruits of the desert to refresh themselves; after which they were allowed to visit the convents and the solitaries. Seized with respect before these heroes of penance, these athletes of all the combats of the soul against the wretched passions, some of whom had struggled hand to hand with the demons themselves in person and seemed to have reconquered, as a thousand marvellous stories related, the ancient empire of innocent man over nature, Paula prostrated herself before them and kissed their feet, believing she saw Jesus Christ in each of them, and addressing these homages in her thought to Our Lord, whom these Saints represented to her; then she listened eagerly to the stories of the solitude and inquired in detail into the manner of life of the Fathers. It was a life very simple and very free, at the same time very holy and very austere: eager to bring their flesh into subjection and to penetrate the secrets of divine things, they united action with contemplation. Their days were divided between work and prayer. They were seen busy breaking up the soil, felling trees, fishing in the Nile, milking their goats, plaiting the mats on which they were to die. Others were absorbed in the reading or meditation of the Holy Scriptures. The monasteries, as a Saint says, were like a beehive: each had in his hand the wax of work and in his mouth the honey of psalms and prayers. After seeing the cenobitic life at Nitria, Paula went to the desert of the Cells to see the anchoritic life there; then to the desert of Scete.

After these pilgrimages, which had lasted almost a whole year, Paula returned to Bethlehem, where letters from Rome awaiting her on her return from Egypt told her of the death of her youngest daughter. But, as always happens in the trials God sends, a grace was hidden in this sorrow: Providence, which wished to keep Paula in the holy places, seemed to take care, in order to soften her last struggles, to untie itself the bonds she would have had to break. She now needed nothing but a solitude in which to weep and to pray. That austere and pure life, seen at close hand by her in the deserts of Egypt, alone answered the powerful attractions she felt. The holy places, moreover, exercised a sovereign ascendancy over her; she could not tear herself away from them. To meditate on the Christian mysteries in the very places where they had been accomplished, and on the divine Scriptures under the sky that had inspired them: she could see no other life possible for herself henceforth. The voice of God made itself heard with a force that left no more room for resistance.

She resolved, therefore, to build at once near the Saviour's manger two monasteries: one of women, where she would live with Eustochium and the colony of widows and virgins who had followed her from Rome, ready to go wherever she led them; and another of men, for Jerome and his friends. The site chosen for Jerome's monastery was to the right of the church of the manger, on the north side, in a spot a little off the public way; a path that left the road at the tomb of King Archelaus led to it. Paula's was placed some distance away and, as it were, hidden on the slope of the hill, almost at the bottom of the valley. A few ruins amid the greenery still mark its place today. But until the monasteries were built she went to settle with her

companions in a small secluded house, and she settled Jerome and his followers, who were fewer, in a dwelling more modest still. Then on both sides they began the manner of life they proposed to observe in the monasteries: a life of work, study and prayer.

Paula had gone back with more happiness than ever to the reading of the sacred Books, while actively supervising the building of the monasteries. From time to time she walked with Eustochium and her companions on the hills or in the fields of Bethlehem, singing psalms, and she relished with extreme joy the beauties of that picturesque countryside, to which she was very sensitive. She also paid frequent visits to the manger, to the holy places of Jerusalem and to the convent on the Mount of Olives.

In the midst of the occupations and spiritual joys of her new life and her new abode, Paula did not forget those she loved on earth, from whom the vast expanse of the seas separated her in vain. The thought of Rome constantly visited her soul. She herself was not forgotten there. Her pilgrimages and her resolve to settle in the holy places were the daily talk of her children, of the virgins of the Aventine, of all Rome. An active correspondence was established from then on between Rome and Bethlehem, and never ceased.

Meanwhile the works undertaken by Paula were advancing, and the monasteries were rising little by little on the hill of Bethlehem, but too slowly for her liking. There was in each of them a church or chapel; and we even know that the patroness Paula gave to the church of her monastery was St. Catherine of Alexandria, a young martyr of the last persecutions, very famous in the East, who offered her daughters the example of all the virtues at once, virginity, learning and heroism, and of whom Bethlehem kept a touching tradition. The completed buildings were each surrounded by an enclosure of high walls and furnished with a tower. All these buildings were crowned by the foundation of a hospice for pilgrims, which was built right beside the church of Bethlehem.[1] At the end of three years the monasteries, the church and the hospice were all finished. It was time. The humble house that had provisionally sheltered the swarm of virgins gathered around her could no longer hold them. Their number had greatly increased. Paula's great name had drawn them from various regions, some simple plebeians, others belonging to rich or noble families; among these, some had arrived with numerous servants: Paula had admitted them only after making them send all these people away. It was the true solitary life, with its austerity and its poverty, that Paula meant to found in her monasteries. She was in great impatience to enter them.

Following the example of the cenobitic establishments she had visited on the banks of the Nile, Paula divided her daughters into three groups, and as it were into three monasteries, each having at its head an abbess or mother. The virgins were thus separated for work and meals; but they all came together for psalmody and prayer in their chapel of St. Catherine. At the joyful chant of the *Alleluia*, which was the signal, they all ran from their cells to the *Collecta* or assembly, Paula always the first or among the first. She waited until all the sisters had arrived before beginning the prayer or the psalmody. Not to leave everything as soon as the *Alleluia* had sounded, and to delay by one's negligence the sweet moment of common prayer and of the chanting of God's praises, was a great shame, and this shame a keen spur, the only one Paula wished to use here, rightly thinking that for exercises which essentially demand promptness and gladness it was better to expect everything from piety and the heart than from constraint. They gathered early in the morning, then at the third hour, at the sixth, at the ninth and finally in the evening, to sing the psalms; and in the very middle of the night, when all was silent and asleep, the voices of Paula's daughters rose again to repeat the beautiful hymns of the Prophet of Bethlehem. The whole Psalter was sung every day. All the sisters were obliged to know it by heart and had, besides, to learn something of Holy Scripture every day. On Sunday the community went to the church of Bethlehem, each group with its mother at its head, and came back in the same order. On their return the work for the week was given out. It was ordinarily clothes to be made for the monastery or for the poor of the district, of whom Paula's monastery soon became the providence. Each sister had her task. Moreover, within the monastery none might have a servant, but each had to serve herself and serve the community. All the sisters, patrician or plebeian without distinction, wore the same habit,

which was of wool, and they used linen only to dry their hands. The enclosure was absolute and all communication with the outside strictly forbidden. Such, in its main lines, was the Rule of Paula's monastery. In the government of this monastery she displayed all the great sides of her nature: an admirable mixture of energy and gentleness, and a rare discernment of minds and characters. This word of the Apostle, "What will you? Shall I come to you with a rod, or in meekness and gentleness?" was Paula's rule; and the strength necessary to apply it constantly, that self-mastery so necessary to those who command others, was her virtue.

Paula's greatest authority for maintaining obedience and fervour was that of her example and her virtues. She was seen, with Eustochium, first everywhere, at work and at the hard practices of penance as at psalmody and prayer. And such was her deep humility that anyone, says St. Jerome, who, knowing of her only her great name, had asked to have her pointed out to him in the midst of her community, could not have believed it was she, and would have cried out on seeing her: "No, that is not Paula; that is the last sister of the monastery." Paula's austerity was such that she never yielded, even when her health was weakened and ruined, to the youngest and most robust sisters in abstinence and fasting. But as hard as she was on herself, so tender was she toward the sisters when they were ill. St. Jerome gives up trying to depict her kindnesses to them, her assiduity, her attention, her eager and delicate care. She would then make them take wine and meat, although she had never been willing to do so herself. Her bed was hair cloths spread on the bare ground, and she never wanted any other couch on which to take her rest, even when she was ill and fever was devouring her — "if one can call rest," says St. Jerome, "nights spent almost entirely in prayer." And in these long-protracted prayers her eyes let fall fountains of tears, and these tears, at the remembrance of the slightest faults, flowed so abundantly that one would have thought her guilty of the greatest sins. St. Jerome tried in vain to stop them. "We often said to her," he writes, "'But do spare your eyes and keep them for reading the Holy Scriptures.'" "Ah! what are you saying?" she would answer; "I must disfigure this face which I so often, contrary to the law of God, covered with rouge and white lead. I must tame this body which I fed on delights. I must drown the long laughter of former days in eternal weeping. I must replace fine linen and silk gowns with the rough hair shirt. Too long have I wished to please the world; now I want to please God."

There was yet another point on which Jerome tried in vain to moderate Paula's ardour: the pious prodigalities of her charity. After the death of this holy woman he reproached himself for it; but at the time, faced with the considerable and daily growing charges of the monasteries, he thought he ought to temper Paula's zeal with counsels of prudence. Not that Paula really lacked prudence; on the contrary, she had, St. Jerome tells us, a marvellous industry in multiplying her alms by her skill in distributing them; but her resources were limited and her charity was not: she did not know what it was to stop or to refuse a request. Seeing her, then, fling without counting help in clothing, food and money to the needy not only of Bethlehem but of the whole district, open her hospice to all pilgrims without exception, and exhaust, together with her own resources, even the whole patrimony of Eustochium, Jerome thought he ought to intervene and moderate these immoderate alms. And he tried to do so with the help of the words of the Gospel or of the Apostles.

Paula listened to his words with respect, and yet she always found an answer, reserved and brief but peremptory, to these difficulties. "You fear," she would say to him, "that my resources will be exhausted. No, no; I shall always have credit enough; and if I ask, I shall easily find someone to give to me. But these unfortunates, if I fail them, what will become of them?" And to the texts cited by Jerome she gently opposed the beautiful words of the sacred Books on almsgiving: "As water quenches fire, so alms quenches sin. — Give alms, and this fire of charity will purify all your sins. — Make to yourselves friends of the mammon of iniquity, who will one day receive you into the everlasting dwellings." She loved to repeat these words, which seemed to her clearer and more decisive than the finest reasonings. Then, rising to the height of the greatest Christian ideas, she spoke with so lively a faith both of the love of God, who regards as done to Himself what is done to the poor, and of the happiness of resembling Jesus Christ by real poverty and

effective self-stripping, that St. Jerome no longer had the heart to insist, and, overcome by admiration, let her follow her heroic inspirations as she pleased.

These labours and these virtues, of which we have just sketched the picture, carried the renown of Paula's monasteries further and further through the Church and drew all eyes from every side toward these admirable foundations. From Rome, from Gaul, from Spain, from Africa, from Dalmatia and even from Germany, the souls that had been touched by the fruitful breath then passing over the Church, and that felt within them the inspiration of Christian perfection, turned toward these monasteries to ask counsel there or to contemplate examples. Paula had thought to hide herself from the whole earth at Bethlehem, and she was seen there by the entire world. Her monasteries were like a shining beacon whose brightness was projected far and wide, or like an abundant spring, open to all, of doctrine and of the high Christian life. Paula's hospice could not hold the crowd of visitors who flocked to it from every side and went away afterwards, delighted, to tell in their own countries what they had seen and admired. "What region does not send its pilgrims here?" said Jerome; "but which of them does not go away saying that what struck him most in these holy places was Paula? As in a jewel there is always one rich diamond that eclipses the other stones with its fire, or as in the sky the bright star of day makes all the stars pale before its brightness, so Paula, from the depths of her humility, eclipses all of us here, every one. She has made herself the least; but that is what makes her the greatest. The more she lowers herself at the feet of Christ, the more Christ takes care to exalt her. She hides, she slips away; but her virtue shines afar and betrays her. Thus even the human glory she has fled, she has found in fleeing it, because that glory, after all, follows virtue as the shadow follows the light."

Paula, in the greatest heat of July, fell into a very serious illness, which threw the two monasteries into the keenest anxiety. This illness revealed in a striking manner, by a trait that can be understood only in a wholly heroic life, to what degree this holy woman had acquired the love of sacrifice and immolation. A dreadful fever was burning her, and besides, the physicians feared dropsy. In this danger they thought it necessary that she should relax her ordinary mortifications a little, and in particular, because of the nature of the illness, that she should abstain from drinking water and consent henceforth to take a little wine. Jerome made this prescription of the physicians known to her; but, in spite of the soundness of the reasons given her, Paula would not bring herself to relax on this point of her habitual austerities. Jerome thought that perhaps St. Epiphanius would have more influence with the sick woman, and he urged him to make an attempt to persuade her. Epiphanius consented, and, shown into Paula's cell, after speaking to her of various things he began to press her on this point. Paula received all his words with veneration; but when he came to that, understanding Jerome's stratagem, the sick woman answered the holy bishop with a smile: "Oh! as for that, it is not you who are saying it to me; I know very well who whispered it to you." And when Epiphanius came back to Jerome's monastery, "Well," said Jerome to him, "have you succeeded?" "Succeeded?" answered Epiphanius; "quite the contrary: she has almost persuaded an old man like me never to taste wine again."

The silence and peace of Paula's monasteries were soon troubled by the appearance of Origenism, which the bishop of Jerusalem upheld. Paula bore without a murmur the severities displayed against her monasteries by this heretical bishop, awaiting the day when the injustices of men would give way to the justice of God; and, although her taste would have inclined her to it, her lofty reason made her shun absolutely all dogmatic controversy. The more noise was made around her, the more she shut herself up in prayer and tears and the sweet meditation of the Holy Scriptures, closing her ear to vain disputes, leaving those whose duty it was to fight to fight for doctrine, and, as Christian women ought always to do when their belief is attacked, remaining on the serene Thabor of her faith, her gaze toward heaven and the clouds beneath her feet. Jerome, moreover, had laid down for her a very simple and at the same time very protective rule of conduct: to hold invariably, in all these controversies, to the anchor of the Roman faith, and to let the waves of polemic toss around her without being troubled by their tumult. Heresy did not leave her in this peace: a conquest such as hers would have been too great a triumph not to be attempted; but having been unable to shake Paula in her

faith, it took its revenge by unleashing itself against her. Her great virtue, moreover, gave too much offence to be spared. Raised to heights to which poor humanity scarcely climbs, it was good, in St. Jerome's own expression, that trial should come to remind her of her mortal condition. Sometimes envy attacked her directly: her least actions and her least words were disparaged and turned to ridicule. Sometimes she was included in the attacks of which Jerome was the object. They went further still: her very virtues, her mortification, her charities, were turned against her.

Nothing showed better than these trials all the work grace had done in this soul: the solidity and sincerity of her virtue; her unalterable serenity, her heavenly gentleness, her entire self-possession, the annihilation in her heart of all the old Roman and patrician pride; her incomparable humility, her infinite patience, and above all faith, which was in her the root of all these virtues, and which raised her up and fixed her in those higher and tranquil regions where the clouds do not rise and where, in the light of God, all the things of this earth vanish in their littleness. And so envy raged in vain outside; nothing troubled within her recollection, her silence and her deep peace in God. Never a word, never even a sign that showed the least emotion: this lively nature seemed to have lost even that sensitiveness which still makes the most detached souls suffer so much, and the firmest minds, those best made to judge at their true worth the real emptiness of the things that wound us so in life. Her assiduous meditation on the sacred books bore these wonderful fruits. It was in Scripture, St. Jerome tells us, that she drew her light, her consolation and her strength. That was the armour, always ready, that covered and protected her. While the old solitary bounded like a wounded lion under the attacks of calumny, and by turns grew indignant or groaned, and sometimes even felt his constancy and courage give way, Paula, always calm and peaceful, restrained him or consoled him, putting to his lips the honey of the Holy Scriptures, whose sweetness filled her soul.

It sometimes happened that insolence went so far as to fling the insult in her face. Without answering a single word, Paula contented herself with singing in her soul with the Psalmist: "When the sinner stood up against me, I was silent; I held back every answer on my lips." One day someone came and told her to her face that the excess of her virtues made her pass for mad, and that it was being said in Jerusalem that her brain needed treatment. Jerome grew indignant against the insolent fellow; but Paula contented herself with answering with her habitual gentleness: "Yes, we are fools for Jesus Christ; but that folly is wiser than the wisdom of men." And she added, turning to Jerome: "Does not the Saviour say to His Father in the psalm, 'Thou knowest my foolishness'? And do we not read in the Gospel that His kinsmen wanted to bind Him as a madman? Did not the Jews also call Him a Samaritan, one possessed by the devil? Ought we to be better treated than He? Has He not told us that the world hates us because we are not of the world?" And then, turning her whole soul toward God, "O my God," she cried, "You know the secrets of the heart. For You we are mortified all the day long and regarded as sheep destined for the slaughter. But You, Lord, are our help, and I do not fear what man can do to me." It was thus that Holy Scripture furnished her with an answer to everything, and that trial made spring from her heart all the treasures of humility, gentleness and strength, of great faith and holy hope, which her austere and studious life, her mortifications and her tears had silently amassed there.

The persecution of Paula's monasteries and of Jerome continued. The bishop of Jerusalem having obtained from the governor a decree of banishment against the monks, Jerome drew himself up at this blow in all his indignation. "What!" he cried at the news, "a bishop who has been a monk threatens monks with exile and strikes them with it! Does he not know, then, that this race is not accustomed to yield to fear, and that when the sword is presented to it, instead of putting it aside with the hand, it holds out its head? But for a monk, who has no other country than heaven, is not the whole world a place of exile? No, there is no need of expense, of an imperial rescript, of journeys to the ends of the earth. Let him touch us with the tip of his finger, and we shall leave. The earth is the Lord's and all that it contains. Christ is a prisoner in no place." And so, weary of these struggles, he wanted to leave at once, without waiting for the rescript to be carried

out. With this in mind he came to Paula, and there was a touching scene between them. “Let us go,” said Jerome, “and let mad envy triumph. Jacob fled from Esau, and David from Saul.” Paula certainly had no less than Jerome that higher detachment, independent of things and places and of every earthly bond; but, gentler and therefore stronger in the face of trial, knowing that one flees from it in vain and that it reaches us everywhere, held back moreover by her invincible love of the holy places, and unable to consent to part voluntarily from her dear Bethlehem, she gave him this fine answer: “Yes, you would be right, and we should do well to flee, if the devil did not fight in every place against the servants of God and were not bound to go before us wherever we went; if I did not have, besides, this dear bond of the holy places, and if I could hope to find another Bethlehem somewhere.” She then added with her habitual gentleness: “We are hated, we are crushed; why not simply oppose patience to hatred and humility to arrogance? We are struck on the cheek; why not turn the other cheek?” Then, seeking as always her light and her strength in the Holy Scriptures, she went on thus, says Jerome: “Has not the apostle St. Paul written, ‘Overcome evil with good’? Were not the Apostles happy to suffer ignominy for the name of Jesus? And the Saviour Himself, did He not endure everything, even to death, and even to the death of the cross? If Job had not fought and triumphed, he would not have received the crown of justice, and he would not have heard from the very mouth of the Lord this word: ‘Thinkest thou that I have tried thee for any other end than to make thy virtue shine forth?’ And so the Gospel proclaims blessed those who suffer persecution for justice’ sake.” And lastly, taking refuge in the impregnable asylum of her conscience: “When conscience tells us that our sufferings are not the consequences of our sins, we are quite sure that the afflictions of this world are only the material of eternal rewards.” Thus Paula sustained and calmed the impetuous Jerome. The delicacy and serenity of this beautiful soul, raised to those heights of the light and love of God which the storms of this world do not reach, softened, as by a penetrating charm, the movements of that heart, embittered still more by the troubles it was bringing upon Paula than by what it suffered itself.

Meanwhile a sinister rumour, which ran through the East with the speed of lightning, spread terror among the solitaries. It was said that the Huns had flooded the East and were threatening Jerusalem. Arabia, Phoenicia, Palestine and Egypt were seized with terror. On every side preparations for defence were hastily made; Tyre cut its isthmus and isolated itself from the mainland; Jerusalem repaired its walls, too much neglected during a long peace. In this danger Paula, to save her monasteries from the outrages of the barbarians, had only one course to take: flight. She decided, therefore, not without a great rending of heart, to leave Bethlehem, and withdrew with her virgins, and Jerome with his monks, to the seashore at Joppa, ready to embark as soon as the barbarians appeared. A certain time passed in these alarms. But the Huns having suddenly turned back without crossing the Lebanon, Paula brought her daughters back to her monastery with a joy equal to her past terrors.

If it is true, as the author of the *Imitation* has said, that there is no love without sorrow, and that nothing makes us like to Jesus Christ, and nothing perfects and consummates virtue, as suffering does, one understands that God is pleased to make chosen souls pass by this royal road, and that it is, as it were, a law of high holiness. Moreover, since every soul here below is sooner or later touched by this mysterious power, it is good that the souls destined to serve as models to others should be the first to pass through this fire, which at once tries them and refines them. But there is not only the blood of the veins and bodily martyrdom; there is also the blood of the soul and the tortures of inner martyrdom. Now it is above all this latter martyrdom of which Paula, one of the first in the history of holiness, presents the phenomenon, opening the road for so many holy women who were afterwards to know it in their turn, and to whom she appeared, in the night of their trials, resplendent with this light. It was in the midst of trials that the great gift which is the salient trait of this soul unfolded in all its forms: strength, strength in tenderness; hence those acts of resignation under the blows of the divine hand, all the more admirable in that they struggled against a keener sensibility. Repeated bereavements came blow upon blow to bruise her heart and to bring down more and more upon her life those great shadows that announce the approach of the last night. After the death of her

daughter Paulina, that of her only son Toxotius was the supreme blow of her sorrows.

To all these pains of the heart were added the infirmities contracted as a result of her austerities; in her last years they had almost no respite. These trials, by opening her soul, so to speak, let the treasures of virtue it held enclosed be seen, and brought sublime words to her lips. In her bodily sufferings she was heard to say, with courageous faith and heroic patience: “When I am weak, then am I strong”; and again: “We must indeed resign ourselves to carry our treasure in fragile vessels, until the day when this wretched mortal body shall put on immortality.” She loved also to repeat, and found a divine consolation in, these words: “If the sufferings of Christ abound in us, His consolations abound also. Companions of His passion, we shall be companions of His glory.” At the same time she rose through all these sufferings to a greater detachment than ever. For many years she had judged life at its true worth; but as the end drew near, as this world was about to disappear, as the sorrows of men and things multiplied around her, everything lost its colour still more in her eyes, and she groaned at being still in these low places, where light is like darkness.

The desire for the heavenly country grew in her in the same proportion. She had always regarded herself as a stranger here below and had always loved to repeat the saying of the patriarchs whose land she inhabited: “We are but travellers on the earth.” At the end of her life she repeated these words with a still deeper feeling, and she was heard constantly crying out, with tears in her voice: “Alas! alas! how my exile is prolonged! Among the dwellers of Kedar my soul is too much a stranger!” She also said, unceasingly: “I would see this dust of my body dissolved and be with Christ.” And when her sufferings, which she bore with admirable patience, made her feel their sting more keenly, “Ah!” she would say, “who will give me the wings of the dove? and I will go, I will fly to the place of eternal rest.”

It was toward the end of the year 403 that Paula felt the onset of the illness that was to be her last. When the imminence of the danger had been recognized, everything in the monastery was in consternation. Eustochium above all was inconsolable. Her love for her mother, which had always been so touching, showed in these last moments all the ardour and all the energy that heart contained. She would yield to no one the sweetness of nursing her, and she moved everyone to tears by her devoted care and the delicate attentions of her filial piety. She was there night and day at the sick woman’s bedside, gave her her food, made her bed, in short rendered her all the offices of a nurse, distressed when any hand other than her own had served her. She was seen running distraught from her mother’s bed to the Manger, and there, weeping and sobbing, begging the Lord with all the ardour of her soul not to deprive her of such a companion, or at least not to let her live after her mother, and to allow them both to be laid in the same tomb.

But these tears and prayers could not delay the moment marked by God. “Paula,” says St. Jerome, “had, as the Apostle says, finished her course and kept her faith to God; the hour was about to strike for her to receive the crown and to follow the Lamb wherever He goes. She had had the holy hunger for justice; she was about to be filled; and already, joyful, she could sing: ‘All that we have heard of the city of the God of hosts, we are now about to see.’ She had wept enough; the moment of eternal joy had come. She had worn the hair shirt enough; it was time to put on the robe of glory and to cry out: ‘Thou hast rent the sackcloth of my penance, and hast clothed me with gladness.’ She had eaten her bread like ashes long enough, and mingled her drink with her tears; it was time to go and feed in eternity on the bread of angels, and to repeat for ever these words: ‘Taste and see how sweet the Lord is.’” The sick woman’s strength was consumed, and she had only a few days left to live. She suffered with admirable patience and heavenly serenity.

Meanwhile the illness was making frightening progress. Death had already chilled her extremities and part of her limbs; only a faint beating of her heart showed that Paula was still breathing; but she breathed only for God, and she was heard faintly murmuring verses of her favourite psalms: “Lord, I have loved the beauty of Thy house and the place where Thy glory dwelleth. How lovely are Thy tabernacles, O God of hosts! I have chosen to be little in the house of my God rather than to dwell in the tents of sinners.” The bishop of Jerusalem and all the bishops of Palestine, as well as a great number of priests, monks and virgins, had

hastened to witness the spectacle of this holy death. The monastery was full of them. Paula, wholly absorbed in God, heard and saw nothing around her; one could only perceive, by the slight trembling of her lips, that she was continuing to converse sweetly with God. Some questions were put to her; she did not answer. Jerome then, coming near her, asked her why she was silent and whether she was in any pain. She answered him in the Greek tongue: “Oh! no, neither pain nor regret. On the contrary, I feel an immense peace.” After these words she remained again in her silence. Her finger, which she kept constantly on her lips, did not cease tracing the sign of the cross on them. At last the agony began; her breathing became harsh and laboured, and suddenly she was seen to open her eyes; from the midst of the shadows of death a sudden brightness, the last reflection of the soul upon the body it was about to leave, shone on her face, and her gaze seemed to fix itself as if on a heavenly apparition: and indeed it was one. It was understood from her answer that Our Lord was calling her to Himself; for she was heard to cry out quite joyfully: “The flowers have appeared in our land; the time for gathering them has come”; and again: “I believe I see the good things of the Lord in the land of the living.” She expired with these words. It was the 26th of January of the year 404, in the sixth consulate of the emperor Honorius. Paula had lived fifty-six years, eight months and twenty-one days, of which five years were spent in Rome after her widowhood in the holy profession of the religious life, and twenty at Bethlehem, near the manger where the Son of God was born.

Eustochium was inconsolable at her mother’s death; to the grief she felt were added, for the timid virgin, two great anxieties at which her humility took alarm beyond measure: the spiritual government of her community, a concern she had never had while Paula lived; and the charge of these two monasteries, of which she was becoming the sole resource and which she had to support.

After governing her monastery in holiness, Eustochium fell asleep sweetly in the Lord in 419 and was buried, according to her desire, in her mother’s tomb: so constantly and so tenderly united in life, they were to be so in death also. The Church celebrates her feast on the 26th of September.

St. Paula is represented prostrate in or before the grotto of Bethlehem; kneeling before the holy manger in the company of St. Jerome and of St. Eustochium, her daughter; on board a ship weighing anchor while a child, her son Toxotius, seems to call her from the shore with his tears; herself shedding tears over her own, for her heart was as good as it was great, but generosity prevailed over tenderness; venerating or embracing the instruments of the Passion. Her most usual costume is that of a nun carrying a book; it is claimed that she is the foundress of the Hieronymites.

CULTE ET RELIQUES.

Cult and Relics.

Paula’s funeral was a triumph. Before she was lowered into her tomb, she was carried from the monastery into the church of the Manger, to be exposed there, with her face uncovered, to the veneration of the faithful. The bishops held it an honour to carry her body. An immense crowd had hastened from all the towns of Palestine; the monks and virgins had eagerly left their deserts and their retreats; but the finest and most royal pomp was the procession of the poor, who wept for their nurse and their mother. The Saint remained exposed for three days in the church without death having made any change in her features. Her body was then laid in the church, in a grotto adjoining that holy grotto of the Manger which she had loved so much, where her tomb is still seen today.

St. Jerome engraved on her sepulchre the following inscription: “The daughter of the Scipios, of the Pauli, of the Gracchi, the illustrious blood of Agamemnon, rests in this place. She bore the name of Paula. She was the mother of Eustochium. The first in the senate of Roman matrons, she preferred to the splendours of Rome the poverty of Christ and the humble fields of Bethlehem.”

He also engraved at the entrance of the sepulchral grotto, on the rock, this epitaph, which reproduced the same contrast in other terms and showed besides its sublime source: “Seest thou this grotto hollowed in the rock? It is the tomb of Paula, a dweller in the heavenly kingdom. Her brother, her kindred, Rome her native land, her riches, her children, she left all for the grotto of Bethlehem: she is buried here. Here too, O Christ, is Thy manger, and here the Magi came to offer Thee their mystic gifts, O God-Man.”

The feast of St. Paula has always been celebrated solemnly in the cathedral of Sens, which has possessed her relics since Charlemagne. That emperor had asked the bishops and abbots to give him relics to adorn the cathedral he had just built at Aix-la-Chapelle. Everyone hastened to comply with his wishes, and Charlemagne received so many fine relics that he himself was able to give some to his friends.

No church, either in Rome or in Palestine or elsewhere, boasts of possessing her body. The liturgy of Sens attests her cult and the presence of her relics in the cathedral from the most remote antiquity; St. Paula, since the arrival of her relics, has been adopted as patroness by the city of Sens. The inventories of 1095, 1192, 1239 and 1571 attest the presence of the relics of St. Paula in the treasury. Here is the last inventory, which was made by Nicolas Pellevé, cardinal-archbishop of Sens, one of the signatories of the Council of Trent, and which sums up all the preceding inventories:

“*Nicolaus miseratione divina sacrosanctæ Romanæ Ecclesiæ presbyter cardinalis de Pelleve, archiepiscopus Senonensis, Galliarum et Germaniæ Primas… notum facimus quod in hoc loco reposita sunt multorum sanctorum et sanctarum pignora gloriosa.*

“*Hæc autem litteris et actis publicis mandanda posteris curavimus, ut omnes tam præsentes quam posteri diligenter sciant et attendant, quanta cum devotione et reverentia Deo et sanctis ejus assistere debeant…*

“*Sed hæc sacra pignora a Carolo Magno* (812) *et aliis patribus huic ecclesiæ donata sunt et primum ab archiepiscopo qui Magnus vocabatur (et erat ejusdem Caroli magni consobrinus) accepta esse nobis certissime constitit per acta publica in capsis inventa, quæ ab anno Domini 1095 exarata absque lituris integra ad nos usque pervenerunt.*

“*Quo tempore primum* (1095) *a venerabili archiepiscopo Richerio, regnante Philippo rege, visitata et thecis argenteis distincta et recondita sunt… Longo post tempore venerabilis antistes et archiepiscopus Guydo capsis novis restauravit anno Domini 1192 in crastino Assumptionis Beatæ Mariæ…*

“*At vero venerabilis antistes Galterus anno Domini 1239 gloriosa pignora singulis thecis reponenda curavit. Nos vero sanctorum illorum patrum vestigiis insistere volentes, hæc tam sancta pignora, quanto potuimus honore et reverentia visitavimus et publicis decretis supplicationibus populo proposuimus…*

“*Duodecim thecis partim argenteis, partim ligneis distinguuntur.*

“*Prima quæ auro et argento undique decorata est corpus sanctæ Paulæ continet (cui tam honorifice Hieronymus suam senectutem commendat), etc.*

“*… Senonis anno Domini millesimo quingentesimo septuagesimo primo…*”

Moreover, the liturgy of Sens, local chronicles, and all the authors who have spoken of the religious history of Sens attest that the body of St. Paula is at Sens and that it was given, together with the magnificent piece of the true Cross, by Charlemagne to Magnon or Magne, archbishop of Sens, his cousin.

The feast of St. Paula is celebrated every year in this diocese on the 26th of January, with the rite of a double. The relics were slightly charred by a fire that consumed the cathedral of Sens in the tenth century. Even today the reliquary of St. Paula is carefully preserved in the treasury, enclosed in a glazed cupboard.

For the composition of this biography we have used the Histoire de sainte Paule, *by the Abbé Lagrange, vicar general of Orleans; the* Acta Sanctorum*; the* Éloge *of the Saint by St. Jerome; and* Notes locales *concerning*

the relics, supplied by the Abbé Cartier, canon of Sens.

SAINT JEROME OF STRIDO, PRIEST AND DOCTOR OF THE CHURCH

420. — Pope: St. Boniface I. — Emperor of the East: Theodosius II.

> *Saint Jérôme a été 1° un soleil dans le monde, car il a terrassé les hérétiques, converti les mondains, ouvert aux parfaits de nouveaux horizons ; 2° un ange dans le désert, par sa pureté, sa mortification, son esprit d'oraison ; 3° un prodige dans l'Église, par les livres qu'il a composés, les oracles qu'il a rendus, les vertus dont il a donné l'exemple.*
>
> *St. Jerome was 1° a sun in the world, for he struck down heretics, converted worldlings and opened new horizons to the perfect; 2° an angel in the desert, by his purity, his mortification and his spirit of prayer; 3° a prodigy in the Church, by the books he composed, the oracles he delivered and the virtues of which he gave the example.*
>
> *Laselve, Conciones.*

The title of Very Great Doctor cannot be refused to St. Jerome; the Roman Church grants it to him solemnly in the prayer of his office, as a particular distinction to set him apart from the other Fathers who have defended or enriched the Spouse of Jesus Christ by their writings. He was born in the town of Strido, on the borders of Dalmatia and Pannonia, or Hungary. His father was named Eusebius. He also had a brother called Paulinian, who came into the world when Jerome was already in Syria, and a sister whose name is unknown, as is that of his mother. He also speaks, in his Epistle xxvi, of an aunt called Castorina, with whom he had some disagreement which he tried to smooth over by several obliging letters. Born of rich and distinguished parents, he was able to satisfy his precocious taste for study. Eusebius, his father, sent him to Rome to follow the lessons in grammar and rhetoric of the celebrated Donatus and Victorinus. Jerome made great progress in this excellent school. But he did not escape the dangers which the innocence of students runs in great cities; he was then only a catechumen. At first he led the Christian life his parents had taught him; he often visited the catacombs and the tombs of the martyrs, and was fired with a holy zeal at the memory of those who had sealed their faith with their blood. But little by little he let himself be carried away by the passions, as he himself later related with great remorse.

Having learned all he could from the great men of the capital of the world, he resolved to travel, in order to see the famous libraries and the learned men of other countries and to perfect himself more and more in the knowledge of letters. He first took the road to Gaul, accompanied by Bonosus, with whom he had been brought up in childhood and who had had the same nurse as he. He passed through Concordia, a small town near Mirandola in Italy, where he formed a friendship with an old man called Paul, to whom he afterwards sent the life of St. Paul the Hermit in a letter which is the xxist of his Epistles. It was from him that he learned that St. Cyprian called Tertullian his master, as he himself remarks in his book *On Ecclesiastical Writers*. He stayed some time at Trier, where he copied with his own hand St. Hilary's long treatise *On the Synods*. He observes in the preface to the second book of his *Commentaries on the Epistle to the Galatians* that the language used in that town was the vernacular of the Galatians, and that the latter did not use the Greek language, although at that time there was no other in the whole East; which makes him judge that they were descended from the Gauls. The account he gives of the chief towns of Gaul, such as Mainz, Strasbourg, Rheims, Amiens, Arras, Tournai, Thérouanne, Lyons, Narbonne, Nantes, Toulouse and many others, shows that he went through all its provinces and spared nothing to acquire new knowledge, whether in the libraries or in conversation with the great men with whom all those vast countries were filled.

It was at Trier that our Saint took the resolution to serve God without reserve, so as to be a Christian and not merely to appear one. Some believe that he had nevertheless already received baptism at Rome; others maintain that he received it only on his return. From Gaul Jerome withdrew to Aquileia, where he led the ascetic life in a monastery that had just been established there, and formed friendships with several very learned ecclesiastics of that town, whose names often reappear in his writings. He was obliged to leave his

retreat, probably on account of his sister, who had strayed from the ways of salvation and whom he had the happiness of bringing back to them. Seeking once more a place where he could live with all the freedom of solitude, he did not choose his own country for this, because he would have been too much importuned there by his relatives; besides, as he admits in his Epistle xliii, corruption there was so great that no other god was recognized but the belly, nor any other happiness than riches; and, what he deplores still more, Lupicinus, who governed its Church, was a very wicked priest, who ruined souls instead of saving them. Nor did he stop at Rome; that city was no doubt wholly holy, and virtue was esteemed there, but it was difficult to lead a monastic and solitary life there on account of the number of its inhabitants and the crowd of pilgrims who came there from every side. Moreover, being known there, he would have been obliged to conform to others, that is to say, to be seen by his friends and to see them, to pay and receive visits, to give praise on the one hand and on the other to tear his neighbour's reputation to pieces. So he speaks in his Epistles xvii and xviii. He believed, therefore, that he would do better to withdraw into some distant region where he would find only occasions of rising to God and working at his perfection. Syria seeming to him suited to this design, both because of the holiness of the places and because of the neighbourhood of an infinity of monks who inhabited it, he made his way there, taking his library with him. The companions of this great journey were Heliodorus, Innocent and Hylas. He spent some days at Jerusalem to visit the holy places; then he went through Thrace, Pontus, Bithynia, Cappadocia and Cilicia, always in the desire of learning something new. He also stayed at Tarsus, the birthplace of St. Paul, in order to study the language that Apostle used in his Epistles. He stopped also at Antioch, at the house of Evagrius, from where he went to confer about his plan of retirement with Theodosius and the other anchorites, and to examine the place where he might live before committing himself. This solitude, called Chalcis, is situated in a region that separates the Syrians from the Hagarenes; and, apart from the monks who inhabited it, nothing was to be found there but wild beasts, serpents and scorpions. He went there at last with all his books, the reading and study of which were to form a good part of his occupation.

The devil, who foresaw the important services Jerome would render to the Church in this retreat, used all his malice to make him abandon it. He first threw him into a strange desolation by the loss of all those who had accompanied him; for Heliodorus, whom he loved more than the others, returned to his country under the pretext of a greater good and to assist a sister and a nephew whom he had left there, without the Saint's being able to hold him back by his prayers or his tears. He even wrote him a powerful letter summoning him to carry out the promise he had made him to return; but it was without success. Innocent died of a burning fever, and some time afterwards death also took Hylas from him. Besides these misfortunes, which he felt very keenly, he was attacked by all sorts of illnesses, among others by a very violent fever which seized him in the middle of Lent and reduced his whole body, delicate and moreover exhausted by fasting, to so pitiful a state that, as nothing was any longer awaited but the hour of his death, everything necessary for his burial had already been prepared. It was then that he appeared in spirit before the tribunal of Jesus Christ. Here is how he speaks of it to the virgin Eustochium in his Epistle xxii: "I fasted, and yet I read Cicero; I kept vigils and wept for my sins; I did not fail after that to read Plautus; and when, having come back to myself, I cast my eyes on the Prophets, their lowly and uncultivated style filled me with horror. While the devil was thus seducing me by his wiles, I fell ill; and at the height of the illness, when my life could be felt only by a beating of the heart, I was rapt in spirit and set before the tribunal of the sovereign Judge, where the brilliance of the lights and splendours that came from those who surrounded Him obliged me to prostrate myself on the ground without daring to raise my eyes to look at the majesty of my Master. There I was asked who I was; I answered that I was a Christian; but the Judge said to me: 'You lie; you are a Ciceronian and not a Christian, for where your treasure is, there is your heart.' At these words I was silent, and amid the blows (for the Judge had ordered that I should be scourged) I felt furious remorse of conscience in my soul, reflecting within myself on this verse of the Prophet: *In inferno autem quis confitebitur tibi?* At last I began to cry out and say, melting into tears: 'Lord, have mercy on me; Lord, have mercy on me'; it was the only cry

I made to resound amid the blows. Those who were present threw themselves at the Judge's knees and begged Him to pardon my youth and grant me time to do penance, saying that if I did not do it, and read profane authors again, I should be punished still more severely. Then I took an oath in the presence of my God that I would have no more secular books and would never read them; and that if I failed in my word, I was willing to be held an apostate. This protestation was the cause of my freedom: I was let go and came back to myself. This was not a drowsiness, nor one of those dreams that deceive us during sleep; I call to witness the tribunal before which I appeared and the sad judgement that gave me such fright — may it please my God that such a thing never happen to me! Indeed, I felt clearly on awaking that it had been a reality, since I bore on my shoulders the marks of the lashes I had received. Since that time I have read the Holy Scriptures with more ardour than I formerly read profane books."

All these trials[1] were followed by horrible temptations of the flesh, by which he was cruelly tormented. His imagination was so filled with shameful objects that, in the horror of his desert, where he saw nothing but animals, rocks and trees, he believed himself to be in the midst of the delights and seductions of Rome; but the holy young man, sustained by the grace of the Saviour, always triumphed over his enemy by prayers, tears, macerations and the other austerities which he himself describes in the Epistle we have just cited: "How many times," he says, "being in my hermitage, which the heat of the sun made almost uninhabitable, did I imagine myself amid the delights of Rome! I sat alone in my cell, my heart flooded with bitterness and my body like that of an Ethiopian scorched by the heat of the sun. I spent whole days shedding tears and sending up sighs to heaven. And when I was overwhelmed with sleep, I lay down on the bare ground, where I did not even give myself time to rest. I say nothing of drink or food, since cold water was all the drink of the monks, however languishing they might be, and to eat anything cooked was regarded by them as a sin of self-indulgence. I, then, poor Jerome, who had condemned myself to this kind of life for fear of hell, being in this prison with no other company than scorpions and wild beasts, often found myself in spirit amid gatherings of young women. My face was pale with austerities, while my heart, in a body as cold as ice, was aflame with evil desires, and although my flesh was already in some sort dead, I felt in it the fires of concupiscence. Having no help on the side of creatures, I threw myself at the feet of the Crucifix, and after watering them with my tears I wiped them with my hair. I fasted whole weeks to quench these fires. I spent days and nights beating my breast, until I heard an inner voice saying to me: It is enough. I entered my cell only with a kind of horror, regarding it as the witness of my evil thoughts. And, growing angry with myself, I went wandering alone into the depths of the deserts, and prostrated myself in prayer, now in a valley, now in the hollow of the rocks, at other times on the summit of the mountains, until at last, after torrents of tears and frequent looks toward heaven, it seemed to me that I was among choirs of angels, where I sang with gladness: Lord, we run after Thee to the odour of Thy ointments." That is how Jerome made all the devil's efforts vain; but this enemy of our salvation, having gained nothing over him by attacking him as a lion and by open force, attacked him as a fox and by cunning, making use of heretics to try to seduce the faith of him whose chastity he had been unable to corrupt.

The Arians of Tarsus knew his merit; they knew that this young man already surpassed the greatest personages of Greece in learning and doctrine as well as in holiness; they came to him to ask whether he admitted one or three hypostases in God. He at once recognized the venom hidden beneath this question. He answered them that if by the word *hypostasis* they meant the divine essence, there was only one in God; but that if they meant person, there were three in the Holy Trinity. The various parties of the city of Antioch also did their utmost to draw him each to its own side; for that Church was then divided into three factions: the Arians, who had Vitalis as their head, and the Catholics, some of whom recognized Meletius and others Paulinus as bishop. They all pressed St. Jerome separately to take up their interests; but they had no other answer from him than that he adhered entirely to the Roman Church, outside of which there is no salvation. However, as each also maintained on its side that it was in the Roman communion, our holy solitary wrote to Pope Damasus and earnestly begged him to tell him with which of the three bishops he ought to

communicate. At the same time he revealed to him the venom hidden beneath the word *hypostasis*; and, so as to receive his answer, he told him to address it to the priest Evagrius at Antioch, their common friend, who would not fail to have it delivered to him in his hermitage.

Meanwhile he was ceaselessly persecuted by the heretics, who demanded new professions of faith from him every day. The Arians proclaimed that he was not orthodox because he defended the *homoousion*, that is, the consubstantiality of the divine persons; others made him out to be a Sabellian because he maintained three subsisting persons, true, entire and perfect, in the Holy Trinity. The persecution was so great that they at last forced him to abandon his beloved solitude. He had remained there four years, or six according to Baronius, during which he had translated the homilies of Origen and learned the Hebrew language from a Jew who had been converted and become a solitary. He admits that he had extreme trouble in this study, and that, after having tasted the subtleties of Quintilian, the eloquence of Cicero, the gravity of Fronto and the sweetness of Pliny, it had been a hard mortification for him to learn an alphabet and pronounce guttural words; so that he had several times despaired of mastering it; that he often gave it up, discouraged by the difficulties he found in it; that afterwards the desire to understand this language made him take up his work again; in a word, that he had obtained understanding of it only with inconceivable labours. The memory of the heavenly sweetness and divine lights with which his soul had been filled in this solitude made him always regret it and carry it everywhere in his heart. This is what he told Pammachius in his Epistle xxvi.

It is probable that it was on leaving the desert that he visited Greece, and particularly the city of Athens; after which he went to Antioch, where he studied Holy Scripture under Apollinaris of Laodicea, without, however, adopting the contentious doctrine of that learned man, afterwards the author of a heresy with which he tried to infect the Church. He adhered to Paulinus, one of the three bishops we have spoken of, in accordance with the answer he received from Damasus, who always favoured that party as the most just. Although he no longer lived in the desert, he did not on that account give up the habit or the profession of a solitary, and in the various places where he went to consult able men and make new discoveries in Holy Scripture he led a retired life so as to devote himself more to prayer and study. In his thirtieth year he was ordained priest by the same Paulinus; but he consented to his ordination only on condition that he should not be attached to any church and should not give up the monastic profession he had chosen, as he himself says, to weep for the sins of his youth and to move God’s mercy toward him. So he speaks to Pammachius in the sixth letter, defending himself against the vexation of John, bishop of Jerusalem, who wished to subject him to his Church although he had not ordained him. His priesthood not obliging him to remain at Antioch, he continued to travel here and there. He spent some time near Jerusalem, in the countryside and in the solitudes, and particularly at Bethlehem, which he relished from then on as the holiest place to which he could retire. He also went to Constantinople to hear St. Gregory Nazianzen, whose reputation had spread everywhere. But that great prelate, knowing Jerome’s virtue and merit, did not treat him as a disciple but as a friend from whom he could learn many things for the interpretation of Holy Scripture, because of the perfect knowledge he had of the Hebrew language; which does not prevent our Saint, in his Epistle to St. Gregory of Nyssa, from glorying in having had that illustrious bishop of Constantinople as his teacher. It was shortly after his ordination to the priesthood that he finished his *Commentaries on the Prophet Obadiah*, which he had begun when still quite young, on leaving his rhetoric; he also corrected what he had already done of them, admitting that when he had worked on them he had not had all the light necessary for so great a work. He dedicated them to Pammachius, his fellow student and the son-in-law of St. Paula. Pope Damasus proposed to him several difficulties on various passages of Scripture, writing to him for this purpose by Etherius, a deacon, who carried the letters and brought back the answers. He also sent him presents to show his affection more sensibly. Certainly it is no small glory for St. Jerome to have been thus consulted by the sovereign Pontiff, who is himself the oracle of the Church.

As the factions of Antioch still troubled the peace of the Church, the emperor Theodosius sent letters to the bishops of the West and of the East to have them assemble at Rome, so that they might end all these disputes and resolve in synod several difficulties that were being raised in various places on points of doctrine. The Easterners, among whom was Paulinus, were very glad to take Jerome with them, because they needed a man who knew Latin and because he was known to Damasus; perhaps also because that Pope wrote to him expressly to call him to this Synod, and even because the emperor obliged him to go there; for he confesses in his Epistle xxvii that he went only against his will and with reluctance. But if he found it hard to bring himself to this journey, the Romans, on the contrary, were overjoyed to see again in their city the man they had once admired in his youth, and whose reputation had greatly enlarged the first idea they had formed of his merit. They vied with one another to enjoy the charm and the light of his conversation and to give him the most praise. Some praised his penitent and solitary life, others his knowledge of languages, these his understanding of Scripture, those the purity of his doctrine. The Roman ladies could not weary of hearing him, the priests consulted him, the clergy and the people had their eyes constantly upon him as upon the greatest man of the age; in a word, by his piety, his learning, his courtesy and his obliging manners, he won everyone's heart. But St. Damasus, more than all the others, was delighted to have him, and, for his sake, showed great friendship to Paulinus and Epiphanius, with whom he had come. He regarded him as another St. Paul, who was to help him with his counsels in the government of the Church. Indeed, after ending the Council and confirming Paulinus as bishop of Antioch, he dismissed the prelates and kept Jerome by his side, so that he might help him to bear part of the weight of the sovereign pontificate. He gave him the charge of answering all the questions that were raised concerning religion, of clearing up the difficulties of particular Churches and of synodal assemblies, of prescribing to those who were returning from heresy what they were to believe or not to believe, and of drawing up rules and formulas for this purpose. Rufinus, in his apology for Origen, admits that it was this great doctor who composed the Confession for reconciling the Apollinarists, and he himself relates, in his Epistle li, the various functions he was obliged to perform under the sovereign Pontiff.

Yet these laborious occupations made him diminish nothing of his austerities, and he always practised them exactly, as if he had still been in the secrecy of a solitude. He continued his prayers as usual and lived in the silence and recollection of a true monk. He celebrated the holy sacrifice of the Mass devoutly, and for a long time the chasuble he used for that august ministry was preserved at Rome. His chalice is even still kept there now, and is sometimes shown to the people to renew their respect for this incomparable doctor who deserved so well of the Roman Church. The devotion he had in celebrating this divine mystery was so well known to the priest Nepotian, nephew of Heliodorus, that at his death he bequeathed him the tunic he had used at the altar. This being so, there is reason to be astonished that Godeau, in his *History of the Church*, should have written that "St. Jerome never said Mass, from a religious fear he had of that awesome sacrifice." One may judge of the greatness of his zeal for everything concerning the worship of the Holy Eucharist by the praise he gives to this same Nepotian, who brought incomparable care to all things related to this mystery. It is in the epitaph he composes for him in his Epistle iii: "He took care," he says, "that the altar should always be properly clean, that the walls of the church should be spotless, that the pavement should be well swept, that the doorkeeper should be constantly at the door so as to admit only those who were to have entrance, and that all the ceremonies should be observed with all possible exactness. He was almost constantly in the churches, and adorned the basilicas of the martyrs with flowers, branches of trees and vine shoots. He wanted nothing to appear there that could offend the eyes of the faithful, but everything to excite them to piety and to the adoration of the divine Majesty." St. Jerome must doubtless have been animated by the same zeal to praise so highly these actions, which have so little outward brilliance. Indeed, he watched extremely that the divine offices and all ecclesiastical functions should be carried out with all possible decorum. Everything devout and majestic he had noticed in the churches of Antioch and Jerusalem, the two oldest in Christendom, he introduced at Rome; it was at his instance that Damasus had the *Alleluia* sung according to the use of the

Church of Jerusalem, and that at the end of each psalm the *Gloria Patri* was added, after the example of that of Antioch. He corrected the psalms and the version of the Septuagint, which the Pope then had sung by the clergy. He did the same for the New Testament, which has always been read in the Church since then according to his version. He compiled and abridged the Acts of the Martyrs, so that they might be recited at the divine offices. We shall speak later of the other works he composed for the universal good of the Christian religion; we shall now speak only of what he did at Rome while still in the flower of his age.

Several Roman ladies, who had a singular veneration for him, also obliged him to write some books. He expounded to Blesilla, daughter of St. Paula, the *Ecclesiastes* of Solomon, to inspire her with contempt for all the things of the world, and from then on he began to write commentaries on Scripture. He gave Fabiola the interpretation of the multitude of names found in the book of Numbers and explained to her the prophecy of Balaam. He wrote for Eustochium the *Treatise on Virginity*, which forms the twenty-second of his Epistles, to combat the error of Helvidius, who took away this excellent virtue from the Queen of Virgins. He gave Marcella, a young widow, the understanding of the ten names of God used by the Hebrews. He taught St. Paula the Hebrew *Alphabet*. All these women were so many holy spouses whom he had won for Jesus Christ and had led to pass from an ordinary life to the pursuit of Christian perfection.

The goal to which Jerome resolutely called the chosen souls capable of it was evangelical perfection. “There must be no inconsistencies,” he said: “a sublime ideal and a vulgar life; a widow’s or a virgin’s habit and the habits of a worldly woman. The means must be in keeping with the end. Whoever chooses the perfect life must walk in the perfect way.” “Your profession as a virgin consecrated to God,” he added, “is supremely free, and that is what makes its merit; let those renounce it who cannot bear its honour; otherwise let them fulfil its duties.” Such was St. Jerome’s energetic direction.

Abstinence and fasting were what he clearly counselled as a habitual practice to these opulent and delicate patrician ladies. He saw nothing else safe for the heroic virtue to which they aspired; and, seeking in the depths of human nature the decisive and invincible reason for these rigorous austerities: “As long as we are in the tabernacle of the body, surrounded by mortal flesh,” he said, “we can indeed moderate and tame our inclinations; we cannot destroy them. It is difficult, or rather impossible, whoever one may be, not to know at least the beginning of passion. All flesh has its tendencies and solicits the soul with the lures of deadly pleasure. I tell you these things so that you may know well that human nature is in you, and that these common miseries, if you ceased to keep a strict guard over yourself, could reach you too. Under silk and under sackcloth the same inclinations rule us. They fear neither the purple of kings nor the rags of the poor.” “To conquer avarice,” he also said, “it is enough to open one’s purse; to triumph over a slanderous tongue, silence is enough; against vanity and the taste for foolish finery, an impulse of generosity is enough.”

The love of God was, above all, the nourishment St. Jerome wished to give the generous hearts he invited to crucify the flesh with its concupiscences, to die in order to live again. The love of the poor was the second. To draw them to every sacrifice and every devotedness he showed them Jesus Christ in the poor, and presented the happiness of being able to give to the unfortunate as a sublime compensation for renouncing worldly display and the worldly life. “Since you embraced everlasting chastity,” he said, “your riches are no longer yours, or rather they are yours far more, since from that day they began to belong to Jesus Christ. For know well that you really possess only what you have spent in charity.” But to give one’s gold to the needy is only the first degree of charity. To give oneself is the second. And it was that far that St. Jerome wished to bring the holy women he directed. He wanted the fruit of this austerity of life, which broke their delicacy and kept their souls in all their purity, to be to raise them above all the repugnances of nature to every devotedness of charity.

The love of God and the love of the poor were what St. Jerome put in place of wretched passions and frivolous affections; let us add the sweetness of the pure and holy friendship that united all these widows and virgins, his disciples, to one another. Along with the life of the heart, he wished also to develop in his

disciples, on the ruins of the life of the senses and of the frivolous life, the life of the mind. His great means was Scripture, not only studied as a science for the mind, but above all meditated as truth and divine light for the heart. He imposed the reading of it on all his disciples.

To complete this summary of direction as he understood it, it is necessary to set out briefly the counsels he gave on this important subject. He strictly prescribes manual work to the descendants of the Scipios, the Fabii and the Camilli, from four points of view: first, to avoid boredom, that burden of worldly lives; next, because it is a duty, even for those whom God has most loaded with the gifts of fortune; then because work can be a precious auxiliary of charity; and lastly because nothing better maintains the domestic virtues and the spirit of family. These four points of view, still so timely, are indicated with great precision and great delicacy in the following passage of one of his letters: “When the hours appointed for the reading of Holy Scripture and for prayer are over, after the care of your soul has often made you bend your knees, always have your wool in your hands, and either draw out the thread from the spindle with your thumb, or make it follow a weft; or wind into a ball what others have spun; fit it on the loom. Examine your weaving, redo what is badly done, and prepare other work for yourself. If you are thus occupied, the days will never seem long to you; on the contrary, even the long summer days will seem short to you, for in the evening you will never have finished your task.” What St. Jerome adds is very remarkable and cannot be too much meditated on by the Christian women of our day: “By doing so you will save yourself, and you will save others.” What does this mean? Jerome explained it thus. You will save yourself, because you will avoid the peril Scripture points out, “Every idle soul is agitated by desires,” and because you will not put into your life the void, the great gap, which the neglect of a capital duty such as the duty of work always brings with it. “For if a woman thinks she can dispense herself from working because, thanks be to God, she lacks nothing, she is mistaken. She must work like everyone else; and if she wishes to do so as a Christian, while her hands work let her soul think of God. Hands and eyes on her work, her heart in heaven.” How will she save others? By example. “You will thus be the model of a holy life, and the chastity of those whom laborious habits, contracted after your example, will have saved will be your gain.” St. Jerome adds a last, very astonishing touch: “I will say it simply: even if you were to distribute all your goods to the poor, nothing will have more value in the eyes of Christ than the work made by yourself, whether for your own use, or to give an example to the other virgins, or to offer it to your grandmother and your mother, who will give you in exchange abundantly what is needed to relieve the wants of the unfortunate.” There is in this, it seems to us, a deep and delicate understanding of family life, and what these discreet words let us glimpse in Christian homes of the considerateness of filial piety and of the ingenious calculations of charity is admirable. What! manual work, a woman’s work, above charity? Yes, because work is not only the substitution of useful occupations for vain distractions, of serious tastes for frivolous ones, of a full life for empty days: it is also respect for the aged and suffering grandmother, a virtue blessed by God, a daughter’s delight in her mother, the protection of virtue in the shade of the domestic hearth under the maternal eye, and finally also the relief of the poor and the fruitful resource of charity. That is why St. Jerome wishes to keep the young girl and the young widow sheltered in the paternal house, in assiduous work, near her mother and her grandmother, because happiness is there, with virtue. Such is the direction of St. Jerome, the great Christian direction, as we grasp it for the first time in history.

Among the disciples of St. Jerome we also see Melania, Asella, Lea, Albina, Marcellina and Felicity, who by his exhortations ardently embraced the strict maxims of virtue. He also converted several men who were so sunk in crime that they led the life of idolaters rather than of Christians. He called his brother Paulinian to his side, not to advance him in the world by his influence but to teach him virtue and letters. Several fine monasteries were then formed in Rome through his zeal, and the multitude of men and women servants of Jesus Christ who withdrew into them caused the monastic profession, which had previously been regarded there as almost ignominious, to become glorious and honoured by everyone. These relations with Roman women would have been very suspect and very dangerous for a man less virtuous than he; but the grace of

Our Lord, under whose inspiration he acted, sustained him in these dangers. Slander, however, did not spare him, and affections that were very pure and very holy were imputed to him as criminal attachments. The freedom with which he rebuked vice drew this calumny upon him; but the shining virtue of the disciples soon justified the master in the eyes of those who bore him no envy and whose judgements were not blinded by a brutal passion. His example, nevertheless, should be followed only with extreme reserve. Jerome, after three years' stay in Rome, where calumny had come to strike him, returned to Palestine; but before leaving Ostia he wished to pour out his grief, and from the deck of the ship that was to carry him away he wrote to Asella: "I am called infamous, a cheat, a liar, a magician; and people came to kiss my hands while my reputation was being torn to pieces in the most pitiless manner… Was I ever seen to enter the house of any suspect woman? Did I attach myself to magnificence of dress, to a painted face, to the glitter of jewels and gold? I have often been with virgins; I have often explained Holy Scripture to some of them as best I could. This study obliged us to be often together; assiduity gave rise to familiarity, familiarity bred confidence; but let them say whether they noticed in my conduct anything unworthy of a Christian, anything equivocal in my speech or passionate in my looks. Before I knew St. Paula, all Rome esteemed me and applauded my virtue; everyone judged me worthy of the sovereign priesthood… Was there, then, only a penitent and mortified woman capable of touching me, a woman dried up by continual fasting, neglected in her dress, become almost blind from weeping, and who spent whole nights in prayer? a woman who knew no other song than the psalms, no other conversation than the Gospel, no other pleasure than continence, no other food than fasting? Was there, once again, only this woman in Rome who could have any attraction for me? Touched by her wonderful chastity, scarcely had I begun to see her and to show her marks of respect when at once my merit disappeared and all my virtues vanished! O envy, which beginnest by tearing thyself!… I was very foolish to wish to sing the canticles of the Lord in a strange land and to abandon Mount Sinai to beg the help of Egypt."

Jerome embarked in the month of August with Paulinian, his brother, the priest Vincent and some other religious, and set sail for Cyprus, where he landed safely and was received by St. Epiphanius with every possible welcome; from there he went to Antioch, from where Paulinus took him, in the middle of winter, into Judaea. Before settling there altogether he went once more to Egypt and visited the monasteries of Nitria; he then took the road back to Palestine and withdrew to Bethlehem. St. Paula, with her daughter Eustochium, Melania, granddaughter of the consul Marcellinus — who, however, afterwards abandoned St. Jerome to follow Rufinus, his adversary — and a number of other virgins, came to him there. He chose this place for his solitude from a singular devotion he had to the mysteries of the Saviour's childhood. The sight of this holy place, where the only Son of the eternal Father willed to be born for the salvation of men, where He was recognized by the shepherds and adored by the Magi, was a touching object which every day kindled his heart with new flames of love for his divine Master. It is only six miles from Jerusalem, as Sulpicius Severus remarks, who visited our Saint there and stayed six months with him. His cell was on the road that led to the tomb of King Archelaus. There was a church over the grotto where Jesus Christ came into the world,[2] and an altar over the manger in which He was laid at His birth, so that the spotless Victim might be offered in the very place where the divine Word had offered Himself to His Father for the redemption of the world. Beside this church Paula had two monasteries built, one of men and one of virgins. St. Jerome devoted his days and nights to prayer, study and work with the other brethren of the monastery. He lived in perfect poverty, possessing no money and desiring none, content with food and clothing. He chastised his body by rigorous fasts and continual vigils. He slept on the hard ground, and during his rest his heart did not cease to be applied to God. Nothing came from his mouth but holy discourse, whether to explain Scripture, to speak of virtue, or to praise chastity, which had inconceivable charms for him. He kept himself hidden as much as he could, preferring to be a Saint in reality rather than to appear one in the eyes of men. His great retirement did not prevent him from exercising all the duties of charity toward the pilgrims, who were received in a hospice St. Paula had founded near the grotto of Bethlehem. He visited them, talked with them, consoled them, led them to piety, washed their feet and even those of their camels, served them at table; in a

word, he did his utmost to make them find comfort after the fatigues of their pilgrimage. In the first five years of this solitude he translated the book of *Ecclesiastes* from the Hebrew and composed the fine work we have from him against Jovinian. The more he advanced in age, the more ardour he seemed to have to be taught what he believed he did not know. And, without considering that the white hairs with which his head was beginning to be covered gave him rather the authority of a master than the standing of a disciple, he went to consult those from whom he hoped to learn some secrets for the understanding of Scripture, which was then his whole occupation. The high reputation of Didymus, an old friend of St. Athanasius and of the great St. Anthony, made him go to Alexandria to put some difficulties to him. He saw him, and admired his profound learning all the more because, having lost his sight in childhood, he had been able to learn almost nothing from men. He formed so close a friendship with him that Didymus, at his request, dictated five books of *Commentaries on the Prophet Zechariah* and wrote an exposition of Hosea, which he dedicated to him. St. Jerome, for his part, translated a book *On the Holy Spirit* which Didymus had composed. He admits that his insight into Scripture was incomparable; and so, just as he attributes to Origen as his singular characteristic the composition of a great number of books, eloquence to Cicero, subtlety to Aristotle, prudence to Plato and erudition to Aristarchus, so he gives this author, as his specific difference, the knowledge of the Scriptures. From Alexandria he returned to Bethlehem, where he applied himself anew to the study of Hebrew; he again had as his master in this language a Jew who spoke Hebrew with extraordinary purity and grace. St. Jerome made great progress in this language; he also studied the places and customs spoken of in the Bible, an easy thing at that time and in that country. Pope Clement VIII says that St. Jerome was assisted and inspired from on high in translating the Holy Scriptures. His translation, indeed, ended by causing all the others to be rejected and becoming that of the Church; he has also left us excellent *Commentaries* on almost all the sacred books.

The multitude of pilgrims, particularly monks, who came to the grotto of Bethlehem increased so much from day to day that, as the hospice St. Paula had founded was no longer large enough to hold them, St. Jerome resolved to have a larger one built; and, to have the means of meeting the expense, he sent his brother to Dalmatia to sell there the inheritance of their father, which the Goths, who often came to ravage that country, had not yet entirely ruined. Paulinian, on his return, was ordained priest by St. Epiphanius against his will. John, bishop of Jerusalem, condemned this ordination as having been done in his diocese without his permission; and although it was represented to him that it had taken place in a monastery that was not under his jurisdiction, and that Paulinian was thirty years old, the age required by the Canons for the priesthood, he carried his displeasure so far that he excommunicated all who upheld this ordination, and even St. Jerome, to whom he forbade entry to the holy sepulchre, although it was permitted to heretics. Regard for Paula was perhaps the reason why he was not driven from that place; for he was on the point of being banished through the favour his adversary found with the governors of the province. And so, in his Epistle sixty-one, to Pammachius, he expresses his regret at not having actually had the crown of exile, as he had his will disposed to suffer it courageously. For the rest, the ordination of Paulinian was only a pretext for persecuting our holy Doctor. Here is the real cause. St. Jerome had discovered that this prelate, eloquent as he otherwise was, taught, relying on Origen, that in the Trinity the Son could not see the Father, nor the Holy Spirit see the Son; that souls were in bodies as in a prison and had been in heaven before being united to bodies; that the demons and the damned would at last do penance and be saved like the Saints; that before sin Adam and Eve had no bodies; and that after the resurrection there would no longer be any distinction of sex. He had complained also of his allegories and metaphorical interpretations, which ruined the truth of the letter of Scripture.

These errors had already been condemned, at the instance of St. Epiphanius and St. Jerome, by the Church of Alexandria under Theophilus, who was its patriarch, and this condemnation had been confirmed by the Roman Church; that is why our Saint could not bear to have them revived. As he was ardent and did not always dip his pen in oil when writing against those he believed to be infected with bad opinions, he brought

this powerful enemy down upon himself. The fact appears certain from the Epistle we have just cited; nevertheless the Rev. Father Vastelius, a Carmelite, in the edition of the works of John of Jerusalem which he published in 1643, labours to justify the patriarch of all these accusations; he maintains that the Epistle to Pammachius, in which they are reported, is not by St. Jerome, because of the marked difference of style, which is very even in all his other works. The reader may consult that book; it is enough for us to have mentioned it without going into the substance of this dispute.

The outrages our Saint received from this patriarch, who did not love him, were not so painful to him as his break with Rufinus, with whom he had had a quite extraordinary friendship. This division made a great stir in the Church, and several were even scandalized by it and accused our Saint of too much heat, not wishing to consider that he had very strong reasons for breaking with a friend of that quality, since he had abandoned the truth of the orthodox faith and fallen into Origenism. Theophilus of Alexandria reconciled them, but this reconciliation did not last long. Rufinus, having gone to Rome, continued to teach the errors of Origen and published the book entitled *Periarchon*, that is, *On First Principles*; and, the better to insinuate the bad doctrine it contained, he gave, in an affected manner, great praise to St. Jerome, who had translated that work long before.

At last he counterfeited the good Catholic so well while spreading the venom of his heresy that he drew a number of Romans to his party and even obtained by surprise letters of communion from Pope Siricius. Then our Saint, unable to bear that this seducer should thus corrupt the faith of Catholics, declared himself openly against him. He had at the same time to clear himself of the crimes Rufinus imputed to him and to refute the falsity of his dogmas; he did so with such force and eloquence that those who saw the works of both could no longer regard his adversary as a learned man, seeing him so far from the erudition of Jerome.

Besides his writings against Helvidius and against Rufinus, he also wrote two excellent books against Jovinian. This was a monk of the monastery St. Ambrose governed in the suburbs of Milan; unable to bear the discipline of that holy Prelate, gentle though it was, he left it with some others whom he had infected with his bad opinions. He afterwards wished to return; but as he gave no sign of true penance, and his conversation was judged contagious for his brethren, he could not obtain what he asked. It was after this very just refusal that Jovinian began to teach publicly the errors of Helvidius, to which he added that the state of virginity had no advantage over that of marriage, and that virgins consequently merited no more than married women; that there was one and the same reward for all the blessed; that the flesh of Jesus Christ was not real but phantasmal; and other ravings of this kind. By this pernicious doctrine he deceived several virgins consecrated to God and made them renounce their holy profession to embrace the married state. Our Saint, who had won so many widows and young Roman women to chastity, could not bear this seducer. He took up his pen against him, fought him, refuted him, confounded him, and showed his malice, his corruption and his error so manifestly that he forced him to be silent. In the heat of the discussion he sometimes seems to lower marriage a little too much, which is holy and honourable and the symbol of the union of Jesus Christ with His Church, according to St. Paul’s manner of speaking; but this is only by comparison with the blessed state of virginity, which is much holier and more perfect and makes Christian souls the beloved spouses of Jesus Christ Himself.

Jerome’s reputation, which his holiness and doctrine always set above the persecutions of his adversaries, moved Alypius, a disciple of St. Augustine, on a journey he made to Jerusalem in the year 393, to visit him in his monastery. He spoke to him so favourably of the merits of St. Augustine, his master, who was then still only a priest, that our Saint resolved from then on to form and maintain a close friendship with him. He wrote him a letter, therefore, which we do not have, to warn him to read the letters of Origen with caution because of the errors they contained. St. Augustine felt extreme joy at the affection he showed him and desired nothing more than to be able to live near him, to draw from that sea of learning with which he knew him to be filled. He wrote him three letters, the first by Profuturus, the second by Paul, the third by the deacon

Cyprian, whom he sent expressly from Africa to Palestine, being already a bishop. In these letters he begs him to translate into Latin the Greek authors who had written commentaries on Holy Scripture; he shows him how little satisfaction he has with his version of the Old Testament from Hebrew into Latin, because the Christian Churches had grown accustomed to the version of the Septuagint, which was very different from his; he asks him what title should be given to his book *On Ecclesiastical Writers*, because the copies circulating in Africa were untitled; finally he takes the liberty of taking him to task for the interpretation he had given of the second chapter of St. Paul's Epistle to the Galatians, where mention is made of the public correction that Apostle gave St. Peter because, by judaizing, he was making the Gentiles who had embraced Christianity believe that they themselves were obliged to observe the ceremonies of the law.

The first of these letters, which preceded the others by a long time, was not delivered to our Saint, because Profuturus, who was charged with it, could not make the journey to the East, having been elected bishop and having died shortly after his election. But some ill-intentioned persons who found it among his papers published it, and it went round Africa, Italy and Gaul before St. Jerome had knowledge of it. It was only Sisinnius, deacon of St. Exuperius, bishop of Toulouse, who gave him a copy of it after twelve years. He answered it, and at the same time the two others, by a letter which is the eleventh among those of St. Augustine and begins with these words: *Tres simul epistolas, imo libellos breves*. He shows him the admirable usefulness of his version of the Old Testament because of the omissions in that of the Septuagint and the changes the Jews had made in it. He tells him what the title of his book *On Ecclesiastical Writers* is, which the matter it treats sufficiently declared of itself. He dwells at great length on the dispute between St. Peter and St. Paul, which he maintains was only a matter of dispensation and of mutual agreement between them for the spiritual good of the Jews and the Gentiles. This answer gave St. Augustine occasion to treat the matter more thoroughly; and we have said in the life of those great apostles what should be thought of it, according to the most common opinion of the Doctors. After that these two great lights of the fifth century wrote other letters to each other, some of doctrine, others only of friendship and civility; in particular St. Augustine, who was much younger than St. Jerome and regarded him as his father and as an already accomplished Doctor, sent him some of his treatises so that he might examine and correct them as he thought fit. He also consulted him on several important difficulties of theology, and particularly concerning the origin of souls, whose creation was not yet as clearly recognized and as commonly received as it is now. In short, all we have to regret in the intercourse of these two holy Doctors is that, being extremely far apart and not having the convenience of messengers, they could not confer together as easily as the great subjects they had to examine required. Paul Orosius, a Spanish priest, was the last messenger St. Augustine employed for so holy an exchange; and this holy man was very well paid for his message, since, having had the happiness of conversing with St. Jerome shortly before his death, he drew from him great lights, by which the Church has profited through the fine writings he afterwards gave to the public.

St. Augustine was not the only one who consulted him and held him in regard. We have already said that Sulpicius Severus stayed six months with him; and he was so charmed by his doctrine and holiness that he would have stayed there all his life had it been in his power. Hedibia and Algasia sent Apodemius to him from the farthest parts of Gaul to learn his opinion on extraordinary questions. Sunnia and Fretela deputed trustworthy persons to him to learn from him the different versions of the psalms. Pammachius, Oceanus and many others wrote to him constantly from Rome to have the solution of the difficulties that arose among Catholics and of the objections the heretics raised. In a word, so many learned men from every part of the West had recourse to him as to the oracle of his age that he admits, writing to St. Paulinus, that it was impossible for him to satisfy all these people. What is admirable in this is that, being obliged to write to so great a number of different persons — to the Pope, to bishops, to priests, to religious, to clerics, to lords, to virgins, to married women and to widows — he so adapts his style to all these conditions that he answers each according to the reach of his mind and gives advice and instructions suited to the state of each individual.

About the year 406 he wrote against Vigilantius, whom in irony he called Dormitantius. This heretic was a Spaniard by nation and rector of a church in Catalonia. He at first hid his errors so cleverly under the mask of hypocrisy that St. Paulinus of Nola, who had been ordained priest at Barcelona, wrote in his favour to St. Jerome and recommended him as a man of great piety and one of his friends. But when St. Jerome had seen Vigilantius at Jerusalem and observed his conduct, he withdrew his esteem from him in great part. Scarcely had Vigilantius returned to Gaul when he began to sow his errors there. He taught that no honour should be paid to the relics of the holy Martyrs, and called those who venerated them ash-worshippers and idolaters; that all the miracles said to take place at their tombs were illusions of the devil; that Catholics who entered the basilicas dedicated in their honour should be shunned as persons defiled with idolatry; and that it was folly to light lamps and candles in church during the day. He also condemned all the vigils held there by the faithful according to the ancient custom, and forbade giving alms to the holy places. He preferred those who gave their goods to the poor little by little to those who gave them all at once. He also renewed the errors of Jovinian against celibacy and virginity, and added other extravagant opinions to his impieties. St. Jerome learned all these blasphemies through the letters of Riparius and Desiderius, Gallic priests, which were brought to him by the religious Sisinnius, whom St. Exuperius, bishop of Toulouse, was sending to the East to assist the monks of Egypt, whom a great famine had reduced to the last extremity. He used the same means to have delivered to that prelate the writing he composed in one night against Vigilantius, in which he treats him as his extravagances and impieties deserved. In it he deplores the misfortune of Gaul, which, never having borne monsters before, had at last produced this one (Catalonia was then a part of Gaul); and this little work refuted the dogmas of this new sect so powerfully that it was at once extinguished and buried in oblivion. From this a strong argument can be drawn against the Lutherans and Calvinists, who have renewed the errors of this heresiarch, showing them that the Church of the first centuries had sentiments quite opposed to theirs, since it regarded as blasphemies the propositions of Vigilantius, which they have not scrupled to revive and teach to the people, together with others no less contrary to the faith of the ancient Fathers.

In writing on the prophet Daniel he had foretold the ruin of the Roman empire, and his enemies had taken occasion from this prediction to despise him and decry his works. But the event showed that it was true and that the Holy Spirit was its author: for in the year 410 Alaric, king of the Goths, besieged Rome and took it, and by the pillage he granted to his soldiers he reduced countless families of that great city to extreme misery. When the account of these catastrophes reached Jerome, pierced to the depths of his soul, he poured out his grief in eloquent cries; one would have said it was the old Jeremiah once more uttering his lamentations over these new ruins: “So it is quenched, the light of the world; so it is cut off, the head of the Roman empire; in the fall of a single city the whole universe collapses!…” And to picture this great disaster he borrowed images now from the Prophets — “Moab was taken by night; by night its rampart fell!” — and now from the profane memories of the sack of Troy: “Who shall tell the woes of that cruel night? Who shall make lamentations equal to the calamities? It is overthrown, the ancient city that ruled the nations…” And elsewhere, for he is haunted by this image: “Is it credible? This Rome, enriched with the spoils of the world, this proud sovereign of the nations, has fallen; she has become the sepulchre of her people, and now she covers all the shores of the East, of Egypt and of Africa with her fugitive or enslaved sons!”

And indeed Jerome soon saw bands of exiles arrive at Bethlehem; it was a lamentable spectacle. Patricians, men of consular rank, noble matrons, widows, virgins, men who had formerly not even known the extent of their immense fortune, fleeing to the ends of the world from the sword of the barbarians and the ruin of their country, came in the last degree of destitution to ask asylum of Paula’s monasteries. Many of them had perhaps once blamed her departure for the East. They did not know that she was going to prepare for them under that distant sky an asylum for the day of great misfortunes. Thus Providence sometimes takes pleasure in justifying its Saints. Jerome left everything to take in these remnants of the shipwreck of Rome and of the world; he received the priests into his monastery, Eustochium the virgins and widows into hers. The hospice was crowded. Jerome multiplied himself to relieve so much misery. But how could he relieve it all?

“Bethlehem,” he wrote, “sees every day the most illustrious personages of Rome begging at its gates. Alas! we cannot give help to all; at least we give them our tears; we weep together.”

In the year 413 he published his *Dialogues against Pelagius*, whose doctrine he had already combated; but this heresiarch had been absolved at the Council of Diospolis after the feigned abjuration he had made of the errors of which he was accused, deceiving the assembled bishops by his subtleties and equivocal answers. Jerome fought him again in three dialogues between Critobulus and Atticus. He would not name this impostor in them, out of respect for the Synod that had judged him orthodox; but under the name of Critobulus he makes him declare the venom of his heresy, which he had hidden under fair appearances from the Fathers of the Council. Pelagius was extremely irritated by them and proclaimed everywhere that envy and jealousy had made this great Doctor compose them; he even carried his resentment so far that he resolved to take revenge on him. Indeed, many holy women who lived under the direction of this Saint suffered a cruel death at the hands of a band of brigands who were of the heresiarch’s party; a deacon was caught up in the massacre, and Jerome escaped their fury only by a miracle, while the monasteries he governed were being burned. In short, Pelagius, animated by the spirit of heresy, which is always pitiless, neglected nothing to satisfy his vengeance. Baronius, under the year 416, says that John of Jerusalem, who loved Pelagius as much as he hated St. Jerome, was suspected of having given occasion to these cruelties; for from the Synod of Diospolis he had openly shown that he favoured the heretic against his accusers. And so Pope Innocent, to whom Eustochium and the younger Paula, daughter of Laeta and granddaughter of the great St. Paula, made their complaints and sent the account of what had happened, wrote to this bishop in a manner that clearly showed that he suspected him of having connived at it: “Is your piety not touched,” he says to him, “by the excesses of cruelty which the devil has exercised against you and yours? Against you, I say; for is it not your condemnation and the shame of your priestly dignity that so great a wickedness should have been committed in your diocese? Where was your foresight to prevent it? Where are your consolations and your help now that the evil has appeared? And what is lamentable is that the persons who have informed me of these excesses say that they fear still more evils than they have endured.”

This holy Pope wrote on the contrary to St. Jerome to praise him for his constancy and his faith and to console him in this persecution, offering him, moreover, to use all his apostolic authority to repress the insolence of his enemies. But as his extreme modesty in complaining of the outrages done him had kept him from naming them to him, he told him that he could do nothing else to stop and prevent them than to write to the bishop of Jerusalem, so that he might watch with more circumspection over what should happen to him in future.

Yet neither this great concourse of persons who consulted him from all parts of the earth, nor his admirable diligence in combating heretics as soon as he discovered them or in writing apologies against his adversaries, nor his unremitting assiduity in governing monasteries, nor his continual application in directing, by letter or by word of mouth, the souls who had confidence in him, nor his laborious charity in giving hospitality to the pilgrims who visited the holy places, nor lastly the persecutions of his enemies — none of all this, we say, prevented him from occupying himself day and night in meditating on the law of his Lord and in reading, explaining and translating the sacred books of Holy Scripture. We have already spoken of his translations; but since it is the singular characteristic of this great Doctor to have used his pen to give the Church faithful versions of the Bible, we shall relate here, before finishing our history, all that he did for this, so that Christians may know how much they owe to his labours.

There were in his time countless Latin versions of the Old Testament, drawn from the Greek version of the Septuagint, and almost as many of the New; one may even say that there were no fewer versions than volumes, because they all differed from one another. It was necessary, so to speak, to reduce all these versions to unity, so as to purify the source of the divine truths that are to be poured into the souls of the faithful. St. Jerome was chosen by God among the other Doctors, by a wonderful disposition of His

Providence, to work at this great undertaking, so desired by the Church and so important to Christianity. For this purpose He caused him to be born with an ardent inclination to learn the Eastern languages, namely Greek, Syriac and Hebrew. Next He inspired him with the desire to travel in various countries, so that, making himself the disciple of the greatest men of his age who were versed in the study of the Scriptures, he might learn from them the secrets necessary for carrying out this design. He also gave him an untiring courage in copying the books suited to this undertaking. And finally, to put him in a position to succeed in it happily, He called him to a retired and penitent life, imprinted on his soul the sentiments of a very deep humility, and gave him a generous contempt for riches, the care of which would only have distracted him; a kind of horror, from his childhood, for all the grandeurs of the earth, whose brilliance would only have served to obscure the divine lights and those of his fine mind; a strong aversion to high offices, which would have robbed him of the most precious moments of his time; and finally a continual distrust of himself, which obliged him to ask for enlightenment not only on the things he doubted but also on those he thought he knew perfectly.

It was thus that Jerome, accomplished in the human sciences and in the understanding of the holy tongue, strengthened by the spirit of God and animated by zeal for His glory and for the good of His Church, undertook what no one before him had dared to attempt, and what no one at all since him has dared to undertake; for he made two translations of the Old Testament, one from Greek into Latin, following the version of the Septuagint, and the other from Hebrew, also into Latin. As for the psalms, not only did he translate them as well as the other books, but he also twice corrected the old Latin edition which was in use in his time and had been drawn from the common and vulgar Greek version. By order of Pope Damasus he revised and corrected with incredible exactness the New Testament, which through the negligence of copyists was then full of faults and errors; and this translation of Holy Scripture was found so pure and so perfect that it was received not only by individual Doctors but also by the universal Church, which has declared it authentic; so that it still serves today to confirm the points of faith. Preachers and theologians quote it in the pulpit and in the schools, and the Fathers of the general Councils use it to define controversies in matters of religion.

What was admirable in this great man was the ease and speed with which he produced his works. It would be hard to believe if he had not written it himself: in three days he translated the books of Solomon, and in a single day he put into Latin the book of Tobit, which was previously in the Chaldaean tongue. In fifteen days he dictated commentaries on St. Matthew at the instance of Eusebius of Cremona, his disciple, who, being in haste to return to Italy, wished to take this precious work of his master with him. We have said that he took only one night to compose the learned treatise he published against the errors of Vigilantius, because Sisinnius, who was to carry it to St. Exuperius of Toulouse, being in haste to leave, did not give him more time. What further shows the liveliness of his mind is that he sometimes had six scribes to whom he dictated on the spot various matters with as much clearness as if he had been occupied with only one subject. But what is still more astonishing in his studies is that from his youth he began to be attacked by serious illnesses, which made him old before his time and put him in such a state that he remained fourteen years without being able to use his hand to write, or his eyes to read Hebrew books at night, and even by day he read them only with great difficulty. As for Greek books, he had them read to him by others, because the weakness of his sight no longer allowed him to read them himself. Nevertheless, in spite of his serious occupations and his great age, he did not disdain to stoop to teaching little children, in order to form Jesus Christ in their hearts and sow there the first seeds of virtue, as we may infer from his Epistle vii to a Roman woman named Laeta, who had married Toxotius, one of the sons of the great St. Paula; he begs her to send him her little daughter, so that he may teach her to serve God and to imitate the piety of her grandmother, whose name she bore.

Such was the life of this very great Doctor until, consumed by the number of his years and exhausted by penance and labour, he was seized by a fever which obliged him to take to his bed. As he had always kept a great vigour of mind, he then employed it wholly in preparing for death by a humble contrition of heart and by loving transports toward Jesus Christ. At last, in the presence of the monks and virgins, to whom he commended the practice of humility, patience, charity and the other Christian and religious virtues of which he had so often spoken to them, he peacefully sent his soul to heaven to receive there the reward he had merited by his immense labours. It was the 30th of September of the year 420, which was, according to Baronius, the eighty-first of his age, although others make him much older, but with little likelihood. His body was buried in the grotto of Bethlehem, which he had so often watered with his tears; but it was afterwards carried to Rome, to the church of St. Mary Major, and placed near the chapel where the holy Manger is preserved, in which the Saviour of the world was laid at His birth.

St. Jerome is represented: 1° about to die, supported in the arms of some disciples, sinking under a body worn out by penance and years, but with his gaze still full of fire, and his soul, by a supreme effort, raising up this failing body as if to spring toward God; 2° setting sail for Palestine; 3° disputing against the Pelagians; 4° explaining Scripture to St. Paula and her daughter; 5° studying the Hebrew books; 6° in the desert; 7° tempted in his desert and sustained by an angel; 8° meditating on the Holy Scriptures; 9° blessing a lion in the desert; 10° dying: the Saint holds a book and the angels receive his soul.

ÉCRITS DE SAINT JÉRÔME.

Writings of St. Jerome.

We shall speak of the works of St. Jerome according to the order they hold in the Benedictines' edition of this Father.

Volume i contains the *Sacred Library*, that is, all the books of Scripture that St. Jerome translated into Latin from the Greek or the Hebrew.

Volume ii contains: 1° The book *On Hebrew Names*. The holy doctor there explains the etymologies of the proper names found in the Old and New Testament; then come some Greek fragments of the same book, translated into Latin; 2° the dictionary *On Hebrew Places*, or sacred geography for the understanding of Scripture. The substance of the work is by Eusebius of Caesarea, but St. Jerome made it his own, so to speak, by perfecting it; 3° the book of *Hebrew Questions on Genesis*. In it are found the opinions of some Jews and of several interpreters, Greek as well as Latin, on various passages of this book of Scripture; 4° sixteen *Letters* on some difficult passages of the Old Testament; 5° the *Commentary on Ecclesiastes*, about the year 388; 6° translation of the two *Homilies* of Origen *on the Song of Songs*, about the year 383. This translation was made at the request of Pope Damasus, to whom it is dedicated; 7° there follow several works attributed to St. Jerome which also have Holy Scripture for their object.

Volume iii contains the holy Doctor's *Commentaries on the Prophets*, which were written at different times.

Volume iv contains: 1° The *Commentary on the Gospel of St. Matthew*, about the year 398; 2° several *Letters* in which the holy doctor explains some difficulties relating to the New Testament; 3° *Commentaries on the Epistles of St. Paul to the Galatians, to the Ephesians, to Titus and to Philemon*.

The second part of volume iv contains the *Letters* of St. Jerome, which are divided into several classes and several of which are true treatises, as well as his ascetical and polemical works. We shall content ourselves with indicating the principal ones: 1° The *Lives of St. Paul the Hermit, of St. Hilarion and of St. Mark*; 2° the *Catalogue of Illustrious Writers*, written in 392 and divided into thirty-five chapters. In the last, St. Jerome speaks of his own works; but he is, to believe him, only an abortion and the last of all Christians; 3° the *Book against Helvidius*, who maintained that the Blessed Virgin, after the birth of Jesus Christ, had had other children by St. Joseph, and who had gone so far as to teach that virginity had no advantage over marriage.

This work was written about the year 384; 4° the two *Books against Jovinian*, which also have for their object the defence of virginity, about the year 392; 5° *Apology* of the holy doctor concerning his books *against Jovinian*, about the year 393; 6° the *Book against Vigilantius*; 7° *Dialogue against the Luciferians*; 8° works of St. Jerome *against Rufinus*; 9° the *Dialogues against the Pelagians*.

In volume v have been placed the works attributed to St. Jerome and a collection of pieces relating to the history of this holy doctor.

The style of St. Jerome in his commentaries on Scripture is pure, simple and clear, but accompanied by a certain dryness. He believed that the dignity of the divine oracles was sufficient in itself. It is not so with his other works; there the Saint strove to give his style all the polish of which he was capable. His thoughts are noble, as are his expressions. One notices in his discourse a variety of turns as agreeable as it is surprising; he knows how to use figures with great art, and he is no less happy in the use he makes of the subtleties of logic. He brings in with taste the finest passages of the philosophers and the classical authors, and he has the talent of embellishing his works with whatever is most curious in the arts and sciences. The fitting together of all these parts is so perfect that each seems to be in its place; and his discourse may be compared to those works of marquetry in which all the pieces are so artfully joined together that they seem made for one another. It must be admitted, however, that this manner of writing sometimes betrays a little too much affectation. The judicious Fénelon also says that St. Jerome's style is not always according to the rules; but he adds at the same time that some faults into which he fell should not prevent his being preferred for eloquence to those who hold a distinguished place among the orators.

Besides the works we have from him, he composed several others which have not come down to us and whose loss is inestimable. Cassiodorus had them all in his library, namely: a book *On Heresies*, of which St. Augustine speaks, expressing his sorrow at not having been able to find it; a treatise *On the Resurrection*, which Orosius brought back to the West and which was addressed to Oceanus; thirty homilies on the Gospel of St. Luke; twenty-eight translated from the Greek of Origen; seven treatises on the Psalms; a volume on the four Evangelists; an exposition on the Judgement of Solomon, on the Apocalypse, and an Epistle addressed to Antius, in which he cleared up many difficult questions. It is well, in speaking of the works of this great Saint, to warn the reader here that among those printed under his name several have slipped in which are not his: the most dangerous are the *Commentaries on the Epistles of St. Paul*, of which Pelagius is the author.

Dom Martianay, a Benedictine of the Congregation of Saint-Maur, published at Paris an edition of the *Works* of St. Jerome in five folio volumes, the first of which appeared in 1693 and the last in 1706. The *Book of Hebrew Names* and the other critical works of the holy doctor had until then been horribly disfigured, even in the editions of Erasmus and of Marianus Victorius. Cave and other scholars have given great praise to Dom Martianay's work, although it does not have the degree of perfection it might have. This religious shows in it, it is true, more judgement and learning than in some of his treatises; but he is far from bearing comparison with the Mabillons and the Constants. He also left a great number of faults in the text of St. Jerome, and his notes are not always accurate. The order he followed in arranging the holy doctor's letters throws such confusion into them that one does not know how to go about finding or citing them. He did not give St. Jerome's chronicle, nor the martyrology attributed to him in some ancient manuscripts, although this Father only translated it into Latin, as we learn from Bede and Walafrid Strabo. This martyrology was published by Dom Luc d'Achéry, *Spicil.*, vol. iv.

Martianay placed a life of St. Jerome in the fifth volume of the *Works* of this Father; but he gave it again in French, with additions, in 1706. In it he defends the holy doctor against Baillet, who uses very harsh expressions in speaking of him, and also against some other critics who did not sufficiently measure the terms they used. Barbayrac also ill-treated St. Jerome and calumniated him by imputing to him a doctrine he did not teach; but he has been solidly refuted by Dom Ceillier, *Apologie des Pères*, pp. 308–311.

Vallarsi, an Italian Oratorian, gave at Verona in 1738 a new edition of the *Works* of St. Jerome in 10 folio volumes, with a life of this Father and very useful notes. He was helped in this work by several scholars, and notably by the Marquis Scipione Maffei; but he has been reproached, like Erasmus and some other critics, with having corrected the text of his author according to his own conjectures and without the authority of the manuscripts, which greatly diminishes the usefulness of his undertaking. In 1766–72 there appeared at Verona a new edition of the *Works* of St. Jerome by MM. Vallarsi and Maffei. M. Migne has reproduced it in his *Latin Patrology*, from vol. xii to vol. xxx.

The *Select Epistles* were published in 1815 at Lyons, after the edition of Canisius and of Martianay, one volume in-8°; at Milan in 1833, in-8°; at Paris, by Lecoffre, in 1855, one volume in-8° and one volume in-12. The *Letter to Nepotian*, with notes by Catalan, appeared in 1781, one volume in-8°. Some letters appeared in the little *Library of the Latin Fathers* published at Rome in 1839 by Father Ventura. St. Jerome's commentaries on the Gospel of St. Matthew are found in the Christian classics of M. Gaume, in two volumes in-12. MM. Collombet and Grégoire have translated into French the select works of St. Jerome, with notes and commentaries. The Latin text is on the facing page. The translation is followed by dissertations on various subjects of Christian archaeology by M. l'abbé Greppo, vicar general of the diocese of Belley, Lyons, Périsse, ten volumes in-8°. The *Select Letters* are also found in the *Chefs-d'œuvre des Pères*, with a translation by M. l'abbé Orsini and M. X. and the text on the facing page, eleventh volume of the collection. The *Bibliothèque choisie des Pères*, vol. xx, contains a fairly large number of pieces translated by the abbé Guillon. Several works of the Saint are found translated into French in the *Bibliothèque à l'usage des Dames chrétiennes*. The *Panthéon littéraire* contains the works of St. Jerome translated into French by Matougues under the direction of M. Aimé Martin, Paris, Aug. Desrez, 1838, large in-8°.

See Tillemont; Ceillier; the Lives of the Saint by Martianay and Villarsi. — Cf. Father Dolci, Hieronymus vitae suae scriptor*: this is a life of the holy doctor drawn from his writings.*

SAINT GREGORY THE ILLUMINATOR, BISHOP AND CONFESSOR, APOSTLE OF ARMENIA (ABOUT 323)

Gregory, sprung from the royal family of the Arsacids (the dynasty of the Parthian kings, founded in the year 255 before Jesus Christ by Arsaces I and replaced in the year 226 of our era by that of the Sassanids), was the first after the apostle St. Bartholomew to preach the Gospel in Armenia, his native land. Having escaped the massacre of his family, he was carried as a small child to Caesarea in Cappadocia (today Kaisarieh, on the Halys), where he was brought up in the Christian religion and received Baptism. In the same city had taken refuge Tiridates, son of Chosroes, king of Armenia (213–258), who had been treacherously killed by Anak, Gregory's father, at the instigation of the usurper Ardashir the Sassanid, and despoiled of his kingdom by the Persians. Knowing the crime committed by his father, Gregory gave himself as a slave to Tiridates, and later he returned with him to Armenia when the Romans had had his throne restored to him. Tiridates wished to force

Gregory to honour the idols, and he employed every kind of torture against him. He had him thrown into a very narrow dungeon, put a gag on him, and hung him up by a rope that pressed tightly on his chest; the Martyr remained in this state for seven days. He underwent a second suspension, hung by one foot, head downward, breathing the foul smell of dung that had been brought there on purpose, while he was beaten with wet sticks. During this torture Gregory prayed to God for the salvation of all peoples, and in particular for the salvation of the Armenians. The king admired this courage and redoubled his cruelties. He had planks and knotted cords brought, and the sufferer's feet squeezed until the blood spurted from the ends of the feet. Gregory also had his face bruised with many blows, his head pressed in a vice, and his nostrils filled with salt and vinegar; he endured all these torments and several others, and the king was greatly astonished that he had remained alive.

Meanwhile one of Tiridates' satraps informed him that this Gregory was the son of Anak, the murderer of Chosroes. This discovery brought Tiridates' fury to its height; he had Gregory taken to Artaxata, a fortress of the province of Ararat, with irons on his hands and feet and a rope about his neck, and there he had him thrown into a cleft in the rock, resolved to leave him there to perish. But God delivered him from this torture as from all the others, and in the end Tiridates, overcome, opened his eyes to the light of the faith and received Baptism from the hands of Gregory himself. Gregory, at last free to preach the Gospel in Armenia, converted almost the whole of that people and founded a great number of churches there. According to Eusebius, Maximin Daia, then Caesar in the East, who had sworn an irreconcilable hatred against Christianity, was greatly irritated to see it make such progress in Armenia; he came to attack that country, but he was repulsed and obliged to withdraw in confusion. This is the first war of religion of which history speaks.

St. Gregory was consecrated bishop by Leontius of Caesarea. It was Tiridates himself who sent him to that prelate so that he might receive episcopal anointing from his hands. On returning to his country he continued his apostolic labours with new zeal; he also carried the torch of the faith to several barbarous nations near the Caspian Sea, and penetrated as far as Mount Caucasus. We learn from an Armenian historian (Moses Chorenensis) that, having withdrawn to a cell at Mania, which is in the province of Daranalia (Upper Armenia), he ended his days there about the time when Constantine the Great made himself master of the East (315–323). Some Christians, obliged to flee from Armenia, brought his body to Italy; his head was deposited at Naples with the chains he had once worn, and one of his arms is in the cathedral of Nardò (Terra d'Otranto).

St. Gregory is represented: 1° having a vision dominated by the cross, which makes him understand that Armenia and the whole Roman world are to find peace in the triumph of Christianity; 2° with a crowned boar or pig at his side; for a legend related by Metaphrastes claims that Tiridates, in punishment for his barbarity, was changed into a swine.

Proper of Rome, completed with Godescard, the Acta Sanctorum, *Father Cahier, etc.*

SAINT LÉRY, PRIEST AND ABBOT, IN THE DIOCESE OF VANNES (SEVENTH CENTURY)

A Breton by birth, Léry was born of Christian parents, who had him begin his religious studies as soon as he was able to learn their first elements. He made great progress in them, and, to follow the attraction of a particular grace that called him to a higher perfection, he left his goods and his family and set out for a land where he hoped to be known to God alone. There he built a little monastery which has since borne his name and has given birth to the village of Saint-Léry (Morbihan, arrondissement of Ploërmel, canton of Mauron). There he led a wholly heavenly life and made himself useful to all the surrounding country by his discourses, his examples, and the miracles with which it pleased God to reward his prayers and the faith of those who had recourse to him.

In the course of time some disciples presented themselves to Léry and asked to walk under his guidance in the ways of salvation; they found in him an inexhaustible store of faith, of confidence in God and of zeal for the salvation of his neighbour. With them the holy abbot began to work for the salvation of the Bretons, and particularly of those of the diocese of Aleth (a destroyed town whose ruins are seen between Saint-Malo and Saint-Servan); numerous conversions were the fruit of the zeal of these generous missionaries.

After running a long course, St. Léry fell ill and passed away on the 30th of September, in what year is not known exactly. His body, enclosed in a stone tomb, was laid in his hermitage; at the time of the Norman invasion his relics were carried to Tours and went to enrich the abbey of Saint-Julien. In 1407 these sacred bones were taken from a wooden shrine that was almost worm-eaten and placed in another of silver; they

were kept there with respect until the year 1562, when the Protestants, having seized Tours, pillaged the churches and carried off from that of Saint-Julien five silver shrines, among which was the one that held the body of St. Léry, and which they destroyed.

The ancient calendar of the abbey of Saint-Méen (*S. Melanus*, Order of St. Benedict), in the diocese of Rennes, marks the feast of St. Léry, abbot, on the 30th of September, with twelve lessons. This Saint is no longer honoured in any diocese of Brittany, and appears to receive a cult only in the village that bears his name. His tomb is still seen in the parish church: it is raised three feet above the ground, and on the stone that covers it is his statue, which represents him clothed in a cope, holding a crosier in his right hand and a book in his left. On the edge of the tombstone are read these words, written in Gothic letters: "Cy fut mis le corps de Monsieur saint Léry." At the lower part of the tomb there is a series of pointed arcades, with the figure of a religious between each pair of columns. The whole monument is of stone; we do not know to what century it belongs.

Extract from the Saints de Bretagne, *by Dom Lobineau.*

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[1] Leopardus, a Roman of illustrious birth and chamberlain of Julian the Apostate (331–363), embraced the Christian faith on the advice of Valentine, a priest, who taught him letters, and received holy baptism. When Julian wished to have divine honours paid to himself, he refused to offer him incense and was condemned to be scourged with rods. As his constancy was not shaken by it, he was beheaded on the 30th of September 362. Valentine went and buried the Martyr's body thirty miles from Rome, at Otricoli (*Ultricola*). Later this same body was carried to Aix-la-Chapelle and laid in the great church of the Holy Virgin built by the emperor Charlemagne. St. Leopardus is one of the principal patrons of that church, where he is surrounded by the devout veneration of the faithful. — *Proper of Cologne.*

[2] About the year 950, Bertha, the pious wife of Rudolph II, king of Burgundy, who very often resided in the neighbourhood of Solothurn, withdrew there after the death of her second husband, Hugh, king of Italy, and miraculously discovered the remains of these generous martyrs; she had a church built at Solothurn dedicated under their invocation, and these holy relics were laid in it. Until the time of the Reformation the feast of the two Saints was celebrated with pomp on the 30th of September in almost all the churches of Switzerland, and particularly at Zurich. If the devotion of the faithful has slackened, it is perhaps because the relics of our two illustrious martyrs have lost, in consequence of upheavals of every kind, their character of authenticity; the Bollandists seem to insinuate as much. — Cf. *Acta Sanctorum*, tome vii of September.

[3] A Roman by birth, Honorius or Honoratus embraced the monastic state in his native land. Pope St. Gregory the Great (590–604), who knew the extent of his learning and the solidity of his virtues, joined him to the missionaries he had charged with working for the conversion of England. St. Justus, archbishop of Canterbury, having died about the year 630, Honorius was elected to succeed him. He was consecrated at Lincoln (*Lindum Colonia*) by St. Paulinus, archbishop of York, received the pallium from Pope Honorius I (625–638), and edified his diocese for twenty-three years. — *Acta Sanctorum* and Godescard.

[4] We shall give his life on the 10th of October.

[5] Sophia, a Roman matron, may be compared to the mother of the Maccabees: after bringing up her daughters in piety and the love of God, she was able to encourage them to martyrdom and to die after them. The Roman Martyrology gives the feast of the holy Faith, Hope and Charity on the 1st of August. (See note 2 to that martyrology, tome ix, page 175.) St. Sophia is represented breathing her last on the bodies of her holy daughters.

[6] The finding of his relics is celebrated on the 15th of October, but it is not known at what period they were found. The feast that draws the most faithful to the township of Saint-Victurnien is that of the Ascension. On that day the parishioners of Cognac (Haute-Vienne, arrondissement of Rochechouart, canton of Saint-Laurent-sur-Gorre) go to the church of our Saint and escort his bust during the procession. Perhaps this custom comes from their church's having been dedicated only by virtue of some grant of relics made to them by the inhabitants of Saint-Victurnien, who will have required this yearly mark of gratitude; or from some vow made long ago by the inhabitants of Cognac after some great favour owed to the Saint's intercession. His tomb is now seen under the high altar of his church; before the Revolution his head was enclosed in a silver bust. — De Reignefort, *Vies des Saints du Limousin.*

[7] When he was legate of the Holy See, he gave a lesson to a parish priest who complained that the Dominicans came to hear confessions in his parish and to win the good graces of his parishioners. "How many parishioners have you?" the Blessed asked him. "Nine thousand," answered the parish priest. "Rash man," cried the legate, "do you not know that at the judgement of God you will have to render an account of each one of these souls? Why then complain that people come to help you and lighten your burden?" And, finding him unworthy to exercise the ministry, he deprived him of his functions. — Godescard.

[8] The convent of the Franciscan Fathers today occupies the site of this hospice.

[9] This condemnation falls on an excessive passion for profane literature, but not on the study of the good authors of antiquity, a study made to form taste and style; such a study can only ennoble the soul. Besides, St. Jerome himself initiated most young people into the reading of the best Latin authors, and had the Works of Cicero copied.

[10] In the basilica of Bethlehem one sees the Oratory of St. Jerome: it is an underground chapel in which the holy doctor came to seek inspiration at the Saviour's cradle. Beside the Oratory one sees a chapel in which is his tomb; opposite is that of St. Paula and St. Eustochium. — *Les Saints Lieux*, by Mgr Mislin.

1 October

MOIS D'OCTOBRE — PREMIER JOUR D'OCTOBRE

Month of October — First day of October

MARTYROLOGE ROMAIN.

Roman Martyrology.

At Rheims, St. REMI, bishop and confessor, who converted the Franks, baptized their king Clovis and initiated him into the mysteries of the faith: he occupied his episcopal see for many years and died on the 13th of January, shining with holiness and with the glory of his miracles; his feast is nevertheless celebrated on this day, which is that of his translation. 533. — At Rome, St. Aretas, martyr, and his companions, to the number of five hundred and four. 852. — At Tomi, in Pontus, the holy martyrs Priscus, Crescens and Evagrius. — At Lisbon, in Portugal, St. Verissimus and his sisters, St. Maxima and St. Julia, martyred under Diocletian. 303 or 304. — At Tournai, St. PIAT, priest and martyr, who came from Rome into Gaul with St. Quentin and his companions to preach the Gospel, and afterwards passed from earth to heaven, having consummated his martyrdom during the persecution of Maximian. About 287. — At Thessalonica, St. Domninus, martyred under the same Maximian. 303. — At Ghent, St. BAVO, confessor. About 654. — At Orvieto, St. Severus, priest and confessor.

MARTYROLOGE DE FRANCE, REVU ET AUGMENTÉ.

Martyrology of France, revised and enlarged.

In the dioceses of Agen, Albi, Amiens, Angers, Autun, Bourges, Beauvais, Cambrai, Carcassonne, Clermont, Cologne, Dijon, Langres, La Rochelle, Le Mans, Limoges, Lyons, Meaux, Montauban, Nîmes, Paris, Poitiers, Saint-Dié, Saint-Flour, Soissons, Tarbes and Versailles, St. Remi, archbishop of Rheims and patron of the diocese, cited in the Roman Martyrology of this day. 533. — In the diocese of Chartres, St. Piat, priest and martyr, cited today in the same martyrology. 287. — At Bazas (*Cossio, oppidum Vasatum*), in the Gironde, in the diocese of Bordeaux, St. Fraigne (Fermère, Frenir, Frevir), confessor, honoured in Angoumois on the 30th of August, who has sometimes been confused, but wrongly, with St. Formier, martyr, honoured in the town of Vanares in the province of Álava (Spain) on the 25th of September. Sixth century. — At Bar-sur-Aube, in the diocese of Troyes, Saints Germana and Honorata, virgins and martyrs, whose life we have given on the 1st of May. 451. — At Condé (*Condatum*), in the diocese of Cambrai, St. Wasnulf or Wasnon, commonly Vanon (*Basanulfus*), a Scot by birth and a missionary, whose life we shall give on the 11th of October. About 708. — At Maastricht (*Trajectum ad Mosam*), in Dutch Limburg, St. Ursicinus, second or third bishop of that see, and confessor.[1] — In Gaul, St. Front, bishop.[2] — In the diocese of Nantes, St. Benedict of Macérac, abbot, of whom we shall speak on the 22nd of October, the day of the translation of his relics. 845. — In the neighbourhood of Saint-Malo (Ille-et-Vilaine), in the diocese of Rennes, St. Suliau (Suliac or Sulia), abbot, already cited in the Martyrology of France of the 29th of July, where we gave fairly numerous details of his life. Sixth century. — At La Ferté-Milon, on the Ourcq (Aisne), in the diocese of Soissons, St. WULGIS, priest and confessor. 550. — At Ferrières (*Aquae Segestae*, Loiret), in the diocese of Orléans, St. Montaine (*Montana*), virgin and abbess of the Benedictine monastery of that place (*Bethleem Ferrariae*), founded in 630 by Duke Wandelbert.[3] Eighth century. — At Auxerre, translation of the relics of St. Germanus, bishop and confessor, whose life we have given on the 31st of July. 450. — In Lower Brittany (which formerly formed the dioceses of Tréguier, Vannes, Quimper and Saint-Pol-de-Léon), St. Qué or Ké

(*Quinocus*), bishop in Ireland, of whom we shall speak in more detail on the 7th of October. About 495. — At Tours, St. Léry or Lor (*Laurus*), abbot, whose life we have sketched on the 30th of September. Seventh century. — At Lanmeur (Finistère, arrondissement of Morlaix), in the diocese of Quimper, St. Melair (Meloir, Mélore, Meilleur, Melar), martyr.[4] About 798. — At Beauvais, St. DOMANE or DOMAINE, wife of St. Germer, one of the glorious patrons of this diocese. 658. — In Brittany, St. Eurielle or Urielle and Blessed Onenne, virgins, sisters of the king St. Judicael. Near Trémeur and the old priory of Saint-Georges, in the neighbourhood of Dinan, there used to be a parish church that bore the name of Sainte-Eurielle. Onenne receives a kind of public cult at Tréoranteuc, a parish of the diocese of Vannes. In the church is seen her tomb, on which lies her recumbent statue. In a neighbouring field is a spring that bears her name, where people go to wash their eyes out of devotion. The processions of the Rogations and of Corpus Christi stop at this place. On the top of a small hill are found fragments of brick which come, it is said, from the house this virtuous princess lived in. Seventh century. — At Arras, translation (667) by St. Aubert of the body of St. Vedast, bishop of Cambrai and of Arras, whose life we have given on the 6th of February. 540. — In the canton of Mugron, diocese of Aire, Notre-Dame de Maylis (Mother of the lilies), a sanctuary built in the fourteenth century in honour of the purity of Mary. Since 1847, when it was made a chapel of ease, the people have begun to frequent again this pilgrimage, which had lapsed during the Revolution.

MARTYROLOGE DES ORDRES RELIGIEUX.

Martyrology of the Religious Orders.

Martyrology of the Canons Regular. — At Rheims, St. Remi, bishop, of the Order of Canons Regular. He converted the Franks, baptized their king Clovis and initiated him into the mysteries of the faith. Having occupied his see for many years, he died on the 13th of January, shining with holiness and with the glory of his miracles; his feast is nevertheless celebrated on this day, which is that of his translation. 533.

Martyrology of the Congregation of Vallombrosa. — Blessed Mary de Cervellione, virgin, who is mentioned on the 19th of September.[5] 1290.

Martyrology of the Order of Friars Preachers. — At Rome, the execution of the holy martyrs Eustace, Theopista his wife, and two of their children, Agapius and Theopistus, who, under the emperor Hadrian, having been exposed to the beasts, received no harm from them, through divine help. They were then shut up in a red-hot bronze bull, where they completed their martyrdom.[6] 118. — On the Saturday before the 1st Sunday of October, commemoration of St. Mary of Victory, which the sovereign pontiff St. Pius V instituted (1571) to be celebrated every year, because of the remarkable victory won on that day (at Lepanto) over the Turks by the Christians in a naval battle, through the help of the Mother of God. Gregory XIII decided, for the same reason, that this feast should be celebrated on the first Sunday of this month, feast of the Rosary of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

Martyrology of the Three Orders of St. Francis. — At Orbe, in Savoy, Blessed Louise, widow, of illustrious birth, who embraced the Rule of St. Clare under the reform of St. Colette and shone by her holiness.[7] 1503.

Martyrology of the Order of Friars Minor. — The same as above.

Martyrology of the Order of the Blessed Virgin Mary of Mount Carmel. — St. Thomas of Villanova, bishop and confessor, whose birthday in heaven is celebrated on the 8th of September.[8] 1555.

ADDITIONS FAITES D'APRÈS LES BOLLANDISTES ET AUTRES HAGIOGRAPHES.

Additions made from the Bollandists and other hagiographers.

At Tomi, a town of Lower Moesia (today Analdolkios), in Bulgaria, together with the holy martyrs Priscus, Crescens and Evagrius, cited in the Roman Martyrology of this day, the holy martyrs Denegothia or

Demergotia, Faustinus, Martial, Januarius, Alexander, Euprobus (Eoprobus or Eutropius), Dignus or Pigrus, Gothia or Gotia, Saturnina or Saturninus, Spes, Castus, Primus, Donatus, Passicus or Paffiscus, Propus or Prepus, and another Dignus. — In the dioceses of Rome and of Naples, St. Gregory the Armenian or the Illuminator, bishop, whose life we have given on the 30th of September. 323. — In the dioceses of Trent (Tyrol) and of Brescia (Lombardy), St. Remedius or Romedius, confessor. He is believed to have been a native of Thaur, near Hall (*Hala ad Œnum*), in the Tyrol. He lived and died as an anchorite in the valley of Val di Non (*Vallis Anaunia*), where there was formerly a great tower overlooking a rock, reached by a staircase of a hundred steps: this was the temple where our holy anchorite went to pray; at the foot of the tower was his grotto; relics of the Saint, among others his hermit's staff, were kept there. Other relics enriched the church of Saint-Pierre at Thaur; the head and notable relics were venerated in the monastery of Saint-Georges (diocese of Brescia). Schwaz (*Suasium*), Hall and some towns of Bohemia still possess today particles of these venerable remains. Fifth century. — At Constantinople, St. Romanus the Symphonist (*Romanus Melodus*), so called because of his great talent in the composition of sacred hymns. He was a native of Emesa (today Hems or Homs), a town of Syria in Lebanese Phoenicia, and a deacon of the Church of Berytus (today Beirut), a town and port of Syria in the present pashalik of Saida. He came to Constantinople in the time of the emperor Anastasius the Silentiary (430–491) and devoted himself there to the composition of sacred hymns. It was there that he died. About 500. — At the monastery of San Salvador, in Navarre, Blessed Viril, abbot, whose body rests in a village in the neighbourhood of Pamplona. — At Sivas (*Sebastopolis*), a fortified town of Turkey in Asia and the ancient capital of First Armenia, St. Michael and thirty-six of his companions, monks and martyrs. 782 or 788. — At Milan, a city of the kingdom of Italy (Lombardy), Blessed Thomas, archbishop of that see, and confessor. Some authors claim that it was he who placed the iron crown on the head of Pepin and on that of Charlemagne. He baptized Gisela, daughter of Charles the Simple and wife of Rollo, duke of Normandy. About 783. — Among the Hebrews, Onias III, high priest of the Jews. He succeeded his father Simon II in 200, governed the country wisely, but was deposed by Antiochus Epiphanes (174–164), who gave him as successors first Jason, then Menelaus, his brothers. Summoned to Antioch by the monarch to give an account of his conduct, he was assassinated there by order of Menelaus. 168 B.C. — Also among the Hebrews, Mattathias, a Jew of the priestly family of the Hasmonaeans and father of the Maccabees. He refused to sacrifice to the idols, put himself at the head of the Jews who had risen against the kings of Syria (166 before Jesus Christ), went through the country, everywhere destroyed the altars of the false gods, and re-established the worship of the Lord. Feeling his end approach, he gave his son Judas as leader to his troops. 165 B.C. — In Japan, the holy martyrs Gaspar Fisogiro and Andrew Groscenda, both Japanese and members of the Holy Rosary. 1617.

FÊTES MOBILES D'OCTOBRE.

Movable feasts of October.

On the first Sunday of October, in the dioceses of Bordeaux, Carcassonne, Nancy and Vannes, the most holy ROSARY of the Blessed Virgin Mary. — On the first Sunday of October, at Lorient (Morbihan), in the diocese of Vannes, a solemn procession with the statue of Notre-Dame des Victoires, by virtue of the special protection with which the Blessed Virgin surrounded this town when it was besieged by the English in 1746. — On the second Sunday of October, in the dioceses of Agen, Algiers, Ajaccio, Arras, Beauvais, Blois, Bordeaux, Cambrai, Cahors, Carcassonne, Châlons, Chartres, Clermont, Cologne, La Rochelle, Le Puy, Limoges, Marseilles, Meaux, Mende, Moulins, Nice, Perpignan, Rennes, Sens, Toulouse, Tours, Vannes, Nancy and Versailles, feast of the Maternity of the Blessed Virgin Mary.[9] — On the second Sunday of October, in the diocese of Autun, feast of all the holy pontiffs of that Church. — On the second Sunday of October, in the diocese of Bayeux, feast of all the holy bishops of Bayeux and Lisieux. — On the second Sunday of October, in the diocese of Coutances and Avranches, solemnity of the most holy Rosary. — On the second Sunday of October, in the diocese of Rouen, St. Nicasius, bishop and martyr, and his companions,

whose life we shall give on the 11th of October. — On the third Sunday of October, in the dioceses of Agen, Algiers, Ajaccio, Arras, Autun, Beauvais, Blois, Bordeaux, Cambrai, Cahors, Carcassonne, Châlons, Chartres, Clermont, Cologne, La Rochelle, Limoges, Marseilles, Meaux, Mende, Moulins, Perpignan, Rennes, Sens, Toulouse, Tours, Vannes, Nancy and Versailles, feast of the Purity of the Blessed Virgin Mary.[10] — On the third Sunday of October, in the diocese of Coutances and Avranches, feast of the holy bishops of these two sees, now united. — On the third Sunday of October, in the diocese of Rouen, St. Romanus, bishop of that see and confessor, whose life we shall give on the 23rd of October. 645. — On the third Sunday of October, in the diocese of Verdun, St. Sanctinus, first bishop of that see and of that of Meaux, whose life we have given on the 23rd of September. First century. — On the third Sunday of October, in the diocese of Le Mans, feast of the Most Pure Heart of the Blessed Virgin Mary. — On the fourth Sunday of October, in the dioceses of Agen, Algiers, Arras, Autun, Blois, Bordeaux, Cambrai, Cahors, Carcassonne, Châlons, Clermont, La Rochelle, Le Puy, Limoges, Marseilles, Meaux, Moulins, Perpignan, Rennes, Sens, Toulouse, Vannes and Versailles, feast of the Patronage of the Blessed Virgin Mary.[11] — On the fourth Sunday of October, in the diocese of Ajaccio, feast of the holy Relics. — On the fourth Sunday of October, in the diocese of Naples, feast of the Purity of the Blessed Virgin Mary and of Our Lady of the Dying. — On the fourth Sunday of October, in the diocese of Nancy, feast of all the holy bishops of the country of the Leuci.[12] — On the fourth Sunday of October, at Mesnil-Saint-Loup (Aube, arrondissement of Nogent-sur-Seine, canton of Marcilly-le-Hayer), in the diocese of Troyes, pilgrimage of Notre-Dame de la Sainte-Espérance, which owes its origin to a pious association of prayers established in that village on the 1st of May 1853 and enriched with numerous indulgences. “Our Lady of Holy Hope, convert us!” — such is the cry that more than ninety-two thousand persons, divided into as many series as there are hours in the day, address every day to the most holy Virgin to form the pious exercise of Perpetual Prayer. The pilgrims of the fourth Sunday of October, joined by the pious inhabitants of the village, renew their souls in prayer and in the reception of the Sacraments, and carry back to their homes a heart filled with holy joy and better disposed to the practice of the virtues.[13]

SAINT REMI, FIFTEENTH ARCHBISHOP OF RHEIMS, APOSTLE OF THE FRANKS

533. — Pope: John II. — King of France: Childebert I.

> *Tu, quas tot annos, alme Senex, regis, Adhuc benignus respice Gallias, Francique reges, quos sacrasti, Mente pii tueantur aras.*
>
> *Avec des yeux d’amour regarde cette France, Dont ta main a sacré les invincibles rois : Fais que des saints autels ils prennent la défense, Et conservent les droits.*
>
> *With eyes of love look down upon this France, Whose invincible kings thy hand has consecrated: Grant that they take up the defence of the holy altars, And preserve their rights.*
>
> *Santeuil.*

One may say of the family of St. Remi, archbishop of Rheims and apostle of the Franks, what is commonly written of those of St. Basil and St. Gregory Nazianzen: that it was a race of persons filled with the fear of God. His father, Emilius, count of Laon, was a lord of extraordinary merit. His mother, Celina or Celinia, knew so well how to unite piety with the eminence of her rank that she has merited the title of Saint in the Church, which honours her as such on the twenty-first day of this month. Their marriage was blessed by heaven from the beginning by the birth of two boys. The elder was Principius, who became bishop of Soissons. The name of the younger is not known, but it is known that he had a son named Lupus, who succeeded his uncle in his bishopric; and both are recognized as Saints in the ecclesiastical *Tables*.

As for St. Remi, whose life we wish to give, his birth was altogether miraculous. His parents were already very old and expected no other children than the two whom divine Providence had given them; a holy hermit

named Montanus, who was blind, but less afflicted by that infirmity than by the deplorable state in which he saw the Christian religion in the Churches of Gaul, received an order from heaven three times to inform them that they would have yet another son, who would be the light of the Franks and would draw those new conquerors out of the abyss of idolatry in which they were plunged. He came therefore to Emilius and Celinia and told them this happy news; the solitary's prediction was fulfilled. Our Saint was born at Laon, the seigneurial residence of his parents, and was named Remi.

He was sent early to school, where he made such great progress in divine and human letters and in the practice of the Christian virtues that at the age of twenty-two, in spite of all his resistance, he was compelled after the death of Bennagius to accept the archbishopric of Rheims. A ray of light that appeared on his brow and a heavenly unction that perfumed and consecrated his head showed that this election came from God; but people were still more convinced of it by the way he discharged an office of such importance; for no sooner was he charged with it than he fulfilled all its duties excellently. He was assiduous in vigils, constant and attentive in prayer, careful to instruct his people and to procure their salvation, charitable toward the poor, the prisoners and the sick, austere toward himself, sober, chaste, modest, prudent, reserved, never carried away by anger and readily forgiving those who had offended him. It is true that a kind of severity sometimes appeared on his face, but he knew how to temper it by the gentleness of his spirit; and if he had for sinners the ardent zeal of a St. Paul, he had for good people the kindly and loving look of a St. Peter. In a word, he possessed all the virtues, though he hid several of them by the deep humility of which he made a singular profession.

The gift of miracles he received from God further enhanced, in a wonderful way, the lustre of his holiness. During his meals the birds came without fear to take bread from his hand. Making his visitations at Chaumuzy, he healed and delivered a blind man who had long been possessed by the devil. At Cernay, by the sign of the cross, he filled with wine a cask that was almost empty, to reward the charity of Celsa, one of his cousins, who had received him with great devotion in her house. Having no holy oil to perform the ceremonies of baptism for a lord who was dying, he obtained some suddenly from heaven; and this oil was so salutary that, having contributed to the health of the sick man's soul, it restored to him the health of his body as well. By his presence he checked a great fire that threatened the city of Rheims with complete ruin. As he came down from the church of Saint-Nicaise for this purpose, he imprinted his footprints so deeply on a stone that they have remained there ever since; and scarcely had he appeared before the flames, making the sign of our Redemption and invoking the name of Jesus Christ, than they fled before him as fast as he could pursue them. A young girl of Tours, possessed by the evil spirit, was taken by her parents first to the tomb of St. Peter at Rome, then to St. Benedict, who was then at Subiaco or Monte Cassino; but as God did not grant her deliverance in either place, St. Benedict sent her to St. Remi and wrote to him to beg him to exercise his power and charity toward the unhappy girl. Alaric, king of the Goths, also wrote to him on the same subject. The Saint long resisted this request, not thinking himself worthy to obtain from God what so great a man as the abbot Benedict had not been able to obtain; but at last he was forced by the prayers of his people to pray over the possessed girl. The devil was at once obliged to flee and leave her free; but shortly afterwards she died of the exhaustion this infernal monster had caused her. Recourse was at once had to the holy prelate, who had already withdrawn. He returned to the church of Saint-Jean, where he had left her; he found her lying on the ground without breath and without life; and his word, which had had the power to deliver her from the chains of Satan, also had the power to bring her back from the gates of death. We have in the *Notes* of Colvenerius on Flodoard the letter that the glorious patriarch St. Benedict wrote to him. Cardinal Baronius doubted that it was his; but this author justifies its genuineness with good proofs.

Yet St. Remi's greatest marvel was without doubt the conversion of Clovis and the Franks. It is related at full length in the history of that great prince; but it is necessary to give a summary of it here. Clovis was the fifth king of that warlike nation which, having forced the passage of the Rhine, had seized the better part of the

Low Countries, Picardy and the Île-de-France, and was continually pushing its conquests into Gaul, previously occupied by the Romans. He came to the crown in 481, only fourteen or fifteen years old; but, young as he was, he did not fail to follow in the steps of his predecessors and to put himself at once at the head of his armies, to make himself master of the neighbouring provinces and form them into a vast kingdom. He gave battle to Syagrius, who was defending the remnants of the Roman empire in Gaul. He defeated and killed him, and in this way, finding nothing more to resist the force of his arms, he subjected a great part of Gaul to his rule. He was still a pagan; yet he did not persecute the Christians, and he even had respect for the bishops and priests of the cities he took or that submitted to his rule. St. Remi was the one whose virtue he honoured most. Indeed, one day his soldiers, passing near Rheims, had pillaged a church there and carried off the ornaments and sacred vessels. At the mere request the Saint sent to him, to give back from all the booty at least one silver vessel that its weight and chasing made very precious, he came to the place where the spoils were being divided and asked his army as a favour that this vessel be given him by preference, without drawing lots for it. Most of the soldiers consented; one alone, more mutinous than the others, struck the vessel a blow with his axe, saying insolently that the king should have, like the others, only what fell to him by lot. Everyone was surprised at this impudence; the king concealed it for a time, and did not fail to take the vessel and give it back to the man St. Remi had sent to him. But at the end of the year, reviewing his troops to see whether their arms were in good order, and recognizing the rash soldier who had done him this affront, he threw one of his weapons to the ground on the pretext that it was not as bright as it should be; then, while the man stooped to pick it up, he struck him a blow with his axe on the head and killed him with his own hand, saying to him: “Thus didst thou strike the vessel at Soissons.”

When this great conqueror had also subdued Thuringia, which he did, according to Gregory of Tours, in the tenth year of his reign, he married Clotilda, daughter of Chilperic, brother of Gundobad, king of Burgundy, promising in view of this alliance that he would embrace the Christian religion, which she professed. Clotilda often pressed him to carry out his promise, finding it very hard to live with an idolatrous prince who defiled himself every day with the impious and abominable sacrifices he offered to the demons; but her prayers and her entreaties were useless for five years. At last, the Alemanni having made a great incursion into the lands of the Ripuarian Franks, the king was obliged to march against them with numerous troops. He gave them battle at Tolbiac, which is believed to be Zülpich or Zülch. The Franks, after a few moments of combat, turned their backs, and a great slaughter was being made of them, when the lord Aurelian, who had negotiated the king’s marriage with Clotilda, turned to him and advised him to vow on the spot to Jesus Christ to embrace Christianity if He changed the fortune of the battle and made him win the victory. The king, in his desire to conquer, and moreover touched inwardly by an extraordinary movement of grace, at once made this vow; and at the same moment the Franks faced about, threw themselves impetuously on the Alemanni, broke their ranks and defeated them completely. The king of the Alemanni himself was killed in the fray, so that Clovis remained entirely victorious and made tributaries of those whose number and power had already struck terror into all France. The queen learned with great joy of this success and of her husband’s change. She at once had St. Remi informed of it, and begged him to come promptly to the court to complete what fear and the desire to conquer had begun, and to prepare the king for baptism. The Saint did not fail to obey. He found Clovis already half instructed through the care of St. Vedast, whom this great monarch had taken at Toul to be his catechist. He finished opening his eyes and showing him the excellence and holiness of our mysteries. The ardour of faith and religion was kindled so strongly in that martial heart that he made himself the apostle of his subjects before being a Christian; he assembled the great men of his court, pointed out to them the folly and extravagance of the worship of idols, and urged them to adore no longer any but one God, creator of heaven and earth, in the trinity of His persons. He did the same with his army, and his preaching was so powerful that most of the Franks wished to imitate his example.

The night before his baptism, St. Remi came to him in his palace, and, having led him with the queen and a great number of princes and officers into the chapel of St. Peter, he gave them an admirable discourse on the

unity of God, the vanity of idols, the incarnation of the eternal Word, the redemption of the human race, the last judgement, the paradise of the just and the hell of the wicked. Then the chapel was filled with light and with a fragrance beyond price, and a heavenly voice was heard, saying: “Peace be with you! Fear nothing; persevere in My love.” The Saint’s face also became all radiant; the king, the queen, all the lords and ladies threw themselves at his feet. The Saint raised them and foretold the future greatness of the kings of France, if they remained faithful to God and did nothing unworthy of the august quality of Christian kings. The next day Clovis walked to the church of Notre-Dame through streets hung with tapestries. When he was at the font, St. Remi said to him: “Bow thy head gently, proud Sicambrian; burn what thou hast adored and adore what thou hast burned.” After some exhortations, when it came to consecrating the baptismal water, there was no chrism, because the cleric who was carrying it had not been able to get through on account of the crowd. In this necessity the Saint raised his eyes to heaven and asked God to deign to supply this want; and at that very hour a dove whiter than snow came down from on high, bearing in its beak a phial full of a heavenly balm formed by the ministry of angels, which it placed in the hands of the holy prelate. He received it with wonder and thanksgiving, poured part of it into the font, and then anointed the king’s head. At the same moment the dove flew away and disappeared; but the phial remained, and it is what we call the Holy Ampulla.

Cardinal Baronius remarks that, besides the baptismal anointing, St. Remi also conferred on the king the royal anointing, which has since always been given to our kings separately from their baptism, by the august ceremony of their consecration; it is for this that the heavenly oil of this Ampulla has served until now, preserved intact until the French Revolution. The genuineness of this Ampulla, brought by an angel in the form of a dove, has been attacked by some foreign authors, enemies of the glory of the kings of France, who alone have the privilege of being consecrated with an incorruptible balm come from heaven; but it has been upheld and proved with great force and eloquence by several learned men of our nation, who believed that the testimony of Hincmar, Flodoard, Aimoin, Gerson, Gaguin and other ancient historians, together with the immemorial tradition of our fathers, approved even by a great number of writers of other countries, was sufficient to convince every mind of any reasonableness.

Two sisters of Clovis were baptized with him: Albofleda, who was a pagan, and Lanthilda, who was an Arian; the same grace was also granted to three thousand lords and to countless soldiers, women and children who wished to have a share in the happiness of spiritual regeneration. It is more commonly believed that this was on Christmas Day; but as baptism was then conferred only at Eastertide, it is not without reason that several believe, with Hincmar and Flodoard, that it was on Holy Saturday. Colvenerius even says that this is certain and that there should be no doubt about it.

One cannot represent worthily enough the love Clovis had for St. Remi and the favours with which he loaded his person and all who belonged to him. He gave him a host of lordships around Soissons and in other places, with which he enriched his cathedral and other churches, metropolitan as well as collegiate. At his prayer he pardoned Eulogius, lord of Épernay, who was guilty of lèse-majesté; this lord, in gratitude, offered the Saint his land, to make it the inheritance of the house of God; but the blessed Prelate thanked him, thinking it unworthy of a generous man, and above all of a good pastor, to receive presents as the price of his intercession. However, as Eulogius wished to leave the world and dispose of his property, St. Remi accepted it and paid him for it, and in this way Épernay came to belong to the church of Rheims. This same Clovis did nothing of consequence without taking the advice and blessing of this man of God. He took it to go and fight Gundobad and Godegisel in Burgundy; he took it to make war on Alaric, king of the Goths; and by the force of this blessing he won illustrious victories over these three princes, killed Alaric with his own hand, and joined to his empire a great part of the provinces of Gaul as far as the Alps and the Pyrenees. It was also by the same virtue that the walls of Angoulême fell of themselves before his army, like those of Jericho before the army of Joshua, and that he carried this place without being obliged to besiege it. And in each of these

expeditions St. Remi had given him a flask of blessed wine for his use, telling him that he would be victorious as long as this wine lasted; and by a great miracle the wine did not diminish until his return. Finally, this blessing prevented this great conqueror from being killed by two Gothic soldiers who attacked him from behind and did their utmost to pierce him with their lances.

The emperor Anastasius, having created Clovis patrician and consul and sent him, with the insignia of that dignity, what was formerly the height of Roman ambition, a golden crown of great price, St. Remi advised him to send it to Rome and have it presented to the Pope as a testimony that he was an obedient son of the Church. Hormisdas, who was then sovereign Pontiff, received this present with extreme joy, and, knowing that it was to St. Remi that the Church owed the conquest of the kingdom of France, he gave him power to create new bishoprics there as he should judge most fitting for the establishment of the faith and of Christianity. By virtue of this power he made a bishopric of the church of Notre-Dame of Laon, his birthplace, which had previously been only a simple parish of his diocese. He placed there as first bishop Genebaud, whose life we have given on the 5th of September.

Shortly after the embassy to Rome, Clovis died laden with trophies. St. Remi learned of his death by revelation before it happened, and perhaps he learned also that his soul had received the reward of so many conversions of which he had been the cause by his exhortations and his example, and of the establishment of the Christian religion in countless places where the devil was worshipped. Savaron, president of Clermont in Auvergne, wrote a treatise expressly on his holiness, which readers may consult.

It was about this time, in the year of grace 511, that the first council of Orléans was held. St. Remi did not fail to attend it with thirty-three bishops of various provinces. When he entered the assembly, all the prelates who had come before him rose to do him honour; one alone, who was an Arian and very proud, remained seated out of contempt and did not even deign to greet him when he passed in front of him. But his incivility, as well as his perfidy, was punished on the spot; for he lost the use of his tongue and could no longer speak. Then he acknowledged his fault and, prostrating himself at the Saint’s feet, begged him by every bodily sign he could make to obtain mercy for him. “Very well!” said St. Remi to him, “if thou hast true sentiments of the divinity of Jesus Christ and dost acknowledge Him consubstantial with His Father; otherwise the use of thy voice would serve only for thy blasphemies.” At these words the bishop renounced Arianism inwardly and by gesture, and his tongue being loosed at the same moment, he recovered speech to confess that Jesus Christ was one God with the Father and the Holy Spirit.

We learn from Sidonius Apollinaris and several authors that St. Remi was one of the most learned and most eloquent men of the early centuries, and that he wrote some commentaries on Holy Scripture full of very profound doctrine and in a very gentle and very elevated style. The difficulty is to know whether the *Commentaries on St. Paul* that bear his name are among them. Villalpando, of the Society of Jesus, endeavoured to prove it; several others deny it and attribute them to Remigius of Lyons or Remigius of Auxerre. There is less doubt about the two Epistles found in the *Library of the Fathers*: one to Clovis on the death of his sister Albofleda, the other to St. Genevieve, for whom he had a particular love and respect. His undoubted work is his testament, which our historians have always regarded as one of the most precious monuments of antiquity. In it he makes his cathedral church the principal heir of all his goods, together with the bishop Lupus, his brother’s son, and the priest Agricola, his other nephew. He also made in it many pious legacies to the other churches, to clerics, widows, orphans, the poor and beggars. This testament is found in Flodoard.

At the end of his life he was attacked by several very painful ailments and also lost his sight; but, far from grieving at this, he continually gave thanks to God for it, regarding these afflictions as great benefits that gave him occasion to exercise patience and made him more like Jesus Christ suffering and dying on the cross. He was ceaselessly in prayer, and tears of compunction flowed from his eyes at every moment. He knew the time of his death; but before it came his sight was restored to him, and he had the consolation of

celebrating the holy Mysteries once more. At last, having embraced his spiritual children and given them his blessing, he gave back his beautiful soul to God, without appearing to have any mortal illness, but simply worn out and consumed by old age. It was the 13th of January 533; he was about ninety-six years old.

He is represented: 1° healing a young girl; 2° receiving the Holy Ampulla; 3° baptizing Clovis; 4° appearing to a bishop of Mainz, on whom he inflicts strokes of the discipline in punishment for a breach of his duties; 5° with a dove near his head holding the Holy Ampulla. At Rheims, in the new sacristy of the church of Saint-Remi, are seen very curious tapestries of great perfection, given in 1581 by Robert de Lenoncourt, archbishop of Rheims. They represent the principal facts of the life of the apostle of the Franks: the birth of St. Remi; sight restored to a hermit; exorcisms; miracles; Clovis catechized; the imprisonment and deliverance of St. Genebaud; a council in which an Arian bishop is confounded and recovers speech only by invoking Jesus Christ, true Son of God; St. Remi singing Matins before the Blessed Virgin and the Apostles; his funeral.

CULTE ET RELIQUES.

Cult and Relics.

When it was desired to carry his body to the church of Saint-Timothée and Saint-Apollinaire, as he had ordered in his testament, the coffin became so heavy in the middle of the road that it was impossible to go any farther. Everyone recognized that heaven did not wish this great treasure to be carried to that church; and so an attempt was made to take it first to Saint-Nicaise, then to Saint-Sixte, but this too was without success. At last, after a long prayer, the thought came of placing it at Saint-Christophe, which was near by and where there was as yet no holy body. As soon as this resolution was taken, St. Remi let himself be carried easily, and he was placed at the spot where an altar has since been raised in honour of St. Genevieve. As for the place where he had remained immovable, called the Ban de Saint-Remi, a cross has been set up there with an inscription containing the account of this marvel.

Many miracles took place at his sepulchre and through his intercession. Here is one of the most famous, related by Gregory of Tours. The plague was ravaging all France, after depopulating Italy and Germany; the people of Rheims, to prevent this horrible sickness from entering their city, took from the sepulchre a cloth with which the holy body was covered and carried it in procession around their walls. Then a very surprising prodigy was seen: the plague, coming up to the circle the procession had made, never dared to pass beyond it; although even the birds died three paces away, no one was struck within the bounds of this mysterious circle. This led to the thought of placing the holy prelate’s body in a more fitting place. Archbishop Sonnatius had a crypt made behind the high altar for this pious purpose. The 1st of October was chosen for the translation; men wished to carry it out, but the coffin having again become immovable, they could not manage it. A gentle sleep having overcome them after the labour of the day, the angels accomplished what they had not been able to do. On awaking they found the relics in the place that had been destined for them, and the church perfumed with a heavenly fragrance that those of lilies, roses and jasmine cannot equal. Archbishop Hincmar, on the same day, made a second translation of this sacred deposit into a silver shrine. This was in the year 852. He found the body entire. Two paralytics and a subdeacon tormented with toothache were then perfectly healed. Afterwards various reasons obliged it to be carried first to Épernay, then to the abbey of Orbais. Its return to Rheims was made illustrious by an infinite number of supernatural cures. There were no blind, lame, deaf, dumb or sick persons along the road who did not recover their health. It was kept for a long time at Notre-Dame; but it was at last brought back in 908 by Archbishop Hervé to the church of Saint-Christophe, where it had been buried, and which, under Archbishop Hincmar, had given up that first name to take that of St. Remi. This church was at first very small and little frequented; but when it was enriched with the remains of our apostle, it began to be enlarged. Canons were placed there first; then Archbishop Tilpin placed there religious of St. Benedict. Three different abbots, Errard, Thierry and

Hérimar, undertook the great building. The last completed the magnificent church we see there today. The pope St. Leo IX dedicated it himself in 1049, accompanied by a great number of archbishops and bishops. The shrine of its glorious patron, which had been taken to Notre-Dame during this ceremony, was brought back to it with pomp and an incredible concourse of people. It was again on the 1st of October that this ceremony took place, and the Pope appointed that day in perpetuity to be the day of St. Remi's feast. He says, in the bull he issued on this subject, that although this blessed prelate is not the apostle of all the nations, he nevertheless has this prerogative of being the apostle of the Franks in particular, and that this nation is the mark and honour of his apostolate.

Five mausoleums raised above the ground have successively enclosed the body of St. Remi. The first was raised by Hincmar (845–882) in the ninth century; the second by Hérimar, abbot of the monastery of Saint-Remi, in the eleventh century; the third by Cardinal Robert de Lenoncourt at the beginning of the sixteenth century. This mausoleum, begun in 1533 and completed in 1537, lasted until the French Revolution. It was an oblong of about eight metres in height and five metres in length. It was made up of two storeys. The lower one was of the Corinthian order. Seventeen columns of red and white jasper supported the entablature. Between the columns were niches containing life-size statues of the twelve peers of France. The upper storey, of the Doric order, was adorned on each side with twenty-four silver plaques representing the life of St. Remi. The door of the tomb was covered with plates of gold. In the middle was another small door made of very pure gold and inlaid with precious stones. At the centre was a piece of rock crystal carved with wonderful art, representing the baptism of Our Lord. This door and this crystal came from the mausoleum raised by Hincmar. The whole monument was surmounted by a small lantern in the form of a dome set with precious stones. The fourth was raised in 1803 at the expense of M. Ludinard de Vauxelles, president of the church council, who took the cost of the monument upon himself; it was rebuilt on the old site, but in the form of a rotunda instead of the square form it had formerly had. The marble columns, which came from the high altar of the church of Saint-Pierre-les-Dames, were given by M. Blémont. The ceremony of reception took place on the 27th of March 1803.

Finally, in 1847, under the episcopate of Mgr Thomas Gousset, archbishop of Rheims, the tomb was restored under the direction of M. Brunette, architect, and put into the state in which it is seen today. The twelve statues between the columns are made of a very fine white stone and covered with a varnish that makes them shine like marble. They are the same as those of former times, the municipality having consented to take them out of the museum and restore them to their original purpose. They stand there as a memorial of institutions and dignities that have disappeared with our old dynasties. On the right side are the six bishops: the archbishop-duke of Rheims, bearing the cross; the bishop of Laon, the sceptre; the bishop-count of Beauvais, the royal mantle; the bishop-count of Châlons, the ring; the bishop-count of Noyon, the girdle. On the left side: the duke of Burgundy, bearing the crown; the duke of Aquitaine, the standard; the duke of Normandy, a second standard; the count of Flanders, the sword; the count of Toulouse, the spurs; the count of Champagne, the military ensign.

Dom Oudard Bourgeois, grand prior of the abbey of Saint-Remi in the seventeenth century, gave a shrine of solid silver enriched with precious stones. It had the same form as the tomb raised by Cardinal Robert de Lenoncourt. It weighed nearly fifty-six kilogrammes and had cost more than fourteen thousand livres. Its length exceeded two metres and its width one metre. On the 19th of August 1650 the old shrine of Hincmar was placed in the new one without the old seals being broken.

In the tomb of St. Remi two very precious objects were enclosed: 1° the pastoral staff, covered with gold and stones of great price, sent to St. Remi by Pope Hormisdas when he named him apostolic legate; 2° the Holy Ampulla, or crystal phial forty-five millimetres high, containing the Chrism intended for the consecration of the kings of France. It was the abbots of Saint-Remi who carried it about their necks at the ceremony of the consecration. The Holy Ampulla was set in a kind of rose of silver-gilt, in the form of a paten, artistically

worked and enriched with diamonds. It was fixed on the back of a golden dove. It was with a golden needle thirty-seven lines long that a particle of the balm was detached from the phial, to be mixed afterwards with holy Chrism at each new consecration of our kings. The Holy Ampulla was kept with such care that it was never allowed to leave Saint-Remi except for the consecration of a king of France. In 1483 Louis XI, who surrounded himself with all sorts of relics and whose devotion went as far as superstition, seeing himself near death, wished the Holy Ampulla to be brought to him. The monarch's request was submitted to Pope Sixtus IV, and it was only after obtaining his consent that a deputation was charged with carrying it to Plessis. When the relic passed through Paris, the Parlement in a body escorted it to the Sainte-Chapelle, where it was placed for a night before continuing the journey.

On the 23rd of October 1793 the revolutionaries, glorying in the name of sans-culottes, invaded the church of Saint-Remi at about five o'clock in the evening, seized the shrine, broke it to pieces and threw the holy bones on the ground. Then the government commissioner went up into the pulpit and made the vaults ring with his blasphemies against relics and the future life. Then, having gathered up the bones, he went with his infamous accomplices into the garden adjoining the church, in the middle of which was a cemetery; the venerated remains of the holy apostle of France were thrown into a pit with the corpses of two soldiers who had just died at the Hôtel-Dieu. The tomb was demolished from top to bottom. The gold and silver ornaments were taken to the mint; the statues enriched the town museum.

As for the Holy Ampulla, it was smashed with hammer blows, to cries of "Long live the Republic!", in the middle of the Place Royale, on the steps of the pedestal that had borne the statue of Louis XV. The perpetrator of this act of vandalism was a representative of the people named Rhull, sent expressly from Paris by the Convention, which moreover wished the fragments of this reliquary, regarded as dangerous to the safety of the Republic, to be faithfully transmitted to it.

A municipal officer, M. Hourelle, churchwarden of Saint-Remi, came to an understanding with the abbé Seraine, the intruded parish priest and keeper of the keys of the tomb; and, being unable to substitute another phial for the phial of the reliquary, they removed with the golden needle some particles of the dark brown balm that adhered to its sides and preserved them carefully. On the 11th of June 1819, under the episcopate of Mgr de Coucy, the possessors both of these precious particles and of two fragments of the phial deposited them, after a preliminary inquiry, in the hands of their archbishop, who provisionally enclosed the whole in a modest reliquary and had it taken to the church of Saint-Remi, where it remained until the month of May 1825.

On the 5th of July 1792, about eighteen months after the profanation of the Saint's body by the revolutionaries, a municipal officer named Favréau persuaded the same gravedigger who had buried the precious bones to exhume them from the cemetery and hand them over to him. An authentic official report was drawn up on the spot. The same municipal officer decided, on the 15th of March 1796, to entrust this deposit to the abbé Seraine, constitutional parish priest of Saint-Remi, who placed them in a chapel set up in the library of the Minims. At last, in the first days of October 1796, the church of Saint-Remi having been restored to worship, the shrine of the holy bishop was transferred there. The bones were carefully examined by physicians and found complete, in the presence of several witnesses and of the intruded bishop Nicolas Diot. A new recognition of the relics took place, first in 1803 by order of the bishop of Meaux, in whose diocese Rheims was included, and then in 1824 by Mgr de Latil, archbishop of Rheims, who had the first rib set apart, affixed his seals to the bones, which were gathered together and wrapped in a shroud, and himself enclosed them in the new shrine of silvered copper, owed once more to the munificence of M. Ludinart de Vauxelles. This shrine is nearly two metres long and more than one metre high. The statuettes of the twelve Apostles are placed on each side.

On the 22nd of May 1825 Cardinal de Latil had the box containing the fragments of the Holy Ampulla taken from the tomb of St. Remi, took from it the various particles rescued from the profanation, mixed them with

holy Chrism, and poured the whole into a phial cast on the model of the old one. The reliquary that Mgr de Coucy had ordered from the skilful goldsmith Charles Cahier was finished only at the time of the consecration of Charles X. The new phial was enclosed in it. The reliquary as a whole is a true masterpiece; its description fills six octavo pages in the history of Notre-Dame of Rheims by the abbé Cerf. One of the bas-reliefs represents the baptism of Clovis. The inscriptions are ingenious and perfectly chosen; on the horizontal surfaces of the base are the medallions and portraits of the kings consecrated both at Rheims and in other cities, such as Pepin at Soissons, Charlemagne at Noyon, etc. The whole reliquary cost twenty-five thousand francs, not counting a great number of precious stones given by the ladies of the king's court. — Since the consecration of King Charles X, the Holy Ampulla has not returned to Saint-Remi; it remains in the treasury of the metropolitan church.

St. Remi has always been held in great veneration at Rheims. Since his death the people of Rheims have had recourse to his intercession in every calamity; his relics have often been carried through the streets in procession or exposed at Notre-Dame in the hope of preserving the city from various scourges — plague, war, invasions — or of obtaining peace, or an heir to the crown, or again to thank God for a favour granted. The inhabitants of the parish of Saint-Remi are so strongly attached to keeping the body of the holy archbishop that in 1823, when a procession with the shrine had been announced by order of the archbishop's office on the occasion of the cholera, there was lively opposition and almost a riot, the people fearing for the shrine of St. Remi the fate of the Holy Ampulla. The ecclesiastical authority therefore thought it prudent to cancel the ceremony.

The zeal of the present parish priest, M. l'abbé Aubert, has introduced the custom of an annual and very solemn novena, which is often prolonged beyond the ninth day after the feast. It is a kind of retreat or mission, which draws to the services and sermons a considerable number of pilgrims, estimated at about forty thousand. Today, when impiety and atheism proudly raise their heads and openly attack the foundations of religion and of the holy Church established by Jesus Christ on earth, people ought to hasten from every part of France to the tomb of St. Remi and ask above all of the glorious bishop who instructed and baptized Clovis the preservation of the Catholic faith and the sincere practice of the precepts of the Gospel.

A little booklet distributed at the door of the church of Saint-Remi contains antiphons, prayers and litanies full of unction and piety, which the pilgrims do not fail to recite humbly, kneeling before the precious remains of the apostle of the French.

We have the life of St. Remi by Hincmar, one of his successors. St. Gregory of Tours and Flodoard speak of him very fully in their histories. Father René de Cérizières, of the Society of Jesus, gave a very ample eulogy of him drawn from these authors, which has served us in composing this summary. We have completed it with Notes supplied by M. Henri Congnet, of the diocese of Soissons.

SAINT WULGIS OR VULGIS, PRIEST AND CONFESSOR, SOLITARY AT TROESNES, IN THE DIOCESE OF SOISSONS

550. — Pope: Vigilius. — King of the Franks: Childebert I.

> *Inimici jaculis invulnerabilis est, qui solitudinem diligit.*
>
> *Celui qui aime la solitude est invulnérable aux traits de l'ennemi du salut.*
>
> *He who loves solitude is invulnerable to the darts of the enemy of salvation.*
>
> *St. Nilus.*

St. Wulgis or Vulgis was born about 470, in the country of Rheims. History, which does not record the names of his father or his mother, assures us nevertheless that both were very estimable for their nobility as well as for their piety. The young Vulgis was deprived from his tenderest years of the consolation of being

brought up by the care of his dear parents; but divine Providence abundantly compensated him for this loss by giving him as spiritual father the great St. Remi, archbishop of Rheims, at whose hands he had already had the honour of receiving holy baptism, as appears from an ancient inscription found in his shrine, as we shall tell later. This great prelate, who noticed rare qualities of mind and good inclinations in this young child, thought it a duty of his piety to take particular care of the education of this little orphan whom he had begotten in Jesus Christ. He gave him all the instructions suited to his age and omitted nothing to make of him a perfect disciple, whom he hoped one day to raise to the noblest functions of his Church.

The young Vulgis responded as fully as could be wished to the holy archbishop's intentions; he perfected himself in the sciences and still more in piety, of which he had powerful examples before his eyes at every moment in the person of the one who served him as father and protector. It was not long before he was recognized by everyone as a great model of perfection, and this rising light even then cast rays that began to illumine the whole province. Indeed, he let himself be governed so well by the movements of the grace that went before him, and followed St. Remi's lessons so faithfully, that he wished to have dealings with heaven alone, applying himself to prayer, to the study of the Holy Scriptures and to his duty. In this spirit he refused the honourable offices and distinguished employments offered him in the world, and remained ever constant in the resolution he had taken to serve God alone.

St. Remi, having certain proofs of the good spirit and solid virtue of the young Vulgis, and recognizing his perfect detachment from all the things of the earth, began to regard him as a man sent by God to procure the salvation of souls and to uphold the interests of the Church; and, no longer considering him merely as his disciple, he made him the companion of his labours in the functions of the prelacy. When he saw himself raised to the dignity of the priesthood, Vulgis was seized with a holy fear; and, his deep humility making him regard this character as an honour of which he thought himself utterly unworthy, he became more exact than ever in the observance of his exercises, so as to respond faithfully to the holiness of his state.

What reassured him in the fear he had of not fulfilling the duties of the priesthood worthily enough was the choice his prelate had made of him, and the resolution he had taken to obey him in everything he should command; he therefore thought only of following what should be marked out for him by so great a master. Giving himself entirely to ecclesiastical functions, he opened his mouth to announce the word of the Gospel to the people. Obliged to make the talent God had entrusted to him bear fruit, he shared with the churches the abundance of all the lights with which the Holy Spirit had filled him.

The author of his life notes that it was at about this time, that is, about the year 500, that the great Clovis was converted and came to Rheims to receive baptism at the hands of St. Remi. There is no doubt that St. Vulgis, his faithful disciple, had a great part in this event, since it was then a question not only of the conversion of Clovis alone but also of that of his whole army and of the great men of the kingdom, who, as history teaches us, embraced after their monarch's example the Christian religion that St. Remi set before them. Indeed, this harvest appeared so abundant that a great number of labourers were needed, and several famous bishops and holy priests, among others St. Vedast, who was made bishop of Arras, were called to announce the truths of the Gospel to so numerous an army. Thus, although St. Vulgis is not named, any more than so many others who laboured at this work, there is no doubt that, having the gift of preaching, being animated as he was with zeal for the glory of God, and living at that time with St. Remi, who had associated him in the cares and labours of his pastoral office, he consequently contributed in many ways to the conversion of King Clovis and of so many other Franks who followed him and embraced the faith as he did. Indeed, the memoirs of his life tell us that, the holiness of his life having been recognized by the chief lords of the court, they were so charmed by his virtue and conduct that, unable to do without his conversation, they obliged him to remain at the court, against all his inclinations, which tended only to silence and retirement.

St. Vulgis endured for a time this situation, which one could call a violent one for him; but although his instruction and his example produced wonderful fruit among this great number of lords, and he was of

extraordinary help to the holy prelate who had chosen him and who relied on him for countless cares attached to his pastoral charge, he could not resist the voice and inner attraction of grace, which seemed to call him to solitude and urged him to leave the noise and the entanglements of the court and go and enjoy the sweetness of contemplation in silence in the desert. What finally decided him to take this course and carry it out as soon as possible was a certain rumour that reached his ears and let him know that the people, who he thought were too prejudiced in his favour, planned to raise him to the episcopal throne after the death of St. Remi, who was already broken with old age. And indeed that holy prelate, who also judged him more worthy than anyone else to fill his place, shortly afterwards named him his coadjutor, with the consent of the people and of the whole court.

The dignity to which Vulgis saw himself raised only confirmed him in his resolution; his humility on the one hand, the thought of his salvation and perfection on the other, and the extreme repugnance he had for grandeur and for a multiplicity of affairs, made him look for the means of slipping away from his friends and absenting himself from the court. St. Remi was informed of it; keenly grieved, he spoke of it to his dear disciple and did all he could to keep so excellent a subject, whom he had formed with such care and for so long; but after many trials and conversations on this matter, having recognized God's designs for this holy priest, he could not refuse him permission to withdraw as he wished. Having therefore embraced him, his face bathed in tears, he gave him his blessing, and our Saint left with incredible joy his friends, the court and all the dignities that were offered him.

Free henceforth from every kind of hindrance, the young priest went to settle in the Orxois, in a wild spot in the forest of Retz, on the slope of a hill at the foot of which flows the river Ourcq, called Troësnes[1] because of the plant of that name that grew there in abundance. The traces are still seen there of a little cell said to have been built with his own hands, and one even notices a kind of altar on which it is believed he celebrated the sacrifice of the Mass. It must be admitted here that the excessive humility of this holy solitary deprives us of very great goods, by taking from us the knowledge of what he practised during the forty years he remained hidden in the bosom of this desert. God alone and the angels could witness his mortifications, his vigils, his fasts and his continual prayer. What could his food have been in a place that was not cultivated and whose land was then entirely barren? It was without any doubt some wild herbs that he found in the forest, and his bed could only have been the bare ground. Vulgis thus reproduced the manner of life of the holiest hermits who had preceded him, whom he took as models of the perfection to which he aspired.

It was apparently the pious solitary's intention to persevere thus until death, unknown to men and in the continual practice of the most severe and exact penance, had not God, who did not wish so brilliant a light to be admired by the angels alone, permitted men also to have some knowledge of it, at least towards the end of the life of this incomparable penitent. Here is the occasion that brought him to light. A poor peasant of the surrounding parts, who had only two cows for all his wealth, led them to graze in a meadow not far from the hill where our Saint's cell was situated. The river Ourcq, of which we have spoken, was then very high, and indeed so far over its banks that its ordinary bed could not be distinguished from the parts of the plain that were flooded; so that the two cows, thinking they were still walking on firm ground in the water that lay over the surface of the meadow, and coming at last to the edge of the river at a very deep spot, suddenly fell in and were drowned, not having been able to see the banks where they might have saved themselves. As no one had been able to give them prompt enough help, the poor peasant to whom they belonged, and who drew from these animals his own living and that of several children he had to support, seeing this misfortune, began to lament, to fall into a kind of despair, and to utter such loud cries that his voice rang out as far as the hermitage of St. Vulgis. The Saint, learning of the distress of this poor man, and moved by his charity to wish to help him at once, came up to him, consoled him, disposed him to have perfect confidence in God, and then, having raised his eyes to heaven to pray, made the sign of the cross over the river and commanded the two animals to come out of it. A surprising thing! the poor man and those present saw them appear and swim

on the surface of the water at the same moment. They came towards the place where they saw people, and at last sprang with an effort on to the bank, and then went safe and sound to their master.

No sooner had our holy solitary worked this marvel than the fear of receiving praise for it made him go back very quickly into his beloved solitude; but He who had inspired him to perform this miraculous act of charity, wishing by this means to make his merit known, did not permit him to remain hidden any longer. The report of so public a miracle soon spread through the whole province: the poor peasant in whose favour it had been worked published and recounted the truth of the prodigy on every side; the inhabitants of the place confirmed, as eye-witnesses, what he said; people came running from all parts to see the man of God. The hill where the solitary's cell stood ceased to be a desert: some came out of curiosity, to see a man to whom God had communicated the power of working miracles; others to implore his help in their illnesses; some to consult him in their doubts; others to ask his advice in the affair of their salvation; and all, in short, to obtain from this divine man help in the needs and pressing necessities in which they found themselves.

St. Vulgis, whose charity knew no bounds and who saw himself discovered by a disposition of Providence, could no longer either hide himself or refuse his neighbour the help he knew he could give. He therefore responded with admirable gentleness to all that was desired of him. He well understood that the Spirit of God, who had led him into the desert to keep him hidden there from the eyes of men for a time, was inspiring him, in the situation in which he found himself, to come forward and let himself be known by those same men, in order to relieve them in their needs and bodily illnesses and at the same time give them salutary instructions and advice to convert them and bring them out of their bad spiritual dispositions. Indeed, it would be difficult to relate all the miraculous cures he worked on bodies, as well as the infinite number of conversions he brought about in souls; and one might say, as we learn from the history of his life, that it was enough for the sick merely to have touched his garments to be healed; and likewise it was enough for sinners to have witnessed his preaching to go home deeply pierced with compunction and perfectly disposed to give up their disorders and their bad spiritual habits.

But the country, which was beginning to profit abundantly from the fruits of the rich treasure that belonged to it and had so long been hidden from it, did not long enjoy the joy of having at last discovered and possessed it; for scarcely had this fair light been taken from under the bushel to appear on the hill where it had been set, than divine wisdom judged it fitting to withdraw it from there to make it shine in a far more honourable place, the abode of the blessed in heaven.

Our holy solitary, being thus ripe for the heavenly fatherland, where he was soon to go and receive the crown of glory prepared for his merit, was favoured with a revelation in which he learned the day of his death; he even indicated it to several of his friends who had come to see him. And although he had prepared for death throughout the whole course of his life by the mortification of all his senses and a perfect detachment from all the things of the earth, nevertheless, the happy last day he was awaiting having come, he offered the sacrifice of the Mass as was his custom, in which he had the happiness of receiving the holy Eucharist once more as Viaticum; and having offered himself to his God in this last act, as a victim about to be consumed for His glory, he peacefully gave back his spirit to the Creator on the 1st of October, about the year 550, at the age of eighty, of which he had spent forty in solitude.

St. Vulgis is the patron of La Ferté-Milon; he is invoked above all against the diseases of flocks and herds.

CULTE ET RELIQUES.

Cult and Relics.

The news of his death having spread through the whole country, an immense crowd hastened to attend his funeral. It was thought that no more honourable place could be chosen for his burial than the spot he had chosen himself with the intention of hiding and burying himself, so to speak, alive in the shadows of the

desert and in the tomb of a deep humility; he was therefore buried near his cell, and it was there that it pleased Him who knows how to exalt the humility of His servants to work countless miracles for all who came to implore our Saint's help. Shortly afterwards a church was built in that place and dedicated to the apostle St. Peter, because it was found that the oratory of St. Vulgis was consecrated to that Apostle.

Later Milon, who was the most powerful lord of the province, judging that the Saint's precious relics were neither safe enough nor in an honourable enough place, had them taken away from Troësnes (720) and placed them in the chapel of his castle, dedicated to St. Sebastian. This castle had been given the name of La Ferté-Milon (*Firmitas Milonis*) from the lord to whom it belonged; it was then one of the rarest and most magnificent buildings in the country. This powerful lord had the body of St. Vulgis placed in a silver shrine, which is still seen in the church of La Ferté-Milon, with a bust, also of silver, which he had made to hold the Saint's head. It was also at this same time that Milon, wishing to compensate the district of Troësnes in some way and to preserve in perpetuity the memory of the place where the holy solitary had practised so long and so hard a penance and had worked such great marvels, had a stone tomb set up there, supported on four pillars, which is seen in the church of that village. The figure of the holy solitary is in full relief on this tomb. He appears in it clothed in his priestly vestments, with a chalice in his hands; and, as a testimony to the first miracle he worked in favour of the peasant of whom we have spoken, the figures of the two animals to which he restored life have been placed above his feet. Several gentlemen of singular piety made it a devotion to succeed one another in that place for the space of more than five hundred years, trying to imitate the extraordinary virtues of the Saint who had once made his dwelling there, and for whom they had conceived a particular esteem and veneration.

It has happened on several occasions that a very sweet fragrance has been exhaled from our Saint's tomb, as if to show how good was the odour of the virtues this pious solitary once spread through the country; and it is also claimed that God has shown by several events that He did not approve the design of those who wished, though with good intentions, to remove his stone tomb at Troësnes and give it another place in that church; it is added that it even cost the lives of those who attempted to do so, as well as of the workmen employed for the purpose. An official report, drawn up in due form in 1611, mentions among others two masons who, working in that church near the tomb of St. Vulgis, had the curiosity, in spite of the prohibition laid on them, to dig down beneath the figure of the Saint which is in relief on this little mausoleum. In spite of the pleasant fragrance that at once came out of that place, which was smelt by a great number of persons, the two workmen, whether in punishment for their rashness or because of the extreme fright that seized them, died in the same year, after some months of a wholly languishing life.

Something similar happened in 1691: two masons, as well as the man who had employed them, died that year after moving our Saint's tomb from where it was to another place in the same church. It is added that two other workmen, having also worked at making an opening near the same tomb of St. Vulgis in order to bury there the man who had been responsible for the move of which we have spoken — for he was a man of distinguished merit — also died the same year; and that the man who had set them to this work, though from a praiseworthy motive, nevertheless remained for the space of four months in a languor for which the physicians could find no remedy, not knowing its cause. A holy and very experienced man having pointed out to him that his illness might well have come from having placed the grave of the person he had buried in that church too near the tomb of St. Vulgis, the sick man, profiting by the remark and regarding what he had done as a fault, at once had recourse to St. Vulgis, asking him for deliverance from his infirmity, and by this means recovered his former health.

We leave it nevertheless to the judicious reader to form whatever judgement he wishes on these facts. What we have that is most certain is the official report that Mgr Le Gras, bishop of Soissons, had drawn up in 1643 at La Ferté-Milon. From it, it appears that, having gone to that place with his officials to open the shrine of St. Vulgis, in the presence of a multitude of distinguished persons who had come to witness this ceremony

and of several physicians called in to do what belonged to their art, the entire body of our Saint was found in the shrine. The physicians, examining all the parts scrupulously, judged from the bones that St. Vulgis had been a strong, tall and powerful man of body, and that he appeared to have lived to a great old age. There was also the satisfaction and joy of finding in this shrine a roll of vellum on which the following words are written in Gothic letters, perfectly formed, which is affirmed to be a testimony of their antiquity: *Corpus sancti Vulgisii, filioli et discipuli sancti Remigii, Rhemensis archiepiscopi*: "Here is the body of St. Vulgis, godson and disciple of St. Remi, archbishop of Rheims." There was also found in the same shrine an official report of the year 1543 concerning the translation of this shrine to the city of Soissons because of some repairs that had to be made to it. The bishop of Soissons, who performed this ceremony with a very tender devotion, unable even to hold back the tears that flowed from his eyes, took, with the consent of the parties concerned, the two jawbones from the Saint's body, one of his ribs, and a bone of St. Sebastian, former patron of the castle chapel. He left this bone of St. Sebastian and one jawbone of St. Vulgis to the church of La Ferté-Milon, and they were afterwards enshrined in a silver reliquary representing the figure of an angel carrying them on its head. As for the second jawbone and the rib of St. Vulgis, he took them to Soissons, where he had no sooner arrived than he had a general procession held, in the midst of which he carried these two relics uncovered in a rich silver basin. Then he gave one of them to the abbey of Notre-Dame of Soissons and kept the other for himself. Mgr de Bourlon, his successor, has since had it enshrined in a precious reliquary. A single tooth had remained to the church of Troësnes, which formerly possessed the whole body; but in 1652 it was taken from them by the Lorrainers, who wished to have the satisfaction of possessing in their own country some particles of the relics of so great a Saint.

The town of La Ferté-Milon attributes to the protection of St. Vulgis, its patron, the fact that it was not pillaged and destroyed by the army of the Lorrainers, who were quite ready to assault the place, had not the prayers addressed to heaven through the protector of the town made them change their plan. Let us end by relating what happened in 1714 concerning the cattle that were dying on every side, which caused extreme distress to all the people. The whole province, and even the neighbouring countries, had recourse to the power of St. Vulgis; countless processions kept arriving from all parts at his church, to pray there and have solemn Masses celebrated. Such powerful help was received on this occasion from this holy advocate that people do not hesitate to affirm that the two places that have St. Vulgis for patron lost none of their beasts in the disaster felt elsewhere, at the time of the diseases that were raging everywhere.

Cf. Acta Sanctorum, *1st of October.*

SAINT BAVO,[2] COUNT OF HESBAYE, HERMIT AND CONFESSOR, PATRON OF GHENT AND OF HAARLEM

About 654. — Pope: St. Eugene I. — King of Austrasia: Sigebert II. — King of Neustria and Burgundy: Clovis II.

> *Non quia magnus eras, te gloria magna beatum Sed contempta decus gloria magna facit.*
>
> *Ce n'est point la grandeur de ta naissance qui fait aujourd'hui ta gloire : elle te vient, au contraire, de ce que tu l'as méprisée.*
>
> *It is not the greatness of thy birth that makes thy glory today: it comes to thee, on the contrary, from thy having despised it.*
>
> *St. Livinus, Epitaph of St. Bavo.*

This illustrious penitent, one of the glories of religious Belgium, accompanied for some time on his missions the apostle St. Amand, whom God had used for the work of his conversion. Their relations with each other deserve to be recalled for the edification of Christian souls.

St. Bavo was born of illustrious parents, whom he seems to have lost early. Perhaps this circumstance prevented him from receiving a family upbringing that might have softened the savage roughness of his character and moderated the impetuosity of his inclinations. From his earliest years he distinguished himself sadly by all the excesses to which an ardent nature, perverted in its direction, can carry a young man who has no other rule than his own will and his whims. Allied through his father Agilulf, count of Hesbaye,[1] and his mother, the noble Adeltrude, to the most illustrious families of Austrasia, and in particular to the house of the Pepins, Bavo asked and obtained from Count Odilo the hand of his daughter, whose chaste charms had subdued his heart. This alliance was a great favour of heaven granted to Bavo; it would be difficult to say whether he responded to it at first. Everything leads one to believe that the terrible leud received the first blow of grace only later, from the lips of a child whose birth had drawn still closer the bonds uniting him to his virtuous companion. Agletrude, an innocent little girl, grew in age and piety under her parents' eyes and called down by her supplications the mercies of God on her father, who by his violence had become the terror of the whole region. These two souls, which had no other strength than their prayers, began to bend this man whom nothing on earth could have mastered.

Such was Bavo. His soul, already shaken by the virtues of his wife and his daughter, was longing to return to the right path, when he felt himself struck to the heart at a time when St. Amand had returned to those parts after one of his missions. His pious companion, like a flower cut before its time, suddenly began to languish and lose her strength, and soon she went down to the tomb. Bavo's grief cannot be expressed. The tears, the sobs, the roars he uttered in his sorrow broke the hardest hearts. It was the hour of grace: this time he was faithful to it.

In those days of mourning the name of Amand rang in his ears. At once Bavo felt desires awaken within him that stirred and urged him on. He left his castle, too long the witness of his violence, and made his way to the monastery of Ghent. There, all in tears, he threw himself at Amand's feet, and, humbly confessing his crimes, asked for penance. "Holy pontiff," he cried, "for the salvation of my soul give me wise counsel. I will follow it; I will correct my whole life and purify it. I abandon myself to you, holy pontiff; have pity on me, save me." St. Amand, overjoyed, raised Bavo up, received him with charity like a sheep returning to the fold, and, mingling tears of joy with those of repentance, declared to him that he was ready to sacrifice himself, if need be, to save him.

After these first transports and these mutual outpourings of heart, the holy missionary addressed salutary warnings to Bavo. He set before him the deep disgust the Christian soul must have for a world plunged in malice, where virtues are despised and passions and vices honoured. He put before his eyes the ineffable sweetness of the heavenly city, where the just will bless the Lord for all eternity and where all who have been holily united on earth will meet again before the throne of God. Amand also spoke to him of the efforts of the devil to turn men away from salvation, and of the delightful consolations God pours into the hearts of those who devote themselves to His service.

Bavo listened to these words of the holy bishop: they fell on his heart like a gentle and fruitful dew which was to produce abundant fruit. At that moment all the memories of his past life came back to his mind; he remembered the virtues of his wife, whom he would see again in the abode of happiness promised to repentance as to innocence; he remembered the sweet caresses and the prayers of little Agletrude, the living image of her mother; then, turning his thoughts again to the crimes of his youth, he gave free course to the sobs that burst from his breast and to the tears with which his face was flooded. But Amand soothed his grief and repeated to him ceaselessly that the Lord is good and full of mercy, and that He desires not the death of the sinner, but that he be converted and live.

Bavo had unburdened his heart of the heavy load of his iniquities; he began to taste the sweetness of peace in a purified conscience. After several days spent with St. Amand he returned to his castle. Arriving among his own people, this man, until then the terror of the country, whom even his servants approached only

trembling, began to distribute his goods to the poor, to the infirm, to the unfortunate of every condition. His speech, once harsh and haughty, became gentle and full of kindness; his manners breathed benevolence and the most affectionate charity. The humility of his sentiments and the wisdom of his conduct edified all who saw him, and everyone repeated, blessing God, that grace had touched Bavo and that he had become a new man.

Having shared his riches among the poor and the churches of the region, Bavo finished putting his temporal affairs in order. Then he came back to St. Amand, bearing the olive-branch of peace, fleeing like the dove the world in which he had dwelt only too long. Amand, as prudent in the guidance of souls as he was zealous for the honour and service of God, received with kindness the humble penitent who asked him for the tonsure, so as to place himself, by this free choice of his will, under the happy necessity of living better thenceforth. He reminded Bavo that he was free to remain in the world and lead a Christian life there, but that once admitted into the clerical or monastic militia he could no longer break this engagement, in spite of the temptations with which the devil would not fail to assail him. Nothing could shake the resolution of the noble Bavo.

St. Amand, embracing him then as a beloved son, led him into the church of the monastery. There, prostrate before the altar, the penitent laid down all that remained to him of his warrior's insignia and received, with a happiness betrayed by his tears, the humble tonsure of clerics. From that moment he submitted to religious discipline under the direction of Florbert, one of the disciples of St. Amand. Sometimes also he asked the holy missionary to let him accompany him on his journeys, so as to learn more and more in his company and to expiate by every kind of fatigue and privation the disorders of his past life. Now such was Bavo's fervour that it let no occasion escape of showing the keenness of his repentance. One day he met one of his former servants whom some years before he had ill-treated, beaten and had put in prison. At the sight of him grief seized him: he went up to the man and, throwing himself at his feet, cried with tears in his eyes: "I beg you, forget the harm I did you and treat me as I treated you. Beat my body with rods; shave off my hair like a thief's, and lead me to prison with my feet and hands bound." Bavo's former servant, surprised and confused, refused to carry out this order. He would not dare lay hands on a man who had once been his master and who now appeared to him with all the marks of a public penitent. But Bavo pressed him, urged him, implored him, and made such entreaties that at last he consented. The vassal therefore bound the terrible hands of this count of Hesbaye; he cut off his hair, put fetters on his feet and hands, and led him in this state to a prison. Bavo blessed God for being able to give Him this satisfaction, as well as to the men he had so often scandalized and outraged by his violence. He stayed some time in that place, shedding tears in abundance, then returned to his monastery.

Meanwhile Bavo continued to give himself up to the most frightening macerations. Lying on the hard ground, his body covered with a hair shirt, he took for food only barley bread soaked in water, with which he often mingled his tears. His feet were in fetters like those of criminals shut up in dungeons; and, as if these mortifications had been insufficient, he soon asked to lead the life of a recluse in a narrow dwelling. This request, dictated by the repentance of a generous soul, was granted. He therefore left the town of Ghent and, having withdrawn into a wood called Beila,[2] shut himself up in the hollow of an old elm, which he found spacious enough to serve him as a cell. He thought himself better lodged in this dwelling, which nature had prepared for him, than in the finest palaces and under gilded ceilings. His poverty, which was extreme, seemed to him richer than the very riches of princes and sovereigns. He lived there almost on nothing but prayers and praises of God, which he repeated continually day and night; his bodily food was very meagre, consisting of fruits, herbs and wild roots. He was at last discovered in that place, and this was enough to draw there a multitude of persons who came running, some to hear his instructions, some to ask the help of his prayers, others to admire his manner of life, like that of St. John the Baptist and the first inhabitants of the deserts.

As he found himself too much disturbed by this multitude of persons of every state and condition, he fled by night into an extremely dense forest called Medmedung.[3] Having cleared a little spot by cutting away the brambles and thorns that were there, he built himself a poor cell of branches, stones and mud. He remained there some time without being known to anyone, having no more converse than with God and the Saints. Oh, what joy he had in being thus separated from all that could attach his heart and prevent it from rising to heaven at every moment! Nuts and wild apples, which he picked from the trees, were his food; and if thirst pressed him he quenched it with the water of a brook that flowed near his hermitage. But, well hidden though he was, he was nevertheless discovered again; and as he was only two leagues from Ghent, he at once saw the crowd making its way through the undergrowth to have the happiness of coming to see him. This prodigious concourse made him think that his solitude, which made him singular and set him apart among clerics and monks, might be more harmful to him than the common life; and so, having learned that St. Amand, who was still working for the advancement of religion in the town of Ghent, had gathered religious under the direction of the venerable abbot Florbert, he asked to be admitted. The joy of his entry was mutual: as much consolation as he had in being received into this house of prayer and mortification, so much gladness had the religious, who had wished for it, in seeing among them a man whom his birth, his virtue and his wholly miraculous life already made so famous throughout the country. While a cell was being built for him, the carter who was bringing stones and wood fell from his cart and had his legs crushed. The Saint prayed for him so insistently that he healed him: which wonderfully confirmed all the people not only in their esteem for his holiness but also in belief in the resurrection of the dead and in all the other points of our religion.

After some years of penance in this cell, Bavo was inspired to undertake a new one, still harsher and longer than all those he had performed until then. He therefore made himself a cave so low and so narrow that for want of height he could not stand quite upright, and for want of length he could neither lie nor sit, but only stoop. The bishop St. Amand and the abbot Florbert approved his devotion and even led him solemnly to the place, accompanied by the clergy and the people singing psalms and hymns. Bavo entered this horrible prison with a joy and consolation that cannot be expressed. His abstinence there was extreme: he ate only a little tasteless unleavened bread and drank only a little water. His sleep was very short, and even during his sleep his soul, accustomed to contemplation, did not cease to unite itself intimately with its Lord. His life was nothing but continual prayer and love of God. For the rest, one cannot form an idea of the good he did in all that country. There were always people around his grotto: he reconciled persons set against one another, settled lawsuits, converted sinners, instructed the ignorant, and set the faithful aflame with the fire of divine love. If his words were not strong enough to win some hardened souls or to turn away the scourges of God’s justice, he redoubled his abstinences and practised unheard-of austerities. In a word, he took no less interest in the spiritual good of towns, dioceses and individuals than if he had been charged with them by God and had had to render an account of them before the tribunal of His justice.

The devil, unable to bear the great victories this admirable soldier of Jesus Christ won over him, used every kind of ruse and artifice to intimidate him, fill him with terror and make him abandon his solitude. Sometimes he shook this frail building with frightful winds and storms; at other times he surrounded it with fire and flames; sometimes too he made a multitude of dragons, lions, bears, wolves and other wild beasts appear all around him. But Bavo laughed at these spectres and, relying on the help of his God, defied all hell to tear him away and make him leave his voluntary prison. One day, after a hard combat, he fell asleep for a little from weariness, and during his sleep an angel appeared to him in the form of a dove and filled his soul and his senses with such delights that he thought himself already in heaven. From then on he thought only of leaving the earth to go and enjoy the happiness of the vision of God. He was further assured of his beatitude by a cross of light that came down on his head in the presence of a great multitude of people who had come to receive his instructions.

As the hour of his death approached, he wished to be assisted at that last moment by a holy priest named Domlin, parish priest of Turnhout. This priest was very far away, and the boy who attended our Saint did not know the way to his presbytery; nevertheless he set out to go there; an angel joined him, guided him safely, and brought him back with that venerable cleric whose presence St. Bavo desired. Shortly afterwards a band of blessed spirits came down into his cell to receive his soul and carry it to the abode of beatitude. "Farewell," he said then to those present, "farewell, holy company of servants of God; Jesus Christ Himself is present. My soul, come out of thy prison and go to meet Him." Saying these words, he expired. It was the 1st of October, about 654. The religious were all bathed in tears; but they were consoled when they learned that this blessed soul had appeared to St. Gertrude to ask her to send shrouds to wrap his body. His funeral procession was surrounded not only by priests and religious, but also by lords and nobles, and above all by a countless number of the poor, of widows, orphans and the wretched, who wept his death no less bitterly than if they had lost their father and mother.

St. Bavo is represented: 1° withdrawn into the hollow of a tree that serves him as a cell; 2° wearing, as a mark of his nobility, either armour or a rich costume, with a naked sword in his hand; 3° with a falcon on his left fist, as a sign of lordship; 4° wearing a plumed cap, clothed in a long princely mantle, and sometimes holding a book in his hand to indicate the meditations to which he gave himself in his retreat; 5° healing, as we have said, a man whose legs had been broken by his cart; 6° carrying a church on his hand, as founder (at least through the intermediary of his disciples) of the abbey of Saint-Pierre at Ghent, which later took the name of Saint-Bavon; 7° with the hermit's pouch and staff; 8° sometimes holding in his arms a large stone, which he carries into his hermitage to use as a pillow. This stone was long preserved at Mendonck (East Flanders) in memory of the Saint. St. Bavo is invoked against whooping cough; he is patron of Ghent and of Haarlem.

CULTE ET RELIQUES.

Cult and Relics.

Sixty gentlemen, touched by the example St. Bavo had left them, consecrated themselves to the austerities of penance. They built at Ghent the church of his name, which was served first by canons, then by religious of St. Benedict. Pope Paul III secularized the monastery in 1537 at the request of the emperor Charles V. This prince, having had a citadel built on that spot, transferred the chapter three years later to the church of Saint-Jean, which since that time has possessed the relics and borne the name of Saint-Bavon. This church became a cathedral when, in 1559, Paul IV erected a bishopric at Ghent at the request made to him by Philip II, king of Spain. St. Bavo is patron of that city; he is also patron of the church of Haarlem (North Holland), where a fairly considerable part of his relics is kept with respect.

Vies des Saints de Cambrai et d'Arras, by M. l'abbé Destombes; Godescard; Caractéristiques des Saints, *by Father Cahier;* Acta Sanctorum, *1st of October; Mabillon; Life of the Saint by Thierry, abbot of Saint-Trond; Lecointe,* ad annum *649; Pagi,* Crit. in Baron., ad annum *631;* Acta Sanctorum Belgii*; Sanderus,* Rer. Gandav.

THE SOLEMNITY OF THE HOLY ROSARY

Pontificate of Clement XII (1730–1740).

> *Saint Dominique convertit cent mille Albigeois en leur faisant connaître et aimer les mystères adorables du saint Rosaire. Imitons l'exemple de ce grand ouvrier des gloires temporelles de la Reine des Anges, et nous travaillerons avec fruit à la conversion de ces Albigeois du xix■ siècle qui blasphèment tout ce qu'ils ignorent et se dépravent dans les choses qu'ils n'étudient qu'au profit de leurs abjectes passions.*
>
> *St. Dominic converted a hundred thousand Albigensians by making them know and love the adorable mysteries of the holy Rosary. Let us imitate the example of this great worker for the temporal glories of the Queen of*

Angels, and we shall labour with fruit for the conversion of those Albigensians of the nineteenth century who blaspheme whatever they do not know and corrupt themselves in the things they study only for the profit of their abject passions.

M. l'abbé Combalot, Instructions.

In thanksgiving for the victory won by the Christians at Lepanto, a fortified town and port of modern Greece, on the first Sunday of October (the 7th of the month) in the year 1571, the holy pope Pius V (1565–1572) instituted a yearly feast under the title of St. Mary of Victory. Two years later Gregory XIII (1572–1585) changed this title to that of Our Lady of the Rosary, and approved a proper office of the feast for all the churches in which there was an altar dedicated under the invocation of St. Mary of the Rosary. Clement X (1670–1676) extended the feast to all the churches under Spanish rule. The army of the emperor Charles VI having defeated the Turks near Temesvár (Hungary) on the day of the feast of Our Lady of the Snows, in the year 1716, and those infidels having raised the siege of Corfu (the ancient Corcyra, chief town of one of the Ionian Islands) on the day of the Octave of the Assumption of the same year, Clement XII (1730– 1740) made the office of the feast of the Rosary universal.

We have already spoken, in the life of St. Dominic Guzman,[1] of the establishment of the holy Rosary, which acknowledges that blessed Patriarch as its founder; but since it is at this time that the Church commemorates it in her martyrology, and its solemnity is celebrated in all the churches of the Order of Friars Preachers and in many others that share in the same devotion, we have thought it necessary to give a separate discourse on it here, for the benefit of those who make up this great Confraternity. We observe, then, that there are three things to be distinguished in the Rosary: its matter, its form, and the sacred and religious union of the faithful who bind themselves to recite it, which we call a Congregation or Confraternity.

As for its matter, it consists of the holiest and most august prayers that can ever come from a Christian's mouth, namely: the Creed, composed by the Apostles at the time of their separation, by the light and movement of the Holy Ghost; the Lord's Prayer, taught by Jesus Christ Himself to His disciples when they asked Him in what manner they ought to pray; and the Angelic Salutation, which is the greeting that the angel Gabriel brought from heaven to the glorious Virgin, to declare to her that she was to be the Mother of God, together with the blessings that St. Elizabeth, her cousin, gave her when she received her visit, and a petition that the Church adds to it, to implore her intercession with God, both during our life and at the hour of our death.

The Creed contains, in twelve articles, the chief mysteries of our faith; and one may even say that it contains them all, since, in confessing the holy Catholic Church, who is our mother and our mistress, it embraces all her doctrine and attaches itself inseparably to all her decisions. In reciting it, one makes an excellent act of faith and of submission to all the revealed truths; one adores the eternal Father as the principle of our creation; one adores His Son as the author of our redemption; one adores the Holy Ghost as the source of our sanctification. One goes out to these three divine Persons in the unity of their essence by a movement of pure love; one is filled with the mysteries of Jesus Christ born, suffering and glorious; one sets before oneself the last ends, which are death, judgment, the reward of the good and the punishment of the wicked; one quickens one's hope by considering the help the just give one another in the union of charity that is among them, and by the sight of the remedies God has placed in His Church for the remission of sins. Lastly, one is consoled for the miseries of the present life by the expectation of the resurrection and of a blessed life that will never end.

The Lord's Prayer is the most excellent and the most perfect of vocal prayers. It is the summary of all the others, as Jesus Christ, according to the prophet Isaias, is the abridged word of the eternal Father. It contains, in a wonderful order, everything that can lawfully be asked, whether spiritual or temporal, and as much for deliverance from evil as for advancement in good. It extends to the benefits of nature, of grace and of glory, and to what concerns the honour of our heavenly Father, our own interest and that of our neighbour. It

contains eminent acts of all the virtues, such as faith, humility, detachment from temporal things, ardent desire for eternal goods, confidence in God, resignation to His will and to the orders of His Providence, forgiveness of injuries and charity toward our neighbour. It has a wonderful force and virtue, since the eternal Father will take good care not to reject a prayer that His own Son puts into our mouths, and of which He is the author and the master. Lastly, it is the one prayer necessary to all Christians, and the model by which we must regulate all that we have to ask.

The Angelic Salutation, with all that accompanies it, is the rarest and most brilliant praise we can offer to the glorious Virgin Mary. It discloses her greatness to us, it explains her perfections and her virtues, it represents to us her infinite credit with God, it bears witness to her goodness and her mercies toward us; it gives us the assurance to approach her throne and implore her help, it stirs us to love and confidence toward her. In a word, it makes us consider her not only as the Mother of God, but also as our mother and as the tenderest and most lovable of all mothers.

As for the form of the Rosary, it consists in the order and arrangement of these different prayers. And first, after making the sign of the cross — to arm oneself against the temptations of the devil, to implore the help of the most holy Trinity, to refer this action to His greater glory, and to awaken in one's heart the memory of the passion and death of our Lord Jesus Christ — one recites the Apostles' Creed, as is done at the beginning of the divine office, in order to dispose oneself for prayer by an act of faith, according to the teaching of St. Paul and St. James, who say that he who comes to God must believe, and that to obtain what one asks one must ask it with faith. Next one says one *Pater noster* and three *Ave Maria*, to honour the relations of the holy Virgin to the three divine Persons: to the Father, whose well-beloved daughter she is; to the Son, whose Mother she merited to be; and to the Holy Ghost, who chose her for the first and most excellent of all His Spouses. Finally (and this properly makes up the body of the Rosary), one says fifteen decades of *Ave Maria*, beginning each decade with a *Pater noster*, in memory of the five joyful mysteries, the five sorrowful mysteries and the five glorious mysteries of Our Lady. The five joyful mysteries are: her annunciation and the conception of the divine Word in her chaste womb; her visitation and the influence of grace that her Son exercised upon St. John the Baptist, both being still in their mothers' wombs; her childbearing and the birth of Jesus Christ in the stable of Bethlehem; her purification, and the offering she made of the Saviour of the world in the temple; her journey to Jerusalem, and the happiness she had of finding her divine Child there, twelve years old, after having lost Him. The five sorrowful mysteries are: the prayer and agony of our Lord in the garden of Olives; His cruel scourging after He had been taken, bound, buffeted and shamefully stripped; His crowning with thorns and the ignominy He received when He was presented to the people in so shameful a state; His exhaustion under the burden of the cross, when He was dragged to Calvary laden with that instrument of His punishment; His crucifixion between two thieves, followed by His death and burial. The five glorious mysteries are: the resurrection of the Saviour, and the inestimable glory in which He showed Himself at that moment to His most holy Mother, to dry her tears and give her a share in His happiness; His ascension into heaven, and the loving transports of this divine Mother to accompany Him there in mind and heart, until she could be united to Him in reality by her own glorification; the sending of the Holy Ghost, and the new fullness of graces with which this august Queen was filled in that great and ineffable mystery; the assumption of the same Virgin, body and soul, into heaven; and lastly the consummation of her glory, by the triple crown of greatness, power and goodness that she received from the hands of her Creator.

It must be observed, then, that to say the Rosary perfectly it is not enough to recite devoutly the fifteen decades that compose it; one must also apply oneself to meditation, or at least to the remembrance and veneration of the Mysteries in whose honour they are recited: which is done in several different ways, the form of which will be found in the treatises that have been printed on this subject. Besides, it should be known that the rosary may be divided into three parts, and each recited separately: the first in honour of the

five mysteries that were the joy of the holy Virgin; the second in memory of the five mysteries that filled her heart with bitterness and sorrow; the third in remembrance of the five mysteries that began or completed her glory and her beatitude. In that case each part must be begun with the Apostles' Creed, a *Pater noster* and three *Ave Maria*; and this is what we call the little chaplet of five decades.

This holy method of prayer is without doubt an invention of the industrious charity of St. Dominic. It is true that the practice of repeating the Lord's Prayer and the Angelic Salutation several times, and even of using threaded beads to mark the number, is much older, and that we have examples of it in the first centuries of the Church. It is said of St. Bartholomew that he prayed a hundred times by day and a hundred times by night, which good authors understand of the recitation of the *Pater noster* and the *Ave Maria*. Palladius, in his *Lausiac History*, chap. xxiii, and after him Cassiodorus, Sozomen and Nicephorus, relate that St. Paul, abbot of Mount Pherme in Libya, who lived in the time of St. Anthony the Great, said three hundred prayers a day, which were apparently *Pater* and *Ave*, and that he counted them by little stones that he took for this purpose from his bosom. Polydore Vergil, in his book *On the Inventors of Things*, asserts that Peter the Hermit, wishing to prepare the peoples for the holy war under Pope Urban II, taught them the lay Psalter, composed of several *Pater* and a hundred and fifty *Ave Maria*, just as the ecclesiastical Psalter is composed of a hundred and fifty psalms, and that he had learned this practice from the solitaries of Palestine, among whom it had long been in use. Blessed Alan de la Roche, of the Order of St. Dominic, in his *Treatise on the Rosary*, relates that as early as the time of the Venerable Bede, who flourished in the year 700 of our salvation, images were made holding chaplets in their hands. It was by the power of a chaplet of fifty *Ave Maria*, which he had all his soldiers carry, that Pope Leo IV drove the Saracens, in 854, from the gates of Rome and from all Italy. We read further in Surius, under the 7th of April, that St. Albert, a religious of Crespin, made a hundred and fifty genuflections every day, reciting the Angelic Salutation at each. In the tomb of St. Gertrude of Nivelles and in that of St. Norbert, threaded beads were found which appeared to be precious remains of the chaplets they used to mark the number of the prayers they had prescribed for themselves. But though one may gather from these histories that in the centuries before St. Dominic there were sketches of the admirable devotion of the holy Rosary, it is certain that it is to him, after the holy Virgin, that the faithful owe the excellent arrangement in which it is now proposed to them. So speak of it the popes Leo X, Pius V, Gregory XIII and Sixtus V in their bulls, in which they extol this manner of praying wonderfully, because of its ease for all sorts of persons, and because it applies the mind to the chief mysteries of our religion. What led this holy Patriarch to preach this new method of prayer with so much zeal was that he observed that the extraordinary progress the heresies were making in his time, in France as well as in Spain, came from the fact that the faithful were in gross ignorance of the principles of our faith, and that most of them, not knowing how to read, had no practice of prayer. He wished therefore to remedy this disorder by teaching them a manner of praying that was independent of reading and that would gently and effortlessly instil into them what we believe of Jesus Christ and of His holy Mother.

Thick volumes would be needed to relate the wonders that have been worked through the recitation of the Rosary. Hardened sinners, whose salvation was almost despaired of, have been converted; obstinate and malicious heretics have been enlightened; cities, provinces and whole kingdoms have been happily changed, whether by the reform of morals or by the abjuration of the errors in which they were entangled. The dead have recovered life, the blind sight, the deaf hearing, the dumb speech, the lame and the paralysed the use of their limbs, and all sorts of sick people a health they could not expect from the ordinary remedies of medicine. Storms have been calmed, fires extinguished, seditions stifled in their greatest fury, important battles won, and peace restored at times when no one dared hope for it any longer. By means of the Rosary, now rain has been obtained to make the seeds of the earth fruitful, now excessive floods have been stopped that threatened the countryside with universal desolation. Women have used this devotion profitably, whether to have children, or to change the fierce and intractable temper of their husbands, or to draw down upon their families the heavenly blessings without which they were entirely ruined. Those who have had

recourse to it, whether in their lawsuits, or in the harsh and pitiless pursuits of their creditors, or in the miseries of a long captivity, have received from it prodigious and wholly supernatural help. Many souls have been drawn out of the flames of purgatory, and some even, on returning to their bodies, have escaped those of hell by its efficacy and power. The fruits of holiness it has produced cannot be counted, not only in Europe but also in the Indies and America; in short, the Church and the whole Christian world could say of this devotion what Solomon said of Wisdom: *Venerunt mihi omnia bona pariter cum illa*: "All good things came to me together with her." This is what led the sovereign Pontiffs to grant great indulgences, either plenary or limited, to those who should piously recite the Rosary, as may be seen in the leaflets or rituals printed on this subject. But it must be observed that the name of *Rosary* was not given to this method at first: it was called at first the *Psalter of Our Lady*, because the Angelic Salutation is repeated in it a hundred and fifty times, in conformity with the hundred and fifty psalms that make up the Psalter of David; for the *Pater* and the three *Ave Maria* said immediately after the Apostles' Creed and before the fifteen decades do not properly belong to the Rosary or to the institution of St. Dominic, but they have been added on the model of the chaplet of the seven *Pater* and *Ave Maria*, where they are placed at the beginning. It was also called the *Sacred Fifty*, because the Rosary is commonly divided into three fifties, like the Psalter, and these are recited separately, as we have already observed. Lastly it was given the name of *Rosary*, which means a flower-bed or a field covered with roses, because in fact the Lord's Prayers and the Angelic Salutations repeated in it are like so many roses of matchless beauty and fragrance that wonderfully rejoice the heart of God.

It remains for us to speak of the Confraternity or Congregation of the Rosary, set up for those who wish to bind themselves to recite it. It is held for certain that St. Dominic established it only by the order and instructions of the holy Virgin, when he was seeking the means of bringing back the Albigensians and rooting out the heresies that defiled the whole face of the Christian world. It was from then on a powerful safeguard which kept the faithful in their religion and prevented them from falling into those errors, and it served also for the conversion of an infinite number of heretics. Having been published on every side by this glorious patriarch and by his sons, and confirmed by a great number of miracles, it produced wonderful fruits, not only in France and Spain, where it had begun, but also in Italy, Germany, Russia, Muscovy, and as far as the islands of the Aegean Sea. Almost everyone enrolled in it and learned in this holy congregation to meditate on our mysteries and to honour Jesus and Mary. After the death of this great man and of the first heirs of his zeal, this excellent devotion grew slack, partly through the negligence of Christians, partly through the cunning of the devil, who spared nothing to destroy it and abolish its memory; but in 1460 Blessed Alan de la Roche, after various apparitions and commands, both of the holy Virgin and of his father St. Dominic, re-established it, or rather raised it from the dead. To this end he travelled for fifteen years through France, England, Flanders and the northern countries, and he did it with such success that more than a hundred thousand persons entered this holy Congregation and bound themselves to recite their Rosary. Since that time the sovereign Pontiffs have praised it and granted it very special favours and privileges. The indulgences and participations it enjoys are so considerable that they ought to suffice to draw everyone to it. They may be seen in the Bull of Sixtus V, *Dum ineffabilia*, dated in the year 1586, in which that pope recites and confirms all the graces his predecessors had conferred on it; and he does not hesitate to call the faithful who have given in their names not the servants or the friends of the holy Virgin, but her brothers and sisters: *Confratres et consorores*. It has divided into two principal branches. The first is the Confraternity of the ordinary Rosary, which obliges its members to say the fifteen decades every week, to go to confession and communion on the first Sunday of each month, and, if it can be done, to attend the solemn procession held in the places where the Confraternity is established. The second is the Confraternity of the perpetual Rosary, which is a holy union of several persons who agree together not to let a single hour or a single moment pass in the whole year in which one of them is not reciting this excellent prayer. For the rest, these obligations are not under pain of sin, but always remain optional: only, the members lose, by not discharging them, the indulgences attached to them, which are nevertheless treasures more considerable than all the goods one can

possess on earth.

CATALOGUE DES INDULGENCES ACCORDÉES PAR LES SOUVERAINS PONTIFES AUX MEMBRES DE LA CONFRÉRIE DU SAINT ROSAIRE.

Catalogue of the Indulgences Granted by the Sovereign Pontiffs to the Members of the Confraternity of the Holy Rosary.

His Holiness Pope Pius IX, by his decree *Urbis et Orbis* of the 12th of May 1851, confirms each of the indulgences already granted by his glorious predecessors, whether to persons associated in the confraternity of the holy Rosary or to all who recite it; he graciously grants others, which are noted under each heading of the present catalogue with a citation of the said decree and of the related declaration issued by the Sacred Congregation of Indulgences on the 2nd of August of the same year 1851.

I. *On the day of entry into the confraternity.* — The faithful who, being sincerely contrite, having confessed and received communion, enter the confraternity, obtain the plenary indulgence. (Chap. ii. *Sum. Indulg. SS. Rosar.*, nos. 2 and 3.) — If, being sincerely contrite and having confessed, they receive communion that same day in the church or chapel of the confraternity, reciting the third part of the Rosary and praying according to custom, they will gain the plenary indulgence. (Chap. ii, no. 1.)

II. *On the first Sunday of each month.* — The associates who, being contrite and having confessed, receive communion in the church of the confraternity, praying for the exaltation of holy Church, will gain the plenary indulgence. (Chap. ix, no. 1.) — If, being contrite, having confessed and received communion, they devoutly visit the chapel of the Rosary, they will gain the plenary indulgence. (Chap. vi, no. 2.) — The plenary indulgence is likewise granted to those who, being contrite, having confessed and received communion, attend the procession. (Chap. v, nos. 3 and 5; chap. vi, no. 6.) — There are also several other partial indulgences. (Chap. v, nos. 1 and 2, and chap. vii, no. 5.)

III. *On the occasion of the feasts of the holy Virgin.* — The associates who, being sincerely contrite and having confessed, or intending to confess, visit the chapel of the Rosary from first Vespers until sunset, will gain the plenary indulgence. (Chap. vi, no. 1.) — If, in addition, they receive communion and pray according to custom, they will also gain the plenary indulgence. (Chap. vi, nos. 2 and 3.) — They will also gain the plenary indulgence if, being contrite and having confessed, or intending to confess, they accompany the procession. (Chap. v, no. 4.) — On the occasion of certain particular feasts of the blessed Virgin, the indulgences are increased. On the feast of the Annunciation, the associates of the confraternity who, having confessed and received communion, say the Rosary, will gain the plenary indulgence. (Chap. iv, no. 4.) — On the feast of the Assumption, if, being contrite, having confessed and received communion, they visit the church of the confraternity, praying according to custom, they will gain the plenary indulgence at each visit. (Chap. vi, no. 9.) — The perpetual plenary indulgence, applicable to the souls in purgatory, is granted to all persons associated in the confraternity who, having confessed and received communion, visit some church from first Vespers until sunset of the following day and remain there some time, praying according to the intention of the sovereign Pontiff, on the occasion of the following feasts, namely: the Conception, the Nativity, the Annunciation, the Visitation, the Purification, the Presentation and the Assumption of the holy Virgin; besides two Fridays of Lent only, at each one’s choice, and also the days of the Resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ, of the Ascension and of Pentecost. (*Decr. Urbis et Orbis*, 12 *maii* 1851. *Declar. S. C. Indulg.*, 2 *augusti* 1851.) — Other partial indulgences are granted to those who, on the occasion of the said feasts, recite the Rosary (Chap. iv, nos. 1, 3, 4 and 6), and who visit the church. (Chap. vi, nos. 8 and 9.)

IV. *On the feast of the holy Rosary, the first Sunday of October.* — All the indulgences of the first Sundays of each month. In addition, the plenary indulgence is granted to the associates of the confraternity who, being sincerely contrite for their sins, confess to a priest of the Order of Preachers and receive communion in the church of the same Order. (Chap. ix, no. 3.) — The plenary indulgence is granted to them if, having

confessed and received communion, they visit the chapel of the Rosary from first Vespers until sunset. (Chap. vi, nos. 4 and 7.) This indulgence is common to all the faithful. (Chap. vi, no. 5.)

V. *On the feasts of the mysteries of the Rosary.* — The associates who, being contrite for their sins, having confessed and received communion, visit the chapel of the Rosary, gain the plenary indulgence. (Chap. vi, no. 6.) — Other partial indulgences are granted to them if they recite the Rosary (chap. iv, nos. 6 and 7), and others if they visit the chapel. (Chap. vi, no. 8.)

VI. *On the station days and other days of the year.* — The associates, by visiting five altars, gain in full the same indulgences as if they were visiting all the stations of Rome on pilgrimage. (Chap. iii.) — The station days are: the Circumcision, the Epiphany, the three Sundays of Septuagesima, Sexagesima and Quinquagesima; from Ash Wednesday to Low Sunday, every day; the feast of St. Mark and the three Rogation days; the Ascension, the vigil and day of Pentecost up to the following Saturday, every day; the Ember days of September; the Sundays of Advent and the Ember days of December; the vigil of Christmas, Christmas Day (three stations for the three Masses); the three feasts that follow Christmas. (*Miss. Rom.*) — The associates who, being sincerely contrite for their sins, having confessed and received communion, visit the altar of the Rosary, gain the plenary indulgence on the following days, namely: the third Sunday of April (chap. vi, no. 4); the days of Corpus Christi and of the titular saint of the church (chap. vii, no. 6); and they gain the plenary indulgence on the Sundays within the octave of the Nativity of the holy Virgin if, being contrite and having confessed, they receive communion and pray according to custom. (Chap. ix, no. 2.)

VII. *For the recitation of the Rosary.* — Persons associated in the confraternity, if they recite the whole Rosary, will gain all the indulgences granted to those who in Spain recite the crown of the holy Virgin. Among these indulgences there is a plenary indulgence. (Chap. iii, no. 11.) — If they recite it throughout the week, besides the said indulgences they gain two years' indulgence for each third part (chap. iii, no. 8), and further seven years and seven quarantines (*ibid.*, no. 10); and if they are contrite for their sins and have confessed, they obtain ten years and ten quarantines (*ibid.*, no. 6); lastly the plenary indulgence, applicable once in their lifetime. (Chap. ix, no. 2.) — Persons associated in the said confraternity, and the other faithful who, being at least sincerely contrite for their sins, devoutly recite the third part of the Rosary *together, whether at home or in church, in public or private oratories*, will gain an indulgence of ten years and as many quarantines, perpetual and applicable to the souls in purgatory. (*Decr. Urbis et Orbis*, 12 *maii* 1851. *Declar. S. C. Indulg.*, 2 *augusti* 1851.) — All the faithful who recite the whole Rosary, or the third part of it, will gain a hundred days' indulgence for each *Pater* and each *Ave*; if for a year they recite at least the third part of it, confessing and receiving communion on a day of their choice, they will gain the plenary indulgence, provided the chaplets are blessed by religious of the Order of Preachers. (*Bened. XIII*, 13 *aprilis* 1726; Brief *Sanctissimus*.) If they are in the habit of reciting the third part of the Rosary at least three times each week, and if, having confessed and received communion, they visit *some church or public oratory*, praying there for some time according to the intention of the sovereign Pontiff, they will gain on the last Sunday of each month the plenary indulgence, perpetual and applicable to the souls in purgatory. (*Decr. Urbis et Orbis*, 12 *maii* 1851. *Declar. S. C. Indulg.*, 2 *augusti* 1851.) These are precisely the indulgences already granted to St. Bridget, as appears from the catalogue of those same indulgences. (4 *decemb.* 1714, *in Bullar. Clem. XI*.)

VIII. *For the votive Mass of the holy Rosary.* — Priests who, enjoying this faculty, celebrate the votive Mass of the holy Rosary, and all the religious men and women of the Dominican Order, as well as all persons associated in the confraternity of the Rosary who, being contrite for their sins and having confessed, or intending to confess, hear this Mass praying according to custom, gain all the indulgences granted to those who recite the whole Rosary. (Chap. x, no. 6.) — In addition, once a month, if they are accustomed to say or to hear this Mass, having confessed and received communion, they gain all the indulgences granted for the procession of the first Sunday of each month. (Chap. x, no. 7.)

IX. *For various works of piety.* — The associates who attend the *Salve* after *Compline* obtain a hundred days' indulgence. (Chap. vii, no. 4.) In addition, on the occasion of the feasts of the holy Virgin, of the Apostles and of the Saints of the Order of Dominicans, three years and three quarantines are added. (*Ibid.*) On all Saturdays and all the feasts of the year, forty days more are added, and on the Saturdays of Lent a year. (*Ibid.*, nos. 1 and 6.) — An indulgence of three years and three quarantines is granted to them if they visit the sick for more than three hundred days. They will gain the same indulgences if they accompany the dead to burial. By attending the funeral services held each week, they obtain eight years' indulgence; lastly, besides several other particular indulgences, they generally gain sixty days' indulgence for each work of charity and piety. (Chap. vii, *per tot.*) — By visiting the chapel of the Rosary, the associates of the confraternity gain each time a hundred days' indulgence. (Chap. vi, no. 4.) If they have the Rosary recited by others, an indulgence of a hundred and forty days is granted to them each time. (Chap. iii, nos. 1 and 4.) If, being contrite for their sins, they carry the Rosary in honour of the holy Virgin, they will obtain an indulgence of a hundred years and as many quarantines. (Chap. iii, no. 3.) Lastly, an indulgence of five years and five quarantines is granted to them if at the end of each *Ave Maria* they pronounce the name of Jesus (*ibid.*), and others besides. (Chap. iv, no. 5.)

X. *For the sick and others lawfully hindered.* — The plenary indulgence of the procession on the first Sunday of each month can be gained by the associates while they are travelling, sailing or doing service, if they recite the whole Rosary, and by the sick or by those who are lawfully hindered, if they recite the third part of it, provided they are sincerely contrite for their sins and have the firm intention of confessing and receiving communion on the days appointed by the Church. (Chap. xi.) — They can also gain the plenary indulgence granted for the visit to the chapel of the Rosary on the occasion of the feast of each of the fifteen mysteries, provided they recite the Rosary as has been said above. (*Ibid.*) — Sick associates can gain the plenary indulgence granted for communion made on the first Sunday of the month in the church of the Confraternity, and for the procession of the same Sunday, if, having confessed and received communion, they recite the Rosary before some pious image. (Chap. v, no. 2, chap. ix, no. 1.) — There are also other partial indulgences for the sick, etc. (Chap. vii, nos. 4 and 5.)

XI. *At the hour of death.* — The associates who recite the Rosary during the week will gain, at the hour of death, the plenary indulgence, which the priest applies by means of the formula called the absolution of the Rosary. (Chap. iv, no. 2, and chap. x, no. 1, *et post.* chap. xii.) — Plenary indulgence at the hour of death for the said associates who have received the sacraments of Penance and of the Eucharist. (Chap. ii, no. 1, and chap. x, no. 1.) — The plenary indulgence is likewise granted to them if, having recited the Rosary at least once, and being sincerely contrite for their sins and having confessed, or intending to confess, they die holding in their hands the blessed candle of the Rosary. (Chap. x, no. 2.) — They also gain the plenary indulgence if, having confessed and received communion, they invoke at the hour of death, with mouth and heart, the holy name of Jesus, or at least with the heart if they cannot pronounce it with the mouth. (Chap. x, no. 3.) — Plenary indulgence if, at the hour of death, receiving the last Sacraments and professing the faith of the holy Roman Church, they recite the *Salve Regina* and commend themselves to the blessed Virgin. (Chap. x, no. 4.) — Lastly, they gain the plenary indulgence if, being sincerely contrite for their sins, having confessed and received communion, they invoke the holy name of Jesus with the heart, if they cannot invoke it with the mouth, or if they give some sign of contrition. (Chap. x, no. 5.)

XII. *For the dead.* — The altar of the holy Rosary is privileged each time that any priest of the Order of Friars Preachers only celebrates the Mass of the dead (if the rubric of the day permits it), and even (if the rubric of the day does not permit it) that of the living, with the application of the sacrifice (*D. S. R. Congr.*, 31 *julii* 1848, *Manuale Decr. Romæ*, 1853, p. 286, no. 996) for the soul of an associate of the Confraternity of the Rosary. (Chap. xii, no. 1.) This privilege was afterwards enlarged and extended to all the altars of the churches of the Dominican religious, for the benefit and deliverance of the souls of all the faithful suffering

in purgatory. (*Bened. XIII*, Brief *Exponi nobis*, 22 *septembris* 1724.) — Priests associated in the Confraternity of the Rosary enjoy the privilege of the altar like the priests of the Dominican Order; but in their case this privilege is restricted to the altar of the Rosary alone; and since it is not personal but local, it follows that a church where this altar does not exist does not enjoy this privilege. (*S. Congr. Indulg.*, 7 *junii* 1842.) — All the indulgences granted to persons associated in the Confraternity of the Rosary may be applied, by way of suffrage, for the relief of the souls of the faithful departed. (Chap. xii, no. 3.)

There are many authors who have described the excellences of the Rosary and related in detail the miracles worked by its means; among others Blessed Alan de la Roche, the famous doctor Martin Navarre d'Azpilcueta, Thomas Bzovius in his Annals, *Justin of Miechów in his* Discourses on the Litanies, *and Bellet in his treatise entitled* L'Adoration chrétienne et la solide dévotion du Rosaire, *1754. — Cf.* Année dominicaine, *and* Trésor des vivants et des morts.

SAINT PIAT OR PIATO,[2] OF BENEVENTO, APOSTLE OF TOURNAI AND MARTYR (ABOUT 287)

St. Piat was born at Benevento, a fortified town of the kingdom of Italy, of rich and noble parents. Having received the gift of faith and the knowledge of the truth, he did not think he could better show his gratitude for it to God than by sacrificing his life to Him, to obtain similar graces for those to whom he had been inspired to go and carry the light of the Gospel. With this in view he left his country, like St. Lucian and several other great Saints, to come to the very ends of Gaul and discharge an obligation that his charity alone laid upon him; accompanied by St. Chrysolius or Chryseuil and by St. Eugenius, he arrived at Tournai, a fortified town of Belgium (Hainaut). It is said that he went first to Chartres to preach the holy Gospel there, but that, finding hearts hardened, he passed on and went to Tournai. In two months he converted thirty thousand pagans to the faith of Jesus Christ, not counting women and children. The first to receive Baptism was one named Irenaeus, who gave his house to serve as a church: our Saint dedicated and consecrated it to God. It is today the church of Notre-Dame of Tournai.

As St. Piat was preaching in the middle of the square, he caught sight of the guards of Rictiovarus, prefect and governor of Gaul, who had orders to seize him and put him to death. He warned the Christians who were listening to him and withdrew, accompanied by some devoted disciples; but the executioners pursued and arrested him, and, after killing on the spot and in his presence those who were with him, they put him in prison. Among the torments they made him endure, it is certain that they pierced his fingers, between the nails and the flesh, with great red-hot nails. Then, seeing his unshakable constancy, they cut off the top of his head in the middle of the public square of Tournai, where he fell dead, on the first day of October in the year 287.

His death was accompanied by several miracles, the greatest of which was that the Martyr stood up on his feet, gathered up the top of his head with his hands, went out of Tournai and carried it as far as Seclin (Nord), where he fell to the ground, died for the second time and was buried by the Christians. It was in this village, situated two leagues south of Lille and four leagues from Tournai, that his body was found in the seventh century by St. Eligius, bishop of Noyon, who drew out the nails of which we have spoken, showed them to the people in witness of St. Piat's martyrdom, gave him a new and honourable burial in the same place, and raised a magnificent mausoleum over his tomb. He spared neither silver, gold nor precious stones on it, as St. Ouen relates. It appears also that a church was built there, dedicated under the name of Saint-Piat; but the body of the holy Martyr was taken from it about 881, to be carried to Saint-Omer because of the Normans, and afterwards to Chartres, where a collegiate church was built under his invocation. This treasure, which was entire, was torn from its shrine by the revolutionaries in 1794 and buried with other relics in a neighbouring cemetery; quicklime was thrown over it. It was found again in 1816, recognized by those who had been charged with putting it in the ground, and placed with honour in the church from which it had been

taken, which is today the cathedral church of Chartres. Three leagues from Chartres there is a village that bears the name of Saint-Piat (Eure-et-Loir, arrondissement of Chartres, canton of Maintenon), whose church is under the invocation of this Saint. In the same diocese there are a great number of churches or chapels placed under the patronage of St. Piat. The cathedral church in particular celebrates his feast with solemnity. The city of Tournai has also distinguished itself at all times by its devotion to St. Piat. Besides the church dedicated to him, it possessed a cross called the cross of St. Piat, which stood in the neighbouring cemetery. On the eve of the Saint's feast, all the clergy of the episcopal city went in procession to his church to invoke him. Even today his image is met with in various parts of the cathedral, whether opposite the doorway of the nave, or on the front of the rood-screen, in the transept, and in the windows of the choir.

But it is above all in the town of Seclin that the cult of St. Piat has been famous for centuries. Cousin, in his *History of Tournai*, says that all the parishes of the deaneries of Lille, ninety-four in number, came there in procession every year. After fulfilling their religious duties, many pilgrims went to draw water from the spring found in the crypt of the church, near the ancient tomb of St. Piat. The faith of the faithful has often been rewarded by miraculous cures or by other favours from heaven.

St. Piat is represented: 1° undergoing the torture of red-hot nails driven under his nails; 2° beheaded and carrying his head in his hands.

He is invoked against rains and bad weather.

Acta Sanctorum, 1st of October. — Cf. Notice historique sur saint Piat, *by M. Hérisson, advocate. Chartres, 1816, in-8°.*

SAINT DOMANE OR DOMAINE OF LA ROCHE-GUYON, RECLUSE AT GASNY, IN THE DIOCESE OF ÉVREUX (658)

Domane was born at the castle of La Roche-Guyon, a small town in the department of Seine-et-Oise, situated three leagues from Mantes. She was descended, it is said, from Blessed Pientia, converted about five centuries earlier by St. Nicasius, apostle of the Vexin. The inheritance of virtues that the illustrious martyr had left to her family was piously gathered up by our Saint.

From her earliest years Domane showed a touching modesty, a great love of God and an unreserved submission to the will of her parents: mothers could not set before their daughters a more perfect model for the fulfilment of the duties laid upon their age. Conduct so exemplary drew down upon her the favours of heaven. God, who always blesses the humble and chaste young girl, willed that Domane should have a Saint for her husband. Married to Germer, lord of Vardes and already powerful at the court of Dagobert I, she vied in ardour and zeal with this virtuous Christian in the practice of the law of God. The poor, the churches and the monasteries shared their liberality, of which Domane was most often the generous distributor. The religious venerated her as a mother, while, by the services she rendered them, one would have taken her for their servant.

Having given birth to three children, two daughters and a son named Amalbert, Domane brought them up more for heaven than for earth; and so God called them to Himself early. Her two daughters died first and went to offer Jesus Christ their virgin's crown: the elder at the moment when she was about to receive a mortal bridegroom, and the younger after choosing the Lord for her inheritance in a monastery. When Domane had had their remains laid in the church of Saint-Remi of Vardes, she resolved to spend the rest of her days in solitude; and, as the voice of God was calling her husband to it also, they separated, so that each might be occupied only with the grave concerns of eternity.

Having returned to La Roche-Guyon, to her family, the Saint lived there for some time separated from the world. Soon the death of her young son Amalbert broke the last tie that could still bind her to the earth. From

then on, following the counsels of St. Ouen, she founded at Gasny, beside the tomb of St. Nicasius and his companions, a religious refuge where she made for herself a still more perfect solitude. Wholly given to God and to the salvation of her soul, she no longer allowed any noise from outside to reach her. When the cup of her merits was full, she ended, by the death of the just, a life spent in the exercise of virtue and the meditation of eternal truths.

God has shown, by miracles worked at Domane's tomb, that He had admitted her to His glory. From time immemorial several churches of the Vexin have paid her public honour. She was honoured above all in the priory of Gasny, where her holy relics had been laid.

St. Domane is represented in company with St. Germer of Vardes, her husband, and St. Amalbert, their son.

Extract from the Vie des Saints du diocèse de Beauvais, *by M. l'abbé Sabatier*.

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[1] Cf. the Martyrology of France of the 6th of February, where we said: "At Maastricht, Tongres and Liège, commemoration of the holy bishops who occupied these various sees. From St. Maternus to the year 750, the bishops of Maastricht are honoured as Saints." The Bollandists (*Praetermissi* of the 1st of October) refuse Ursicinus the title of Saint and claim that they have found no trace of his cult anywhere. Ferrarius is the author of the mention in today's Martyrology of France.

[2] The mention is Rabanus's; he was followed by Molanus, Galesinius, Ferrarius and Canisius. The Bollandists (*Praetermissi* of the 1st of October) claim that this is St. Front, apostle of Périgueux, whose life we shall give on the 25th of October.

[3] Menard, Bucelin, Du Saussay and Chastelain mention St. Montaine on this day. The Bollandists place her among their *praetermissi* and seem to insinuate that she is the same as St. Gertrude of Nivelles (South Brabant), whose life we have given on the 17th of March (vol. iii, page 478).

[4] He was the son of St. Meliau (26th of October) and grandson of Budic-Mur, count of Cornouaille (part of Lower Brittany), and was assassinated at the age of fifteen by Rivod, his uncle, a jealous, ambitious and cruel man. Father Bollandus (*Acta Sanctorum*, vol. i of January) gave his Acts drawn from the English legendaries; we ourselves followed him (*Petits Bollandistes*, vol. i, page 91, note 1); but modern hagiographers, among others M. l'abbé Tresvaux, annotator of the *Vies des Saints de Bretagne* of the Benedictine Dom Lobineau, claim that these legendaries were interpolated, and that the interpolators' chief aim was to transfer the scene of St. Melair's murder to insular Cornwall (the English county of Cornwall, at the south-western tip of the island), whereas there is no appearance of truth in this supposition. Lanmeur glories in having been the place of burial of the martyr's body as well as the scene of his execution. Under the choir of the parish church there is a crypt dedicated to him, in which is seen his statue, which represents him with the right hand and left foot cut off. The church of Quimper kept the Saint's head until the Revolution; the rest of his body, taken from Brittany in the tenth century by Salvator, bishop of Aleth, was first carried to Paris and then to Meaux, where it was placed in the church of the abbey of Chage (*Beata Maria in Cavea*); but these holy relics are now either destroyed or lost. A small portion of them is still found at Paris in the church of Saint-Jacques-du-Haut-Pas. — Cf. *Saints de Bretagne*, by Dom Lobineau; *Acta Sanctorum*, 3rd of January; *Praetermissi*, 1st of October.

[5] We have given her life on that day.

[6] See their life on the 20th of September.

[7] See her life on the 24th of July.

[8] We have given his life on the 18th of September.

[9] See the volume of *Movable Feasts*.

[10] *Ibid.*

[11] *Ibid.*

[12] The *Cédules* of the Church of Toul give a good number of the bishops of that ancient see the title of Saint. We have already given, and shall give again, each in its place, their notice; but not all have their feast marked in the *Bref* of the diocese; nine are passed over in silence: we shall cite them here for remembrance and to save them from oblivion. They are Saints Celsinus, 4th; Ursus, 5th; Albaud, 8th; Dulcitius, 10th; Premon, 12th; Antimonde, 13th; Endulus, 14th; Stephen, 36th; and Berthold, 38th bishop of that ancient see. If they have no express mention in the canonical office, it is perhaps because the period of their episcopate is not sufficiently determined, or because there is nothing very striking in the acts of their administration. Indeed the book of *Epitaphs* mentions only their zeal for the propagation of the Christian faith and for the salvation of their flocks, and their eminent virtues. Of St. Albaud alone it is known that he had the church begun by St. Epvre, his predecessor, completed; that he founded the monastery which became a celebrated abbey of Benedictines and the seat of the episcopal schools of Toul; that he was buried beside St. Epvre in the church he had completed; that his body was raised from the ground and worthily enshrined by St. Gauzlin; and that his feast was celebrated in his monastery on the first day of March. On that day the religious exposed his relics to the veneration of the faithful and distributed blessed wine, called *vinage* or vinegar of St. Albaud, which God many times used to reward the pious confidence of the sick and infirm. The house this holy bishop lived in — he died towards the middle of the sixth century — still partly survives today. It has kept the name of Cour Albaud (*Curia Albaudi*), and appears to have served as a palace for the first bishops of whom we make mention here. — Note owed to the

kindness of M. l'abbé Guillaume, author of the *Histoire du diocèse de Toul et de celui de Nancy*.

[13] *Saints de Troyes*, by Defer.

[14] Troësnes is a small village of the department of Aisne, arrondissement of Château-Thierry, canton of Neuilly-Saint-Front.

[15] Or Allowin, and in Latin Bavo, Alloynus, Adloinus, Adlowinus.

[16] The Hasbain or Hesbaye was a part of the former principality of Liège; it extended along the left bank of the Meuse from Liège to Huy, and contained, besides Liège, Saint-Trond, Tongres, Herstal, Landen and Huy. This country is the cradle of the Carolingians.

[17] This was doubtless the wood still called today Beilebosch or Belle-bosch, about a mile from Turnhout, a town of Belgium (province of Antwerp).

[18] Medmedune or Medmedung later became a famous village, known by the name of Mendonc, whose church is dedicated to St. Bavo.

[19] Under the 4th of August, volume IX, page 273.

[20] In Latin *Piatus, Piato, Piatonus*.

2 October

Martyrologies

Second day of October

MARTYROLOGE ROMAIN.

Roman Martyrology.

The feast of the holy GUARDIAN ANGELS. 1608. — At Nicomedia, St. Eleutherius, soldier and martyr, with a vast number of other Christians, falsely accused of having set fire to the palace of Diocletian, which had just been burnt. This cruel emperor, believing them guilty, ordered them to be put to death in batches: some were beheaded, others burnt, others thrown into the sea; as for Eleutherius, the first among them, after suffering severe tortures, and seeming to gain new strength at each torment, he was tried by fire like gold, and so ended his glorious martyrdom. 303. — In Artois, the martyrdom of St. LÉGER, bishop of Autun, whom Ebroin, mayor of the palace of King Theuderic, put to death after making him suffer all kinds of outrages and torments for the defence of the truth. 678. — In the same place, St. Warein or Guérin,[1] brother of this holy Martyr, who was stoned to death. About 669. — At Antioch, the holy martyrs Primus, Cyril and Secundarius. — At Constantinople, St. Theophilus, monk, whom the emperor Leo had cruelly ill-treated for the defence of the holy images; sent afterwards into exile, he passed from there into the rest of the Lord. Eighth century. — At Hereford, in England, St. THOMAS, bishop and confessor. 1282.

MARTYROLOGE DE FRANCE, REVU ET AUGMENTÉ.

Martyrology of France, revised and enlarged.

In the diocese of Amiens, the feast of the Octave of St. Firmin, bishop and martyr, whose life we gave on the 25th of September. Second century. — In the dioceses of Angers, Arras, Autun, Bayeux, Beauvais, Chambéry, Cambrai, Chartres, Dijon, Lyons, Mende, Nevers, Poitiers, Rouen, Saint-Flour, Soissons, Strasbourg, Tours and Viviers, St. Léger, bishop and martyr, named in the Roman martyrology of this day. 678. — In the dioceses of Amiens, Beauvais, Dijon, Limoges, Meaux, Paris, Rouen and Saint-Dié, the feast of the holy Guardian Angels, noted today in the same martyrology. — In the diocese of Mainz, St. Amand, bishop of Maastricht, missionary and founder of abbeys, whose life we gave on the 6th of February. 684. — At Larchant, in the Gâtinais (Seine-et-Marne, arrondissement of Fontainebleau, canton of La Chapelle-la-Reine), in the diocese of Meaux, St. Pipe or Pipion (*Pipia, Pipio*), deacon of the church of Beaune (Côte-d'Or), in the diocese of Dijon. He is also named in the martyrology of France on the 7th of this month. — In the former abbey of Saint-Hubert in the Ardennes (*Andaginum S.-Petri*), in the diocese of Liège (Belgium), St. Bergis or Beregisus, founder and first abbot of this monastery, occupied first by Canons Regular, then by Benedictines. Beregisus, a native of the Condroz (*Condustrus pagus*), a district that

stretched from Dinant to Liège and had Huy for its capital, was brought up in the Benedictine monastery of Truyen or Saint-Trond (*S.-Trudo, Sacrinium*), in Belgian Limburg, and there received the order of priesthood. Aided by the liberality of Pepin of Herstal and his wife Plectrude, he founded the monastery of Saint-Hubert, where he trained a great number of servants of God in the practice of piety, and where he died full of merits. About 724. — In the diocese of Troyes, St. SEREIN (*Serenus*), priest and confessor. 650. — In the diocese of Chartres, St. Scariberga, wife of St. Arnulf, archbishop of Tours and martyr, with whom she lived in perfect continence. She is already named in the martyrology of France on the 18th of July. Sixth century. — In the former Cistercian abbey of Villers in Brabant (*Villarium*), in the diocese of Namur (Belgium), Blessed Godfrey Pachomius of Louvain, monk. He spent forty-seven years in this monastery, exercising himself unceasingly in prayer, obedience, charity and mortification. Thirteenth century. — In the same abbey, Blessed Godfrey of Cologne, first a Benedictine monk, then a Cistercian religious at Villers. He became sacristan of the abbey church. After his death, traces were found on his body of the severity with which he had mortified his flesh. — In the former abbey of Echonte or Eeckhoute (*Luercetum*, Order of St. Augustine, founded about 1050), in the diocese of Bruges, St. Querelin or Querelein, recluse, who spent twelve years in solitude and penance in the neighbourhood of the village of Oosterloo. 1060.

MARTYROLOGES DES ORDRES RELIGIEUX.

Martyrologies of the Religious Orders.

Martyrology of the Order of St. Basil. — At Constantinople, St. Theophilus, monk, of the Order of St. Basil, who, after being most cruelly ill-treated by Leo the Isaurian for the defence of the holy images, was sent into exile, where he passed to the Lord. Eighth century.

Martyrology of the Order of Friars Preachers. — The commemoration of the holy Guardian Angels.

ADDITIONS FAITES D'APRÈS LES BOLLANDISTES ET AUTRES HAGIOGRAPHES.

Additions made from the Bollandists and other hagiographers.

In the desert of Nitria, in Egypt, St. Amon or Ammon, solitary, whose life we shall give on the 4th of October. About 350. — At Antioch (*Antiochia ad Daphnen*), today Antakieh, a city of Asiatic Turkey (Syria), with Sts. Primus, Cyril and Secundarius, named in the Roman martyrology of this day, the holy martyrs Pitinus, Pontius, Leo, Gaianus, Secundianus, Plato or Platio and

Leontius. — At Venice, a city and port of the kingdom of Italy at the head of the Adriatic, St. Lizier (*Lizerius*), martyr at Rome, whose relics were translated to Venice. Fourth century. — At Benevento, a fortified town of the kingdom of Italy on the Calore, St. Modestus, deacon and martyr. Born in Sardinia of illustrious parents who had him given a Christian education, he showed from his tender years great dispositions for virtue. Humble, chaste, modest, patient, pious and merciful, he won the goodwill of all who knew him. His virtues raised him to the rank of deacon of the Church of Benevento; at that time the persecution of Diocletian was raging fiercely; Modestus was one of its first victims; purified in the flames, he flew away, radiant, to the heavenly country. Beginning of the fourth century. — At Milan, capital of Lombardy, St. Diateria, virgin, whom Peter Bosch, martyrologist of the Church of Milan, praises thus: "In the Pontian basilica of Milan rests the body of St. Diateria, virgin, who knew how to keep her lamp supplied with the oil of good works and to go out to meet the heavenly Bridegroom as soon as He came to visit her." Date uncertain. — At Como, a city of Lombardy, St. John II, bishop and confessor. He imitated the piety of his predecessors, governed his diocese with great wisdom and produced many fruits of salvation. After sixteen years as bishop, he fell asleep in the Lord and was buried in his cathedral church. 660. — At Lérida (*Ilerda*), a fortified town of Spain on the Segre (Catalonia), Blessed Berengar, confessor, of the Order of Friars Preachers. Having resigned a canonry of the Church of Lérida to embrace the poverty of the religious

of St. Dominic, he was later elected bishop of the same city; but, not wishing to take up the burden of the episcopate, he obtained from God the favour of dying before he had been consecrated and confirmed in his new dignity. 1256. — At Lettir, in Ireland, St. Othrain (*Othranus*), confessor, brother of St. Medrain, also a confessor. 548. — In Japan, the holy martyrs Louis, Lucy his wife, and Andrew and Francis their sons. 1622.

SAINT LEODEGAR OR LÉGER,[2] BISHOP OF AUTUN AND MARTYR

78. — Pope: Domnus I. — King of France: Theuderic III.

> *Præcidis linguam, sæve tyranne, meam; Sed frustra vacuo divellitur illa palato. Cor sua, si nescis, organa vocis habet.*
>
> *Tu m'arraches la langue, cruel Ebroin ; mais c'est en vain que tu veux priver mon palais de cet organe : le cœur a le sien, s'il faut te l'apprendre.*
>
> *Thou tearest out my tongue, cruel Ebroin; but it is in vain that thou wouldst deprive my mouth of that organ: the heart has its own, if thou must be taught it.*
>
> *Hugues Vaillant, Fasti sacri.*

"The illustrious and glorious Leodegar (Léger), bishop of Autun, a new martyr in a Christian age," says the anonymous monk of Saint-Symphorien, was sprung from a Frankish family of the banks of the Rhine, rich, illustrious and powerful. Through his uncle, Duke Athalric, and his aunt Berswinda, he is connected with the first three dynasties of our kings and with the imperial houses of Habsburg and Austria; but the fairest glory of his race, great before men and great also before God, is to have produced lofty virtues, to have spent its treasures in multiplying good works and in creating monastic institutions that later became opulent cities, and above all to have furnished women or virgins, anchorites, bishops and popes consecrated by the cult of the Church. And let us not be astonished to see this noble line send so many Saints to heaven at the same time as it sends princes to occupy the finest thrones of Europe: nothing gives the heavenly fruitfulness of virtues like the blood of a martyr. Léger was born about the year 615, the thirty-first of the reign of Clotaire II. He had one brother only, named Warein (Guérin), who was one day to share his lot and his glory. To give birth and education to these two predestined children a Saint was needed. God had chosen Sigrada and placed in her heart, beside a mother's tenderness, the lively and strong faith of a Christian of the first ages, the love of God, stronger still than maternal love, stronger than death itself.

Sigrada's husband, named, it is believed, Bodilo, died at no great age, and his young widow was left in charge of his two orphans, having to help her in her maternal care only her sister Berswinda and her brother Dido, bishop of Poitiers. By a custom that recalled the old *commendation*, Léger was handed over while still a child to King Clotaire II, to be fed at the royal table among the young Franks brought up under the eye of God and the guardianship of the Church, amid the relics of the Saints, by clerics, abbots, and bishops who were chaplains and archchaplains, in the oratory of the palace called the *Chapel*, from the name of the small, poor cape of St. Martin (*capella*) that was preserved there with care as the palladium of the monarchy. In this famous palace school, directed by illustrious scholars who were at the same time great Saints, Sigrada had found a sure safeguard for her son's youth. She was happy to see him grow up under the wing of religion in knowledge and virtue. Her heart as a mother and a Christian could give itself up to full confidence; for there the masters not only gave lessons but also served as models.

To this education of the heart, to this delicate cultivation of the soul worked by religion, aided by a mother's care and counsel, was joined in Leodegar and his young companions the progressive development of the intelligence in a widely drawn circle of studies containing all sacred and profane knowledge. The palace school was a high school, where all the branches of knowledge that formed, as it were, the encyclopaedia of that age were taught at an advanced level to the sons of the noblest families, destined to occupy the most eminent posts in the country. And so from this palace hive, as people then said, there would come forth

swarms of men distinguished by their learning and their virtues, among whom Sigrada's son would stand out. We shall soon see him govern the school that had brought him up, then a vast diocese, and even the kingdom of the Franks.

Formed at the palace by masters who had taught him to become what he was one day to be, Léger left the school and the chapel of the palace, where his intelligence and his piety had developed side by side, and went to his uncle at Poitiers, near the tomb of St. Hilary. Soon he heard the call of God and obeyed it without hesitation, entering the levitical tribe to consecrate himself to the service of the altars. Dido first entrusted his nephew's early clerical education to a venerable priest, very learned and a great servant of God, and then had him pass into his cathedral school, where the education of the clerics was perfected and completed. Leodegar was vigorously trained there, says the history, applied as he was to the highest studies and fully submissive to that strong discipline which, like the file, wears away the too sharp projections and polishes the roughness of youth. Though still young, he already had mature tastes; he hung eagerly on the words of the elders, and if he heard of some deed worth remembering, he hastened to entrust it to his memory, which held it fast. Thus his soul drank deep draughts at the springs of doctrine, so as one day to pour out its outflowings, sweeter than honey, into the hearts he would form.

Dido, delighted with the progress of the young pupil of the sanctuary in knowledge and virtue, built the fairest hopes on him and already thought he saw him seated on the see of Poitiers. He wished therefore to complete with his own hands the education of a nephew in whom he already foresaw a great man and a holy pontiff. That is why he admitted him from then on into his closest intimacy; and, not content with having until then entrusted to others the care of this choice intelligence, he reserved to himself, as the second father that he was, the cultivation of that heart so noble and so pious, of that soul so lofty. And so he continually recommended to Leodegar to remain chaste and pure, as he himself had always kept himself, the historian remarks; and to make him in his own likeness he often said to him: "My son, keep unceasingly within you the flower of virginity; be a vessel without stain, a chosen vessel, worthy of the Church of God." In a nature so rich and so well endowed, education advanced surely and quickly. And so the engaging young man soon perfectly possessed sacred and profane learning; he offered an accomplished model of all the qualities of the heart as well as of all the qualities of the mind. And this is no strange thing, says one of his biographers; for while the Pontiff, his model and his daily instructor, struck his ears with the words of the lesson, the Holy Ghost, by His secret touches, was fashioning the inner man: the one was the monitor, the other the one and true master. Thus was completed that spiritual painting called education, in which God Himself guides the brush to reproduce in the Saints an image of His Word made flesh, the pattern of all holiness. Happy he, we shall say with the pious and learned author of the history of St. Léger, who, offering no more resistance than the mute and docile canvas, receives early and keeps always the living colours of the divine artist! Happy the young souls who, closed to the noise of the world in the calm and silence of the cenacles of childhood or youth, gather up every murmur of God's inner language and lose nothing of the truth taught within, while the word of a good master teaches it without! These examples, these lessons, falling like a divine seed upon Léger's heart, found an admirably fertile soil and brought forth a hundredfold. There indeed dwelt the most lovable innocence; and the heavenly sisters who form its retinue — humility, temperance, true charity, hope and faith — rested sweetly, as in a temple, with the Holy Ghost, in the soul of the admirable young man. Not only did they preserve it from the slightest stains that could have tarnished its beauty, but by a wonderful fruitfulness they gave birth in it to all the other virtues.

The new Samuel was ready, and the doors of the sanctuary opened before him. Here then is the noble Austrasian, lately seated at the table of kings, devoting himself to the humblest functions of the clerical state and reproducing all the examples of Nepotian: like him, watching with pious care that the walls were always free of dust, the pavement without stain, the sanctuary, the altar and the vessels shining with cleanliness; like him always the first at work, assiduous in prayer, having the holy scriptures always in his heart, on his lips

and in his hand, even during the long vigils of the night, until the sacred page received his head weighed down by sleep. Soon the eminence of his merit called him to the highest administrative dignity after the episcopate: he became archdeacon. Poitiers was of one voice in approving Dido's choice; all the accounts tell us so, and remark at the same time that Léger showed so much learning, strength and wisdom that, young as he still was, he surpassed all his predecessors. He exercised, says the history, a considerable influence in three different spheres: in the diocese, where under the bishop he was set over the government of all the parishes; in the episcopal household, where he went down into all the most intimate details, giving audiences, settling business, keeping the accounts, receiving guests, feeding the poor, making the monthly distributions to the clerics and directing the cathedral school of which he had lately been the most distinguished pupil; and lastly in the church, where he presided over the good order of the ceremonies and often replaced his uncle in the most apostolic and most episcopal function of all, together with prayer: the ministry of the word. Then Poitiers saw a great spectacle: the crowd pressing round that same pulpit from which the great Hilary had once spoken — whose eloquence St. Jerome compares to the roaring waves of the most impetuous of our rivers — and an archdeacon of twenty-five holding fast upon his lips the immense assembly, moved, recollected, fascinated by all the charms of eloquence. For, says an eyewitness, to the graces of speech he joined an august and majestic bearing, magnificent features, an astonishingly handsome face, a sweet voice, an expression full of liveliness, and, what is more remarkable still in a man of that age, an imperturbable prudence, a zeal full of ardour and yet so wisely regulated that he knew how to adapt himself to all and win them all to Jesus Christ. Skilful in bending to the most varied needs, he gave back joy to the afflicted, brought sinners back to virtue, raised up the humble, humbled the proud, encouraged the good, thundered against the wicked and purified every defilement, so pure was the heart from which his word came. For, as a final charm, the reflection of a virginal soul was seen in his whole person. Enraptured by this divine charm that gave so much fruitfulness to his eloquence, an old poet bursts out in his verses with an enthusiasm that echoes the universal enthusiasm. The peoples venerated him as an angel of the Lord, and the city of Poitiers said in celebrating his praises: "It is God who has visited us in the person of such an apostle." Léger no doubt found a powerful auxiliary for the good administration of the diocese in Guérin, who, in his capacity of count of Poitiers, was as it were the bishop of the outside. Thus the two brothers, uniting all powers, governed the Church of the city in the name of the bishop and in the name of the king. What good must these two Saints have done, who knew how to combine harmoniously their authority, their zeal and their efforts! And so Poitou was never happier.

Meanwhile the worthy archdeacon became a priest. But then God sent him a thought of humility and sacrifice: a secret voice made itself heard in his soul and said to him, as to the

Prophet: "I will lead thee into the wilderness, and there I will speak to thy heart." He listened to it even in the midst of the most brilliant and purest successes, in the midst of the most flattering applause and the most legitimate ovations; and, tearing himself away to follow it from the world that smiled on him, he went to bury himself, not in a great and famous abbey, but in a small monastery, poor, unknown and remote, called the Cell of Saint-Maixent (650).[1] An imperious need of peace and obscurity seems to weigh upon him. Scarcely had he arrived among his new brethren when Léger was raised by them to the office of abbot. He refused it; and it was only on a formal order from Dido, his uncle and his bishop, that he submitted out of obedience to a new superiority — he who had fled precisely to escape the sometimes so heavy burden of business and of governing men. The new abbot marked his administration by an important work, the introduction of the Rule of St. Benedict into his community, and no doubt also by abundant alms during the terrible famine of 651. His reputation had followed him to the depths of his desert; and eager listeners frequently hastened there to hear him, and numerous novices placed themselves under his direction; for his example had become contagious: many nobles, rich men and great ones of the world tore themselves from the most tenacious ties to follow him. After six years of fruitful solitude the holy abbot was ready for great things, as for hard trials; and God opened the field of them before him. One day, then, illustrious guests

arrived at the cell of Saint-Maixent: they were deputies who came on behalf of the pious Bathilde, queen and widow with three children, to call upon the help of his great wisdom and to beg him to exchange his monastic government for the administration of three kingdoms.

Léger, far above all worldly ambition, persuaded that the world had closed behind him for ever, happy to have escaped the encumbrances of the world, and aspiring only to end in the oblivion and pious calm of the cloister a life he had hoped to hide there, at first resisted with all his strength, alleging his unworthiness and incapacity. But the urgent entreaties of the bishops of the palace, who had not forgotten him, and above all those of his uncle Dido, supported Bathilde's request so strongly that at last, obliged to recognize the call of Providence, he obeyed with the simplicity of a child, the self-denial of a religious and the devotion of a Saint from whom God asks a sacrifice.

Léger had once fled greatness and left the court; but in this backward course God, by a sudden turn, seized him and brought him back to his starting point. The young leud, become a monk and now recalled to that same palace, offers us the image of the Church taking possession of the guardianship of the Frankish peoples and kings. So the decrees of Providence willed: was it not a question of the education of the chosen people, the eldest son of the Church? Our Saint had all the qualities fitted to win hearts and merit esteem. The majesty of his stature and the beauty of his face gave new attractions to the liveliness of his mind and the charms of his natural eloquence; while his prudence in affairs, his zeal for the interests of religion and his knowledge of canon and civil law made him judged worthy of the first dignities of Church and State. That is why he was first called to take his place in that senate of bishops, venerable and skilful counsellors, with whom Bathilde had had the wisdom to surround herself, and worked jointly with them to carry out a magnificent plan of policy at once national and Christian: the exaltation of the reign of God through the greatness of France within as well as without, employing three principal means — the rehabilitation and strengthening of the royal authority; the enfranchisement and relief of the people by the abolition of the fiscal exactions that weighed so heavily on them; and the prosperity of the Church, which itself makes the noblest, purest and truest happiness of a nation. The whole regency of Bathilde lies there. Thanks to Léger and his colleagues, who sought to imitate the action of Providence, great things were accomplished with strength and gentleness; and the pious queen deserved to be given this admirable motto: *Pax in virtute*, peace in strength.

Looking at his important mission from on high and understanding the whole greatness of the part he had to play at court, Léger did not think he could better serve the queen and France than by preaching the Gospel, that divine code of nations as of individuals, because before all else the reign of God must be established and His will done on earth as it is in heaven: the rest comes as it were in addition. Thus the word of Leodegar and the fragrance of his holiness, mingled with that of the holiness of Bathilde — that rose of Saxony transplanted among the lilies — kept the court from corruption; thus the abbot of Saint-Maixent prepared by the apostolate for the functions of the episcopal office to which he was about to be called.

About the year 660, Bishop Ferreolus having died, the sanctuary was seen to turn into a battlefield over the election of his successor: covetous men and ardent factions disputed and tore at the shreds of the pallium. To put an end to the scandal and to fill, in such circumstances, a post so important and so difficult, nothing less was needed than a personage of great ascendancy, of conquering race, of illustrious name, of almost royal blood, of undisputed merit and surpassing virtue — that is to say, a great lord, a great man, a great saint, before whom all ambitions could only humble themselves. Léger was therefore chosen by the senate of bishops who formed Bathilde's council. He devoted himself and came to console the vast and desolate diocese entrusted to his care.

On arriving at his episcopal city he stopped outside the walls in one of the four *diaconiae* intended for receiving strangers, then passed under one of those superb porticoes with which Roman power had adorned the old city, and went across the forum to the hospice (*xenodochium*) of Saint-Andoche, where he was solemnly received, swore on the holy Gospels to respect the privileges granted by St. Gregory, and spent the

rest of the day and the following night in that refuge of the poor and of pilgrims, not far from the place where the house of St. Faustus had stood. The next day the whole community went again in procession and led him to the gate of the *castrum*, an enclosure formerly reserved for the praetorium. There all the clergy awaited him to accompany him to the basilica of Saint-Nazaire, where the bishops of the province were assembled with the consecrator and all the people, who for three days had been in prayer and fasting to draw down the blessings of God. As soon as he had entered the temple, decked as on the greatest days, a thousand voices raised a unanimous acclamation in his praise. The electing bishops ratified this wish; and the august ceremony of consecration took place in the midst of the holy vigils of the night. Then, clothed in all the insignia of the pastoral office, bearing in his hand the sacred crook and on his finger the ring, sign of the indissoluble union that binds him to the Church of Autun, the new bishop went out, accompanied by the pontiffs, the religious, the clergy of the city and of the countryside, the great men of the people and the lords who had come from afar, and went with this magnificent procession to the vast halls of the *Episcopium*, or house of the Church.

This solemnity of the consecration was soon followed by another more imposing still, the holding of a council. Léger had thought the use of this great means necessary in order to calm entirely the agitation of his diocese, to re-establish discipline on its shaken foundations, to correct the abuses that had necessarily crept in or grown during a stormy vacancy of two years, and to close wounds that were still bleeding. Besides, was it not necessary that the Church of Autun should condemn Manichaeism, which seemed to be reviving; and above all that, like the neighbouring Churches, she should rise up against the new error which, wrapping itself in sophistical subtleties, was undermining the dogma of the Incarnation and of the divine motherhood of Mary? Indeed, about that time Monothelites had appeared in Gaul, and one of them had just been teaching his doctrines at Orléans, at Chalon, and at Autun itself. The crafty heresy spread at first secretly; but the evil leaven soon began to ferment and stir up disturbances. Then the pontiffs assembled at the sixth council of Orléans had the emissary of Byzantium brought before them and confounded him. He was shamefully driven out of Gaul. Five years later, in 650, at Chalon, a great and solemn assembly of thirty-eight bishops also anathematized the perfidious sect. Autun, the third theatre of the heresy, dealt it the final blow; and the council held by Leodegar offered Catholic truth a magnificent reparation by solemnly promulgating, for the first time, a document that has since become famous under the name of the Creed of St. Athanasius. The other canons, which were numerous and important, concerned discipline. The fifteenth, one of the most remarkable of those that have come down to us, ordered the monasteries to follow the Rule of St. Benedict exactly and contains these weighty words: “If all things are lawfully observed, on the one hand the number of monks will be multiplied by the grace of God, and on the other the whole world, by their assiduous prayers, will be preserved from every scourge.”[2] This venerable assembly closes, for nearly a century, the fair days of the Church of Gaul and the holding of great councils. Two scourges soon desolated the sanctuary: the Muslim invasion, and intrusion or military commendam.

Léger took advantage of the presence at Autun of his many brethren in the episcopate to draw up his will and have them sign it. By thus giving great solemnity to his testamentary dispositions he wished to impress upon them an eminently religious character, a kind of consecration, so as to ensure the more their faithful execution after his death. Here is the substance of this important document, a copy of which was kept in an ancient cartulary of the Church of Autun. The holy Pontiff, considering the various revolutions of human things, death, the inevitable end of all, and the dreadful hour of judgment; knowing that it is written: “Give, and it shall be given to you… Make to yourselves friends with your riches, that they may receive you into everlasting dwellings”; wishing finally that abundant prayer should be made for the welfare of the kingdom and of the princes, makes the church of Saint-Nazaire his heir. He bequeaths to it what he holds from the munificence of the queen, from Bodilo, from Sigrada his mother and from his ancestors by lawful inheritance, namely: the three estates of Marigny, Tillenay and Chenôve,[3] with all their dependencies. He transfers all his goods for the express purpose of being assigned to a *matricula* that he founds at the door of

his church, and distributed by Bercharius, provost of that same church, and by his successors, to forty brethren for their daily food and their remuneration. He attaches so much importance to this charitable provision that he denounces whoever violates it to the highest judicial authority, the mayor of the palace, places him under the anathema of the fifty-four bishops who signed the will, excommunicates him, and calls down on his guilty head the fate of the traitor Judas, the fate of Core, Dathan and Abiron, whom the earth swallowed up alive.

Léger therefore intended to attain by his testamentary dispositions a double end: the regular, definitive and solemn organization of divine service in his cathedral by the endowment of a numerous clergy, and the relief of the poor. This double end was precisely the one the Church had in view, for we read in history: “Clerics who neglect to be often present in choir shall be reduced to foreign communion, that is, treated as foreign clerics. If they amend, their names shall be entered again in the *matricula*. So was called the catalogue containing the names of the clerics who had a share in the remunerations of the Church and those of the poor whom she fed.” We have just seen that the traditions of his charity were never lost in the Church of Autun, and that his example had imitators. The memory of the establishment he founded also always remained in the people’s recollection. For even in our own day the site formerly occupied by the *matricula* or refectory of the poor is called the *Refitou* (a corruption of *refectorium*). One of the principal estates of the land of Tillenay given by St. Léger had a similar name expressing its former purpose: it was called Tréclin (from *triclinium*, dining hall).

After calming the last shocks of the recent storms, effacing the traces of those struggles in which homicides and implacable hatreds had been mingled, repairing the harm caused by long scandals, and bringing back discipline and peace by the ascendancy of the high authority placed in his hands, by his conciliating word, and above all by the most persuasive of all languages — works of charity, benefits, episcopal devotion — Léger, continuing the work of St. Syagrius, further enlarged and beautified the church of Saint-Nazaire. Decoration like that which adorned the magnificent apse was extended to the whole basilica. The ceilings displayed their gilded panelling; the very pavement matched the splendour of the other parts of the building. Hangings of cloth of gold shone in the sanctuary. To right and left, at the end of the two side galleries or aisles, apses as beautiful as the central one displayed their rich mosaics. On one side was the *diaconicum* or sacristy (*ministerium*), where the vestments, the vessels and the sacred books were kept; on the other, that splendid baptistery, later called Saint-Jean de la Grotte, whose brilliance, on the great days of solemn baptism, surrounded the holy Pontiff with such majesty that he seemed there an angel of the Most High rather than a man. To complete this general restoration, and as a counterpart to the *diaconicum* and the baptistery, he built the *matricula* of which we have spoken and a vestibule (*atrium*) where penitents, catechumens and refugees found shelter. The holding of the council, the foundation of the *matricula* and the brilliant restoration of the cathedral, the three things that first occupied Leodegar, reveal to us the whole spirit of his episcopate: zeal for the house of God, zeal for discipline and zeal for good works; love of God, love of the Church, love of the poor; in a word, the two great virtues of great hearts, religion and charity.

The pious and zealous pontiff loved the beauty of the house of God too much to stop at the outward decoration of the sanctuary and not give still more attention to the regularity of the clerics and religious. He laboured, therefore, with courage and constancy to maintain, by having the prescriptions of the council of Autun exactly observed, the ancient and traditional reputation of his Church for regularity in disciplinary and liturgical observance, in doctrine and in virtue. He occupied himself first with the clergy of his cathedral, assigning to it not only a particular endowment, as we have said, but well-defined functions, and bound it to a common life founded on obedience and poverty under a head or provost, with all the outward form that was then borrowed, and long continued to be borrowed, from religious observance. He also regulated the functions of the small clerical communities attached to the other churches, such as Saint-Pierre and Saint-Étienne in the old cemetery of the *Via strata*, which were likewise called abbeys. Let us not be

surprised to see this title of abbey given to all these churches; for the clerics who served them, living the common life, consequently formed so many religious families. Among the duties of the sacred ministry were instruction and the administration of the sacraments, notably of baptism: Léger provided for them with care. The city had three baptisteries: that of Saint-Jean le Grand for the women, that of Saint-Jean de la Grotte for the men, and another at Saint-Andoche for the children.

After dealing with the clerical communities, Léger turned to the monastic communities. The religious who, at least for the most part, were clerics rather than monks, and consequently accustomed to a broader and more secular life than the Benedictines, were bound by the holy bishop, aided by the worthy abbot Herminarius, to a stricter observance, brought back to a more severe enclosure, obliged to narrow the circle of their outings, even for the holy *Litanies*, by fixing nearer stations for the processions, and finally restricted to the exclusive service of the great basilica of Saint-Symphorien. Léger had reached his goal: each church had from then on its own clergy observing the common and regular life. Thus, thanks to him, everything was reformed, everything organized: the work of St. Syagrius and of St. Racho was accomplished. But he did not reach his ends without causing, as usually happens, some slight friction. In restricting the part played by the religious of Saint-Symphorien, in solemnly commending the Benedictine rule in the council of Autun, in tracing the ideal of a good monk, in giving great importance to the new clergy of Saint-Nazaire, now independent of the abbey, and in assigning — at least in great part, and saving the donations made by Gontran — the goods of that same abbey to other services, there were some malcontents in the abbey who kept up a centre of opposition to the holy reformer. But happily the abbey had at its head a man who must have prevented the contagion from spreading. The wise Herminarius governed with such prudence and skill that in the midst of conflicts he always deserved the general esteem, and at the same time possessed the full confidence of his bishop, whose views and reforms he seconded perfectly.

The holy pontiff often went to visit the abbey of Saint-Symphorien, to venerate the relics of the martyr and to draw inspirations of courage, of episcopal firmness and of charity stronger than death, which he would one day need, at that tomb where kings, princes of the sanctuary and Saints had often come to honour the faith of a youth raised to the height of Christian heroism by the faith of a mother. From there he had only a few steps to go to reach his dear Benedictine abbey, which reminded him of Saint-Maixent and consecrated the very place where the druidic idol was dethroned by the great destroyer of the gods, St. Martin. He loved to go in, as he passed, to the venerable sanctuaries of Saint-Étienne and Saint-Pierre, and to stop to pray in the cemetery where so many holy bishops, his predecessors, slept, to which people came from every side on pilgrimage, and where all the ancient symbols of the faith were to be seen — the dove pressing down a writhing serpent and taking its flight toward heaven, the mysterious fish (ἰχθύς), and other ornaments that the religious of Saint-Symphorien and Saint-Martin reproduced with patient and pious art on the vellum of their books. He knelt in the oratories, almost as numerous as the tombs, in that necropolis from which the cross, planted at first in secret in the ashes of the dead, had then sprung forth to the conquest of the opulent and voluptuous pagan city, had gradually gained its highest point, and at last dominated the Roman praetorium transformed into a Christian basilica.

Coming from the Merovingian palace, of noble race and a great justiciary, Leodegar carried to the highest point the ascendancy of his position as father and head of his people, as first pastor and first magistrate; for in him were united, with the sacred character of the bishop, the tribunician dictatorship of the Roman *defensor*, the ancient majesty of the Aeduan vergobret, and the all-powerful authority of the count or counsellor of kings. But he used his vast authority only to be the benefactor and restorer of his episcopal city, where more than one monument had suffered the ravages of time and of men. Acting in the fullness of his power over the city as over the Aeduan Church, he undertook great works of general utility and repaired the public buildings and those walls which already in the time of Ammianus Marcellinus showed every mark of age. They still exist and present perhaps the best-preserved Roman enclosure in all Europe. Probably the tall belfry, massive

and dark, that still dominates the bishop's palace and the city today, and to which tradition has given the name of the Tower of St. Léger, is, at least in its foundations, a remnant of the great constructions of our illustrious bishop. This restoration of Autun was to be the last. Soon the scimitar of Islam would heap up ruins there, and many would never rise again.

Meanwhile Leodegar kept a great influence at court and did not cease, from afar as from near, to help the pious queen Bathilde with his counsels. In concert with the bishops of the palace he pursued at once the honour of the country and the good of the Church. And let no one be surprised to see the clergy then involved in public affairs: they were called to them by the queen, but still more by the very necessity of the circumstances. Understanding how much his light, his authority and his intervention were needed, he gave them without fastidious or haughty hesitation, as without ambition, for the good of the Church and the welfare of the fatherland. This is what we are going to relate in a few words.

Disturbances, the account of which would lead us too far, after being calmed for a moment, soon began again. The vast plan of monarchical unity that the bishops had conceived and inspired in Bathilde was torn to pieces. The Austrasian leuds demanded a king for themselves: it was thought necessary to yield to the demands of Germanic impetuosity; they were given the young Childeric. In Neustria, Ebroin, mayor of the palace, perhaps also had ideas of centralizing power, but his personal ambition was his ulterior and only aim. He wished to enlarge and strengthen the royal authority only to confiscate it afterwards for his own profit and to reign in the name of the kings. That is why he worked to overthrow a regency that hampered him. To carry out this secret design he began by removing the bishops, and had Sigobrand, bishop of Paris, whom his very see kept near the court, publicly assassinated (664). Powerless to punish, incapable of yielding and above all of approving, deprived of her counsellors and her supporters, Bathilde was at the end of her strength. Leaving, therefore, a regency henceforth impossible, she withdrew to a cell in the abbey of Chelles. Her retirement was at least a protest. There remained the bishop of Autun, who, though absent from the palace, exercised from his episcopal see an immense ascendancy over one of the finest parts of the Merovingian empire, Burgundy. Ebroin knew it well, and he raged. Besides, his jealousy and wounded pride had long shown him in our Saint a rival of whom he must rid himself at any price. For from his first days at the palace, the abbot of Saint-Maixent, counsellor of the regent and no doubt also tutor of the young princes, had acquired a high authority; and the perfidious mayor was all the more humiliated by it because he could not find it illegitimate. He felt himself diminished by all that the newcomer gained, and suffered above all from the triumphs of that eloquent, easy, attractive speech, which contrasted with the harsh-sounding talk of the half-barbarous leud. But he dissembled, while promising himself to let his vengeance burst forth at the opportune moment. It was he who fell first, owed his life to his generous rival, and rose again only to destroy him. Such are the various turns of fortune we are about to see pass before our eyes.

Could anyone have believed in Ebroin's coming fall? Having reached the height of power, he reigned as master in the name of a child king. The bishops, august representatives at court of civilization, wisdom, moderation, justice and true and intelligent patriotism, had been replaced by flatterers — ignorant, greedy, violent and cowardly men, who had no rule or duty but the master's will. Among them were several of the rank of the *honorati*. Now these, irritated against the whole spiritual order, which seemed to them to wish to take possession of the world, were only the more servile before the temporal tyranny. Bowing beneath Ebroin, they rose up furiously against Léger, and could not see him walking with inflexible firmness on the heights of justice, says the historian, without sharing the envy that gnawed at the mayor of the palace and swearing to oppose the peaceful ascendancy of the pontiff. They shared with the mayor of the palace, now arrived at the goal of his ambition, the vexation of seeing the bishop of Autun alone persist in refusing to bow a flattering brow, a new Mardochai, before the new Aman, or to fear any threat. Irritated by a courageous tranquillity that was for them at once an obstacle and a secret reproach, these vile courtiers fanned the hatred by accusing our Saint of insolently persisting in what they called his rebellion. The cruel mayor had no need

to be spurred on by the solicitations of men as perverse as himself; for he saw in Léger, as in all the Frankish nobles, a humiliation and condemnation of his upstart pride; and his fixed system was to persecute above all those whom the honour of birth distinguished. He made them disappear by the sword or by exile, and put in their place docile instruments of his tyranny, who had no recommendation but impure morals, narrow minds and abject origins. A venal and bloodthirsty judge, at his tribunal justice was measured by the weight of gold: the innocent out of fear, the guilty out of need of impunity, all vied in gorging him with treasure. Each execution left a bitter resentment, and each complaint provoked new severities. To rapacity was added murder, and for slight offences the blood of the noblest and most innocent victims flowed abundantly.

But the measure was full, and suddenly a revolution broke out: the signal came from Burgundy. Léger, who as counsellor of kings had always laboured for the happiness of the fatherland — was he to wrap himself stoically in his episcopal pallium and let so much evil be done around him? Had he not been called to uphold, in the hands of a royal widow and her minor children, the weight of the Merovingian sceptre? Was he not charged with defending the crown that men were trying to degrade and to carry off? Now in such circumstances he understood that this former kingdom of Burgundy, where his see gave him a vast influence, was still a powerful counterweight, and he threw it into the scales to make at least a balance to the omnipotence of the unworthy mayor of the palace of Neustria. He obtained more: Ebroin was overthrown. Yet the tyrant had thought he had taken all his precautions. He had just forbidden every Burgundian to appear at the palace without his order, and after the death of Clotaire had placed on the throne the young Theodoric (Thierry), to the exclusion of Childeric, his elder. This was too much: all Burgundy was stirred; a crowd of nobles hastened to the palace of Austrasia; Childeric was raised on the shield and proclaimed king of the whole Frankish monarchy. Ebroin, the day before still terrible and dreaded, now trembled in his turn, fled, ran to beg a refuge at the foot of the altars he had bathed in the blood of pontiffs, gave up his treasures to those he had despoiled, resigned himself to everything except death, and begged mercy at least for his life. But so many tears that he had caused to flow called down terrible reprisals on his head; and to escape them the generous intervention of the bishops was needed, particularly that of Léger, who took no other vengeance on his enemy than this benefit. Theodoric received the order to withdraw to the monastery of Saint-Denis. No greater severity was shown toward the ambitious mayor who had made him king in order to reign in his place. Thanks to Christian charity, which forgets everything and never fails, above all in great reverses, the author of all the evil received for his prison the magnificent abbey of Luxeuil, where he took the monastic habit. Happy if, with the livery of religion, he had taken its spirit at the same time! The storm would then only have cast him into port, and many evils would have been spared France. But he was, says an author, a wolf covered with a sheep’s skin.

Childeric held in his hand the sceptre of the three Frankish kingdoms: the work of unity, which had been the dream of Brunhild, which was the object of the efforts of Bathilde’s government, and toward which Ebroin himself had worked, though for his own private advantage, seemed therefore accomplished. To consolidate this work, as difficult as it was important, and at the same time to remedy the evils caused by the preceding tyranny, a man of merit and authority was needed. The king cast his eyes on Leodegar and called him to his side. The holy pontiff devoted himself a second time and spent all he had of strength, wisdom and administrative genius. But the manliness that this heavenly man displayed, the Merovingian world, already aged and weighed down in vice, says the biographer of Autun, could not bear. The new minister at once brought about four decrees of great importance that effaced the traces of Ebroin’s passage. He recalled to Austrasia Dagobert, son of the holy king Sigebert, whom a crime had caused to disappear and to be exiled to Ireland. Thus Léger’s appearance at the head of a great people was an era of restoration. His worthy brother Guérin had accompanied him from Poitiers and Autun to the Merovingian palace and helped him in all his undertakings. Unhappily the illustrious minister of the three kingdoms had scarcely time to show himself to the Franks and to let them glimpse all the wisdom, greatness, love of the Church and devotion to his country that were in him. Barely a few years lie between the brilliance of his beginning and the resounding

catastrophe that suddenly cast him far from the court and interrupted the work so well begun. Childeric had married, contrary to the holy canons, the daughter of St. Sigebert, his uncle. “Léger then recognized that the work of the devil was warming up again,” says the biographer. “Taking up therefore the spiritual arms of which the apostle St. Paul speaks, he marched resolutely to battle against the ancient enemy of God and men.” Incapable of weakening when the holy rules of the Church were in question, the man of God loudly blamed the king’s conduct, threatening him, if he did not amend, with the thunderbolts of divine vengeance. The young prince, in spite of the intoxication and impetuosity of the passions, seemed at first not far from lending an ear to this just admonition of his venerable minister. But, beset by his companions in pleasure, by angry women and by the wretched partisans of Ebroin, he went so far as to stray into thoughts of murder. Léger, thus placed between appearing to fail in his duty by connivance or withdrawing, did not hesitate. He resolved to leave the palace before breaking entirely with the king; and out of delicacy and consideration, to avoid open rupture and scandal, he waited for the first favourable occasion that might mask the cause of his withdrawal by giving a reason for his departure for Autun.

The Easter of the year 673 was near; now it was the custom at court to celebrate this solemnity now in one city, now in another, amid a great concourse of people, leuds and prelates. The bishops highest by birth and rank asked the king to be pleased to visit their church on that great day. Our Saint obtained this favour and took advantage of it to return among his flock, thinking he might at last hope to rest his soul, after so many affairs and tribulations, in the pious calm of his dear city of Autun: his hope was not to be realized. An excellent lady of the country of the Arverni, named Claudia, had seen her only daughter carried off far away, willingly or by force, and married to Hector, patrician or governor of Marseilles. The forsaken widow sought consolation only in good works. Lacking children, she adopted the poor and chose as heir their father, the holy bishop Praejectus (St. Prix). Hector, under the terms of Roman law, claimed a share of his mother-in-law’s goods; and learning that the king was to spend the feast of Easter at Autun, he came there to submit his cause to him. Léger, finding the patrician’s claim lawful, and convinced besides that religion is respectable in the eyes of men of the world only in so far as it appears to them disinterested, did not fear to support it before Childeric. The latter at once dispatched a messenger to the city of the Arverni to invite the pontiff to come promptly to Autun. Meanwhile the enemies of Leodegar, who were not asleep, denounced him to the king as plotting a conspiracy with the ostentatious patrician of Marseilles. Childeric, thoughtless, suspicious and violent, welcomed this calumny, as absurd as it was hateful. The too credulous monarch opened his heart to a dark anger and thought only of stifling in the blood of his most faithful counsellor the plot by which he believed himself threatened. The tomb of St. Symphorian, which he visited, had said nothing to his embittered heart. The barbarian, at once superstitious and cruel, dared to pray before the relics of the martyr while he was thinking of giving yet another to the Church of Autun.

On Maundy Thursday a religious named Bercharius, the provost of the *matricula*, came to Leodegar and warned him confidentially that his death was being plotted. This news did not frighten the courageous pontiff. He celebrated Mass solemnly, as usual, surrounded by all the clerics and all the priests, even those of the countryside, to whom he gave holy communion so as to recall in a more striking way the institution of the great sacrament of the Eucharist; he consecrated the holy chrism and performed the washing of the feet after the example of the Saviour, carrying out all these magnificent ceremonies of the day of the Supper with the calm of a just man, the intrepidity of a hero, the august majesty of a bishop and the serenity of a martyr. He said to himself the Apostle’s words: “If the Lord be for us, who shall be against us?” He remembered the kindness Christ had shown the traitor Judas, and gave thanks to God who allowed him to unite his sufferings with those of the Saviour, to begin his passion with that of Jesus. On Good Friday, after making to the divine Master the sacrifice of his life, he resolved to make a last attempt with the young king, his protégé, his pupil, his ward, and went straight to him, declaring that he was ready to shed his blood on that day on which our Lord Jesus Christ had shed His for the redemption of the world. These noble and holy words, far from calming the impetuous Merovingian, irritated him to the point that he put his hand to his sword; and had not

the fear of God and the remonstrances of some great men of his suite stopped him, he would himself have struck the venerable pontiff dead. Yet Leodegar's sacrifice was accepted, and "he was saved then," says the historian, "only so that he might efface in the furnace of a longer persecution the faults that might have escaped him, come forth from it as gold refined by the hand of God, and shine with the brilliance of a precious stone by the splendour of miracles."

The same day there arrived Praejectus, bishop of the Arverni, the worthy and glorious successor of the Aviti, the Sidonii and the Illidii. The reputation of his holiness and his miracles had gone before him into the city: everyone ran out to meet him. Summoned to court for the affair of which we have spoken above, he was brought face to face with Léger. The two holy bishops, already so alike in their life and soon afterwards still more alike in their death, moved by the same equally upright and pure intentions, were not of the same opinion about the widow's inheritance. For the rest, the case was not argued judicially, because the bishop of the Arverni alleged the prohibition, by the Roman laws and the holy canons, of dealing with any contentious matter on such holy days, and there the matter rested. The king later confirmed Claudia's donation. Léger, without bitterness as without fear, urgently pressed his venerable brother in the episcopate to celebrate the solemn night of Easter in the cathedral. Praejectus obstinately refused this honour: he preferred, no doubt out of piety as much as humility, to withdraw to the monastery of Saint-Symphorien to venerate the relics of that illustrious martyr there. The king followed him there, as if he had feared not to be safe in the city. There he dared to spend the holiest of nights turning over sacrilegiously murderous thoughts, and to attend, with vengeance in his heart, the sacrifice of peace, the banquet of reconciliation, the divine agapes of Christian charity. Scarcely had he left the eucharistic table when he was already seated at a scandalous feast, stifling his last remorse, seeking to work himself up and to breathe in the boldness of crime with the fumes of debauchery. Suddenly, drunk with wine and anger, he rose, his eye aflame, and set off tumultuously with his wretched suite to surprise the holy bishop among the catechumens, who had just been plunged into the sacred bath and had come out of it, as from a tomb, risen with Jesus Christ to a new life. One of the king's attendants, frightened no doubt at the thought of the dreadful crime about to be committed, had managed to go on ahead; he presented himself abruptly to Leodegar and said to him: "Take care, my lord bishop! Know that when Mass is over you will be put to death by the king. Your enemies have long since sown in his heart the deadly seed of hatred; but this night the resolution is taken, all will be consummated." The august pontiff remained calm and continued the celebration of the holy mysteries with that air of imposing majesty and sweet serenity that always accompanied him, above all at the altar. His face even seemed to become more radiant and to light up with a heavenly brightness. They were still in the splendid baptistery, among a thousand torches, the fragrant smoke of the incense and the perfumes of the holy chrism, when suddenly the confused noise of a noisy troop rang out at the doors, and almost at the same moment armed men rushed into the sacred enclosure. At their head was Childeric, furious, brandishing his sword, shouting threats of death and crying: "Leodegar! Leodegar! Where is Leodegar?" Leodegar is there, and the king does not see him: he seems to have been struck with sudden blindness. "Here I am," answers the imperturbable pontiff, stepping forward with dignity, his brow high and calm. The king stands confounded: he sees no one, recognizes no one, and takes refuge, like a man out of his senses, in the episcopal house, which communicates with the baptistery by a door. Meanwhile the holy bishop, whom God had just surrounded with the shield of the angels, calmly finished the celebration of the divine sacrifice.

On leaving the basilica he presented himself before Childeric, without fear as without boldness, and tried to calm him. The fickle and weak prince restrained his violence; but his inner dispositions did not change. To all the gentle and grave remonstrances of the venerable prelate he answered sullenly that he had his reasons for holding him suspect. Then Leodegar, no longer hoping to disarm him, prayed to the Lord and called his friends together to tell them his resolution and ask their advice. "I believe," he said, "that flight is the only course left to me. I shall leave everything, I shall be poor; but at least I shall walk in the footsteps of Jesus Christ, and I shall spare my God an outrage, and my king a crime whose expiation would fall upon the whole

kingdom." His friends supported these words, inspired by the purest Christian heroism. At once, therefore, he took a little wine to restore his strength and a few servants to accompany him, and set out, making this prayer, worthy of a great soul that forgets its misfortunes, forgets itself and thinks only of God, toward whom it sends heavenly and sublime aspirations: "Grant, Lord, that henceforth I may have Thee alone to serve, and that, nothing any longer holding me in the deceptions of the world, I may at last be allowed to break all its bonds."

The patrician Hector fled at the same time, but by another road. At the news of this double escape Childeric, confounded and enraged, cried out furiously: "What! they have been allowed to escape! Quick, to arms, to horse, and bring them back to me." Hector, soon overtaken by the king's men, died bravely at the head of his little troop. As for Leodegar, he was arrested without difficulty, for he forbade all resistance and all shedding of blood; and at his request he was taken to the monastery of Luxeuil. Ebroin was still there. Thus these two men, equally pursued by hatred after their fall — the first for his crimes, the second for his virtues — saw each other again under the same roof, happy in their misfortune to be received into this refuge of prayer and peace as they fell one upon the other from the summit of greatness. Only, Ebroin regrets that greatness and meditates vengeance; Léger despises it, deplores it, and forgets every injury. There our illustrious exile, who had once torn himself from his monastery and then from his bishopric only out of devotion to Queen Bathilde, to King Childeric, and to the good of Church and State, loved to find again in the cloisters of Luxeuil the solitude of Saint-Maixent, to rest there from the agitations of a world that had not understood him, and to console himself there in prayer for the ingratitude and injustice of men, and also for the only grief he felt, that of having left his dear Church of Autun widowed. He did not know, but he could foresee, that God granted him this moment of respite to prepare him more and more for the consummation of that long martyrdom, a bloody and glorious drama of which we have just seen the first scenes. If the holy bishop did not shed his blood sooner, it was because God was reserving him for a slow passion; for Childeric soon took up again the thought of immolating the victim denounced to his hatred. Shortly after Léger's departure he would have yielded to the horrible temptation, had not the abbot of Saint-Symphorien, the venerable Herminarius — to whom, at the request of the whole city, the care of the Church of Autun had been entrusted, sad and desolate at the loss of her spouse — prostrated himself at the prince's feet and wrested from him, by dint of prayers, the safety of the holy pontiff.

Yet in spite of his efforts he could not long master Childeric's fury, stirred up by the secret partisans of Ebroin. At the end of a few months, yielding to their importunities, this prince, as fickle as he was violent, gave the order to drag Leodegar from Luxeuil. The holy bishop opposed for all resistance the triple majesty of the episcopal character, of virtue and of misfortune, heightened by an indefinable august and heavenly air that God impressed upon his noble face. That was enough: at the sight of him the king's emissaries, suddenly overmastered by a supernatural ascendancy, made themselves his defenders instead of arresting him. And even a frenzied attendant, who had sworn to bring his axe down on his head as soon as he was outside the monastery, felt his heart beat with an unknown terror: his knees trembled, and he was suddenly seen to throw himself at the feet of the victim he was about to strike. Leodegar was thus saved once more, while Childeric his persecutor, the unworthy son of Bathilde, having filled up the measure, fell under the blows of the leuds whom his tyranny had armed against him, and left the Merovingian empire without a master. At this news everything was in commotion. Some called for Ebroin; but the greater number saw safety only in Leodegar. Autun leapt for joy and at once sent a deputation to carry to the exiled pontiff the wishes of his children. The city's delegates found him surrounded with affection and homage by the Frankish nobles who pressed about his person, and addressed to him these touching words: "O bishop beloved of God and men! we have long enough wept for your absence and gone in mourning. Come and give back joy to the afflicted and console their inconsolable desolation. Have pity, beloved shepherd, have pity on your flock! It is wasting away with longing, and if it does not see you again it will faint with grief. Come back, O good father, to strengthen and heal those whom you have brought up so piously and so gently; do not leave them to languish any longer in

your absence. Be moved by the tears of your orphaned children, and let the groans of those who sigh for your return bring you back among them…”

The Saint, though in love with the happiness of solitude, was touched by this so affectionate and so pressing appeal. His heart flew to Autun; but he had renounced the world and regarded himself as the captive of Jesus Christ. It was therefore necessary that the abbot of Luxeuil should come to the aid of the deputies from Autun by authorizing him to leave. At the report of his return everyone hastened to his road, and the whole province was in festival. The happy news quickly went down as far as Lyons, where Archbishop Genesius gathered a numerous troop to go and join the venerable pontiff and lead him back in triumph to his episcopal city. At the same time another exile, an apostate monk, a new Julian — Ebroin — was also leaving Luxeuil, but in a very different manner, forcing the barriers of the cloister and raising, says the historian, his poisoned head, like a viper that grows young again and renews its venom. At once there gathered round him, eager to court his favour, all his former accomplices, men of plunder and fraud, most of them disgraced, escaping from their hiding places as reptiles come out of their caverns in the spring. This wretched troop and its worthy chief were already so impatient for vengeance, and their fury broke out so quickly, that they resolved to rid themselves of Leodegar even before his arrival at Autun. But when they overtook him on the road, the assassins found him surrounded by a numerous crowd of devoted friends. They had to dissemble and secretly swallow the vexation of swelling the triumphal procession that was bringing the holy bishop back to his Church. The whole city in festival greeted his entry with a thousand cries of joy; and the gladness was all the keener as the grief had been deeper. His exile had been wept as an absence without return; so that, in reappearing among his people, Leodegar seemed to come back from the tomb. It was a fine day after a storm; it was the transports of a family seeing a father again after weeping his loss and mourning his death. The good shepherd was led to his cathedral through streets and squares decorated with flowers and hangings, amid acclamations bursting out on every side. But this festival and these joyful songs were like the preludes of the evening, like the hymns of the holy vigils that precede the anniversary feast of the martyrs.

Meanwhile France had her eyes turned toward Leodegar; she called him, she expected her salvation from him. The great bishop of Autun devoted himself once more to the service of his country; and, hastening to put an end to the anarchy that had desolated the kingdom since the assassination of Childeric, he hurried to Saint-Denis, drew Theodoric, the sole and last child of the pious Bathilde, from the monastery, had him proclaimed king by the leuds of Neustria and Burgundy, gave him Leudesius of Autun as mayor of the palace, and hastened to return to his beloved people, whom he had scarcely had time to see again since his return from exile. He thought he had done enough for his fatherland; he hoped henceforth to be able to devote himself entirely to his Church and to end his career peacefully in the practice of good works and the pious exercise of his pastoral functions. But he had reckoned without Ebroin. The latter was quivering with spite, sharpening his fury, nursing and preparing in secret the vengeance he longed to satisfy. And so, as soon as Leodegar had left the court, placing himself without delay at the head of a band of Austrasians, he hurled himself upon Neustria, carried off the king at Crécy and killed the mayor of the palace. Covered with blood, he inspired nothing but horror and dread. That was his aim: he wished to govern by terror. One would even say that he took a new name to spread more fear around him. “Ebremer,” — so the historians of the time call him — “a frightful tyrant, a firebrand of hell, uttered, like a lion among wild beasts, roarings that made the whole land of the Franks tremble.” Able then to make sport with impunity of both royalty and the Church, he put forward as the son of Clotaire III a child whom he adorned with the great name of Clovis; and by a new invasion more terrible than that of the Huns and the Vandals, he practised on a large scale a frightful system of oppression and scandal: the armed intrusion of men of war, of unworthy men, into the sanctuary, and persecution and murder against the lawful pastors. Without counting a number of priests and monks, nine pontiffs were sacrificed to his fury. One need only glimpse the depth of the wound Ebroin dealt to the heart of the Church by introducing military commendam to understand the necessity of Leodegar’s opposition.

And so, amid the general terror, one man alone remained upright and firm before the tyrant, one prelate alone troubled his ambition and threatened his future: it was the bishop of Autun. He had to be got rid of at any price. Two bishops, Dido of Chalon and Bobo of Vienne, who had never had anything of their dignity but the name, and a fierce soldier, Waimer, duke of Champagne, offered their help in carrying out the infernal plan. Ebroin leapt for joy at it and gave them a whole army. Soon, from the top of the old ramparts of Augustodunum, the first bands of the new barbarians were seen. It was in the month of August. The holy bishop, remembering St. Lawrence and St. Symphorian, whose feasts were kept at that time of year, generously made up his mind and devoted himself to martyrdom. In vain was he pressed to save by flight a head so dear and the sacred treasures with which he had enriched his Church. He refused: his sacrifice was made. “My brethren,” he said, “if the men of earth are angry with me, it is because God is inviting me to a great favour. As for these goods, which cannot follow me to heaven, my intention is to distribute them to the poor, after the example of blessed St. Lawrence.” After these noble words the august pontiff, keeping back only what was useful for the service of the altar, began his largesse with the monasteries of men and of virgins situated at the gates of the city and in the neighbourhood. Then he poured out his gifts upon the people: not one widow, orphan or needy person was forgotten. Having thus detached himself from the earth and lightened himself to rise more easily to heaven, stripping himself of his riches, which he sent there before him, he addressed his clergy again: “I have resolved, my brethren,” he said, “to think no more of this world, to fear only the evil of the soul, never an earthly and passing enemy. If the enemy has received from God the power to persecute, let him arrest, let him ruin, let him burn, let him kill. In vain should we wish to flee: we should not escape him.”

These sublime words, which were regarded as the last accents of a martyr, as the last farewell of the good shepherd, produced a general emotion. There was a fast of three days and public prayers, with solemn processions like those of the Rogations. The image of Jesus Christ crucified and the relics of the Saints were carried along the streets and the ramparts, while before their oratories were invoked the patrons, the apostles, the Aeduan martyrs and the angels of the city, who were sometimes heard chanting psalms in the sanctuaries and among the sacred tombs of the cemetery of the *Via strata*. During these imposing ceremonies the holy pontiff, his eyes fixed on that cloud of witnesses who encouraged him from on high, felt his soul rise more and more above the earth, and shed tears before God, begging Him, if He called him to the honour of martyrdom, to be pleased to spare the people He had entrusted to his care. This magnanimous wish was granted. Then there was a very touching scene. When all the faithful had come back into the basilica, Leodegar, in whom heroism was united with goodness, and greatness of soul with Christian humility, spoke to them thus: “If there are any among you whom I have offended by too much zeal in reproof or by some wounding word, I beg them to forgive me. For, being on the point of walking in the bloodstained footsteps of the Saviour, I must remember that it would be in vain to suffer martyrdom if the heart were not filled with divine charity.” Soon afterwards the enemy delivered a general assault, and his fury was matched by the courage of the besieged. They fought until evening; during the night the fierce bands of Ebroin’s henchmen were still heard prowling round the ramparts, shouting, and on both sides men were preparing for new combats. But early the next morning, the 26th of August, Leodegar, who could not bear the thought that his people were suffering because of him, harangued the brave defenders of the city thus: “I implore you, lay down your arms. If the enemies have come here for me alone, I alone must give them satisfaction: I am ready to devote myself to appease their fury. Let one of the brethren go, then, and ask them for what cause they are besieging the city.”

At once the venerable abbot of Saint-Martin, Meroald, was dispatched; going straight to Dido, he said to him: “If our faults have deserved all the evils you are doing us, at least remember this sentence of the Gospel: ‘If you do not forgive others, your heavenly Father will not forgive you either’; and this one also: ‘As you have judged others, so shall you yourselves be judged.’” At the same time he begged him to suspend hostilities and to fix whatever ransom he pleased. The wretch, as inflexible as the rock, as hardened as Pharaoh,

stiffened himself against the divine words and answered threateningly that he would not raise the siege until Leodegar, handed over to his discretion, had promised fealty to Clovis, that phantom king presented to the Franks by Ebroin. Thus they wished to dishonour the victim before immolating him. The Pontiff's great soul revolted, and this was his answer: "Know well, all of you, my brethren, and let our enemies and persecutors know it too: as long as God preserves to me a breath of life, I shall keep the fealty sworn before the Lord to King Theodoric. Let my body perish, I consent to it, rather than that I should dishonour myself and stain myself with a crime!"

This generous answer was carried to the enemy, and at once the fury of the assault redoubled. It was useless; for behold the heroic bishop coming out of his cathedral, preceded by the cross and the relics, surrounded by the clergy chanting psalms. He makes his way toward the ramparts; he is marching to martyrdom. At the sight of the good shepherd going to give his life for his sheep, everyone melts into tears and utters heart-rending cries: "Father, why abandon us? Ah, stay here: we can still defend you." But his resolution is taken; he continues on his way, surrounded by an immense throng of the faithful in tears, trying to hold him back. Soon he has passed the gate: there he is among the besiegers. "Whom do you want?" he says to them. "The bishop." "Well, here I am; take my life." The impious and barbarous persecutors received him, quivering with fierce joy, like wolves when the innocent lamb becomes their prey; and in spite of the prayers of the people, the majesty of the pontifical vestments, the relics of the Saints and the image of the cross — the sign of salvation, the sacred emblem of pardon — they violently seized the venerable bishop, adorned with the triple majesty of age, of the pontificate and of heroism, at the moment when he was saying, his eyes raised to heaven: "I give Thee thanks, O almighty God, who hast deigned today to glorify Thy servant."

He was led to the east of the city, onto the hill facing the ramparts, to the place where a church now stands in his honour.[4] There, surrounded by executioners, motionless and calm in sufferings that surpass the strength of nature, he had his eyes torn out and their sockets hollowed with iron points. "I call to witness many illustrious persons who saw it as I did," says an eyewitness: "he would not allow chains to be put on him, and not a groan, not a complaint escaped his lips; but he glorified God and softly murmured the words of the psalms. They were tearing from him the light of the body; but the divine light illumined him within, and he was beginning in the darkness a long vigil of prayers that would last until the dawning of the day without end. He said: 'I give Thee thanks, O most good Lord Jesus, who hast deigned to visit Thy poor servant in this way. After all, these eyes of which I am now deprived are of flesh and are common to me with other men and with the animals. They are of no use to the soul; often indeed they turn it away from right vision. But there remain to me the inner eyes of faith; and those I can always raise toward Thee; by them I can contemplate Thee!… Neither darkness nor distance nor any material obstacle can prevent me from seeing Thee. That is why, divine Master, I say to Thee with the Psalmist: "Enlighten my eyes, and I shall consider the wondrous things of Thy law."'"

Thus the blessed martyr, illumined by a heavenly ray, poured the balm of the holy Scriptures on the pain of his burning wounds. He gave at the same time a great example of resignation and forgiveness of injuries, which merited the safety of his people. Leodegar's generous devotion had prevented the sack and ruin of the city, but did not spare it either ruinous exactions or sacrilege. Besides the booty, the fruit of pillage, the enemy bands carried off six thousand gold sous (about 450,000 francs); and the infamous Bobo, a degraded bishop already expelled from Valence, defiled by sitting on it the see of the Rheticii, the Euphronii and the Syagrii. Happily the martyr Pontiff had provided for the government of his church.

While he was being taken into Champagne by Waimer, persecution reached the members of his family: Dido, his uncle, in spite of his eighty years, expiated by exile the exile of the young Dagobert, of which he had unhappily once been one of the instigators; and Guérin, his worthy brother, fled as far as the Pyrenees. He himself, by order of Ebroin, whose vengeance was not satisfied, was abandoned, in the anguish of a sudden and recent blindness, without food and without guide, in the middle of a deep forest. There he was to

be left to die of hunger, and then the rumour was to be spread that he had drowned. But God, who fed the prophet Elias in the desert by means of a raven, came also to the aid of His servant and kept him alive in spite of the long sufferings of extreme distress and the most frightful abandonment. The fierce Waimer, struck by this prodigy, received him into his house. His heart had softened; the tiger had suddenly been transformed into a lamb; he laid at the holy bishop's feet the share that had fallen to him of the treasures carried off from the Church of Autun. Leodegar at once had them carried back by a voluntary companion of his exile, the pious monk Berto. Soon afterwards he was taken from Waimer's house, no doubt at his own request, to a monastery in Champagne, where for two years he enjoyed that pious calm of Saint-Maixent and Luxeuil from which his devotion to the service of Church and fatherland had twice torn him.

Ebroin meanwhile had thought it more expedient to give up his phantom king, Clovis III, and to go back to Theuderic and cover himself with that prince's authority. Becoming more and more suspicious and cruel, he used implacable severities against the noblest families; and, fearing to see avengers rise up from the blood of his victims, he extended his proscriptions to the children and relatives of those he had persecuted. Yet he was not at ease: what troubled him most was the presence of Count Guérin in the southern provinces and that of Leodegar in the north. It was therefore resolved that both should perish, but by legal forms: a judicial murder was wanted, no doubt to degrade them. The two brothers were accordingly accused of having made an attempt on the life of King Childeric and summoned to appear before their peers. The assembly, composed of leuds and bishops, was numerous. Several abbots of the city appeared there: among others were seen Winobert, successor of the illustrious Herminarius in the government of the abbey of Saint-Symphorien, and Herminarius himself, who had been charged with the administration of the diocese since Leodegar's glorious captivity. The noble accused, strong in their innocence, did not hesitate to appear before a tribunal that ought to establish it. Be that as it may, there at least they could meet after a long absence and embrace for the last time. When they were in the presence of the august assembly, Ebroin, at once accuser and judge, received them with unworthy mockery and overwhelmed them with invectives still more cowardly than insulting. As for them, keeping the humility of martyrs joined with the dignity of rank and misfortune, the calm of a good conscience and the frank and magnanimous freedom of a soul without fear as without reproach, they answered him: "No doubt we suffer justly, because we have sinned against the Lord; yet His clemency prevails, since He deigns to call us to the glory of suffering for justice. But thou, wretch, who inflictest so harsh a chastisement on the nation of the Franks, thou callest down vengeance on thy head. Thou hast indeed been able to deceive many people and to exile many from the land of their ancestors; but thou shalt thyself be exiled in a very different way; thou art losing at once the glory of time and the glory of eternity. Yes, in wishing to prevail over all who dwell in this land of France, thou art only destroying the false glory thou hast usurped."

No charge was alleged against the accused, who seemed to play the part of accusers rather than of accused. But it was only a sham trial: there was only an executioner on a tribunal, and two martyrs facing the flower of the kingdom. Ebroin, furious with spite, ordered his attendants to tear Guérin from his brother's arms and to lead each of them away to his punishment, in order, he said, to cut short the talk they liked to hold in each other's presence. As Guérin was being violently dragged away, Leodegar cried to him: "Take good courage, beloved brother; this too must be suffered. After all, our passing pains will never equal the glory that awaits us in heaven. Yes, it is true, our sins are great; but above them rises the divine mercy, immense and ever ready to cover the faults of those who bless it. Let us suffer patiently for a few moments, and we shall meet again in the eternal fatherland." Guérin had scarcely heard this brotherly exhortation when he was already dragged away, bound, tied to a stake and overwhelmed with a hail of stones; and amid these atrocious pains he said, as a worthy brother of the martyr bishop: "Good Jesus, my divine Master, who camest not to call the just but sinners, receive the soul of Thy unworthy servant. Thou who deignest to make me like the martyrs by allowing these blows of stones to take away my mortal life, O most clement Saviour, be pleased to grant me the pardon of my faults." He breathed his last with the last words of this magnificent act of contrition. Some

pious and unknown hands gathered up his broken bones, which were soon placed upon the altars, like those of his brother.

Will Leodegar end his life at the same time as Guérin? No; that would have been too happy for him: Ebroin did not wish it. The tyrant even had the infernal thought of driving him to despair by slow, sharp and refined tortures. He therefore ordered him to be made to walk barefoot through a pool bristling with sharp and cutting stones, which made the soles of his feet bleed. This first torture was followed by another much more frightful: his lips were cut off, his whole face was torn, his tongue was torn out, so that he might not even have the consolation of uttering a prayer. Thus, with his feet torn, his lips and tongue cut off, his face all defiled with blood and his eyes torn out, the Saint, already several times a martyr, could neither walk nor see nor speak; and he was under the executioner's hand like a lamb at the slaughter. For God, who does not ask for the sound of the lips but for humility of heart, strengthened His servant; He drew him nearer to heaven, He raised him to those serene heights where the souls of martyrs soar far beyond the reach of persecutors and often even experience a kind of radiant ecstasy that deadens the blows of torture. And so Léger passed through new torments without complaint or murmur. He was stripped of his garments, which were stuck to his flesh; he was dragged through the muddy streets; he was exposed in the public square, covered with blood and mire. It was his triumphal robe. They had thought to degrade him; they were covering him with new glory.

Vanquished and weary, Ebroin called a noble personage whom he believed to be one of his own: "Go," he said to him, "take this wretch whom you saw just now full of pride, and put him under good guard. The time will come for you to give an account of him and to give him what he deserves." The tyrant's cruelty was deceived. Waning received the martyr as a precious trust, as a blessing for his house, and by his care prolonged his life for several more years. Only, so as to appear to conform to Ebroin's intentions and not to arouse his suspicions, he at first affected some severity, setting the august captive on a wretched horse to take him to his house, several days' journey away. The Saint rode with great difficulty; but, always united to God by the impulse of faith, he said with the Psalmist, in the exhaustion of his body and the heavenly intuition of his soul: "I am become as a beast of burden before Thee, and yet I am always with Thee, O Lord." Already he even seemed freed from the bonds of mortality; for, deprived of lips and tongue, he nevertheless sang the praises of God during that painful journey, a true way of the Cross. It was a canticle of love breathed out without a material organ; it was a supernatural voice that escaped, free and harmonious, from the depths of the heart. At length they reached the end of the journey. Then Winobert, the worthy abbot of Saint-Symphorien, who with several brethren had had the courage to follow to the end the holy and beloved Pontiff — made twice sacred, twice venerable and dear — begged the favour of being admitted to him. Waning let himself be entreated and granted everything. Winobert was therefore brought in, and a spectacle as wonderful as it was sad met his eyes: the martyr, stretched on a pallet, covered with a wretched rag of coarse tent cloth, his lips and tongue cut off and still bringing up blood, was speaking the articulate language of men. Through the torn organs and the bared teeth came distinct and piercing sounds. These miraculous accents went to the depths of the heart: all were moved by them. The sentry who watched at the door shed tears and ran to tell it to Herminarius, who had likewise just arrived from Autun. Having in his turn obtained free entry from Waning, he visited his holy predecessor with happiness and respect, surrounded him with the most eager care, gave him food and covered him with his own garments. He also loved to ask and to receive his advice for the administration of the desolate Church entrusted to his care.

No one approached the mutilated Leodegar except with religious veneration; for already it was no longer a mere mortal who was being honoured, but a martyr whose solemn translation was beginning; and there was around him as it were an anticipated feast. Detached from the earth, the Saint held to it now only by that sweet and sacred tie that Jesus Himself kept in His heart even on the cross: he had a mother, and in his long agony he thought of the sorrows that filled with bitterness the old age of the venerable Sigrada rather than of

his own pains. He would have wished the chalice to pass, not from his own mutilated lips, but from those of his mother; he begged God to take the last drop of his blood in exchange for a single tear of this mother so tender and so unfortunate, a widow of eighty. Although she had long since gone to hide her life far from the world in the solitude of the cloister of Soissons, after being stripped of all her goods by the tyrant who persecuted her family, could she fail soon to learn, if she did not already know it, of the passion of her two sons? That is why Leodegar wished to address to her a few words of consolation. Taking advantage of the peace God granted him with the compassionate Waning, and of the presence of the abbots and religious of Saint-Symphorien of Autun, he dictated to them a memorable letter, worthy to be engraved on the heart of all sons and all mothers. Eloquence and sorrow pierce through the sublime consolations he lavishes on Sigrada and the heroism with which he recommends the forgiveness of injuries. Here is a part of it:

“To my lady and most holy mother Sigrada, who, already a true mother by the ties of blood, has become one also by the ties of the spirit, since in her has been fulfilled what Truth itself says: ‘Whosoever shall do the will of my Father who is in heaven, he is my brother, my sister and my mother.’ Leodegar, servant of the servants of Jesus Christ.

“Grace and peace be with you through our Lord. I thank God, who has not withdrawn His mercy from me but has made me hear a word of joy and gladness because of our faith and our patience in these tribulations He has sent us, and which you bear after the example of the divine Saviour, the just Judge, so as to be found worthy of His kingdom… Finding your consolation in Jesus Christ, you have changed your grief into joy, and you do well; for we must by no means be sad, according to these words of St. Peter: ‘If you are afflicted with divers temptations during this short moment of life, it is so that your soul, being tried, may become more precious than gold refined by fire’; and these others of St. Paul: ‘As for the present, a light and momentary tribulation works in us an immense weight of glory.’ Yes, O my mother, rejoice in the Lord! You have left what was to be forsaken; you have obtained what your heart desired. God has heard your prayer, He has seen the tears that after many events you shed in His presence; and He has separated you from everything that could hold you back a little in the acquisition of eternal beatitude, so that, freed from the ties of family and free from every hindrance, you may have nothing more to do than to give yourself to prayer and to live in Jesus Christ and for Jesus Christ, our King, our Redeemer, the Voice, the Truth and the Life. It is He indeed whom we must obey, saying with the Psalmist: ‘What shall I render to the Lord for all the things He hath done for me? I will take from His hand the chalice in which salvation is drunk, and I will call upon His name.’”

This chalice that saves, this chalice of martyrdom, from which he himself has already drunk deep draughts, into which he has already poured a part of his blood, Léger only half shows to his mother’s eyes, and at once he points to heaven opened, he counts one more of the elect, he prays, he sings, he exults, like the impatient athlete who asks for a new combat and already salutes the crown. “Oh!” he cries, “happy death that gives life! Happy loss of goods that eternal riches make good! Happy affliction that brings the glory of the angels! Now you have experienced how the most clement Lord Jesus has had pity on you, in granting you the safeguard of a holy discipline and contempt of the world, in snatching from the anguish of the age the pledges that came from your womb, in withdrawing them from the errors of the world to give them the assurance of eternal happiness. Besides, you might have had sons to weep as dead by leaving them to survive you here below; whereas for these, have no anxiety, no sadness. Give, then, a thousand thanks to God, for at last it has vanished, the night that darkens the eyelid of the soul; at last they have been laid down, the burdens and cares of the present life. Let us follow, let us follow the Lord; come! His mercy goes before; let us run without fear to the combat. He is faithful to His word and will give us the victory. He Himself will fight for us and will furnish us, to make us conquer, with arms such as our adversaries have none like: the shield of faith, the breastplate of justice, the helmet of salvation, the whole armour on which the burning darts of the enemy are quenched, the spiritual sword, which is the word of God, and prayer made at every moment with

the inner watchfulness of the soul…"

After these manly accents, worthy of the magnanimity of a noble Frank, of a hero, of a martyr, come more familiar counsels, but always full of loftiness and stamped with greatness: on the forgiveness of injuries in imitation of Jesus Christ, on detachment from temporal things, and lastly on the one thing necessary, salvation, sanctification by the faithfulness to the duties of one's state. "If there remained in the heart," he says, "— which God forbid! — anything of the old leaven, above all any hatred against our enemies, it would be a great loss. May the Lord preserve every faithful soul from it! For where can anything more excellent be found than to deserve to be truly sons of God by loving our enemies, and to be absolved from our sins by forgiving others? Besides, must we not listen to the Saviour and imitate Him? Has He not said: 'If any man serve Me, let him follow Me; and where I am, there also shall My servant be'? Now He has taught us the way by which we must walk in His footsteps, when He uttered these words: 'Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.' If, then, the Author of eternal life, who willed to be born of an immaculate Virgin, prayed for His executioners, how much more must we, full of sins, love our enemies and pray for them, so that, imitating the Lord, we may deserve to have a share in His kingdom with the Saints… There is yet another thing worthy of all our attention: those who have been delivered from temporal cares by the divine goodness must never return to them either in body or in mind, but must detach themselves from everything. Every soul that has given itself to God must give itself day and night, in spite of the persecutions of the wicked, to the singing of psalms, hymns and spiritual canticles, obey the holy rule, and await the coming of the Lord with its lamp lit, so that if He comes and knocks at the door it may not be taken by surprise and may open to Him promptly. Nothing is better than the fear of God, nothing sweeter than to live in the observance of His commandments. O good mother, eye has not seen, nor ear heard, nor has the heart of man tasted what the divine Master is preparing for you. And see how He rewards you even in the present life: in place of your servants He has given you the holy brethren who pray for you every day; in place of the throng of your waiting-women He has given you the pious sisters with whom you live in so devout a fellowship; for the toil of life in the world, rest in the monastery; for the loss of goods, the divine Scripture, holy meditation and assiduous prayer; for the loss of relatives, the venerable lady Itheria, who is your mother, your sister, your daughter; for you two have but one heart and one soul…" Such is this letter, which seems dated from heaven and inspired by God. Leodegar poured his whole soul into it: in it are seen the serenity of the just man, the delicate solicitude of a son and a father, and the joyful and triumphant assurance of a martyr on the point of grasping the palm. It is at once sublime and fragrant with piety, peace and charity.

Soon Waning, filled with veneration for his august prisoner, and taking no account of Ebroin's orders, entrusted him to the monastery of Fécamp. Happy once more to find himself in a pious retreat, Léger was able, in spite of the frightful mutilation of his mouth, to mingle his voice with the angelic voices of the virgins. Feeling his last hour draw ever nearer, he served God with the eagerness of the faithful servant whose master is about to knock at the door; he attended the holy offices day and night and scarcely left the church to take a little food and sleep. A living victim already offered to God several times, he had great fervour in celebrating the divine sacrifice daily. During the two years he spent in the abbey of Fécamp, not content with giving striking examples of piety, patience and humility, he also proclaimed the word of God. The crowd hastened round his pulpit, and sinners went away touched, converted, penitent. Meanwhile Waning had for him a veneration that kept growing and went as far as a cult. He did more still: drawn on by the exhortations and examples of the persecuted holy bishop, he sold his goods, gave to God even his only son, associated himself with every pious foundation, and, after spending the last twenty years of his life in a vast apostolate of good works, deserved to be himself entered in the catalogue of the blessed.

Vanquished by the former exile of Ireland, Dagobert, king of Austrasia, worthy son of Sigebert, Ebroin thought only of ridding himself of his enemies. After getting rid of the holy king of Austrasia, whose power, as strong as it was beloved, hampered his pretensions to universal tyranny, and whose virtue condemned his

vices, Ebroin wished to have done with Leodegar; for his hatred had not forgotten him. No doubt he feared him little, but he thirsted for blood. Driven by the infernal spirit, and so as not to miss his victim this time, he went himself to Fécamp and assembled a conventicle in which, wishing to have Leodegar degraded before putting him to death, he renewed the old and ridiculous accusation concerning the murder of Childeric. The Saint answered humbly but with dignity that, without believing himself free from all fault, he had no part in the crime imputed to him. “Men,” he added, “may be ignorant of my innocence, but God knows it, and that is enough for me.” Ebroin could not obtain Léger’s condemnation for lack of proofs; but his hatred took their place. As soon as he was outside the assembly he was seen, full of spite and rage at the sublime and prophetic words the venerable accused had uttered, to break out against him in transports of fury: “You trust in your fine speeches; but whom do you claim to persuade? No doubt you imagine that you will have the glory of martyrdom, and that is what makes you so rash: you will receive only what you have deserved — death.” The Saint was silent. The questions grew sharper: he was still silent, like the divine Master before Herod and Pilate. Then the scene of the praetorium was renewed: the anointed of the Lord was handed over to sacrilegious hands, and his tunic was torn from top to bottom. At the same time Ebroin, turning to a count of the palace named Chrodobert (or Robert), said: “Take him and keep him under good guard. The hour of his death will come.” And the Martyr went to his Calvary, resigned and joyful, because he saw the divine Rewarder preparing his crown and already bringing it near his head.

As he went along the sorrowful way, overcome with weariness and thirst, a compassionate soul who met him refreshed his lips with a little drink, thus helping him to carry his cross. This new Cyrenean had not yet finished his work of mercy when a great light, coming down from heaven like a whirlwind, suddenly shone on the martyr’s brow. Moved and trembling, all cried out: “What is this light, my lord, that shines on your head like a crown come from heaven? We have never seen anything like it.” He, prostrating himself on the ground, adored God, saying: “I give Thee thanks, O almighty consoler of souls, who hast been pleased to work so great a wonder for Thy servant.” Those present gazed at him in pious rapture, seized with religious awe; then, coming to themselves, they glorified the Lord and said to one another: “Truly this is a man of God.” And they promised to be converted with all their heart. Count Robert took the venerable prisoner to his house so that he might bless it; and this blessing was so fruitful and so abundant that all its inmates at once felt its wonderful effects. They confessed their sins and applied to themselves the salutary remedy of penance. Thus Leodegar displayed once more the quite special gift God had given him of commanding the most rebellious wills and of bending them by a kind of invincible and supernatural fascination.

Meanwhile the end of this long persecution arrived, the day of reward. From the palace came a sentence condemning Leodegar to death. The impious and hateful Ebroin, jealous of a rival’s glory, implacable toward an enemy even beyond the tomb, and fearing that the faithful would pay him the honours of martyrdom, ordered at the same time that he should be taken to the depths of a forest and his remains thrown into some out-of-the-way pit, so that not the least trace of his burial should remain. The bloody message filled Robert’s house with grief. Leodegar’s conversations were beginning to touch this rough and coarse Frank. His wife above all felt cruel anguish at the thought of the part he would take in this death. And as she wept bitterly, the heroic martyr consoled her with these words: “Do not weep because of my last passage. My death will not be imputed to you; rather, heavenly blessings will come to you from it, provided you piously lay this remnant of a body in a tomb.” Count Robert therefore appointed four of his men to carry out Ebroin’s orders. They took Leodegar and led him away, without saying anything to him, into the forest of Sarcing, in Artois, on the edge of which the count’s dwelling stood.[5] After walking a long time with them along unknown paths, the Saint stopped and said to them, borrowing a word of the Saviour: “My children, what is the use of tiring ourselves further? What you have come to do, do quickly, and fulfil the wish of my enemy.” The bearing and air of the Pontiff were at this moment marked by a majesty still more august and a charm still more penetrating than usual; for to the dignity of his bearing and his countenance and the holy serenity of his features was joined the gentle radiance of sadness, suffering and resignation, which seemed to transform him into a heavenly

being. And so, of the four men charged with consummating his martyrdom, three fell at his feet, begging him to forgive them and bless them. But the fourth, named Wadhard, remained standing, with a ferocious air, holding his naked sword. The man of God, after blessing his murderers, knelt down, entered into solemn recollection, and uttered a prayer like those the ancient martyrs used to make at the moment of receiving the mortal blow: “Lord God almighty, Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have learned to know Thee, I bless Thee for having brought me to this day of combat; but I also pray Thee, I implore Thee, to be pleased to extend Thy mercy over me and to make me worthy to share in the merits of Thy Saints, so as to have part with them in eternal life. I ask Thee at the same time to pardon those who persecute me, for through them, I trust, O most clement Father, I shall be glorified before Thee.” Scarcely had he finished this last prayer when he held out his throat to the man armed with the sword, saying to him: “Do what you have been commanded.” And his head fell under the edge of the steel, while his soul flew to heaven. It was the 2nd of October in the year 678. The holy body remained standing for a long time. At last the fierce executioner pushed the martyr’s body with his foot to make it fall. But at once, delivered to the devil, seized with furious madness and struck by divine vengeance, he threw himself into the fire and was burned alive, as if he had already been in hell.

He is represented deprived of sight, then with his tongue and lips cut off, and lastly beheaded.

CULTE ET RELIQUES.

Cult and Relics.

The remains of St. Léger were piously gathered up by the wife of Count Robert, who placed them in a small oratory, where they remained two and a half years. A priest served this holy chapel; now he noticed that miraculous lights were seen shining there, and he heard voices intoning the canticle of the angels: *Gloria in excelsis Deo*. Seized with religious terror, he told what he had seen and heard, confirming his account with the most solemn oaths. Soon the whole neighbourhood was full of this news; the people ran there in crowds, the sick thronged around the tomb, and every infirmity was healed there.

Carmelite religious served this oratory until the time of the Revolution; it was then sold with the lands given by the liberality of the lords of Lucheux, and turned to profane use. When it was put up for sale, it was bought by the parish priest of Lucheux with the aim of restoring it to its ancient and religious purpose.

The abbot of Saint-Maixent, Andulf, disciple and successor of Leodegar in the government of that monastery, was deputed by Ansoald, his bishop, to go and solemnly gather up the precious relics of the Martyr and translate them to Poitiers (782). At this news there came running from every side people, clergy and religious, the sick, the infirm and sinners. Some sang psalms and hymns; others, healed, consoled and converted, expressed by acclamations the transport of their gratitude, shedding tears of joy and tears of repentance sweeter still. It was with this pious and immense procession that the holy body took the road to Poitiers in triumph. Everywhere it passed through the pressing throngs of the populations; for at every step the numerous groups were renewed and the processions followed one another without end. All along the road they were seen coming out of the monasteries, the market towns and the villages with the cross and incense.

When the procession drew near Tours, Bishop Robert went out to meet the blessed Martyr at the head of his clergy and of the crowd of the people. As they were passing through the city, a woman unjustly put in chains invoked the Saint, and her fetters broke; at Jouy, a poor girl, blind, dumb and paralysed, was completely healed; at Seney, a woman was delivered from the devil; at Ingrande, a lame man and a paralytic recovered the use of their limbs at the same moment. Elsewhere, when the bishop of Poitiers, Ansoald, wished to provide food for all this crowd following the body, the wine was miraculously multiplied. Farther on, at the confluence of the Clin and the Vienne, the troubled waters suddenly grew calm, and a man born blind recovered his sight. The most solemn moment of this long festival was that in which Ansoald, with all his clergy and all his people, received the glorious Martyr by the light of torches, amid clouds of incense and the

acclamations, a thousand times repeated, of an immense crowd. The miraculous healing of a paralytic at the gates of the city added still more to the enthusiasm. The procession passed through the city and went first to the basilica of Sainte-Radegonde, then to that of Saint-Hilaire, where other miracles bore witness that the new Martyr was worthy to take his place between the great bishop, Father of the Church and heroic confessor of the faith, and the pious queen, martyr of penance and of divine charity.

Meanwhile a sumptuous building was being raised at Saint-Maixent to receive him, with proportions and forms that were striking for their bold novelty and their astonishing size. He was placed there in an altar all gleaming with gold, set beneath the vaults of a crypt. It was there that his former children came to pray, with the peoples who flocked from every side and obtained miracles. Ansoald dedicated this church and presided over the last translation of the sacred relics.

The cult of St. Léger spread rapidly through all the provinces, as far as Switzerland and Germany. His martyrdom first, and then the miracles that soon made his tomb so glorious, caused a great stir. Hence the countless churches raised under his invocation in almost every diocese; hence his name and his patronage adopted by the most distant populations and by illustrious monasteries. Above all, the places where he lived, where he suffered, where he died, Poitiers, Autun, Arras, Brittany, Burgundy, Champagne, Alsace and even Belgium, were covered with monuments of his cult.

Soon the devastating bands of the Norman pirates spread everywhere. It was necessary to flee and hide whatever was most precious. The religious of Saint-Maixent took refuge with their relics at Rennes, in Armorica. When the first storm had passed, they thought they could return; but fresh invasions forced them to seek a refuge with their dear and holy treasure as far as the mountains of Auvergne. Having stopped at Ébreuil, a former villa of Sidonius Apollinaris, they placed there the holy bodies of Maxentius, of Léger and of Guérin his brother. Later, forced to flee once more before the storm, they nevertheless left the greater part of the remains of the celebrated Martyr at Ébreuil, which from then on took the name of Saint-Léger, and went to Auxerre, from where they at last returned to Saint-Maixent.

Meanwhile his relics were asked for from every side, and several bones or parts of his body went from Ébreuil at different times to enrich a great number of churches, among others those of Saint-Vaast of Arras, of Fécamp, of Saint-Gérard near Namur, of Lucerne in Switzerland, of Notre-Dame of Soissons, where the remains of the son were reunited with those of the mother, and of Saint-Pierre of Préaux, near Lisieux, where they were placed on an altar dedicated to St. Thomas of Canterbury. Thus the faithful associated in their cult these two great bishops, heroic champions of the liberty of the Church. At Saint-Victor and at the Sainte-Chapelle in Paris, at Saint-Denis and at Autun, the eyes of St. Léger were shown at various times and in succession, in whole or in part, enshrined in gold and precious stones. The cathedral of Autun long kept rings of silver and of gold and several other objects that had been used by the illustrious pontiff, among others a fabric of silk and silver, adorned with pearls, called on the faith of tradition *the stole of St. Léger*. Of all this nothing has been preserved, except the stole, whose shape is not very old but whose material certainly dates from distant centuries. The cathedral of Autun has the happiness of possessing a small portion of the bones of the holy bishop.

In 1458 Cardinal Rolin forbade all servile work on the day of the feast of St. Léger, and kept it in the rank of patronal feasts and of the most solemn days of the year. In the sixteenth century this feast was still of quadruple rite, like the major feasts, with thirty-six proper lessons and an octave. Towards the end of that same century, the city of Autun having been delivered from a Calvinist army by the intervention of St. Léger, who appeared on the walls of the city in the midst of the besieged, this extraordinary event added new lustre to the cult of our Saint. To give this fact all its authenticity and perpetuate its memory, the reverend bishop Pierre Saunier, with his venerable chapter, instituted the quadruple feast of the Apparition of St. Léger, fixed on the 21st of June each year.

The chapels that St. Léger had at Saint-Nazaire and at Saint-Symphorien were overthrown together with those churches themselves. It is to be regretted that there is no other monument at Autun to recall the memory of the martyr than the humble church of Couhard. In the cathedral only a painting speaks of him. But in the diocese many parishes recall his name and are honoured to be placed under his invocation.

The inhabitants of Saint-Valéry-en-Caux claim to have been visited by St. Léger during his exile: the good people of the place, where moreover they have remained religious and Christian, go so far as to point out the cliff where the Saint is said to have lost his *rosary*. Of the old chapel of Saint-Léger nothing remains but the bell tower, whose spire is kept in repair. Children who are slow to walk are carried there. They are made to go five times around the ruins of the chapel, so that they may have a light step (*le pas léger*).

The church of Saint-Nizier at Troyes possesses some relics of this illustrious martyr.

At the village of Mercin, a league from Soissons, the upper jaw of St. Léger is kept.

At the major seminary of Soissons, the high altar contains, in the reliquary placed at the centre of the tomb, the following relics: 1° a piece of the head of a St. Lawrence, martyr, coming from the cathedral of Laon; 2° a portion of a tibia of St. Sebastian, saved in the ruin of the old abbey of Saint-Médard; 3° some of the humerus of St. Quentin, martyr; 4° some of a femur of

St. Victricius, archbishop of Rouen, granted by the church of Braine; 5° a portion of the spine of St. Yved, bishop of Rouen, from the same source; 6° lastly, a portion of the lower jaw of St. Léger, bishop and martyr. These two relics of St. Léger formerly belonged to the treasury of the abbey of Saint-Léger of Soissons, of the Order of St. Augustine, founded in 1039 by Goslin, bishop of Soissons. This monastery was devastated by the Huguenots in 1567. From 1666 it had been joined to the canons regular of the Congregation of France, otherwise called the Génovéfains, founded in the seventeenth century by Cardinal de la Rochefoucauld, bishop of Senlis and abbot of Sainte-Geneviève.

The last prior of Saint-Léger of Soissons, M. Labat, died a canon of the cathedral. Mgr Leblanc de Beaulieu, bishop of Soissons after the concordat of 1802, had been vicar of Saint-Léger before the Revolution. The relics of the holy Martyr now possessed by the major seminary of Soissons were detached by Mgr de Simony from those of Mercin in 1848; and those of Mercin had been gathered up by devout faithful at the time of the pillage of the abbey of Saint-Léger in 1793. *See, for further details, the fine* Histoire de saint Léger *by Dom Pitra, of which we give here an abridgement taken from* Saint Symphorien et son culte, *by M. l'abbé Dinet, canon of the cathedral of Autun. — Cf.* Saints de Franche-Comté*;* Vies des Saints de Troyes, *by M. l'abbé Defer;* Vie des Saints de Beauvais, *by M. l'abbé Sabatier; the* Légendaire d'Autun, *by M. l'abbé Pequegnot;* Histoire littéraire de la France, *by Dom Rivet;* Histoire de l'Église, *by the abbé Darras; Dom Ceillier and the* Acta Sanctorum.

THE FEAST OF THE HOLY GUARDIAN ANGELS

1608. — Pope: Paul V. — Archduke of Austria: Ferdinand.

> *Angelis suis mandavit de te, ut custodiant te in omnibus viis tuis.*
>
> *He hath given His angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways.*
>
> *Ps. xc, 11.*
>
> *Dieu vous a mis sous la garde de ses anges. Cette parole doit vous inspirer pour eux du respect, de la reconnaissance et de la confiance.*
>
> *God has placed you under the guard of His angels. This word ought to inspire in you respect, gratitude and confidence towards them.*
>
> *St. Bernard.*

The solemnity of the Guardian Angels, established by Pope Paul V (1605–1621) at the request of Ferdinand of Austria, who was afterwards elected emperor, and assigned to the first free day after the feast of St. Michael, having been fixed by the authority of Clement X on this day, the 2nd of October, we are obliged to set out here for the faithful: first, what they must believe of these blessed tutors and guides of their souls; secondly, what spiritual and bodily assistance they receive from them; and in the third place, what piety engages them to do in gratitude for their benefits.

It is a truth of faith that the angels, blessed as they are, are nonetheless deputed by God for the guard of men. We have such eminent testimonies of it in Holy Scripture that one would have to reject its authority altogether in order not to believe this article. The Royal Prophet, in the 90th psalm, speaking to each man in particular, tells him that God has commanded His angels to keep him in all his ways, and even to bear him up in their hands, lest he dash against a stone and take a false step. It is true that the Church applies these words principally to our Lord Jesus Christ, to whom His eternal Father gave angels, not as guardians and tutors, since He is Himself their head, but as ministers and servants. These words can also be applied to other men; they mean that the angels have received the order to watch over their guard and to defend them against enemies visible and invisible. For the Fathers of the Church, such as St. Basil, St. John Chrysostom, St. Jerome, St. Anselm, St. Bernard, St. Thomas Aquinas and several authors, understand them in this way. The same Prophet, in the 33rd psalm, praising those who fear God, says that the angel of the Lord is round about them and takes care to deliver them from the perils that surround them. And our Lord, in His Gospel, wishing to impress a holy fear of scandalizing little children, says that they have angels of their own, who continually see the face of God. This is also the universal sentiment of the Church, and what she proclaims throughout the whole extent of the Christian world. There is no member of the faithful who does not suck in this doctrine with his milk, no master and doctor who does not teach it, no preacher who does not presuppose it and draw arguments from it to move his hearers now to contrition and penance, now to gratitude towards God. Thus, as St. Augustine says in the 118th epistle that it is folly and extreme imprudence to fight against a doctrine unanimously received and approved by the whole Church, it is clear that one could, without being guilty of temerity as well as of heresy, attack the truth of the guardianship of the guardian angels. Besides, reason itself, supported by the light of faith, leads us to the knowledge of this mystery. Fathers, who know the needs of their children, do not fail to give them governors and masters to cultivate their minds, form their judgement, moderate their passions, regulate their morals and direct them wisely: God regards us in this life as children, He has a father’s heart towards us, He knows the blindness of our minds, the weaknesses of our wills, the strength and malice of the demons who surround us, and the great number of the dangers by which we are afflicted. Need we be astonished that He gives us as tutors and guides those heavenly spirits who are properly our elder brothers, and who regard us as their co-heirs of eternal happiness?

It may be asked whether this doctrine is to be understood only of the predestined and the just, or whether it must be extended generally to all men. We answer that it is general, and that neither sinners nor the reprobate are by any means to be excluded from it, so long as they are wayfarers and death has not yet put them out of the power of saving themselves. The holy Fathers all speak of it in this way; they make no distinction between the just and sinners, the predestined and the reprobate. St. Jerome, on the 18th chapter of St. Matthew, says that every soul, from the moment it comes into the world, has an angel deputed for its guard; and from this he infers the incomparable dignity of souls. St. Anselm, in his book entitled the *Elucidation*, says that every rational soul, at the moment when it is created and united to the body, is given into the keeping of one of these heavenly spirits. St. Bernard, on the Canticle of Canticles, says that the soul is never without the guard of the angels, although they are not seen, because they are pure spirits, who cannot be seen by the eyes of the body. The other Fathers say or presuppose the same thing. The Church, which teaches us the truth of the guard of the angels, does not restrict her doctrine to the predestined or the just either; but she says generally in her catecheses and her familiar instructions that every man is under the guardianship of an angel: and one of the reproaches she makes to sinners and the ungodly, by the mouth of

her ministers, is that they abuse the grace God has given them in granting them an angel as guide; that by their disorders they afflict the charitable heart of this angel, in the way, however, in which a blessed spirit can be afflicted; and that, in despising his inspirations and his counsels, they draw upon themselves the just abandonment of God and torments that will never end.

God refuses to no one the help necessary to leave or avoid sin, to overcome the devil and to work out his salvation; since He says Himself, by the mouth of St. Paul, that He wills the salvation of all and that He gave His blood for all. Now among these necessary helps the guard of the angels is one of the chief. For although God can assist us by Himself and without the concurrence of any second cause, and although it is in fact He alone who carries interior grace into our minds and our wills, where creatures have no access, His Providence nevertheless, which has set an admirable order and economy in the whole universe, has so disposed things that the lower causes are to be helped by the higher, and those subject to change by those whose state is constant and invariable; thus men, being weak and frail as they are, there is no doubt that, according to this wise and kindly disposition, they need to be helped by these higher spirits who have reached their goal and the consummation of their happiness. God, then, denies this help to no one, and there is no man whom He does not entrust to the guard of an angel. And from this it must be concluded that these faithful guardians do not abandon their wards for having fallen back into crime and having rejected their inspirations; but, on the contrary, they then labour to inspire them with the sentiments of a true penance; for no man is entirely past hope in this life, and, whatever sin one has committed, one can always, until death, be converted and return to the ways of salvation. Thus the ministry of a good angel is never useless, and it is all the more necessary to the sinner as his weakness is greater and the power of the devil over him has become more violent.

It is true that St. Basil seems to say, on the 33rd psalm, that we drive our good angels away from us by our wicked actions, and elsewhere, that by sinning we ourselves destroy that hedge of their protection which surrounded us. But the thought of this great Doctor is not that the guardian angels entirely abandon those given into their keeping when they commit some crime; he means only that they withdraw from them for a time out of a holy horror of their disorder, without ceasing, however, to watch over their guard from afar and to take measures for their conversion.

It may further be asked at what time these charitable spirits begin to exercise their office towards those whose guardians they are: whether it is only at the moment when their reason is set free, so that they can act freely and merit; or at the time of their baptism, or at that of their birth, or finally at that of their conception.

The assurance our Lord gives us that children have their guardian angels must persuade us that this guard begins before the opening of the mind and the use of reason. Nor is there any ground for deferring it to the time of baptism, since unbelievers, who have not received this sacrament, nonetheless share in this benefit; one of the principal points of this guard is to preserve the child until the time when it is to receive Baptism. It must therefore be believed without any doubt that the office of the guardian angels begins at least at the moment of birth. Several Doctors think that it does not begin earlier, because, as long as the child is in its mother’s womb, being so to speak one and the same thing with her, it needs no other guardian than the one divine Providence has appointed for her. But although this opinion is probable, it is nevertheless more likely that the child has its own guardian from then on, and that it begins to have him from the moment of its conception: because this guardian is given principally for the soul, and from that moment it has a soul altogether distinct from its mother’s. Besides, the interests of the one and the other are often very different: when it would be very fitting for the mother’s eternal salvation that she should die, this death would often, on the contrary, be altogether prejudicial to the child’s.

The Angelic Doctor, explaining the guardianship of the guardian angels more particularly, declares that one angel is not the guardian of several men, but that each man has his own, different from that of other men. The faithful of the primitive Church were well persuaded of this truth, since, when the apostle St. Peter was delivered from Herod’s prison and came knocking at the door of the house where the Church was assembled,

those who heard his voice, unable to persuade themselves that it was he, said at once: *Angelus ejus est*: “It is surely his angel.” Our Lord also implies it when He says of little children: *Angeli eorum*: “Their angels”; for these words show clearly enough that each of them has his own particular angel. In fact, the interests of two men are often so opposed that it is very fitting, for their good guidance, that each should have his own tutor. It is more difficult to determine whether the same angel is not successively the guardian of several men, we mean of one after the death of another. Some theologians have held this opinion; but the most common opinion is that divine Providence gives each guardian angel the guardianship of one man only. We are speaking here of the angels of individuals; for there are angels who protect families, communities and states.

But if the same angel is neither at the same time nor successively the guardian of several men, it often happens that one man has several to guard him. Thus the sovereign Pontiff, the bishops and the superiors of lawful communities, and likewise kings, princes and magistrates, besides the angels appointed for the guard of their persons, have particular ones to guide them in the administration of their offices; and it is perhaps for this reason that St. John, in his Apocalypse, writing to the seven bishops of Asia, calls them angels throughout, as being in this capacity under the guard of some heavenly president.

As for the benefits that man receives from his guardian angel, they are at once immense and innumerable. First, this angel preserves him from an infinity of evils and turns him away from an infinity of dangers, from the instant of his conception to that of his death. Above all, he applies himself to removing from him the occasions of sin and the charms of this deceitful world, which would be capable of drawing him into crime. Secondly, he gives him holy thoughts and pious and salutary affections, to bring him to good and make him do works worthy of eternal life. In the third place, he sustains him in his temptations, strengthens him in his weaknesses, rouses him in his discouragements, and, when he imagines that all is lost, consoles him in his afflictions. In the fourth place, one of his principal employments is to defend him against the devil, whether that monster attacks him by open force or uses artifice or cunning to surprise him and make him fall into his snares. In the fifth place, if he comes to fall through frailty or malice, he labours vigorously to raise him up again, whether by awakening in him his sleeping remorse, or by setting distinctly before his eyes now the ugliness of sin and the infamy of the souls that wallow in that state, now the torments prepared for those who will not be found clothed in the precious robe of grace, or by procuring for him charitable physicians who apply themselves earnestly to his cure. Thus it is through the providence of this dear guardian that he hears a good preacher who moves him, that he finds a learned and enlightened confessor who instructs him, that he sees an example of virtue that stirs him, that he learns of a sudden death or some other chastisement of God that frightens and converts him. In the sixth place, he carries his prayers and his good works to heaven before the throne of the majesty of God, to obtain for him graces and help from His goodness, so that he may be stirred more and more in virtue and in the exercises of Christian perfection; and he himself prays and intercedes for him with great urgency at times when he entirely forgets his duty. How many times does he oppose himself on his behalf to the anger and indignation of God! How many times does he hold back the scourges His justice is ready to discharge upon his head! How many times does he draw down on him blessings of which his sins or his lax and negligent life make him altogether unworthy! Lastly, the principal service this blessed tutor renders to his ward during his life is to assist him powerfully at the momentous hour of his death, so that, dying in grace, he may share in the happiness that he himself enjoys in heaven. At that decisive moment he strongly resists the efforts of the tempter, who spares nothing to destroy a dying man in his agony. At that moment he encourages him against despair, fills him with a salutary fear against pride and presumption, enlightens and strengthens him against the difficulties of faith, and gives birth in his heart to sentiments of compunction and penance. He assists him also at the moment of his judgement, and defends him against the unjust accusations of his adversary. Finally, if he is condemned to the flames of purgatory to expiate the waywardness of his lax and negligent life, he visits him and consoles him in that place of darkness and pain, procures suffrages for him among the faithful, and negotiates with God the great affair of his deliverance. On this matter of the benefits of the guardian angels one may read the 27th chapter of the

book of the *Soliloquies* attributed to St. Augustine.

It remains for us to set out what we must do to acknowledge these inestimable favours of the charity of our good angels; but we must hear what the glorious St. Bernard says of it in the 11th and 12th sermons on the psalm *Qui habitat*, and on this verse: *Angelis suis mandavit de te, ut custodiant te in omnibus viis tuis*: "He hath given His angels charge over thee, to take care of thee and keep thee in all thy ways." "Oh! what great instruction," says this holy Doctor, "what powerful remonstrances and what a wonderful subject of consolation these words contain! They console weak and fearful souls, urge on the negligent and instruct the ignorant. God has commanded His angels to keep you in all your ways: not in the ways of the flesh, which are avarice and luxury, nor in the ways of the devil, which are presumption and obstinacy; but in your ways, in those ways that lead to God, in those ways that lead to true happiness, which are mercy and truth. If you will walk in these ways, the angels will keep you in them; but if you will walk by other ways, by those crooked paths that lead to eternal torments, the angels, far from keeping you in them, will turn you away from them. God has therefore commanded His angel to keep you in all your ways. Who is it that has given this commandment? To whom has He given it? For whom has He given it? And finally, in what does this commandment consist? Consider all these things attentively, and you will find in them a mystery full of condescension and mercy. Who has given this commandment? It is the Creator of the world and the sovereign Master of the whole universe. To whom has He given it? He has given it to those sublime and blessed spirits who reign with Him in heaven. On behalf of whom has He given it? He has given it for you yourselves, who are but ashes and dust, who vanish like smoke, who pass away like a shadow, who are today and will not be tomorrow. But finally, in what does this commandment, or rather this charge, consist? He has charged His angels to watch over you and to serve you as guardians, tutors, fathers, masters and governors. How much respect, affection and confidence should these words give you! Respect for the presence of these princes of the kingdom of God, who are constantly around you; affection for their goodwill and for the countless favours you receive from their charity; confidence because of the greatness of their care, joined to their form and the extent of their power.

"These are the three ways in which you can in some sort acknowledge the pains they take for you. Walk always with restraint and modesty, as persuaded that you are in the presence of your angel; in whatever place, in whatever corner you may be, show him a profound respect; do not do before him what you would not do before me. What! because you do not see him, do you doubt that he accompanies you and is near you? What would it be if you heard him, if you touched him, if you smelt him? Do you not see that the presence of things is not known by sight alone? The angel is invisible; but if you consult faith, it will teach you that there is always someone with you to guard you. There have been philosophers who, to put a curb on the passions and the levities of their disciples, used to tell them that they ought always to imagine themselves before some person of extraordinary merit and gravity, who was watching them and attentive to their actions. You have no need of an empty imagination in this: your angel sees you without ceasing, he considers you at every moment, he has his eye open upon all your actions, and you cannot take a step of which he is not the eyewitness, and an unimpeachable one. If his presence ought to give you respect, his goodwill ought to give you love; for what is more just than to love him who has so much inclination for you and who loves you not with a frail and inconstant love, but with a firm and unchanging love; not with an interested love, but with a gratuitous love of pure charity; not, lastly, with a barren love that produces nothing, but with a magnificent love accompanied by a multitude of favours and helps? Finally, everything moves you to confidence in this angel: for he is enlightened to know all your needs, he is good to wish to remedy them, and he is powerful to carry out the good intentions he has for you. What reason could you then have to distrust his assistance? You cannot give him greater joy than by loving our Lord above all things; he has no greater contentment than to be the go-between of the chaste loves of God with the soul, to carry the desires of the soul to God and to bring back the gifts of God to the soul. He sees without envy those kisses, those embraces, that close union with which the heavenly Father favours a soul He cherishes, and he thinks himself infinitely happy to have

prepared by his care, for his sovereign Lord, a bride worthy of His nuptial couch and of His most precious jewels."

For the rest, to these three duties that St. Bernard asks of us towards our good angels a fourth must be added, which is docility, submission and obedience, which consists in listening attentively to the inner remonstrances he makes to us and in faithfully putting into practice the advice he gives us. Let us take good care not to prefer the suggestions of the devil, who works only for our ruin, to the holy inspirations of this charitable spirit who applies himself only to our salvation. Let us cast far from us those hissings of the serpent which carry their venom into the very depth of hearts, and take our dear guardian as our master and our faithful counsellor in all the difficulties that befall us. If we are tempted, let us put ourselves at that very hour under his protection, so that he may turn aside the darts of our enemy and prevent us from receiving deadly blows from them; if by misfortune we suffer some shipwreck, let us stretch out our hand to him at once, so that he may draw us out of the waters and not allow us to perish eternally. Let us pray him earnestly to enlighten us, to strengthen us, to console us, to fill us with holy desires, and to lead us by the right ways of truth. Finally, let us behave towards him as a well-born child behaves towards a governor whom his father has given him to train him and to regulate all his actions.

We said at the beginning that the feast of the Guardian Angel was first established by Pope Paul V, whose bull is of the 27th of September 1608, and that afterwards Pope Clement X (1670–1676) fixed it on the 2nd of October. Some authors, however, assert that it was already celebrated in a few particular dioceses, as at Toledo in Spain and at Rodez in France; Blessed François d'Estaing, bishop of that city, who is said to have founded it, ascended that see only three years before the bull of Paul V. There have also long been chapels erected in honour of these blessed princes who watch over our guard, as at Notre-Dame of Chartres, through the piety of St. Louis, and in some churches of Clermont in Auvergne. After the general institution of this feast, devotion to the Guardian Angel greatly increased. In Paris there were two great confraternities of it, one at Saint-Étienne-du-Mont and the other at Saint-Leu-Saint-Gilles. There was also a very celebrated one at the monastery of the Friars Minor at Dunkirk.

The Guardian Angels are usually painted with a child, which represents the soul of the faithful person entrusted to their guard.

INVOCATION AU SAINT ANGE GARDIEN.

Invocation to the Holy Guardian Angel.

We shall be thanked for saying a word about the invocation to the holy guardian angel, so popular in our day. This is the formula of the prayer:

Angele Dei, qui custos es mei, me tibi commissum pietate superna illumina, custodi, rege et guberna. Amen.

"Angel of God, who art my guardian, the Lord in His mercy has entrusted me to thy care; enlighten me, protect me, guide me, govern me. Amen."

This short invocation has been enriched with numerous indulgences: an indulgence of a hundred days each time; — a plenary indulgence on the usual conditions on the 2nd of October, feast of the holy guardian angels, for those who recite this short prayer morning and evening throughout the year; — a plenary indulgence at the hour of death for those who have recited it frequently during their life (Pius V, briefs of the 2nd of October 1795 and of the 20th of September 1796); — a plenary indulgence on the general conditions, to be gained each month by reciting it at least once a day (Pius VII, decree of the 15th of May 1821).

We have kept Father Giry's account. — Cf. 1° among the holy Fathers: Origen, Hom. viii in Gen.; xx in Num., viii in Josue*; St. Basil,* Hom. in Psalm. xxxiii*; St. Jerome,* in Is.*, c. lxvi; St. Augustine,* in Ps. *lxii, lxxviii, xcvi, cxix, cxxxv; St. Gregory,* hom. *liv; St. Bernard,* Sermo de Angelis. *— 2° among the ascetical*

writers: Drexelius, Horologium tutelaris angeli*; Suffren; Dupont; Croiset,* Méditations*; Nonet,* Dévotion à l'Ange gardien. *— 3° among the older panegyrists: St. Thomas Aquinas; St. Bonaventure; Albert the Great; William of Paris; St. Lawrence Justinian; Denis the Carthusian; St. Thomas of Villanova; Engelgrave; Granada; Faber. — 4° among the modern panegyrists: Molinier; Senault; Biroat; Lejeune; Vivien; Laselve; Richard l'Avocat; Texier; Bossuet; Caignet; Bourrée; Houdry; Seguy, etc. — 5° among the contemporary panegyrists: Mgr de Villecourt; Mgr de Mazenod; M. Bolard; M. l'abbé Hamon; M. l'abbé Coulin.*

SAINT SEREIN OF METZ, PRIEST AND CONFESSOR (650)

Serein was born at Metz at the beginning of the seventh century, of Hadrian and Serena, both of illustrious birth. His parents took care to cultivate his mind and to give him the best masters.

The inhabitants of Metz and its surroundings having raised the standard of revolt, King Dagobert I (622–638) unfurled his ensigns, set his legions on the march, and reduced his rebellious subjects to obedience. Now Serein, having become a prisoner of war, was sold for five écus to Boso, a powerful man, governor of a part of France. The wisdom and modesty of the young slave soon won him the esteem and regard of his master. Some time afterwards Serena, having sought her beloved son without success, at last discovered his retreat, asked for his freedom and obtained it. She strongly urged him to return to his father's house; but the servant of God preferred to serve Christ in a shepherd's smock rather than live in his father's castle in a silken garment and amid delights. He kept the flocks of the rich Boso, and in his leisure he went in secret, to study the Holy Scriptures there, to the Benedictine abbey of Nesle-la-Reposte (*Nigella abscondita*), in the diocese of Troyes. He made wonderful progress there.

However, God permitted His servant to be tried. Jealous men persuaded Boso that his flocks were very badly kept, and that the man to whom he had committed the care of watching over them left them altogether to themselves on the pretext of going to study with the Benedictines of Nesle. Anger swelled the governor's breast. Serein, questioned about his charge, answered: "My lord, God is my witness of my faithfulness." At once he sounded his horn, and a numerous and well-fattened flock came bounding out of the neighbouring meadows. "Now," added Serein, "I give back to you what you entrusted to me; I am going to devote myself freely to prayer." Stung by this answer, Boso tried to deal the man of God blows with a stick; but his hand withered, and as the evil grew worse Serein, like another Moses, struck the ground, and there gushed out a health-giving spring whose waters cured the sick man. This spring still exists: it is the Fontaine-Béthon (Marne, arrondissement of Épernay, canton of Esternay).

Towards the end of his life Serein made a pilgrimage to Rome to visit the tombs of the holy Apostles: God permitted an angel to be his guide and protector. He remained seven and a half years in the Eternal City, and was preparing to return to his own country when Pope John IV (640– 642), at an inspiration from heaven, conferred on him the Order of the priesthood. The pilgrim then went back to Champagne, where he spent the rest of his life winning souls for Jesus Christ.

Serein fell asleep in the Lord on the 2nd of October 650, and was buried in the abbey church of La Celle-en-Brie (*Cella Brigensis*), in the diocese of Meaux. A church was built under his invocation at Chantemerle (Marne, arrondissement of Épernay). As devotion to him grew from day to day, a collegiate church of canons was established there, simple prebendaries who did not live in common; but in 1180 Henry I, count of Champagne, founded the abbey of Chantemerle properly so called (*Cantus Merulæ*, Order of St. Augustine).

There is at Béthon, in honour of St. Serein, a pilgrimage that was formerly very celebrated; it is now less frequented.

Desguerrois, Sainteté Chrétienne*; Boitel,* Beautés de l'Histoire de la Champagne*;* Acta Sanctorum.

SAINT THOMAS DE CANTILUPE, BISHOP OF HEREFORD, IN ENGLAND, AND CONFESSOR (1282)

Thomas was born in England, in the county of Lancaster or Lancashire, of William de Cantilupe, one of the most celebrated warriors Great Britain has ever had, and of Méliante, dowager countess of Évreux and of Gloucester, daughter of Hugh de Gournay and allied to the royal families of France and England. When he was of an age to learn the sciences, his father placed him under the direction of William de Cantilupe, bishop of Hereford, on the Wye (in the county of that name), and his near relative, then under that of Robert Kilwarby, a learned Dominican, who was successively archbishop of Canterbury, cardinal and bishop of Porto. The young disciple showed himself very docile to the lessons of his masters; he sanctified study by a tender piety, recited the canonical office and acquitted himself of all the duties of religion with extraordinary fervour. He came to take his course of philosophy at Paris, where his virtue made fresh progress. Resolved to embrace the ecclesiastical state, he went to Orléans to learn civil law there, which serves as the foundation of canon law. Having returned shortly afterwards to England to continue his studies there, he became a doctor of law at Oxford, and was elected chancellor of the famous university of that city. He acquired so much reputation in this dignity that King Henry III made him high chancellor of the kingdom.

Our Saint, however, keenly regretted being kept at court; by dint of entreaties he obtained his freedom. Restored entirely to himself, he withdrew to Oxford, there to occupy himself only with exercises of piety. There he took the degree of doctor of theology in the church of the Dominicans, with whom he had studied. In 1274 Pope Gregory X summoned him to the second general council, held at Lyons for the reunion of the Greeks, and the following year he was canonically elected bishop of Hereford: the ceremony of his consecration took place in the church of Canterbury.

The holy bishop redoubled his fervour to perfect himself in the practice of the virtues that make pastors after God's own heart. To a great zeal for the glory of the Church he joined a charity that embraced the bodily and spiritual needs of his neighbour; he called the poor his brothers, and made them feel the effects of the tenderest affection. Unhappily he was soon to be taken from them. Obliged to make a journey to Rome, he was already on the road back to England when illness forced him to stop at Montefiascone (States of the Church), where he died on the 25th of August 1282, at the age of sixty-three.

He was buried six days later in the abbey church of Saint-Sévère. Some time afterwards his bones were carried to Hereford and placed in the cathedral of that city. Edmund, earl of Cornwall, who had been one of his greatest admirers, had his head richly enshrined and placed it in a monastery that he founded under his invocation at Ashridge (county of Buckingham). In 1287 his relics were enclosed in a fine marble mausoleum, which is still to be seen today in the cathedral of Hereford.

Thomas de Cantilupe was canonized by Pope John XXII on the 2nd of October 1310.

Godescard and Acta Sanctorum, *2 October. — Cf. Matthew Paris, Capgrave; Harpsfield; Browne Willis,* Antiquités d'Hereford.

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[1] Warein, Garin, Gérin, Guérin, from the Celtic *Warn* or *Garn*, protector. See *passim* in the life of his brother St. Léger, which we give on this day. The shrine that keeps his bones is in the parish church of Vergy (Côte-d'Or).

[2] *Alias*: Leutgar, Lutger, Ligaire, Léguier, *Leodegarius*.

[3] Today a small town which, like so many others, owes its origin to a monastery.

[4] See *Les Conciles généraux et particuliers*, by Mgr Paul Guérin, vol. I, p. 545.

[5] The church of Chenôve was under the invocation of St. Nazarius, like the cathedral to which this estate was given by St. Léger. Chenôve is in the Dijon district.

[6] The church of Couhard, or Couarre, *Cacubarris*.

[7] This place now bears the name of Saint-Léger.