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Blessed Cardinal Schuster (d. 1954) • Archbishop of Milan  
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# The Sacramentary

(LIBER SACRAMENTORUM)

*Historical & Liturgical Notes on the Roman Missal*

BY ILDEFONSO SCHUSTER

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from the Italian by ARTHUR LEVELIS-MARKE, M.A.*

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(PARTS 7 AND 8)

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## **PART VII**

### **THE SAINTS IN THE MYSTERY OF THE REDEMPTION**

**(THE FEASTS OF THE SAINTS FROM LENT TO THE  
VIGIL OF THE ASSUMPTION)**

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ISTA · QVAM · FELIX · ECCLESIA · VBI · PETRVS · PASSIONI ·  
DOMINICAE  
ADAEQVATVR · VBI · PAVLVS · JOHANNIS · EXITV · CORONATVR  
VBI · APOSTOLVS · JOHANNES · POSTEAQVAM · IN · OLEVUM  
IGNEVM · DEMERSVS · NIHIL · PASSVS · EST · IN · INSVLAM  
RELEGATVR

(TERTVLL. DE PRAESCR.)



# INTRODUCTION

## CHAPTER I

### THE EARLY LISTS OF FEASTS IN THE LITURGICAL CALENDAR

**T**HE life of blessedness promised to the just after the accomplishment of their earthly pilgrimage, and the unity of the Christian family in the mystical body of Jesus Christ, which unites all the sheep of the fold to the person of the one Shepherd—such are the theological principles on which is founded the Catholic doctrine of the veneration shown to the saints.

This devotion, which was foreshadowed in the Synagogue, spread and increased equally with the development of theological doctrine, and because of its popular nature, was reflected throughout the ages in a thousand different forms of greater or lesser suggestive and artistic value according to the various grades of culture shown by the Christian peoples. Contrary, however, to the theory of Protestants and of those Catholics who have been imbued with their spirit, the veneration paid to the saints is fully justified in Holy Scripture, in ecclesiastical tradition, and in the liturgical sources of the first centuries of the Church.

For, indeed, the hope of a glorious resurrection, of which the resurrection of Christ is the prototype, rendered the *depositio* of the dead, especially of the martyrs, similar to the Sunday celebration at least from the second century onwards; so much so that Ignatius of Antioch writes to the Romans that henceforth he desires nothing more than to die, in order that the news of his martyrdom may reach the faithful at the moment when the altar is already prepared for the divine Sacrifice, so that all may give thanks together to God, for having called the Bishop of Syria from the City of Rome to Heaven.

Some ten years later, at Smyrna, the anniversary of the martyrdom of St Polycarp was celebrated at his tomb with great solemnity, but there was nothing at all to suggest that the rite was either new or unusual.

Originally, perhaps, these periodical commemorations of the martyrs were not very different from those of the other



*Sancti* or faithful departed; hence in the diptychs of the Mass their names might follow chronologically without any apparent difference. Christian feeling, however, always made a clear distinction between the *sacrificium pro dormitione* and the prayers in suffrage for the dead, and those prayers addressed to God in regard to the glory granted to the martyrs whose patronage was invoked before the heavenly throne.

The fact is that, besides the religious salutations traced on the walls in the Roman cemeteries, and the piercing of the sepulchral *cubicola* of the martyrs in order to make other tombs close to these, the *Depositiones* of the martyrs, at least from the end of the second century, constituted, together with the solemnities of Easter and Pentecost, of the Sundays and the stations of Wednesday and Friday, that which Tertullian happily terms the *fasti* of the Christians, as contrasted thenceforward with the *fasti* and the festival cycle of the Pagans.

Thus we know from Pontius, a deacon attached to St Cyprian, that at Carthage the anniversary of a martyr was preceded by a *παννύχια*, or night vigil, and we gather from the *Acta* of St Saturninus of Toulouse that his *natalis* was celebrated not only by a night vigil, but by the singing of hymns and the offering of the holy Sacrifice at early dawn. A last trace of this rite in our present Missal is to be found in the vigiliary Mass of the day preceding the greater festivals of the year.

When, in the fourth century, the daily celebration of the divine Office became almost general, the *natalitia* of the martyrs had long since found a place in the Christian Calendar, nor was it any longer possible to displace them; thus the ferial was joined to the very much older festival euchology, forming together a prayer so harmonious and varied in its details, so beautiful in its whole conception, that it may well be considered one of the finest masterpieces of the Christian mind.

The ancient hierarchical constitution, which usually entrusted each Christian community, whether in a town or in a country district, to the pastoral care of a bishop and his clergy, has left its mark very clearly in the East, in Italy, and in Africa, where the ancient episcopal sees are very numerous.

This ecclesiastical arrangement, whilst contributing in a marvellous manner to the spread of the Gospel teaching, tended, nevertheless, to encourage that form of diocesan autonomy so characteristic of the early Church, and of which among the innumerable forms illustrative of it, the Liturgy is one of the most expressive.



## *Lists of Feasts in the Liturgical Calendar* 3

Formerly, as each Church jealously guarded the tombs of its own bishops, and kept an accurate record of their names and dates in order to be able to prove against the heretics its true descent from the apostles, by means of the legitimate succession of its pastors, so in like manner each body of Christians drew up its own list of hagiographical *fasti* which formed, as it were, the religious and particular history of each Church. These lists of feasts differ very much between one city and another; indeed, sometimes, they vary even between the different basilicas of one and the same locality, for which reason it is impossible for us to describe them all, so we must confine ourselves to examining one only—that of the Roman Church.

The most ancient Feriale of Rome is named after Furius Dionysius Philocalus, the friend and secretary of Pope Damasus. Its first compilation may possibly date back to the year 336, but in any case it is not later than 354. Besides the *Depositiones episcoporum* of the Apostolic See, we find also noted in it, at least from the second half of the third century, the commemorations of the Roman martyrs whose feasts, however, were celebrated exclusively at their tombs,<sup>1</sup> in the extra-mural cemeteries.

Only the Nativity of our Lord, SS Cyprian, Perpetua, and Felicitas of Carthage, and some martyrs of Portus not included among the primitive Roman *fasti*, form an exception to this rule. In all there are thirty-six feasts, of which twelve are those of Roman Pontiffs. If, therefore, to this group of local feasts we add those of Easter, Pentecost, and, perhaps, the Epiphany, we shall have the entire hagiographical cycle of Rome at the period immediately following the Peace of Constantine.

In the Philocalian Laterculus there are two things which should be noticed: the first is the absence of the martyrs of the first two centuries, a period when the Liturgy seemed as yet unable to turn its gaze from the radiant countenance of Christ:<sup>2</sup> *Viri Galilaei quid statis aspicientes in coelum?* so that the cemeteries have kept for us only very few records of these heroes of the earliest Christian period in Rome; the other thing to be observed is the liturgical *cultus* paid to the Popes of the era of Constantine, in which we find one of the very first examples of public veneration given to saints who

<sup>1</sup> The Philocalian Feriale is rather a list of the cemetery stations than a Calendar of saints' days such as we now have.

<sup>2</sup> At that very early period, when the bulk of the Christian people newly converted from polytheism might easily have misunderstood the Catholic doctrine concerning the *cultus* and the veneration paid to the saints, it was wise and prudent of the Church not to insist too much on this point.



had testified to the Faith, not, indeed, by the shedding of their blood, but by the practice of exceptional virtues.

The Syriac Martyrology of Wright, the most important hagiographical document after the Philocalian Feriale, carries us off to Nicomedia or, at least, to the Western part of Asia Minor, about the beginning of the fifth century (402-17). This text has made use in its first part of the *De Martyribus Palaestinae*; of the *Συναγωγή τῶν ἀρχαίων μαρτυρίων* of Eusebius and of some lists of Western martyrs emanating possibly from Rome; so that the document to a certain extent accords with the most ancient copies of the Martyrology of St Jerome, of which it now forms one of the most important texts for the purpose of comparison.

The Martyrology known as that of St Jerome is in no way indebted to Syria for its origin, and besides that which it owes to a Greek compilation of the writings of Eusebius on the martyrs, it has resulted from the fusion of the various hagiographical elements contained in the *fasti* of Dionysius Philocalus, in the lists of African martyrs and in a few other scattered documents of minor importance.

During the sixth century two different versions of the Martyrology were in circulation in Italy; the more detailed version, with a narrative of the notable deeds of the martyrs, is recorded by Cassiodorus<sup>1</sup> and perhaps represents the primitive type of Western martyrology; the other version with the bare mention of the names of the martyrs and their burial places may date from the time of Sixtus III (432-40), and is spoken of by St Gregory the Great in a letter to the Patriarch Eulogius of Alexandria. Both these versions met with success, the shorter one was subsequently added to in Gaul; but St Ado<sup>2</sup> preferred the other, making it the foundation of his own historical martyrology which finally succeeded in supplanting entirely its now too laconic rival.

We might here mention several other ancient calendars such as the *Laterculus* of Polemius Silvius of the year 448, the *Fasti Consulares* of 493, the Carthaginian Calendar dating from about the end of the fifth or the beginning of the sixth century, the various classes of the MSS. of the Martyrology of St Jerome, that of Fulda, of Trèves, of Farfa, a rich harvest of ancient inscriptions in which are recorded various feasts of saints; but it is not necessary to do more than point out these sources of information for the benefit of the student. After the Philocalian *fasti*, the most important and the most trustworthy means for learning more about the Roman hagiographical cycle from the fifth to the eighth

<sup>1</sup> *De Instit. divin. lect.* C. XXXII.

<sup>2</sup> Archbishop of Vienne (France); died 875.



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century are contained in the Sacramentaries and in the lists of scriptural extracts to be read at the Mass.

The starting point of the liturgical year is the Christmas festival, and, as a rule, the Sacramentaries begin with the Mass of the Vigil of Christmas. The day after is polyliturgical with three stations,<sup>1</sup> at St Mary Major, St Anastasia, and St Peter, and is followed by the feasts of St Stephen, St John, the Holy Innocents, and St Sylvester. In the Würzburg List of Lessons, which now represents the older Roman *Comes* of the early days of the seventh century, neither is the Octave of Christmas noted, as in the *Capitulare Evangeliorum* of the same library (of the middle of the seventh century), nor the Vigil of the *Theophania*, but, instead, the whole fortnight between the two solemnities is considered as a festival.

In the Capitulary, the first day of January no longer evokes the unhappy memory of the sacrileges committed on that day by a dying paganism; it has become, instead, the Octave of the Lord, associated in later times by the Gallicans with the thought of the *Circumcisio*, the Gospel account of which, joined to that of the Purification of the Blessed Virgin Mary in the Temple, brings us back to the days when, in the West, a separate feast of the *Hypapante* was not as yet celebrated.

The *Theophania* has in reality no Octave—this is the exclusive privilege of the Easter festival—but, as at Christmas and Pentecost, the feast is prolonged for some days, now done away with in the Capitulary, in which, on the other hand, are noted week by week the various Masses of Feria IV and Feria VI that are to be celebrated throughout the year. On January 14 and 16 occur the feasts of St Felix in *Pincis* and of St Marcellus; after which the Capitulary records, besides St Prisca, St Fabian, St Sebastian (with two separate Masses), the martyrs Vincent and Anastasius (also with two distinct Masses) because of the two separate stational basilicas in which their feasts were celebrated.

In the Lectionary, St Agnes has the same Epistle as St Agatha, but in the Capitulary, besides the feast *de passione* on January 21, that *de nativitate*, a week later, is also entered. No mention is made as yet of the *Purificatio*, but the Capitulary, after the feasts of St Agatha and of St Valentine before Lent, assigns the Gospel of the Purification to a new and unnamed festival noted simply as *II men. Febr.*

A century later a Calendar of Monte Cassino in agreement with the *Liber Pontificalis* concerning the life of Sergius I,

<sup>1</sup> This is not the only case of the kind in the Roman Liturgy, since each time that a feast was celebrated at Rome in several separate sanctuaries (as on June 29): *Trinis celebratur viis festa Sanctorum Martyrum*; the stational Mass was repeated.



and with the Martyrology of St Willibrord, shows how uncertain still was the Roman liturgical tradition with regard to this new Eastern feast, by calling it simply : *Scî Symeonis*. It is a curious coincidence that the Roman Sacramentaries, the Capitulary, and the Lectionary of Würzburg all agree in omitting on February 22 the feast of the Chair of St Peter. This feast, which is entered in the Philocalian Feriale under February 22, is certainly of Roman origin, and must have penetrated in very early days into the Gallican liturgies, which, however, kept it by anticipation on January 18, on account of the Lenten fast.

During Lent no extraordinary feasts are kept at Rome, but each day has its own station at the church appointed for it, with a special Mass inspired by the great religious memories of the locality ; hence the fast was rendered less monotonous and tedious by a magnificent *ensemble* of processions, chants, and solemn rites, always varied and always in relation to the coming Easter festival of which they were intended to be, as it were, the prelude and the preparation.

Unlike the other Roman liturgical books which record the feast of the *Pascha annotina* or commemoration of the baptism received in the preceding year, both the Capitulary and the Lectionary of Würzburg omit it as being a rite already fallen into disuse together with the disciplinary rules of the catechumens. Indeed these two documents even ignore the feast of St George, which was introduced later, and take note only of those of SS Tiburtius, Valerian, and Maximus on April 14, and of St Vitalis on April 28. The feasts of the Ascension and of Pentecost follow with their customary rites ; the fast of the Summer Ember days no longer coincides with the Octave of Pentecost, more recently instituted, and the following Sunday is called simply *Sanc-torum*, as with the Greeks, because it was dedicated to all the saints.

Later, about the year 561, to the feast of the Apostle Philip on May 1, there was added the name of James—that is to say, when the Apostoleion at the foot of the Quirinal Hill was consecrated and the relics of the two apostles placed therein. This James, according to the ancient Sacramentaries and the Oriental use, is James the Great, the brother of John, who was put to death by Herod shortly before Easter. Then follow the feasts of the martyrs of Ficulea,<sup>1</sup> Alexander, Eventius, and Theodulus, of Gordian, Pancras and Pudenziana.

The month of *June* begins with the *dedicatio S Nicomedis* (619-25) of which all trace has now disappeared ; next come

<sup>1</sup> In Latium to N.E. of Rome.—TR.



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SS Peter and Marcellinus, Primus and Felicianus (642-49), Basilides, Marcus and Marcellianus, Gervase and Protase, the Baptist, the martyrs John and Paul, the Apostles Peter and Paul, the three latter feasts being preceded by a vigil. The Capitulary notes for *July* the feasts of the martyrs Processus and Martinianus—the Octave of the holy apostles is less ancient, the polyliturgical feast of the seven sons of Felicitas, St Apollinaris, St Felix—erroneously identified with Felix II (355-65)—the martyrs Simplicius, Faustinus and Viatrix, St Praxedes and SS Abdon and Sennen.

On the first of *August* we find no record of the *Dedicatio* of St Peter in Vincoli, which was then a strictly local festival. The Würzburg Lectionary omits also the feast of Pope Stephen, mentioned, however, in the Capitulary, but enters instead that of Sixtus II (260-66) with his two deacons; next come the vigil and festival of St Lawrence, the *natale sancti Angeli*, with the dedication of his basilica in the Via Salaria, St Andrew, Advent, and the Vigil of the *Natale Domini*. The Capitulary adds in the month of *August*, SS Cyriacus, Euplius (642-49), Eusebius, the *natale S Mariae*, the martyrs Agapitus, Timothy, Hermas, Sabina, Felix and Adauctus, and the Beheading of St John the Baptist.

Adrian, Protus and Hyacinth, Cornelius and Cyprian—with two separate Masses—Nicomedes, Lucy, and Euphemia, Cosmas and Damian occur in *September*; Callixtus in *October*; Cesarius, the Four Holy Crowned Martyrs, Theodorus, Mennas, Martin, Cecilia, Clement, and Felicitas—with two separate Masses—Chrysogonus, Saturninus, and the Vigil of St Andrew form the cycle of the month of *November*.

There are still wanting in the traditions of the Latin Liturgy of the seventh century, at least as universally observed solemnities, the four great feasts of the Blessed Virgin in the months of February, March, August, and September, as also the Exaltation of the Holy Cross. These were introduced into Rome, or at least given more importance, through the influence of a Greek Pope, Sergius I (687-701).

Even in this archaic simplicity how beautiful and varied is this cycle of festivals of the saints, composed in a truly Catholic and Roman spirit, which unfolds year by year before the eyes of the faithful the most touching pages in the history of Christianity in the very capital of the Roman world. How much deeper a meaning must not the Lessons from the Holy Scriptures, chosen with such clear insight and so well adapted to each feast, have acquired when they were read in the actual places so full of inspiration where the holy martyrs lived and died for Christ, realizing in so sublime a manner the ideals contained in those inspired words.

In the later Middle Ages when the liturgical spirit was



beginning to decline, the more characteristic Offices for the feasts of the early martyrs were adapted to the new festivals, so that they became the actual *Commune Sanctorum* of the Missal and the Breviary. This *Commune Sanctorum* has ended by impoverishing the Liturgy through causing to fall into disuse, especially in the Missal, so many valuable elements of the grandest ages of the Church. It was then that an attempt was made to unite in a single group several feasts of saints formerly celebrated with entirely distinct Masses and local rites, such as those of SS Fabian and Sebastian, Vincent and Anastasius, Basilides, Quirinus, Nabor and Nazarius, etc.

Having but very little artistic taste, the oldest liturgical elements had to adapt themselves during the later Middle Ages to the new feasts which ever continued to increase, thus giving rise to the "Common," to which, as it were on a bed of Procrustes, the greater part of the more recent solemnities were of necessity adapted for better or worse, which ended consequently in their having no longer any special signification of their own.

The Breviary did not suffer so much from the same cause. The Roman *cursus*, by its very structure, by the unity of its design, which provides that the entire Psalter shall be repeated in the course of a week, and that the Holy Bible shall be read every year from beginning to end, was protected from the hagiographical invasions which had already altered the Missal. In the sixth century St Benedict, speaking of the *Natalitia Sanctorum* and of the *Solemnitates* of the Lord, makes us realize how rare these were; for whilst he rigorously prescribes the weekly recital of the Psalter, he orders that on the greater festivals, evidently by way of exception, the Psalms, Lessons, Antiphons, and Responsories shall have reference to the feast without regard to the order of the Psalter.

It is very difficult to make out the list of these festivals in the primitive Benedictine *cursus*. Besides the feasts which in the Würzburg lists are preceded by a vigil, as those of St John, St Peter, St Paul, St Lawrence, St Andrew, and SS John and Paul, we have perhaps to add those of St Agnes, and of the seven sons of St Felicitas. It was only in the eighth century, about the time of Adrian I (772-95), that the various local feasts, which until then had been celebrated with special Lessons and Antiphons only in their respective urban or sepulchral *tituli*, were incorporated in the Calendar of the Vatican Basilica, whence they spread also outside Rome and throughout the Latin Church.

The Benedictine *cursus* was restored a few years ago, through the action of the Apostolic See, to the simplicity and



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solemn purity of its primitive form; so that, in the most famous monasteries occupied by the sons of the Patriarch of Monte Cassino, the liturgical life is, at this day, not very different in form and in spirit from that which was led by the monks in the Middle Ages: *Ora et labora*. The extreme caution shown by our forefathers and also in our day by the Religious Orders whose liturgical traditions are of the highest value, such as the Benedictines, the Carthusians, and the Cistercians of La Trappe,<sup>1</sup> in introducing the feasts of saints into the annual liturgical *cursus*, is not exclusively characteristic of the Roman Liturgy, for it is to be found more or less in all the other more ancient Latin Liturgies. At Naples, for instance, a marble calendar of the ninth century, and two valuable Capitularies of passages from the Gospels of the seventh century, record only the feasts of St Stephen, St John, the Holy Innocents, *de stella Domini*, the Finding of the Holy Cross, St Vitus, SS John and Paul, the Baptist, the Apostles Peter and Paul, St Lawrence, St Januarius, St Michael, the Beheading of St John, the Assumption of St John the Evangelist, and St Andrew, almost all preceded by a fast and a vigil.

An *Evangelarium* of the sixth century in the Ambrosian library at Milan has in the margin a kind of Capitulary written between the sixth and the eighth centuries, relative to the liturgical Lessons in use in some church of the Ambrosian rite, other than those of Milan, Verona, or of some other more important city, since in that case there would certainly have been seen traces of some local feast. We find there instead only feasts of a general character; Christmas, St Stephen, St John, the Holy Innocents, St James, the Purification (February 15?), St George, St Pancras, St Nazarius, the Beheading of the Baptist, St Victor, and St Eleutherius.

The list of the feasts observed at Aquileia in the eighth century is known to us in part from an imperfect Capitulary in the Rehdiger library at Breslau; it comprises Christmas with its cycle of feasts, including that of St James, as in the Ambrosian rite; the *octava Domini*, the *Theophania*, the Finding of the Holy Cross, St John the Baptist, the Purification, and St Lawrence.

We might continue to enlarge on this subject, but it would be to little purpose, for the hagiographical element in the Office, being of its own nature eminently local, varied at different times and in different places. But that which must be noticed above all is that these commemorations of saints

<sup>1</sup> In the district of Le Perche (Normandy). Abbey originally founded in 1122.—TR.

had an especially festival character from the second century onwards. It was, indeed, due to the careful introducing of these festivals of saints into the divine Office that it became in those early days ever richer and more solemn, since the Holy Scriptures themselves which form the chief, not to say the only substance of the Breviary, find their most pleasing and most practical application in the feasts of the saints.



## CHAPTER II

### THE VOCATION TO THE PRIESTHOOD AND THE PRAYER OF THE CHRISTIAN PEOPLE

**T**HE two Sacraments of Holy Order and of Matrimony are sacraments which were not instituted merely for the sanctification of the individual who receives them, as is the case with the other five, but which have, on the contrary, an eminently social aim. As Matrimony was ordained for the preservation of the human race, and more especially the material element of the Church—that is, man; so the Sacrament of Holy Order is in relation to the formal element of this same supernatural society, which is the Church—that is to say, to the spirit and to the grace, of which the priesthood is the steward.

It is evident that, without the priesthood, the Church could not exist: indeed in the present dispensation established by God, Christ's mission of redemption would, without the sacred hierarchy, have ended in a very great measure with the closing of his life on earth. It is indeed by means of the priesthood that Jesus Christ continues to live and act throughout the centuries. Through Peter he still feeds all the flock which the Father has given him without losing one of his sheep. Through Paul, he continues to make known to the world the holy name of the Eternal Father, fulfilling in his own mystical body what is still wanting to the fulness of his expiation as Redeemer, that expiation which is to constitute the immense treasure of merits that the Church has at her disposal. Thus, by his priests Jesus to-day *pertransit benefaciendo et sanando omnes*.

These are pages taken from a Gospel written more than nineteen centuries ago, but they are, at the same time, pages which are being lived over again in our own days, in which we ourselves are fortunate enough to bear a part. After so many centuries of life and story, when any other institution would have passed away, or at least would have become decrepit and be in its second childhood, the Church alone flourishes—vigorous in her eternal youth.

What is the Church doing at this present day? It would be easier to say, What is she not doing? She does no wrong,



but *quaecumque sunt vera, sancta, pulchra, pudica*, all science, art, true progress, education of the masses, instruction of the children, relief of the sick, all these good works look upon the Church as their protectress and mother. There is no human need to which she has not held or does not hold out a helping hand; no tear which, as far as is possible in this vale of tears, she does not seek to wipe away; she herself is the true likeness of him of whom it is written: *miseratio autem Dei super omnem carnem*. Such, then, is the sublime vocation and mission of the Catholic priesthood: to continue on earth the work of Jesus Christ, a work which is social and therefore Catholic in the highest signification of the word.

We must realize that it is a matter of such very great importance that the sacerdotal succession should flourish; in other words, that vocations to the priesthood should be so numerous in proportion to the endless obligations and requirements of the Church, as to be in our regard second only to the sacraments themselves. This being granted, it is fitting that we should observe how wonderfully the liturgical tradition reflects this especially social character of the Catholic priesthood and this supreme desire of the Church. This, above all, was most apparent in olden times when the faithful, who through their constant and active participation in the holy Liturgy lived in close union with the life of the Church, took also a very important part in the ordination of her sacred ministers.

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Let us begin by laying down first of all those theological principles which are to guide us in this study. Jesus Christ has said: *Orate Dominum messis ut mittat operarios in messem suam*. He himself has set us an example in this, because before choosing his twelve apostles, the Gospel tells us, he spent a whole night in prayer to his Father, on the summit of a mountain under the starry skies of Palestine. To prayer Jesus had joined another practice, that of fasting. Not only the forty days' fast which had preceded his apostolic ministry, but also that other daily fast which was regular like his daily bread, so much so that when his apostles questioned him on one occasion, desiring to know why their word of command had not sufficed to drive out an obdurate evil spirit, whilst his direct intervention had been necessary, he replied: *Hoc genus in nullo potest ejici, nisi in oratione et jejunio*.

This preliminary liturgical prayer, which became the actual form of the Sacrament of Holy Orders—for in early times, as is very often the case to this day in the East, the sacramental formulas are couched in terms of supplication—appears for the first time in Holy Scripture in connection with the



ordination of the first seven deacons. We find in the beginning of the sixth chapter of the Acts of the Apostles the first page of the history of Holy Orders in the Catholic Church, because therein are expressed the essential and necessary elements of which the sacred rite is still composed.

Consequent on the proposal made by the Twelve, the multitude of the disciples proceeded to elect the seven candidates.

The sacred text does not differentiate between the part taken by the eleven apostles and by the rest of the community in this election, but merely says in a general way: *Elegerunt*, and then: *hos statuerunt ante conspectum Apostolorum*. We shall, however, see further on the distinctive Office assigned to the bishop who calls—*Vocatio*—and to the people who “acclaim” at the ordination of the sacred ministers.

After the nomination of the candidates by means of a general suffrage, there follows in the Acts of the Apostles the sacramental rite, consisting of two parts; the matter and the form. The apostles—the ministers of the Sacrament—*orantes imposuerunt eis manus*. Paul himself, speaking on a similar occasion, adds the special grace received by the deacons through this laying-on of hands: *habentes mysterium fidei in conscientia pura*.

We have mentioned Paul. A passage in the Acts of the Apostles (xiii, 2) concerning his formal call to the Apostolate is still a subject of discussion among exegetes, as to whether it refers or not to that which we should now call his episcopal consecration. All the circumstances induce us to believe it to be such, for the scene is at Antioch, and it is a day of general observance, indeed, a fast-day. The Greek text is much clearer: *Λειτουργούντων δὲ αὐτῶν τῷ κυρίῳ καὶ νηστεύοντων*.

In those first days of the Church the Paraclete was wont to water the tender seedling of the Faith abundantly with his gifts. Thus there arises one in the name of the Holy Ghost and commands that Saul and Barnabas be set aside for a special mission to which he destines them. The leaders of the Church of Antioch, obedient to the word of the Paraclete, hasten to carry out his injunctions: *τότε νηστεύσαντες καὶ προσευξάμενοι καὶ ἐπιθέντες τὰς χεῖρας αὐτοῖς ἀπέλυσαν*. This imposition of hands therefore was accompanied by fasting and united prayer on the part of the whole hierarchical body.

The pastoral Epistles of St Paul do not add very much to these liturgical particulars. They suggest that at that time Holy Orders were conferred *coram multis testibus*. Further the ordination of Timothy, like that of Paul and Barnabas,



was preceded by one or more prophecies, or inspirations of the Holy Ghost. The candidate even before bowing his head beneath the imposition of the hands of the Apostle and of the *presbiterium* of Ephesus, *confessus est bonam confessionem coram multis testibus*. More than this we cannot assert with any certainty.

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In the *Canones Hippolyti*, whose early Roman origin is now more than ever uncertain, but whose great antiquity is not disputed, the consecration of a bishop is thus described: *Episcopus eligatur ex omni populo. . . . In eadem autem hebdomada in qua ordinatur*—this points to a fixed time of the year at which ordinations regularly took place—*dicat populus: Nos eligimus eum. Deinde, silentio facto in toto grege, post exomologesim, omnes pro eo orant dicentes: O Deus, corrobora hunc quem nobis praeparasti*. The rite of ordination follows, and this being ended, *convertunt se omnes ad eum, osculantes eum in pace, quia ille hoc meretur*.

The same rite is carried out at the ordination of a priest. We should note the part then taken by the people, both in choosing the candidate and in invoking for him, in union with the bishop, the graces necessary for the faithful accomplishment of his new mission: *O Deus, corrobora hunc*.

The Roman Liturgy reflects with great accuracy the peculiar prerogatives of this Mother Church, which through Peter and his successors is the divine foundation of all the other different churches: *Vera incessu patuit Dea*, as the poet says.<sup>1</sup> The Liturgy of Rome with its magnificent array of rites, fasts, and public scrutinies which precede the ordinations, shows us also how much importance it has always attached to the apostolic traditions described above—that is, to the prayers and the solemn fasting of the whole people during the week in which the ordinations were to take place.

The *Liber Pontificalis* attributes to Pope Callixtus the institution of the Ember days' fast three times a year, *tribus per annum temporibus*. The existing week in March of the four Ember seasons forms part of and is included in the cycle of the Lenten fast and therefore originally was not taken into consideration.

It is a little difficult to understand that which Callixtus really established, for we know that the Roman Church from apostolic times had added to the weekly fasts of Feria IV and VI also that of the Saturday in preparation for the Sunday festival, and this not without a certain spirit of opposition to the Jews and their sympathizers. However this may be, the three fasts of St Callixtus were so timed as to coincide

<sup>1</sup> Vergil, *Æn.*, I, 405.—TR.



with the Latin festivals of the harvest, the vintage, and the drawing off of the new wine; and to this day, the Roman Missal still preserves in the Masses for the Ember days, notwithstanding that they are days of fasting, a certain festive spirit in keeping with those events of country life.

To the solemnity of these fast-days, which were obligatory on all the faithful and were publicly observed, there was joined in the fourth century the ceremony of the ordinations. At first these were characteristic of the December fasts only—*hic fecit ordinationes duas mense Decembri* is the stereotyped phrase which has passed from the *Liber Pontificalis* even into the biographical extracts of the Popes of the third century in the *Breviarium Romanum*; but later on they took place indifferently at all the four Ember seasons of the year.

We possess an extensive collection of sermons in which St Leo the Great announced to the people the recurrence of these solemn fasts, and in which he dwelt on the necessary moral and spiritual dispositions to be aimed at. At the end of his discourse he would say: *Quarta igitur et sexta feria jejunemus; sabbato vero apud beatum Petrum pariter vigilemus*. We must dwell briefly on these directions given out by St Leo.

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At Rome, and similarly in all the other episcopal sees in Italy, the tomb of the founder of the see was considered as the first living cell, from which had developed all the rest of the ecclesiastical organism. The consecrated bones, enclosed in the golden shrine of Constantine, were not indeed dead bones, since they continued to blossom like a lily whose stem, leaves, and flowers were no other than the bishops, the clergy, and the faithful of the Church itself. Thus we understood why, at Rome, the sepulchres of the early Popes were clustered around St Peter; at Ravenna, around St Apollinaris; at Nola, around St Felix; and at Naples, in the catacombs of St Januarius.

On the most solemn days of the liturgical cycle, the stationary Mass was, as a matter of fact, always at St Peter, notwithstanding the circumstance that originally that sepulchral basilica was outside the city walls; for the faithful were always desirous of keeping the feast beside their father, in his own *domus*, which was on this account the true house of the people, that which afterwards became known as the principal *domus*, the *duomo*, the *pieve*, *plebs*, and finally the cathedral.

In the case of the ordinations at Rome another reason must be taken into consideration. Every act conferring sacred authority was regarded in olden times as an extension of the



plenary and absolute power conferred by Christ on Peter, as a participation in his authority. Therefore, not only must the rite take place at his tomb, but both priests and levites must receive at that sacred shrine their respective *stolae*, which were the mark of their dignity, just as archbishops still receive their *pallium*. For this reason all Masses at which formerly ordinations were held are still assigned in the Roman Missal *ad S Petrum*.

St Leo, in the announcement referred to above, adds a new liturgical element to this assembly at St Peter, which we must explain: *sabbato vero, apud beatum Petrum pariter vigilemus*. Here, at last, is the night vigil spent in prayer and in the celebration of the holy Sacrifice; a rite which, in the second century, was commonly observed every Saturday night, but which was more strictly obligatory on the entire Christian community on the night in which was celebrated the Pasch.

On the occasion of the ordinations on the Sundays following the three Ember seasons, something of the same kind prevailed. This was an event which affected not only the bishop, but the people as well, for the favour which they desired to obtain from God was the choice of good and zealous ministers of the Church. Now, as Jesus Christ had expressly commanded: *rogate Dominum messis, ut mittat operarios in messem suam*, so, on Sunday evening, the faithful, instead of ending their fast as they had done on the preceding Wednesday and Friday, continued it throughout the following night, and therefore betook themselves in large numbers to the Vatican Hill in order to inaugurate the great nocturnal solemnity of the sacred ordinations, at the tomb of the Chief of the Apostles.

That enthusiastic faith and assiduous prayer, those thousands of Christians who, together with the Pope and his clergy, endure the fatigues of the fast, cause us to liken that nocturnal synaxis to the great manœuvres of the spiritual army—*praesidia militiae christianae*—which the Church was then carrying out in the greatest of her temples.

Let us go back to the words of St Leo: *Quarta igitur et sexta feria jejunemus*. At Rome, because of a very ancient liturgical tradition, quite unlike that of the East or of Milan, one could not conceive of a fast in days of antiquity unconnected with a stational Mass. *Sanctificate jejunium*. On Wednesdays during the four Ember weeks the station was therefore celebrated regularly at the Esquiline Basilica of St Mary Major, as though to entrust the happy result of the sacred ordinations to the intercession of her who was so beautifully invoked by Proclus of Constantinople in the words: *O Templum, in quo Deus sacerdos factus est*.



At the beginning of the Mass, the newly elected candidates took their places in a specially reserved part of the church, in full view of all, thus presenting themselves to the people. A notary then ascended the ambo and read out their names, inviting any amongst the faithful who had an objection to make concerning them to come forward: *Domino Deo Salvatore nostro Jesu Christo, elegimus in ordine diaconi (presbyteri), N.N. de titulo N. Si quis habet aliquid contra hos viros, pro Deo et propter Deum cum fiducia exeat et dicat. Verumtamen memor sit communionis sacrae*—for he had afterwards to confirm his own testimony with regard to the candidates by receiving Holy Communion.

If nothing was advanced against those who had been elected, they were next called upon to declare on oath that they had, during the whole of their past life, kept themselves free from those graver sins which, in accordance with the ecclesiastical discipline of those days, for ever excluded those who had committed them from the service of the altar, even though they had obtained sacramental absolution therefrom.

The rite of the Wednesday in the three Ember seasons was repeated on the subsequent Friday in the basilica or *apostoleion*, which had been begun by Pope Julius and completed by Narses at Rome in imitation of that of Constantine at Byzantium. The relics of the Apostles Philip and James alone were preserved there; but as the church had been dedicated to all the twelve members of the apostolic college it was chosen as a suitable place for the holding of this most important station previous to the sacred ordinations. For it was deemed fitting that the candidates for Holy Orders should first of all be presented to those whom they were to represent in a certain degree on earth and whose work they were to carry on.

After the Mass, which ended at sunset—the Masses on fast-days always took place in the evening as is still the custom in the East on particular occasions—all were at liberty to recline after the Roman fashion on the couches in the *triclinium* and partake of the customary supper. After that evening meal, however, the fast preceding the sacred ordinations became so severe and so general that, as it included the entire Christian community, it did not even admit of the celebration of the Saturday morning Mass, but was continued until the dawn of Sunday—that is to say, until the rite of the ordinations had been duly accomplished.

The holy vigil of the night between the Saturday and the Sunday commemorated the fact that Jesus had spent the night before the choosing of the Twelve to the Apostleship in prayer on a mountain. The early Christians were very fond of this liturgical night prayer, instituted by Christ



himself, which had been handed down by the apostles to the Churches as a sacred deposit entrusted to them by the Saviour. St Luke tells us how Paul and Silas, confined in fetters in the prison at Philippi, arose when the hour of midnight had struck and sang the praises of God in such a manner as to be heard by the other prisoners.

The following verse of a very beautiful hymn composed by St Ambrose, which is still recited in the Office of Matins on Wednesdays, alludes to this incident mentioned in the Acts of the Apostles :

*Mentes manusque tollimus,  
Propheta sicut noctibus  
Nobis gerendum praecipit,  
Paulusque gestis censuit.*

This liturgical night prayer was in common use among the faithful from the second century onwards, especially before the celebration of the solemn Sunday sacrifice, and on the occasion of the *natalis* of a martyr. This vigil of prayer was called by the Greek name of *pannuchis*, and by the Latin title of *vigilia*, from which, but with a notable difference in the meaning, is derived in its modern signification our vigil, which the Greeks more appropriately call *preorti*—that is, the day preceding the festival.

The vigil which rendered more solemn the rite of the Ordinations consisted on its liturgical side of a series of scriptural Lessons, sometimes twelve, sometimes twenty-four, read in Greek as well as in Latin. After the seventh century they were reduced to seven in number, and were interspersed with the responsorial chanting of psalms, and with collects which the bishop recited in the name of all the people.

When the greater part of the night had passed in this manner, and the dawn was already beginning to lighten the sky, the Pope left the assembly, which had crowded into the nave and aisles of St Peter singing psalms, and withdrew to the adjacent circular oratory of St Andrew, where he laid his hands upon, and consecrated, the new priests and deacons. This withdrawal of the Pontiff to a particular oratory for the sacred Ordinations may seem, at first sight, curious and unusual. It was not, however, an exceptional circumstance in the ancient Liturgy, since both Baptism and Confirmation were usually administered in two oratories quite distinct from the church—that is to say, in the Baptistery and in the *Consignatorium*, from which the people were likewise excluded. These remained in the meantime in the church and sang the Litanies as it was prescribed that they should do during the ceremony of Ordination.

We must not indeed suppose that the *plebs Romana* in former times was any less inclined to be noisy or disorderly



in church than they are nowadays. To avoid, therefore, any disturbance during the administration of the sacraments which we are now considering, our fathers had adopted a radical and effective method of prevention by keeping the *plebs Dei* (which is at all times the *plebs*) at a certain distance from the sanctuary where these moving sacramental rites were being performed.

In the special case of the bestowal of Holy Orders, there existed at Rome, in the Middle Ages, a second reason for the withdrawal of the celebrant from the great Basilica of the Prince of the Apostles. It was thought fitting that only the consecration of the Pope should take place at the altar of St Peter, since he alone inherited the full authority of the Apostle, all the other ordinations were to be carried out in the vicinity of his tomb, but not at the apostolic sepulchre itself, in order to show by this distinction that the sacred ministers receive only by delegation—that is, through the Pope—a portion of that fulness of power which was conferred on Peter the first Apostle of Christ.

The history of the ceremonies of the Ordinations in early Christian times is extremely instructive, because it shows us what great importance was then attached to each of the above-mentioned details—that is to say, to the fast, the vigil, the suffrage of the people, etc.

Pope Gelasius I (492-6) urged upon the Bishops of Lucania<sup>1</sup> that ordinations should be held only at legitimate times—that is, on the Sundays following the week of the three Ember seasons, on the second and on the fifth Sundays in Lent. So important did it then appear that the imposition of hands, following the example of the apostles, should be conferred only on a holy day, such as the Sunday, amidst the fasting and prayer of the whole Church. St Leo, in a letter to Bishop Anastasius of Thessalonica, regrets that there the priests and deacons were not ordained after the Sunday *pannuchis*, as was done in the case of bishops, observing that *circa eos*—that is, the priests and deacons—*par consecratio fieri debet*.

Many of our readers will doubtless be surprised at the great deference shown, in those days, to the people at the ordinations of the clergy. During those ages of genuine faith and Christian simplicity, the people were treated in the same manner as the apostles had treated them. Clergy and people formed then one family, closely bound together, *cor unum et anima una*.

The people knew but one form of prayer, the divine Office, which they sang together with the clergy in the church. The clergy, moreover, were maintained by the voluntary

<sup>1</sup> Ancient name of part of Southern Italy.—Tr.



offerings which the faithful presented at the altar. Thus, as St Peter, before casting lots on Matthias and before electing the seven deacons, had consulted the entire assembly of the faithful, so, too, in the golden age of the Liturgy the people were always referred to on the occasion of the baptism of the catechumens as well as in regard to the ordination of levites and the appointment of priests and of bishops. The clergy indeed elected the candidates, but the people were called upon to signify their approval.

A formula of Gallican origin, but which has found a place in the present *Pontificale Romanum*, gives the following reason for this: "Because," it says, "the case of the pilot and of those who are voyaging in the boat with him is one and the same; all are in safety or all are in danger, consequently, as this is a matter in which we all are interested, each one of us must have a voice in it. Therefore the holy Fathers have decreed that the people also shall be consulted regarding the character and quality of those who are about to be raised to the priesthood, whether because four eyes are better than two, or because the obedience which they must render to the newly ordained priest will be easier for them if they have previously given their consent to his ordination."

St Cyprian assures us that this custom was in force at Carthage in his day: *In ordinandis clericis, fratres carissimi, solemus vos, ante, consulere, et mores ac merita singulorum communi consilio ponderare.*

It sometimes happened, however, in those first centuries when faith was ardent, and the sacred dignity of a minister was submitted to rather than eagerly sought after, that the people occasionally overstepped their rights, and seizing forcibly upon some candidate, carried him off to be ordained by the bishop against his will. At Milan, for instance, the entire population, at the cry of a child, acclaimed Ambrose as their bishop, nor could the unanimous voice of the Milanese be ignored.

In Africa, Pinianus was nearly ordained in spite of himself, because the people, knowing him to be rich and virtuous, wished for his ordination.

St Paulinus of Nola was less fortunate, for he was seized by the faithful on Christmas Day and dragged, *nolens volens*, to the feet of Bishop Lampius of Barcelona, who ordained him priest. He himself relates that the violence of the mob was such that he was very nearly strangled.

This recalls the story of another holy bishop of those times, who had retired to a cave to lead there a solitary life, when there suddenly came into the heads of the clergy and people of a neighbouring city in Gaul the idea of having



him as their bishop. No sooner said than done. They all went together to the cave of the holy man, and because he in his humility would not hear of leaving his solitude, they bound him fast hand and foot, and put him in a cart like a calf which is being taken to the slaughter-house. Then, having brought him to their cathedral, they placed him, still bound, on the episcopal throne, amidst the enthusiastic acclamations of the people. Pope Siricius (385-98) at Rome did all in his power to prevent this abuse from getting such a footing that it might lead to the bringing for ordination undeserving and unfitting persons.

We have now given a slight sketch of the ancient ecclesiastical regulations regarding the bestowal of Holy Orders; we have spoken often of the people and of the part which they took in the scrutinies and the elections, in the fasts and the vigils which accompanied the sacred rite, but this reconstruction is somewhat one-sided and this is the reason of its being so.

In our days the Christian world, as a whole, has almost ceased to take any part in the life and in the higher interests of the Church. It is no longer concerned with the Ember days, the fasts, the scrutinies, and the ordinations, as though these things concerned only the clergy; and thus the household of Faith is deprived of that abundance of graces which God grants to the intercession of the whole body of the faithful. At this moment the venerable Vicar of Christ and many pastors of souls, especially in Italy, are full of anxiety, for in their respective dioceses many parishes are without a pastor through lack of clergy, and the Christian flock has to exist without Mass, without sacraments, abandoned to its own devices like sheep without a shepherd.

This may well be a just judgement of God upon our generation, which, by the free-thinking tendencies of its public institutions, has now for a long time past embraced the anti-religious system described by the Psalmist: *Quiescere faciamus omnes dies festos Dei a terra.*

In proof of this it will suffice to take a journey through Italy. On every side, both in the towns and in the country, we see churches and chapels, some fallen into ruins, others desecrated by being turned into law-courts, concert rooms, and even into blacksmiths' shops, as may be witnessed at Rome, at Perugia, and elsewhere. The object aimed at is the humiliation of the priesthood, by reducing it through poverty to such a condition that it can no longer widely exercise as before its beneficent influence on the poor, the student, and the artist.

Those ecclesiastical revenues which were intended by their founders as a satisfaction for their sins and as a patrimony



for the poor, had not only provided for the support of the priest, but had, especially in Italy, fostered for twelve hundred years Italian art in all its branches. Nowadays the clergy are reduced to poverty, indeed, to indigence, they are both scorned and despised, and, until lately, the students for the priesthood were obliged to leave their seminaries and to serve in the army—what wonder, then, that so few young men to-day have the courage to choose the ecclesiastical life in preference to some other profession no matter how modest. These are some of the causes of the present crisis in the matter of religious vocations.

Shall we, then, let the souls perish for whom Christ died? God forbid. The remedy is there, and experience has shown it to be infallible. Let us only recall the words from the *Pontificale Romanum* which we have quoted above. To reach the port in safety is to the interest not only of the pilot, but also of all those who are with him on the ship. The priesthood therefore fills a supreme social need, and the whole body of the faithful must bring to the priest its tribute of honour, of deference, and also of pecuniary help as was clearly prescribed in the old Law. Let the more zealous add to these means the prudent encouragement of vocations among the young, which shall lead them as soon as may be to the seminary or to the cloister.

Finally, to all these means let us add that one which is the most efficacious of all—viz., public and private prayer to him who has said: *Rogate Dominum messis, ut mittat operarios in messem suam*. This is the infallible remedy, for “the word of God can never fail.”



## **SANCTAE ROMANAE ECCLESIAE FERIALE**

**N.B.—The three columns of the FERIALE show as follows :**

**The 1st, marked A, the primitive FERIALE contained in the Philocalian Calendar and in the Sacramentaries.**

**The 2nd, marked B, gives the medieval feasts noted in the liturgical books of the eleventh century.**

**The 3rd, marked C, indicates the modern feasts inserted in the Roman Missal since the thirteenth century.**



## SANCTAE ROMANAE

## Mense

## A

1 Kalendis  
 2 VI Nonas  
 3 V  
 4 IV  
 5 III  
 6 Pridie  
 7 Nonis  
 8 VIII Idus  
 9 VII  
 10 VI  
 11 V  
 12 IV  
 13 III  
 14 Pridie  
 15 Idibus  
 16 XVII Kalendas Apriles  
 17 XVI  
 18 XV  
 19 XIV  
 20 XIII  
 21 XII  
 22 XI  
 23 X  
 24 IX  
 25 VIII  
 26 VII  
 27 VI  
 28 V  
 29 IV  
 30 III  
 31 Pridie Kalendas Apriles

4 Lucii pp. in Callisti

7 Perpetuae et Felicitatis Mm.

14 Leonis ep. in Agro Verano.

18 Pigmenii mart.

24 Quirini M. in Praetextati.

25 Annunc. B. M. V.

26 Castuli m. via Labicana.

## Mense

1 Kalendis  
 2 IV Nonas  
 3 III  
 4 Pridie  
 5 Nonis  
 6 VIII Idus  
 7 VII  
 8 VI  
 9 V  
 10 IV  
 11 III  
 12 Pridie  
 13 Idibus  
 14 XVIII Kalendas Maias  
 15 XVII  
 16 XVI  
 17 XV  
 18 XIV

14 Tiburtii Valeriani et Maximi  
in Praetextati



**ECCLESIAE FERIALE**

**Martio**

**B**

10 Quadraginta mm.

12 Gregorii pp. ad s. Petrum

21 Benedicti Abb.

**C**

4 Casimiri c.

7 Thomae Aquin.

8 Iohannis de Deo c.

9 Franciscae Rom. vid.

17 Patritii ep. c.

18 Cyrilli ep. Hieros.

19 Ioseph Sponsi B. M. V.

24 Gabrielis Archang.

27 Iohannis Damasc. conf.

28 Iohannis a Capistrano c.

Fer. VI post Domin. Passionis,  
VII Dolorum B. M. V.

**Aprili**

4 Isidori ep.

11 Leonis pap. ad s. Petrum.

2 Francisci a Paula conf.

5 Vincentii Ferrerii conf.

13 Hermenegildi m.

14 Iustini m.

17 Aniceti pap. m.



**Mense****A**

19 XIII  
 20 XII  
 21 XI  
 22 X  
 23 IX  
 24 VIII  
 25 VII  
  
 26 VI  
 27 V  
 28 IV  
 29 III  
 30 Pridie Kalendas Maias

22 Gaii ep. in Callisti

25 Litaniae maiores ad Sanctum Petrum.

**Mense**

1 Kalendis  
 2 VI Nonas  
 3 V  
  
 4 IV  
 5 III  
 6 Pridie  
  
 7 Nonis  
 8 VIII Idus  
 9 VII  
 10 VI  
 11 V  
 12 IV  
  
 13 III  
 14 Pridie  
 15 Idibus  
  
 16 XVII Kalendas Iunias  
 17 XVI  
 18 XV  
 19 XIV  
  
 20 XIII  
 21 XII  
 22 XI  
 23 X  
 24 IX  
 25 VIII  
 26 VII  
  
 27 VI  
  
 28 V  
 29 IV  
  
 30 III  
 31 Pridie Kalendas Iunias

19 Caloceri et Partheni Mm. in Callisti



**Aprili (continued)**

**B**

- 23 Georgii m.  
25 Marci Evang.  
  
28 Vitalis m.

**Mai**

- 1 Philippi et Iacobi App.  
3 Exalt. S. Crucis—Alexandri,  
Eventii, Theoduli et Iuvenalis  
5 Transl. S. Stephani  
6 S. Iohannis ante portam  
Latinam  
8 Appar. S. Angeli  
10 Gordiani et Epimachi Mm.  
12 Nerei, Achillei et Pancratii  
Mm.  
13 Dedic. S. Mariae ad Martyres  
14 Bonifatii Mart.  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
19 Pudencianae Virg.  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
25 Urbani Ep. Mart.  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
31 Petronillae Virg.

**C**

- 21 Anselmi ep. c.  
22 Soteris pap. m.  
24 Fidelis a Sigmaringa m.  
  
26 Cleti et Marcellini pp. mm.  
27 Petri Canisii c.  
28 Pauli a Cruce c.  
29 Petri Mart.  
30 Catharinae Senen. Virg.  
  
  
2 Athanasii Ep. Conf.  
  
4 Monicae Vid.  
5 Pii V Pp.  
  
7 Stanislai Ep. Mart.  
9 Greg. Nazianz. Ep. Conf.  
10 Antonini Ep. Conf.  
12 Domitillae Virg.  
  
15 Iohannis Bapt. De la Salle  
Conf.  
16 Ubaldi Ep.  
17 Paschalis Conf.  
18 Venantii Mart.  
19 Petri Coelestini Conf. Pontif.  
20 Bernardini Conf.  
  
  
25 Gregorii VII Pont. Conf.  
26 Eleutherii Pp. Mart.—Philippi  
Conf.  
27 Iohannis Pp. Mart.—Bedae  
Conf. et Doct.  
28 Augustini Pontif. Conf.  
29 Mariae Magdal. de Pazzis  
Virg.  
30 Felicis Pp. Mart.



**Mense****A**

- 1 Kalendis  
 2 IV Nonas  
  
 3 III  
 4 Pridie  
 5 Nonis  
 6 VIII Idus  
 7 VII  
 8 VI  
 9 V  
 10 IV  
 11 III  
 12 Pridie  
  
 13 Idibus  
 14 XVIII Kalendas Iulias  
 15 XVII  
  
 16 XVI  
 17 XV  
 18 XIV  
  
 19 XIII  
 20 XII  
 21 XI  
 22 X  
 23 IX  
 24 VIII  
 25 VII  
 26 VI  
 27 V  
 28 IV  
  
 29 III  
  
 30 Pridie Kalendas Iulias

29 Petri in Catac. et Pauli via  
 Ostensi, Tusco et Basso Coss.  
 (ann. 258)

**Mense**

- 1 Kalendis  
 2 VI Nonas  
 3 V  
 4 IV  
 5 III  
 6 Pridie  
 7 Nonis  
 8 VIII Idus  
 9 VII  
 10 VI  
  
 11 V  
 12 IV

2 SS. Processi et Martiniani

6 Octava Apostolorum

10 Septem Fratrum (Rufinae et  
 Secundae Mm.)

12 SS. Naboris et Felicis Mm.



**Iunio**

**B**

- 1 Dedic. S. Nicomedis Mart.  
2 SS. Petri et Marcellini et  
Erasmi Mm.  
  
9 Primi et Feliciani Mm.  
  
11 Barnabae Apost.  
12 Basilidis Mart.—Quirini Ep.  
Mart.—Naboris et Nazarii  
Mm.—  
  
15 Viti, Modesti et Crescentiae  
Mm.  
  
18 Marci et Marcelliani Mm., Via  
Ardeatina.  
19 Gervasii et Protasii Mm.  
  
23 Vig. S. Iohannis Bapt.  
24 Nativ. S. Iohannis Bapt.  
26 SS. Iohannis et Pauli Mm.  
28 Vig. SS. Petri et Pauli Apost.—  
S. Leonis secundo  
29 SS. Petri et Pauli Apost.  
  
30 Comm. S. Pauli Apost.

**C**

- 4 Francisci Caracciolo Conf.  
5 Bonifatii Ep. Mart.  
6 Norberti Ep. Conf.  
  
10 Margaritae Reg. Vid.  
12 Iohannis a S. Facundo Conf.  
  
13 Antonii Conf.  
14 Basili Magni Ep. Conf.  
  
18 Ephuem Syri Conf.  
19 Iulianae de Falcon. Virg.  
20 Silverii Pap. Mart.  
21 Aloysii Gonz. Conf.  
22 Paulini Ep. Conf.  
  
25 Gulielmi Abb.  
27 SS. Protomart, S. R. E.  
28 Irenaei Ep. Mart.

**Iulio**

- 1 Octav. S. Iohannis Bapt.

- 1 Pretiosissimi Sanguinis D. N.  
I. C.  
2 Visitationis B. M. Virg.  
3 S. Leonis II  
  
5 S. Antonii M. Zaccaria  
7 SS. Cyrilli et Methodii  
8 S. Elisabeth Vid.

- 11 Pii I Pap.  
12 S. Iohannis Gualberti



## A

13 III  
 14 Pridie  
  
 15 Idibus  
 16 XVII Kalendas Aug.  
 17 XVI  
 18 XV  
  
 19 XIV  
 20 XIII  
 21 XII  
 22 XI  
 23 X  
 24 IX  
  
 25 VIII  
  
 26 VII  
 27 VI  
 28 V  
 29 IV  
  
 30 III  
 31 Pridie Kalendas Aug.

29 SS. Felicis, Simplicii, Faustini  
 et Viatricis Mart.  
 30 SS. Abdon et Sennen Mart.

## Mense

1 Kalendis  
  
 2 IV Nonas  
  
 3 III  
 4 Pridie  
 5 Nonis  
 6 VIII Idus  
  
 7 VII  
 8 VI  
  
 9 V  
 10 IV  
 11 III  
 12 Pridie  
 13 Idibus  
  
 14 XIX Kal. Sept.

2 S. Stephani Pap.  
  
  
 6 SS. Xysti, Felicissimi et Aga-  
 pitii Mm.  
  
 8 Cyriaci, Largi, Smaragdi et  
 Soc. Mart.  
 9 Vigil. S. Laurentii  
 10 S. Laurentii M.  
 11 S. Tiburtii Mart.  
  
 13 SS. Hippolyti et Pontiani Mm.  
 (Cassiani M.)  
 14 S. Eusebii Conf.—Vigil As-  
 sumpt. B. M. V.



**Iulio (continued)**

**B**

14. SS. Cyri et Iohannis
- 18 SS. Symphorosae et VII Filior.  
Mm.
- 20 S. Margaritae Virg. Mart.  
21 S. Praxedis Virg.  
22 S. Mariae Magdal.  
23 S. Apollinaris Episc. Mart.  
24 S. Christinae Virg. (Vig. S.  
Iacobi Apost.)  
25 S. Iacobi Ap. (S. Christophori  
Mart.)  
26 S. Pastoris  
27 S. Pantaleonis Mart.  
28 SS. Nazarii et Celsi (Victoris I  
et Innocentii I)  
29 S. Marthae Virg.

**C**

- 13 S. Anacleti Pap.  
14 S. Bonaventurae Ep. Conf.  
Doct.  
15 S. Henrici Imperat.  
16 B. M. Virg. de Monte Carmelo  
17 S. Alexii Conf.  
18 S. Camilli de Lellis Conf.
- 19 S. Vincentii a Paulo Conf.  
20 S. Hieronymi Æmiliani Conf.
- 23 S. Liborii Ep.
- 26 S. Annae Matris B. M. Virg.
- 31 S. Ignatii Conf.

**Augusto**

- 1 S. Petri ad Vincula. SS.  
Machabaeor
- 3 Invent. S. Stephani  
4 S. Iustini  
5 Dedic S. Mariae
- 7 S. Donati Ep.
- 9 S. Romani M.
- 11 S. Susannae Mart.  
12 S. Eupli Mart.

- 2 S. Alfonsi de Ligorio Ep. Conf.  
Doct.
- 4 S. Dominici Conf.
- 6 Transfig. D. N. I. C.
- 7 S. Caietani Conf.
12. S. Clarae Virg.

# THE FEASTS OF THE SAINTS IN THE PASCHAL CYCLE

## FEASTS IN MARCH

### MARCH 4

#### ST LUCIUS I, POPE AND MARTYR

**T**HE yearly festival of this illustrious Pontiff (died 254), who was praised by St Cyprian himself for his mildness and peaceful disposition, was noted in the Philocalian list of the *Depositiones Episcoporum* of the year 366.

His original sepulchral epigraph may still be seen in the papal crypt of the cemetery of Callixtus at Rome :

#### ΛΟΥΚΙΟ

After the cemeteries were abandoned, towards the eighth century, all records of his name passed completely away from the Sacramentaries and the Roman Calendars, and it was only under Clement VIII (1592-1605) that it reappeared in the Roman Breviary.

St Lucius did not actually die a violent death, so his name did not appear among the *Natalitia Martyrum*, but only in the *Depositiones Episcoporum*. He was, indeed, exiled from Rome almost immediately after his consecration. Having returned later to his see, he died within a few weeks. St Cyprian, who praises Lucius greatly, mentions one or two letters of his on the manner of dealing with lapsed Christians.<sup>1</sup> His sacred relics are venerated in the Basilica of St Cecilia across the Tiber.

The Mass is throughout that of the Common of a Martyr and Bishop, as for the feast of St Eusebius on December 16; for the liturgical custom of these later ages is to consider the hardships of exile and the distresses which in times of bitter persecution those early upholders of the Faith had to endure, as sufferings equivalent to martyrdom, even though the executioner did not end their life with the sword.

The transference of the sepulchre of Pope Lucius close to that of St Cecilia should be noted. The Pontiff was originally

<sup>1</sup> *Ep.* LXVIII, 5.



buried in the papal crypt in the via Appia, consequently very near the burial-place of the Christian Cecili, where the body of the illustrious virgin Cecilia had rested up to the time of Paschal I (817-24). When her remains were afterwards translated to the church within the city which had formerly been her own dwelling-house, the bodies of the Popes Urban I (227-33) and Lucius, because of their proximity, were also transferred to the same spot, where they rest beside her to this day, in expectation of the final resurrection.

\* \* \* \* \*

The Martyrology of St Jerome also records on this day the names of a group of martyrs who were interred in the cemetery of St Callixtus: *Natale Martyrum DCC, Romae in cimiterio Calesti via Appia, depositio iulii episcopi et aliorum XXVII.*

This refers to a group of many martyrs constantly mentioned in the ancient itineraries, whose number varies from twenty-two to eighty, and even goes up to eight hundred. Who were these? A *graffito* near the tomb of St Cornelius commemorates some martyrs mentioned in the *Acta* of that Pope:

CEREALIS · ET · SALLUSTIA · CVM · XXI

but it is a matter of difficulty to discover any further particulars which might elucidate the matter.

## MARCH 4

### ST CASIMIR, CONFESSOR\*<sup>1</sup>

The festival of this saint, who preserved a virginal purity in the midst of the frivolities of a royal court (died 1483), was instituted by Paul V.

The Mass is of the Common of a Confessor not a Bishop, as for St Raymund on January 23, but the Collect is proper to the feast.

The Collect is as follows: "O God, who didst strengthen holy Casimir with the virtue of constancy amidst the delights of royalty and the blandishments of the world; grant, we beseech thee, that by his intercession thy faithful people may

<sup>1</sup> The feasts marked with an asterisk (\*) do not belong in any way to the original collection in the Roman Sacramentaries, which contained at first only local feasts. They are, however, given here as they now form part of the universal calendar of the Church, and are included in the Roman Missal.



despise the things of earth and ever aspire to those of heaven."

The feasts of those saints who were kings or persons of importance in this world, have a value and a beauty special to themselves, because the more difficult it becomes to practise Christian perfection in such a state of life, amidst, that is, the allurements put forth by riches and glory, so much the more glorious is the victory which Christ obtains through his faithful servants, who, though they were kings of men, were servants of Jesus.

### MARCH 6

#### SS PERPETUA AND FELICITAS, MARTYRS

These celebrated heroines of the Faith, who form part of a group which includes three other martyrs, Revocatus, Saturninus, and Saturus, do not belong to the Roman Church, for their martyrdom took place at Carthage (March 7, 202-203).

Nevertheless, the greatness of their fame and the renown of their *Acta*—put forth apparently by Tertullian—together with the constant communications which then existed between the capital of proconsular Africa and the city of Rome, were the reason that the *natalis* of Vibia Perpetua and Felicitas on March 7 was already entered in the Roman list of the *Natalitia Martyrum*, compiled about the year 336. This feast, together with that of St Cyprian, although not of a local character, are thus the first to be included by Rome in her Calendar of the fourth century. In consequence of this, the Roman diptychs of the Mass also contain the names of these three African saints.

To-day's feast appears, too, in the Gelasian Sacramentary of the Carolingian period, although it was excluded from the Gregorian in the time of Adrian I. It is not difficult to conjecture the reason of this omission. Whilst the greater part of the Gelasian Sacramentary records a period of free liturgical development, when the feasts of the martyrs were still celebrated at the cemeteries in the presence of a great concourse of people, the Gregorian, on the other hand, represents a later reformation both general and severe of the stationary liturgy at Rome.

Lent, which in the fourth century did not as yet form a liturgical cycle of any great importance, had gradually come to be a time of special solemnity. The Eucharistic Sacrifice was offered up every evening at sunset, instead of on the Wednesday and Sunday only, as in the days of St Leo; so



that towards the time of St Gregory I the fast and the daily stations were naturally obliged to exclude every other festival station, and more especially the ancient *Natalitia Martyrum* of the preceding centuries. In this way the feasts, not of Perpetua and Felicitas alone, but also those of St Peter's Chair, St Lucius, St Gaius, and several other eminent Pontiffs were omitted.

The memory of the great Carthaginian martyrs, however, survived in the devotion of the people, in spite of their exclusion from the Liturgy; indeed, it was so faithfully cherished that in the late Middle Ages their feast in the form of a simple commemoration was associated with that of St Thomas Aquinas, who also died on March 7. When, a few years ago, the sepulchral epigraph of Perpetua, Felicitas, and their companions was discovered at Carthage amongst the ruins of the *Basilica Majorum*, in which the great Augustine had also preached, Pius X raised their Office to the rank of a double, at the same time anticipating their feast by a day because of that of St Thomas which occurred on the same day as their *natalis*.

The following is the text of this important inscription, the only remains which modern Carthage has preserved relating to the group of martyrs celebrated to-day throughout the entire Latin Church.

✠ HIC · SVNT · MARTYRES

✠ SATVRVS · SATVRNINVS

✠ REBOCATVS · SECVNDVLVS · PAS · NON · MART

✠ FELICIT · PERPETV

A fragmentary painting in the cemetery of Callixtus, belonging, as some have conjectured, to the tomb of the martyrs Marcus and Marcellinus, shows how popular the *Acta* of St Perpetua were at that time in Rome. In it we see pictured two martyrs ascending to Christ by means of a ladder, at the foot of which a serpent attempts to hinder their passage. It is evident that the artist was inspired and guided by the well-known vision of the Carthaginian martyr, told by her with such vivid faith in the autobiography of her martyrdom. That masterpiece of ancient Christian literature should be in the hands of all the faithful and carefully studied by everyone.

The Mass is the Common of a Martyr, with special collects, which, however, are the same as those prescribed for to-day's feast in the Gelasian Sacramentary.

Collect: "Grant, we beseech thee, O Lord our God, that we may reverence with unceasing devotion the triumphs of thy holy virgins and martyrs, Perpetua and Felicitas; and



although we cannot pay them the honour that is their due, let us at least present to them our humble service."

Secret: "Look, O Lord, we beseech thee, on the gifts which are laid upon thine altars in honour of the festival of thy holy virgins and martyrs, Perpetua and Felicitas, and even as by those mysteries thou didst raise them to glory, so by means of them grant us thy forgiveness."

Post-Communion: "We are filled, O Lord, with mystical prayers and joys; grant, we beseech thee, that by the intercessions of thy holy martyrs, Perpetua and Felicitas, those things which we perform in the flesh we may obtain in the spirit."

The cross dismays us often because we think only of its bitterness, and do not realize that when we suffer for Jesus Christ it is not so much we who suffer, as Jesus who suffers in us. Thus Felicitas, in the prison, groaning in the pangs of child-birth, answered with quiet dignity to the pagans who mockingly asked her how she would be able to bear the torments of martyrdom if she cried out in her present pain: "Now it is I who suffer; but then another will suffer in me, because I shall then suffer through him."

We cannot resist transcribing here the splendid hymn which the Benedictine Hymnal of Solesmes, inspired by Dom Guéranger, appoints for to-day's feast, at one time so celebrated throughout the Latin world:

1.  
Christi sponsa piis laudibus  
    efferat,  
Binas impavido pectore feminas;  
In sexu fragili corda virilia  
Hymnis pangat ovariantibus.

2.  
Ad lucem genitae sole sub Africo,  
Nunc ambae pugiles, actibus inclytis,  
In toto radiant orbe; micantibus  
Fulgent tempora laureis.

3.  
Exornat generis Perpetuam decus;  
Sponso connubiis juncta recentibus,  
Clarescit: sed honos hanc trahit  
    altior,  
Christi foedera praetulit.

1.  
Let the mystic Spouse of Christ  
    praise of two noble women sing,  
Who, fearless of soul, a virile heart  
Within them bore, despite their  
    weaker sex;  
Let the Church with triumphal  
    hymns acclaim them.

2.  
Born beneath the sunny skies of  
    Africa,  
These two heroines by their meritorious  
    deeds  
Far and wide throughout the  
    world are known,  
Girded are their brows with  
    wreaths resplendent.

3.  
Perpetua, distinguished by her  
    noble lineage,  
Still more through her lately  
    wedded husband,  
Seeks an honour far more sublime,  
For she aspires to espousals with  
    Christ himself.



4.

Se Regis famulam libera profitens  
Dum servile jugum Felicitas  
subit:  
Ad luctum properans, gressibus  
aemulis,  
Palmas ad similes volat.

5.

Frustra Perpetuam fletibus et  
minis  
Impugnat genitor; quae simul  
angitur,  
Errantem miserans, oscula filio  
Lactenti dedit ultima.

6.

Terris Heva parens quae mala  
contulit  
Horum sentit onus Felicitas  
grave;  
Nunc et passa sibi parturiens  
gemit,  
Mox passura Deo libens.

7.

Luxit clara dies vincere qua datur  
Athletis Domini, pergite Martyres:  
Omnis Perpetuam curia caelitem  
Et te, Felicitas, cupit.

8.

Quassat Perpetuae membra tener-  
rima  
Elidit sociam bellua. Te soror  
Stans, O Felicitas, ad nova proelia  
Erectam reparat manu.

9.

E caelo pugilum respiciens Deus  
Certamen, geminas ad bravium  
vocat;  
Effuso properet sanguine, spiritus  
In Christi remeans sinum.

4.

Felicitas proclaims herself as free,  
and handmaid of the King of  
kings,  
While yet under servitude's harsh  
yoke.  
With Perpetua she vies, speeding  
eagerly to the combat,  
The self-same glorious prize to  
win.

5.

In vain does Perpetua's irate sire  
With threats and lamentations  
assail her and upbraid,  
She but pities him his error, and  
hastens to bestow  
On the infant at her breast a  
tender, last farewell.

6.

The pains of childbirth, by our  
common mother Eve bequeathed,  
Are sorely troubling Felicitas,  
these sufferings  
She, a mother, is bearing on her  
own account,  
And cheerfully awaits the moment  
when she must suffer for her  
Lord.

7.

Now dawns the glorious day  
which shall bring  
Victory to the athletes of the  
Lord; step forth ye martyrs,  
All the court of heaven awaits  
thee, O Perpetua,  
And with thee, Felicitas, thy faith-  
ful comrade ever true.

8.

A savage beast tosses Perpetua's  
graceful form aloft,  
And sadly wounds her fellow  
sufferer.  
See, O Felicitas, thy sister, re-  
covered from the blow,  
Holds out her hand to support  
thee in a fresh assault.

9.

God, who from heaven looks down  
upon the unequal fight,  
Calls both the heroines to receive  
their celestial palm.  
The blood now flows freely from  
their cruel wounds,  
So may their souls return quickly  
to the bosom of Christ.



10.

Optatus penetrat corpora Marty-  
rum  
Lictoris gladius; sed trepidam  
manum  
Fortis Perpetuae dextera dirigit,  
Praebens guttura cuspidi.

10.

The long-awaited sword of the  
lictor at length is brought,  
And thrust into the bodies of the  
dying martyrs:  
But Perpetua with steady hand  
directs the uncertain aim  
And guides the weapon's sharpened  
point to her throat.

11.

Nunc, O magnanimae, gaudia  
quae manent  
In Sponsi thalamo carpite jugiter;  
Vos exempla dedit: praesidium  
potens  
Vestris ferte clientibus.

11.

Now, ye generous souls, rejoice  
for evermore,  
Be yours the joys prepared for  
you in Paradise;  
He wished for us to have in you  
examples;  
Give to us your clients your aid  
most powerful.

12.

Laus aeterna Patri, laus quoque  
Filio,  
Par individuo gloria Flamini;  
In cunctis resonet Christi adum  
choris  
Virtus Martyribus data. Amen.

12.

Eternal praise be to the Father  
and the Son,  
And equal glory to the Holy Ghost,  
May all the choirs of Christendom  
Exalt the courage granted to the  
martyrs. Amen.

## MARCH 7

## ST THOMAS AQUINAS, CONFESSOR AND DOCTOR\*

It was most fitting that the Angel of the Schools and of Catholic Theology, who began his religious life at Monte Cassino beside the tomb of the Patriarch of Western Monachism, and ended it with something of the glory of martyrdom amongst the sons of the same St Benedict, at the not very remote Abbey of Fossanova in 1274—it was most fitting, we repeat, that St Thomas should refresh our weary spirit by his feast in the very middle of Lent, and should confirm by his example the words which the Church sings in praise of the fast: *vitia comprimis, mentem elevas*.

The special glory of St Thomas, his most salient virtue, is the profound love which he shows for the sacred tradition of the Church. He appears almost to be one with it, and has therefore become its most authoritative interpreter. It would, indeed, not be easy to find in the annals of Christianity a more inspired mind, and one that reflects better the perfections of the angelic spirits than that of Aquinas, who, building upon the foundations laid by the ancient Fathers of the Church, gave with marvellous accuracy a definite form to our knowledge of God.



Our wonder increases when we consider that this monument of wisdom, faith, and contemplation of the divine truths is not so much the result of a long, unwearied study of the codices, as the outcome of confidence, the effect of habitual prayer, and of intimate union with God. In order that the eye of Aquinas might gaze undazzled upon the divine light, it was necessary that it should be both strong and pure, with a strength and purity to which he attained through his perfect detachment from all that is created, that is, earthly and of the senses, and also through his intense inner life in union with Jesus Christ.

The feast of St Thomas was first included in the Church's Calendar as an ordinary one, but Pius V, who himself belonged to the Order of the Friars Preachers, gave to it, at the time of the reform of the Roman Breviary, the rank of a double, together with the Office of the Common of Doctors.

The Angel of the Schools, who, during his life had already added to the glory of the Eternal City by his temporary residence therein and by his preaching and miracles, possessed from the fourteenth century a church dedicated to him near the Palazzo Savelli, at no great distance, therefore, from his monastery of St Sabina. This church no longer exists, but the devotion shown at Rome towards the saint is evidenced by the beautiful chapel erected to his honour in the church of St Maria in *Minervium*, and by the little church near the theatre of Pompey which bears the dedication of SS Barbara and Thomas Aquinas.

The Mass is of the Common, as on the feast of St Francis de Sales, with the exception of the Collect and the Lesson, which are proper to the day.

These are the words of the beautiful Collect: "O God, who by the wonderful learning of blessed Thomas, thy confessor, givest glory to thy Church, and by his holy deeds makest her fruitful; grant, we beseech thee, that we may both see with the understanding what he taught, and follow his example in what he practised."

The many recent encyclicals and papal documents concerning the teaching of Thomistic theology and philosophy, which is obligatory in all Catholic seminaries, throw their inspired light on this magnificent Collect. The Church, therefore, holds the Angelic Doctor to be the most authoritative and official exponent of her teaching and of her theological knowledge, so that all opinions and doctrines which lead minds away from her, are from long experience at once judged by her according to the degree in which they depart from the principles of St Thomas.

In the Lesson (Wisdom vii, 7-14) is clearly shown to us



the supernatural character of what is called the "knowledge of the saints," which is not merely speculative, but has a powerful influence on the will, which it bends and impels towards good. This knowledge, which is in itself a free gift, not only renders us learned, but raises the soul enriched thereby to friendship with God. In the light of this knowledge, the charm of earthly pleasures fades away, and the judgement which the soul now forms of created things is altogether different from that common to the generality of men. The reason is that this knowledge places all things in their true light, when, that is, it considers them all with reference to God. This is Truth in all its harmony, this is the highest and most perfect wisdom, the acknowledgement of all things as coming from their first and final cause, which is God.

It is, above all, through the blindness of ignorance that the devil is able to destroy so many souls. *Qui ignorant et errant*. For this reason, the holy Doctors, who, with the torch of divine wisdom, dispel these shades of death in which sinners grope, gain a glorious victory over our common enemy, and therefore merit a special triumph. Thus the wise teachers of the Church and all those who, by means of sacred doctrine, trained others to act justly, not only shine in heaven with a special glory, but are venerated also in the sacred Liturgy with special devotion.

## MARCH 8

### ST JOHN OF GOD, CONFESSOR\*

It was Clement XI who first inserted in the Missal, as a semi-double, the feast of this famous patron (died 1550) of Catholic hospitals and of all those whose last days of expiation upon earth, before appearing at the judgement seat of God, are passed amid the throes and agonies of disease. Innocent XIII afterwards constituted the feast of St John of God a double, and Leo XIII caused his name to be placed in the Litany of the Dying, together with that of St Camillus de Lellis.

The Mass is that of the Common of Confessors not Bishops, as on January 23, except the Collect and the Gospel, which are proper to the feast.

The Collect, besides alluding to the founding of the Order of the Hospitallers, refers also to the marvellous action of St John of God, when, the hospital of Granada having caught fire, he walked fearlessly in the midst of the conflagration for the space of half an hour, carrying the sick to a place of



safety, and throwing the bedding out of the windows in order to save it from the flames.

The special *cultus* of this saint is assured at Rome by the religious of his Order, who officiate in the ancient church of St John *de Insula* on the island in the Tiber. It is also a tradition of the papal court that the pharmacy of the Apostolic Palaces shall be under the direction of a religious of the Order of St John of God, who thus holds the post of infirmarian to the holy Father himself.

The Collect is thus worded: "O God, who didst suffer blessed John, when burning with thy love, to walk through flames unscathed, and by his means didst beget new offspring to thy Church; grant through the help of his merits that our vices may be healed by the fire of thy love and that we may receive remedies unto life everlasting. Through our Lord."

The Gospel is that of the seventeenth Sunday after Pentecost (Matt. xxii, 34-46), in which Jesus declares the great precept of Christian perfection, which consists essentially in love. It is true that, considering the historical character of modern liturgical composition, we might rather have expected for to-day the story of the compassionate Samaritan, the prototype of the Christian infirmarian. However, the passage chosen is well suited to the saint; for in him the love of one's neighbour and, still more, the love of God, reached such a supreme height as to attain to the sublime foolishness of the Cross, when, for instance, he simulated madness and allowed himself to be beaten and confined amongst the lunatics in an asylum. It was the blessed Master, John of Avila, who discovered his secret and called the saint back from that strange manner of life to a more prudent rule, such as was required of him by God, so that he might in due course found a new and solidly established religious congregation.

When we are on our death-bed, the priest and those around us will invoke the intercession of St John of God on our behalf, in the Litany of the Dying. Most probably we shall no longer be able to do so for ourselves, and perhaps we may not even be able to hear the words as they are repeated; therefore, it would be well that we should even now pray to the saint, and obtain his intercession at the supreme moment on which our fate depends for all eternity.

## MARCH 9

### ST FRANCES OF ROME, WIDOW\*

To-day we have a Roman saint, a spiritual daughter of St Benedict, an oblate of the Abbey of Sta Maria Nova, whose



name, in the middle of the seventeenth century, was included, by order of Innocent X, in the Calendar of the universal Church, as that of a striking example and of a heavenly patron of the state of widowhood, like St Monica and St Jeanne Françoise de Chantal.

The Mass is of the Common, but the Collect is proper, and alludes to the favour granted to the saint, who during a period of many years was able to behold visibly her guardian angel at her side. She died in the year 1440.

When this feast is celebrated in the great Roman basilicas, it acquires a special grace and charm. There, indeed, is the memory of Frances still so fresh that we almost seem to see her still kneeling beside the tombs of the martyrs, rapt in ecstasy or absorbed in prayer. We pictured her, even now, in her humble dress—she who was the nobly born wife of the patrician Ponziani—as she returns with a bundle of firewood on her back from the Porta Portese or from the Via Ostiense to the house of the Oblates founded by her at the foot of the Capitol; or, more wondrous still, intermingling with the crowd of beggars and asking for alms at the porch of the Basilica of St Paul, when the stationary Mass was celebrated there on Sexagesima Sunday.

Of all the Roman sanctuaries which most recall St Frances two especially still preserve, so to speak, the fragrance of her presence, the Basilica of Sta Maria Nova, where she made her profession as an oblate of the Order of St Benedict, and where her body reposes, and the old house *Turris Speculorum* at the foot of the Capitol, where she lived with the other noble oblates whom she gathered around her.

There is also a third sanctuary which calls to mind her holy life, and that is the Palace of the Ponziani across the Tiber, which is now a house of retreat for children preparing for their first Communion. There St Frances lived for many years, and exerted a holy influence over her household. There, too, having gone thither from Tor de' Specchi to assist one of her sons who was sick, and falling seriously ill herself, she remained by order of her confessor and rendered her saintly soul to God.

The Antiphon for the Introit is derived from Psalm cxviii : “ I know, O Lord, that thy judgements are equity, and in thy truth thou hast humbled me : pierce thou my flesh with thy fear ; I am afraid of thy commandments.”

The distribution of God's gifts and the assignment of the vocations to the various states in the mystical body of the Church are part of the mystery which surrounds our predestination to eternal glory. The married state and that of widowhood are undoubtedly less glorious than that of vir-



ginity, but they, too, are a reflection of the goodness and truth of God, who judges them to be good, and provides that souls may, through them, attain to the height of Christian perfection by the exercise of humility and fidelity to duty.

Therefore the Psalmist says most truly: "Pierce thou my flesh with thy fear" . . . because there where, by God's disposition, the glory of virginity is wanting, the holy fear of the Lord must still hold the senses in check. Those souls who are called by God to live in the midst of the world and in the bosom of their family, walk in a narrow and arduous way, bound as they are by the marriage vow—for, as St Paul says: *Tribulationem tamen carnis habebunt hujusmodi*. He proceeds, however, at once to add the rule by which they must guide their conduct in the world, if not with actual vows, at least with the virtue of the evangelical counsels of perfection: *Qui utuntur hoc mundo, tamquam non utantur. Praeterit enim figura hujus mundi* (1 Cor. vii, 28, 31).

The Collect, which is biographical in character, is the following: "O God, who amongst other gifts of thy grace, didst honour blessed Frances, thy servant, with the familiar presence of an angel; grant, we beseech thee, that by the help of her intercession we may become worthy to be admitted into fellowship with the angels. Through our Lord."

The Lesson is from the Book of Proverbs (xxxi, 10-31), in which are sung the praises of the "valiant woman," the mother of a family, who faithfully performs her household duties, thus fulfilling a mission which is not less difficult, nor less important, than that of the apostolate of souls. With reference to this vocation, both St Philip Neri and St Francis de Sales observe that our self-love desires to impose its own judgements even on our practice of virtue, seeking dramatic situations and startling actions, at the same time despising the little everyday domestic virtues which continually require a considerable amount of self-sacrifice. Great occasions for practising heroic acts of sanctity happen but rarely, whereas the ordinary opportunities of overcoming ourselves occur every day. The Holy Ghost in drawing a picture of the "valiant woman" did not place in her hand a bow or a sword, as, by an exception, we see in that of Judith, but has represented her with a distaff and a spindle—that is, in the regular and habitual exercise of the ordinary duties of her state of life.

The Gradual is that of the feast of St Agnes, and the alleluiatic verse is identical with that of St Emerentiana. The Tract which is sung after Septuagesima is the same as that for the Mass on St Apollonia's day, except that the allusion to martyrdom is omitted.



The Gospel and the Offertory are common to the feast of St Emerentiana.

The Secret and the Post-Communion are common to the feast of St Scholastica on February 10, whilst the Communion is taken from Psalm xliv, "Thou hast loved justice, and hated iniquity." These were the vigorous words of the great-souled Pope Hildebrand, when, exiled to Salerno for defending the liberty of the Church, he gave up his harassed spirit to God. "Therefore God, thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows." Here is another note of true Catholic holiness. It may consist simply in performing the ordinary acts proper to one's condition in life without there being anything out of the common, since that which constitutes heroic virtue is to be found in the inner dispositions with which the saints practise it and which are far higher than those of the general level of mediocrity.

St Frances of Rome is the heavenly patron of Benedictine Oblates, and the model of widows. These, indeed, according to the mind of the apostle, are specially called to a high degree of sanctity, inasmuch as the charm of their first youth having faded like a flower, the soul, which has experienced the transitory nature of human beings, finds no secure support but in the Lord. The virtues appropriate to this state of life, from which in apostolic times the deaconesses were preferably drawn, are trust in God, assiduous prayer, mortification of the senses, and works of charity on behalf of others.

## MARCH 10

### THE FORTY HOLY MARTYRS OF SEBASTE

These martyrs of Sebaste, who suffered death about the year 320, and who were so much praised by St Basil and St Gregory of Nyssa, were greatly venerated even in the West from the early Middle Ages and their names placed in the Roman Missal by reason of the various medieval churches dedicated to them in the Eternal City. In the twelfth century Callixtus II erected a small oratory in their honour at the foot of the Janiculum, not far from the title of Callixtus in the Trastevere. Another church dedicated to them stood near the ancient Pretorian Camp, and is mentioned as being there in the time of Innocent IV (1243-54). Nearer the centre of the city on the Via Papalis rose up the church known as *Sanctorum Quadraginta de calcarariis*, now dedicated to the Stigmata of St Francis; and, finally, close to the Flavian amphitheatre was the church *Sanctorum Quadraginta* with a cardinal's title, now destroyed.



The Mass has a certain savour of antiquity, but it is not original, for its various parts are drawn from other and earlier feasts, especially from that of the Seven Sons of St Felicitas on July 10.

The Introit comes from Psalm xxxiii: "The just cried, and the Lord heard them: and delivered them out of all their troubles. I will bless the Lord at all times: his praise shall be ever in my mouth."

Suffering was as repugnant to the saints as it is to us, therefore they cried upon the Lord before the trial. God gave ear to their prayer, not indeed by withdrawing them from the test, but by causing them to be stronger than the temptation.

The Collect for to-day is very fine, but it is taken from the Mass of the Seven Sons of St Felicitas: "Grant, we beseech thee, almighty God, that we who acknowledge the boldness of thy glorious martyrs in confessing thy name, may enjoy their loving intercession for us before thee."

The Lesson is the same as that for the feast of the holy martyrs Fabian and Sebastian on January 20.

The Gradual from Psalm cxxxii praises the constant oneness of the martyrs in all sustaining together the torments which they suffered, animated by the same faith and by the same interior grace of the Holy Ghost.

"Behold how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity. It is like the precious ointment on the head, that ran down upon the beard, the beard of Aaron."

The Tract and the Gospel are from the Common of Many Martyrs as on January 20.

The Offertory is derived from Psalm xxxi, and describes the heavenly joy which follows the bitterness of martyrdom. "Be glad in the Lord, and rejoice, ye just; and glory, all ye right of heart."

The Secret is as follows: "Look down, O Lord, upon the prayers and oblations of thy faithful: that they may both be pleasing to thee for the festival of thy saints, and may confer on us the help of thy propitiation."

The verse for the Communion is obviously not in its original place, since it does not correspond in any way with to-day's Gospel Lesson. It belongs, as a matter of fact, to the feast of the Seven Martyr Brothers, sons of St Felicitas. As, however, at Rome the Mother was included in the same Mass, a graceful allusion is made in the Antiphon for the Communion to the higher significance which Jesus attributes to the title of brother, sister, and mother given to those who do the will of his Father in heaven.

Communion (Matt. xii, 50): "Whosoever shall do the will



of my Father that is in heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother, saith the Lord."

The Post-Communion, which is the same as on July 10, is the following: "Appeased by the intercession of thy saints, grant, O Lord, we beseech thee, that those things which we celebrate by our temporal act we may obtain in perpetual salvation."

The only attitude befitting to man before the inscrutable designs of God is that of humble and silent adoration. No one is necessary to God, and his glory would suffer no disparagement even if we were to refuse to co-operate with it. He can raise up sons to Abraham from the stones; if we do not correspond to his grace the loss will be ours alone, since God will perform by means of another that which he would otherwise have deigned to accomplish through our instrumentality. This is what happened in the case of the Forty Martyrs of Sebaste. The angels had prepared forty crowns in heaven; one of the confessors of the Faith broke down under the torments, and apostatized, but his place was immediately taken by one of the executioners, who thereby merited the fortieth crown.

In early times the *cultus* of the Forty Martyrs of Sebaste was exceedingly popular in the East. We still possess the text of their testament which the majority of critics now consider to be genuine, and which is, therefore, to be regarded as a real gem of ancient Christian literature.

## MARCH 12

ST GREGORY THE GREAT, POPE, CONFESSOR, AND DOCTOR

*Night Vigil and Stational Mass at St Peter.*

This feast, celebrated also by the Greeks, is to be found in the Gregorian Sacramentary in the time of Adrian I, and is one of the few which were admitted in early days into the Roman Calendar during the Lenten season. We know, in fact, that at Rome, in the ninth century: *eius anniversaria solemnitas, cunctis . . . pernoctantibus . . . celebratur. In qua pallium eius, et phylacteria, sed et balteus eius consuetudinaliter osculantur.*<sup>1</sup> The renown of St Gregory (who died in 604) justified this exception, and, above all, the symbolical significance which his personality acquired historically, when in the Middle Ages it made the idea of the Roman papacy in the most sublime expression of its primacy over the whole Church a reality.

<sup>1</sup> Joh. Diac., *Vita P. S. Gregorii*, l. IV, c. 80.



We may say, indeed, that the whole period of the Middle Ages lived in the spirit of St Gregory; the Roman Liturgy, the sacred chant, the Canon Law, the fervour of the monks, the evangelization of the pagans, the life of the pastors of the Church; in a word, everything connected with ecclesiastical activity was founded upon the holy Doctor whose writings seemed to have become the universal law of Catholicism. The large number of ancient churches dedicated to St Gregory in Rome prove how popular was his *cultus*, of which his greatly venerated tomb in the Vatican Basilica and his former monastery of St Andrew at the Clivus Scauri were the two chief points of attraction.

John the Deacon in the ninth century bears witness to the pious care with which all the relics of St Gregory were still kept at Rome, the registers of his almsgiving, his straw bed, his rod, the codex of his antiphonary, and his monk's girdle. The devotion paid to St Gregory I, chiefly owing to the Benedictine Order of which he is one of the greatest glories, and to the Anglo-Saxon people who venerate him as their first apostle, very soon spread throughout the world. Indeed, immediately after his death, the author of the sepulchral inscription commemorating him in the portico of St Peter could find no better words in which to express the universality of his pastoral influence than by calling him—the ancient offshoot of the Consuls of Rome the eternal—the “Consul of God,” *Dei Consul factus, laetare triumphis*. It would be impossible to find a happier description than this, together with these words from the same inscription: *implebat actu quidquid sermone docebat*.

To-day's station, even in the time of John the Deacon, was at St Peter near the tomb of the saint where the night vigil was also celebrated in his honour. In the fifteenth century the papal consistory was not held on this day in order to mark the solemnity.

The Mass, being of a later date than the Gregorian collection, derives its chants from other and earlier Masses.

The Introit is from the Common of a Martyr and Bishop as on January 26, the feast of St Polycarp. By a delicate allusion to the humility with which Gregory met the pride of the Ecumenical Father,<sup>1</sup> the humble of heart are invited to bless God from whom they acknowledge to have received their every good.

The Collect is thus worded: “O God, who hast given to the soul of thy servant Gregory the rewards of everlasting bliss; grant in thy mercy that we, who are weighed down

<sup>1</sup> John II of Cappadocia, Patriarch of Constantinople.—Tr.



by the burden of our sins, may be relieved through his prayers."

"To the soul of thy servant Gregory." These words are well chosen, for the distinctive character of the spirituality of St Gregory, a spirituality which at once shows him to be a monk trained in the school of the Patriarch St Benedict, is wholly expressed in that title which he was the first to use: "Gregory, servant of the servants of God." To this day the Popes, in their most solemn utterances, follow the saint's example, and call themselves by the title of *Servus Servorum Dei*, which, however, signified originally in the case of Gregory, a monk of the monastery of St Andrew: the "servant of the servants of God," that is, of the monks: (*Servus Dei*); in a word, the last in the monastery.

The ascetic tradition of St Benedict concerning the virtue of humility has always been apparent in all the great Doctors fashioned in the Benedictine cloister. Thus we find St Peter Damian habitually signing himself: *Ego Petrus peccator episcopus hostiensis*; and Hildebrand, before he became Pope under the name of Gregory VII, in like manner signed himself: *Ego Hildebrandus qualiscumque, S.R.E. archidiaconus*.

The two Lessons are drawn from the Common of Doctors, as on the festival of St Ambrose, December 7.

The Gradual is also that for St Clement and is taken from Psalm cix, in which is exalted the Messianic priesthood of Christ: "The Lord hath sworn and he will not repent. Thou art a priest for ever according to the order of Melchisedech. The Lord said to my Lord"—that is, the Eternal Father said to Christ, his own son and the son of Mary, the lineal descendant of David—"sit thou at my right hand" as my equal in the power and majesty of the Godhead.

The Tract is the same as for the feast of St Thomas Aquinas.

The Offertory comes from Psalm lxxxviii: "My truth and my mercy shall be with him: and in my name shall his horn be exalted." This is the secret of the success of the saints. They hope in God and therefore shall not fail.

In the Secret we pray: "Grant us, we beseech thee, O Lord, that by the intercession of blessed Gregory this sacrifice may be profitable to us; by the offering of which thou didst vouchsafe to forgive the sins of the whole world."

The Gregorian Sacramentary appoints a proper Preface for to-day . . . *aeterne Deus; qui sic tribuis Ecclesiam tuam sancti Gregorii Pontificis tui commemoratione gaudere, ut eam illius et festivitate laetifices, et exemplo piae conversationis exerceas, et verbo praedicationis erudias, grataque tibi supplicatione tuearis, per Christum, etc.*

The Communion is as on December 5, the feast of St



**Sabbas.** The measure of wheat which Gregory gave in due season to his fellow-servants is his pastoral activity as an unwearied preacher, an ever watchful master, and a Pontiff of spotless character.

After the Communion is said this prayer: "O God, who didst make blessed Bishop Gregory rank with thy saints by his merits; mercifully grant that we who keep his memory by this festival, may also follow the example of his life. Through our Lord."

An artifice commonly employed by the devil is that of suggesting to our minds an ideal and type of perfection to which, on account of the circumstances in which we find ourselves, it is impossible for us to attain. Many souls, in such a case, instead of changing their method and endeavouring to sanctify themselves in the state of life in which Providence has placed them, remain in a condition of inactivity, bewailing their lot and for ever sighing for the form of sanctity unattainable by them. Thus they lose valuable time, embitter their heart, do harm to their health, and are of benefit neither to themselves nor to anyone else.

Perfection should not mean to us merely a metaphysical abstraction, but, like the air, it must pervade all the actions of our life. It matters very little whether we are rich or poor, learned or ignorant, healthy or infirm. We must serve God in those conditions of life in which he has placed us, not in those in which we would like to place ourselves.

A fine example of this practical common sense in the path of holiness is set before us by Gregory. His meditative character inclined him to a life of quiet study of philosophy in the peace of the cloister, whereas God destined him to be a diplomatist, a Pope, the administrator of an immense territorial patrimony, and even a strategist in directing the defensive works of those Italian towns which were besieged by the Lombards—a true Consul of God whose activity and whose influence were worldwide. Gregory, who was often confined to his bed with gout and internal sufferings, wasted no time in lamentations, but adapted himself in a marvellous manner to all these offices, and solely intent on serving God, he executed them with such wonderful mastery and skill that he filled the entire Middle Ages with his spirit, leaving clearly marked traces of his genius on the after development of the Roman Pontificate.

The Byzantines, too, venerate the sanctity of Gregory, to whom they give the title of "Dialogist" or *Διάλογος* on account of his four books of Dialogues, translated into Greek by Pope Zachary.

In honour of the Pontiff who may be considered as the father of the Roman Liturgy and of the ecclesiastical chant,



we here transcribe an ancient Sequence appraising St Gregory, which has already been edited by Bannister from a codex of the fifteenth century.

O rganum spirituale  
Tangat decus clericale,  
Dum recolitur natale  
Vigilis Gregorii.

Let the venerable ranks of the clergy cause to resound a spiritual organ, since to-day is celebrated the feast of Gregory the vigilant pastor.

S criba Regis Angelorum,  
Floruit hic lux doctorum,  
Et Apostolus Anglorum,  
Qui prius inglorii.

From a scribe of the King of Angels, he became the glory and the light of the Doctors, and the Apostle of the Angles, who until then were without glory.

E x prosapia Romana,  
Spreta mundi pompa vana,  
In doctrina Christiana  
Vigilanter studuit

Roman by race, despising the vain pomps of the world, he studied unwearyingly the teaching of Christ.

R ector magnus et urbanus,  
Cuius pater Gordianus,  
Felix Pontifex Romanus  
Atavus resplenduit.

He strikingly filled the office of Prætor of Rome; Gordianus was his father and Pope Felix the Roman his ancestor.

V irgo saeculo pusilla,  
Eius amita Tarsilla,  
Deo vigilans ancilla  
Vidit Iesum dulciter.

Tarsilla, his father's sister, a humble virgin in the eyes of the world, was indefatigable in the service of God, and merited to behold the gentle Jesus.

V ivens Silvia caelestis,  
Mater huius digna gestis,  
Fixit cor aeternis festis,  
Finiens feliciter.

Sylvia, worthy mother of so great a saint, lived a heavenly life, and, with her heart intent on eternal joys, died a happy death.

M onasteria construxit,  
Ac prudentia adfluxit,  
Monachalem vitam duxit,  
Derelinquens omnia.

Gregory built monasteries and ordered them with prudence; renouncing all things, he lived the monastic life.

S ed cum cuperet sincere  
Mori cunctis et latere,  
Cogebatur apparere  
Ut flos inter lilia.

He earnestly desired to be dead to the world and to be hid, but he was constrained like a flower to shine forth among the lilies.

E ruditus in virtute  
A primaeva juventute,  
Iter vadens viae tutae,  
Devitavit crimina.

Instructed in virtue from his earliest years, he walked in the safe path and avoided every fault.

R etexendo cantilenas  
Sublevavit febris poenas,  
Odas addidit amoenas  
Per Scripturae carmina.

He beguiled the hours of fever and suffering by revising the sacred melodies, and beautified the scriptural versicles with sublime harmonies.



V idens pueros Anglorum  
Pulchros vultu angelorum,  
Mox misertus est eorum,  
Suspirando graviter.

O Pontificem beatum,  
Per columnam demonstratum,  
Et a naufrago probatum,  
Dignum mirabiliter.

R ecta scribens, recte dixit,  
Quo malevolos adflixit,  
Sed correctis benedixit,  
Pastor bonus omnibus.

V igil iste Sanctus fuit,  
Qui ut nubes magna pluit,  
Et ut ros de caelo ruit,  
Utilis fidelibus.

M onstra fecit in hac vita,  
Verus hic Israelita,  
Quod cognovit eremita  
Ex divina gratia.<sup>1</sup>

D eus fecit Levi pactum,  
Nec poenituit transactum,  
Pacis atque vitae factum  
Cum honoris gloria.

A E s in zonis non compegit,  
Sed pauperibus redegit,  
Quem Salvator praelegit  
Organum mellifluum.

I stum deprecemur Sanctum  
Nos viventes vita tantum,  
Ut cantemus Agni cantum  
Nunc et in perpetuum.

When he saw the children of the  
Angles, beautiful with angel faces,  
he sighed over them, full of tender  
pity.

O blessed Pontiff, whose symbol  
was a column, whose coming  
was foretold by a shipwrecked  
traveller, and who was worthy of  
all praise.

He excelled in his writings and  
in his spoken words, through  
which he reproved the wicked  
and blessed the good, showing  
himself a true shepherd to all.

The saint was vigilant indeed,  
and like a large cloud refreshed  
the earth with rain, or like dew  
from heaven was precious to the  
faithful.

As a true seer of the Lord he  
performed great wonders during  
his life, according to the revela-  
tion granted by divine grace to  
the hermit.<sup>1</sup>

God made a pact with him as  
with another Levi, a pact which  
was not broken, a pledge of peace,  
of life and of immortal glory.

He did not fill his purse with  
gold, but distributed it among the  
poor. He was chosen by the  
Saviour to be a benign instrument  
of the divine Word to all.

Let us, who live only for this  
earthly life, beseech this so great  
saint that we may sing the hymn  
of the Lamb now and for ever-  
more.

The initial letters of each verse of the Sequence form the  
acrostic : *O Servum Servorum Dei.*

There is another very much older Sequence which, although

<sup>1</sup> This is an illusion to a pleasing legend. A holy monk one day asked the Lord in the simplicity of his heart to reveal to him to what degree of sanctity he had already attained by his life of mortification. The Lord replied that he had equalled Pope Gregory. The monk was displeased at this reply, seeing that he lived in poverty in a cave, while the Pope ruled the world from the splendid palace of the Lateran. God then revealed to the monk that Gregory was less attached to the grandeur of the papal dignity than was the hermit himself to a cat which was the companion of his solitude!



it was not composed originally for St Gregory the Great, is very well suited to his feast, and was indeed sung at the solemn pontifical Mass which Pius X celebrated in St Peter in 1904 on the thirteenth centenary of the death of the great Doctor. The choir on that occasion numbered over a thousand voices, and the Pope was so impressed by the immense effect produced by the melody, that as soon as the Mass was over, he gave orders for the splendid Sequence to be sung again. Having, therefore, been thus consecrated by the approbation of Pius X, it may almost be now considered as belonging of right to the Roman Liturgy.

This is the text of that important medieval composition in pure rhythm, without rhyme, formed, like the early Sequences on the alleluiatic μέλισμα of the Mass.

1.

Alma cohors una  
Laudum sonora  
Nunc prome praeconia.

2.

Quibus en insignis rutilat  
Gregorius ut luna,  
Solque sidera.

2a.

Meritorum est mirifica  
Radians idem sacra  
Praerogativa.

3.

Hunc nam Sophiae mystica  
Ornarunt mire dogmata,  
Qua fulsit nitida  
Luculenter per ampla  
Orbis climata.

3a.

Verbi necnon fructifera  
Saevit divini semina  
Mentium per arva,  
Pellendo quoque cuncta  
Noctis nubila.

4.

Hic famina fundens diva,  
Utpote caelestia  
Ferens in se Numina.

4a.

Sublimavit catholica  
Vehementer culmina  
Sancta per eloquia.

1.

O noble choir, lift up now your  
voices in a sublime hymn of  
praise.

2.

And acclaim Gregory, who  
shines like the sun and the moon  
and the stars.

2a.

He is radiant with the special  
glory of his wondrous merits.

3.

Knowledge of the most profound  
dogmas of holy wisdom distin-  
guishes him, so that he is a light  
which shines unto the uttermost  
ends of the earth.

3a.

Moreover, he scattered the seed  
of the divine Word in men's  
hearts, and drove away all the  
darkness of night.

4.

Proclaiming the Word of God,  
which bears within itself the  
power of the Godhead.

4a.

He exalted by his preaching the  
Catholic Church.



5.

Is nempe celsa  
Compos gloria,  
Nunc exultat  
Inter laetabunda  
Coelicolarum ovans  
Contubernia.

5a.

Sublimis extat  
Sede superna,  
Fruens vita  
Semper inexhausta,  
Sat per celeberrima  
Christi pascua.

6.

O dignum cuncta  
laude, praeexcelsa  
Praesulem tanta  
Nactus gaudia,  
Virtutum propter merita,  
Quibus viguit, ardens  
Velut lampada.

6a.

Nos voce clara  
Hunc et iucunda  
Dantes oremus  
Preces et vota,  
Qui nobis ferat commoda,  
Impetret et aeterna  
Poscens praemia.

7.

Quod petit praesens caterva,  
Praesulum gemma,  
Devota rependens munia  
Mente sincera,  
Favens da  
Sibi precum instantia,  
Scilicet ut polorum  
Intret lumina.

7a.

Quo iam intra palatia  
Stantem suprema,  
Laeti gratulemur adepti  
Polorum regna,  
Qui tua  
Praesul, sistentes hac aula,  
Iubilemus ingenti  
Cum laetitia.

8.

Recinentes dulcia  
Nunc celsaque alleluia.

5.

Having now attained to eternal  
glory, he exults triumphant amid  
the happy choirs of the blessed.

5a.

He is raised up on a lofty throne  
and enjoys an endless life in the  
rich pastures of Christ.

6.

Behold a pastor worthy of all  
praise, who now has obtained such  
very great blessedness as a reward  
of the virtues by which he shone  
forth like a lamp.

6a.

As we praise this great saint  
with joyful songs, let us offer to  
him our prayers and our vows,  
that he may intercede for us and  
help us as far as possible to obtain  
the heavenly reward.

7.

O chief glory of the Pontiffs,  
obtain for those who offer devout  
homage to thee with sincere hearts,  
the grace which they implore,  
that they may enter the heavenly  
realms of light.

7a.

So that as we now stand in thy  
temple, O Pontiff, may we so merit  
to reach with joy unto the king-  
dom of heaven, where rejoicing  
together with thee,

8.

We may cause to resound with  
immense joy the melody of a  
heavenly Alleluia.



We cannot take our leave of so renowned a Pope as was Gregory the Great, whose book on pastoral government in the Middle Ages became the rule for the guidance of bishops, so much so that it was entered in the official list of objects belonging to the papal apartments, without first quoting here the eulogy affixed by the Romans to his temporary sepulchre in the porch of St Peter. After all these centuries a few precious fragments of that marble slab still remain :

SVSCIPE · TERRA · TVO · CORPVS · DE · CORPORE · SVMPTVM  
 REDDERE · QUOD · VALEAS · VIVIFICANTE · DEO  
 SPIRITVS · ASTRA · PETIT · LETHI · NIL · IVRA · NOCEBUNT  
 CVI · VITAE · ALTERIVS · MORS · MAGIS · ILLA · VIA · EST  
 PONTIFICIS · SVMMI · HOC · CLAVDVNTVR · MEMBRA · SEPVLCHRO  
 QVI · INNVMERIS · SEMPER · VIVAT · VBIQVE · BONIS  
 ESVRIEM · DAPIBVS · SVPERAVIT · FRIGORA · VESTE  
 ATQVE · ANIMAS · MONITIS · TEXIT · AB · HOSTE · SACRIS  
 IMPLEBATQVE · ACTV · QVIDQVID · SERMONE · DOCEBAT  
 ESSET · VT · EXEMPLVM · MYSTICA · VERBA · LOQVENS  
 ANGLOS · AD · CHRISTVM · VERTIT · PIETATE · MAGISTRA  
 ACQVIRENS · FIDEIQVE · AGMINA · GENTE · NOVA  
 HIC · LABOR · HOC · STVDIVM · TIBI · CVRA · HAEC · PASTOR ·  
 AGEBAS  
 VT · DOMINO · OFFERRES · PLVRIMA · LVCRA · GREGIS  
 HISQVE · DEI · CONSVL · FACTVS · LAETARE · TRIVMPHIS  
 NAM · MERCEDEM · OPERVM · JAM · SINE · FINE · HABES

Receive, O Earth, a body taken from thy body  
 Which thou shalt one day give back to God.  
 The soul has risen up to heaven, for hell shall have no claim  
 Over one for whom death was the gate to a better life.  
 In this tomb lies the body of a supreme Pontiff,  
 Whose fame will always live because of his countless merits.  
 With gifts of food and raiment he kept off hunger and cold  
 from the poor.  
 By his holy counsels he protected his flock from the Evil  
 One.  
 And his deeds exemplified that which he preached in words.  
 Thus were the Scriptures illustrated by his example.  
 He converted the Angles to Christ and trained them in  
 piety,  
 Thus winning to the true faith a new people.  
 This, O Pastor, was thy work, thy desire, and thy aim,  
 To present to thy Lord abundant fruits in the care of his  
 flock.  
 Therefore art thou named the Consul of God; so rejoice in  
 thy triumphs  
 For now dost thou enjoy for ever the reward of thy labours.



The use of Sequences in the Mass was adopted at Rome only towards the end of the Middle Ages; moreover, the Frankish medieval tradition cannot in truth be termed universal. There was, however, another hymn in honour of St Gregory, which was used as a kind of prelude to the Roman Antiphonary. It was sung in many countries on the First Sunday in Advent, before the intoning of the Introit. The earliest version may go back to the time of Adrian I, but it has since suffered many alterations. The following, in hexameters, is attributed to Adrian II (867-72) :

Gregorius Praesul, meritis et  
nomine dignus,  
Unde genus ducit summum con-  
scendit honorem.

Qui renovans monumenta Patrum  
iuniorque priorum,  
Munere caelesti fretus, ornans  
sapienter,

Composuit Scholae Cantorum hunc  
rite libellum,  
Quo reciprocando, moduletur car-  
mina Christi.

The Pontiff Gregory, great in  
merit and renown,  
Ascended the Papal throne whence  
was derived his ancestor.<sup>1</sup>

He renewed the teachings of the  
ancient Fathers  
And illustrated them with the skill  
and wisdom granted him by  
God.

So he composed this little book for  
the school of the Cantors,  
That they should sing, alternately,  
the hymns of Christ.

The entire city of Rome, of which Gregory was the ever-solicitous shepherd, the stational churches, the cemeteries of the martyrs, all record the tireless zeal of this incomparable Pontiff. Some, however, among the Roman sanctuaries lay claim to-day to a special feast in his honour, and these are, besides the Vatican Basilica, which holds his body in safe keeping, St Andrew at the Clivus Scauri, where Gregory was first a monk and then the Abbot, St Paul, which he caused to be embellished and which contained his family burial-place, and the Lateran, where he lived nearly fourteen years during his Pontificate.

In the Middle Ages the fourteen urban regions of Rome vied with one another in honouring Gregory and in dedicating churches and chapels to his memory; thus we find the churches *S Gregorii ad Clivum Scauri*, *S Gregorii de Cortina*, *S Gregorii de Gradellis*, *S Gregorii dei Muratori*, *S Gregorii in Campo Martio*, *S Gregorii de ponte Iudaeorum*, not to mention the many other oratories named after him.

A Bull of Gregory III (731-41) at the Basilica of St Paul mentions that a daily Mass was celebrated even then in that famous sanctuary of the Apostle of the Gentiles at the altar *S Gregorii ad ianuas*, just as at St Peter, where the tomb of

<sup>1</sup> Pope Felix IV was Gregory's ancestor. Also of Damasus, whose father was raised to the episcopal dignity, it was said in a poem :



the saint was placed in the outer porch, *prope secretarium*. The inscription of Gregory III at St Paul represents, perhaps, one of the most ancient records of the liturgical veneration paid to St Gregory the Great.

The fact that to this day the Pope when solemnizing High Mass at St Peter is vested at the altar which covers the tomb of St Gregory—besides being a mark of special reverence towards the saint who may be regarded as the incarnation of all that is most sublime in the Catholic conception of the papacy—arises from the circumstance that, originally, the tomb of this great Doctor, in the *atrium* of the Vatican Basilica, was close to the *Secretarium* or Sacristy, where the priests assumed the liturgical vestments. When the new Basilica of St Peter was erected, a special point was made of preserving for St Gregory this traditional place beside the Sacristy, so it came about that the custom was also maintained of the solemn vesting of the Pope at the altar of the saint.

The Greeks, too, have a great devotion to St Gregory. In his Office they address him as *Sacratissime Pastor, factus es successor in zelo et sede Coryphaei, populos purificans et ad Deum adducens. Successor in sede Principis Chori Discipulorum, unde verba, veluti fulgores, o Gregori, proferens, face illuminas fideles. Ecclesiarum Prima, cum Te ad pectus complexa esset, irrigat omnem terram quae sub sole est, pia doctrinae divinis fluentis*. Here we see the ancient belief of the Eastern Church with regard to the papal primacy over the universal Church.

### MARCH 14

THE MARTYROLOGY OF ST JEROME ASSIGNS FOR TO-DAY  
THE FOLLOWING COMMEMORATION :

*Romae, Leonis episcopi et martyris*, whose sepulchre is mentioned as existing in the Basilica of St Stephen in the Agro Verano by the biographer of Adrian I : *Immo et ecclesiam sancti Stephani juxta eam sitam, ubi corpus sancti Leonis Episcopi et Martyris quiescit, similiter undique reparavit.*

On the tomb of the saint was inscribed this epigraph in the style of Pope Damasus, and was consequently copied in the ancient collections :

OMNIA • QVAEQVE • VIDES • PROPRIO • QVAESITA • LABORE  
CVM • MIHI • GENTILIS • IAMDVDM • VITA • MANERET  
INSTITVI • CVPIENS • CENSVM • COGNOSCERE • MVNDI  
IVDICIO • POST • MVLTAM • DEI • MELIORA • SECVTVS  
CONTEMPTIS • OPIBVS • MALVI • COGNOSCERE • CHRISTVM  
HAEC • MIHI • CVRA • FVIT • NVDOS • VESTIRE • PETENTES



FVNDERE · PAVPERIBVS · QVIDQVID · CONCESSERAT · ANNVS  
 PSALLERE · ET · IN · POPVLIS · VOLVI · MODVLANTE · PROPHETA  
 SIC · MERVI · PLEBEM · CHRISTI · RETINERE · SACERDOS  
 HVNC · MIHI · COMPOSVIT · TVMVLVM · LAURENTIA · CONIVNX  
 MORIBVS · APTA · MEIS · SEMPER · VENERANDA · FIDELIS  
 INVIDIA · INFELIX · TANDEM · COMPRESSA · QVIESCET  
 OCTOGINTA · LEO · TRANSCENDIT · EPISCOPVS · ANNOS  
 DEP · DIE · PRID · IDVS · MARTIAS

Various circumstances induce us to see in this Bishop Leo the father of Pope Damasus, but although this is very probable, it is not at all certain. That which is proved, in any case, is the antiquity of the liturgical *cultus* paid at the Campo Verano to this illustrious bishop, who, among his other great pastoral merits, appears to anticipate the musical glory of Gregory the Great; for he boasts of having exercised the office of soloist, chanting the Psalms of David in the liturgical assemblies.

It is well known that almost to the fifth century the liturgical chant was responsorial; the Eastern innovation of the antiphon not having as yet been adopted in the West. The *Scholae Cantorum*, therefore, did not exist and the vocalization of a competent soloist sufficed. This Office, however, was held in such esteem that the deacons competed with one another to obtain it, and even bishops boasted of having won praise for the manner in which they carried it out.

If the above-mentioned Bishop Leo was indeed the father of Damasus, it is evident that the love of poetry and of music was handed down in that family from father to son.

## MARCH 17

### ST PATRICK, BISHOP AND CONFESSOR\*

This Apostle of Ireland, who died in 464, after a life full of austerities and of marvels, scattered the seed of the Gospel in those distant regions with such success that, from the innumerable band of holy men and women which it produced, the verdant land of Erin was known in the Middle Ages by the glorious title of the "Island of Saints"—a glory which three centuries of bitter persecution of the Catholic Faith at the hands of the Anglican Church utterly failed to eclipse.

As a tribute, therefore, to the vigorous faith of this nation of heroes, Pius IX, in 1859, raised the feast of St Patrick, which has appeared in the Roman Breviary from the fifteenth century, to the rank of a double. Patrick may truly be regarded as the great patriarch of the Irish episcopate and of



Irish monachism; a monachism whose history has left its mark throughout all medieval Europe, wherever, that is, the wandering *Scotti* planted their tents and introduced their traditions.

Christian Rome has dedicated a new church not far from the Via Salaria to this great Apostle of Ireland; but, also, in olden days, the Irish hospice "*Scottorum*," which later became the Abbey *SS Trinitatis* near the titular church of St Lawrence in Damaso, showed how great was the fervour of faith and the love for Catholic Rome which the teaching of St Patrick had impressed on the religious feeling of the Irish.

The Mass is that of the Common of a Confessor and Bishop as on February 4, but the Collect is proper to the feast. "O God, who didst vouchsafe to send blessed Patrick, thy confessor and bishop, to preach thy glory to the nations; grant, through his merits and intercession, that what thou commandest us to do, we may by thy mercy be able to accomplish. Through our Lord."

Holiness, though necessary to all, is still more so to ecclesiastical superiors, and to all those who in the designs of Providence are called upon to found or constitute any kind of religious society. Those who come after must be careful not to change the spirit and the traditions; but, in order that this may be so, it is necessary that the founders should have kindled in their work so powerful a fire of interior life and holiness that it may also inflame the hearts of future generations of disciples. It is in this sense that we can understand the saying of the apostle that it is not the sons who are to amass a fortune for their parents, but rather the parents who must do so for their children.

### MARCH 18

#### ST CYRIL, BISHOP OF JERUSALEM, CONFESSOR, AND DOCTOR OF THE CHURCH\*

The feast of this Pontiff, who died about the year 386, was instituted by Leo XIII in 1882, as a sequel to his endeavours to promote the return of the Oriental Churches to the unity of the Catholic Communion. The beginning of the episcopate of St Cyril was marked out by God with the marvellous appearance in the heavens on May 7, 351, of a luminous cross which was seen by the whole city of Jerusalem.

The Mass is that of the Common of Doctors as on January 29, except in the following particulars :



The Collect contains a graceful allusion to the doctrinal work of St Cyril, who was the valiant champion of the Divinity of Christ against the Arians. On this account during the reigns of the Arian Emperors Constantius and Valens, he was deposed from his See, and forced on three occasions to endure the hardships of exile, thus earning the merit and glory of a Confessor of the Faith.

Collect: "Grant us, we beseech thee, almighty God, through the intercession of blessed Cyril, thy bishop, so to know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent, that we may be accounted worthy to be numbered evermore with the sheep who hear his voice. Through our Lord."

The Lesson (Ecclesiasticus xxxix, 6-14) is the alternative passage for the Common of Doctors.

The Gospel, which is the same as that appointed for the feast of St Athanasius (Matt. x, 23-28), is chosen with reference to the persecutions and exiles suffered by Cyril at the hands of the Arians. Our Lord did not wish that the apostles should expose themselves recklessly to death, or that they should exercise a profitless ministry among those who were unwilling to benefit by it. He therefore commands his disciples when persecuted in one city to leave it and go to another, in order that the message of the Gospel should be spread abroad and that the whole world should see the shining light of the divine Word, and through it obtain salvation. All the apostles, and especially Paul, carried out exactly this command of the Saviour, and being cast out by the Jews, they turned to the Gentiles of the Grecian and Roman cities, amongst whom the early Church found her first recruits.

St Athanasius, the great fugitive of the fourth century, against whom, as the sacred Liturgy tells us, the whole world leagued itself in persecution, has written a work in which he declares that flight in time of persecution, in the circumstances foreseen in to-day's Gospel, is an act of great perfection, not only because it is a precept of Christ himself, but because instead of ending the sufferings of the Apostolate by a speedy death, it prolongs them, reserving the missionary for fresh and still more severe trials in the future.

The Secret is of great beauty: "Look down, O Lord, on the unspotted victim which we offer up to thee, and grant that by the merits of thy blessed bishop and confessor Cyril, we may ever seek to receive it with clean hearts. Through our Lord."

It was very fitting that the Mass in honour of the great author of the Mystagogic Catecheses of Jerusalem should be inspired by these precious writings in which Cyril in wonder-



fully clear and concise terms expounds the teaching of the Church concerning the sacraments, and especially that of the Holy Eucharist. The conception of the prayer of thanksgiving after the Communion, in which we beg that the Holy Communion may cause us to participate in the fellowship of the divine nature, is certainly taken from St Cyril, who, in his turn, was inspired by the Second Epistle of St Peter (i, 4).

Post-Communion : " Grant, O Lord Jesus Christ, through the prayers of blessed Cyril, thy bishop, that the sacrament of thy body and blood, which we have received, may sanctify our minds and hearts, so that we may be deemed worthy to be partakers of the divine nature."

There is nothing more grand or more mysterious than grace, which communicates the divine life to the soul in a manner created and proportioned to its capacity indeed, but always real. Created and divine, we have said—using two terms which appear to be incompatible—yet the elevation of the soul to the supernatural sphere requires precisely the support of this higher life. Grace, in fact, prepares the soul for glory, wherefore it is not surprising if theologians appear embarrassed when they have to express its intimate nature; since, in order to understand it, it would be necessary to know its ultimate end, which is nothing else than the beatific vision of the divine Essence.

### MARCH 18

To-day the Martyrology of St Jerome announces : *Romae Pymeni presbyteri*. This is the martyr Pygmenius, who was interred, together with Pollion and Milix, in the cemetery of Pontianus. The Salzburg Itinerary records it thus : *Descendis in antrum et invenies ibi innumerabilem multitudinem Martyrum: Pumenius martyr ibi quiescit, et Milix martyr in altero loco*.

The tomb is decorated with paintings representing the saints, and it had this peculiarity—that it could not be entered, but was only to be viewed through the *fenestella confessionis*. Later the relics of the presbyter and martyr Pygmenius were transferred to St Sylvester in *Capite*, so that in the ancient *Notitia Nataliciorum Sanctorum hic requiescentium* we read : *Die XVIII mensis suprascripti (martii), natalis sancti Pymenii presbyteri et martyris*.



MARCH 19

ST JOSEPH, CONFESSOR, SPOUSE OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN  
MARY, PATRON OF THE UNIVERSAL CHURCH\*

In the Echternach copy of the so-called Martyrology of St Jerome, there is noted for to-day the *natalis* of a certain martyr, Joseph of Antioch, who cannot be identified with the most chaste spouse of the Immaculate Virgin Mary. On the other hand, other martyrologies of a later date, beginning with the tenth century, record on this day: *In Bethlehem sancti Joseph nutritoris Domini*, as we see, for instance, in the martyrology of Farfa. From so brief a notice as this originated the great solemnity which the Catholic Church celebrates to-day.

Devotion to St Joseph has developed amongst Christian people in so marvellous a manner, following such wonderful laws, that it is impossible not to recognize therein the working of divine Providence.

During the first three centuries, it was necessary that the divine nature of the Redeemer should shine forth in all its brightness on an idolatrous people. For this reason the earliest festivals of the liturgical year were those having reference to the mystery of the salvation of the world, such as Easter, the Epiphany, the administration of holy Baptism. When the first dangers arising from polytheism and the Arian heresy had been averted, theology dwelt in preference upon the study of the union of the divine and the human natures in the one person of the Redeemer, and thus there arose the feasts which refer principally to the sacred humanity of Christ, such as the Nativity, the Presentation in the Temple, and the Falling Asleep of the most Blessed Virgin Mary.

This was the golden period of Mariology, which began with the Council of Ephesus, and which throughout the early Middle Ages gave rise to so many feasts and processions, to so many basilicas and monasteries dedicated to the Mother of God, that finally the veneration shown to our Lady was so closely united to the Catholic Faith as to become its special characteristic.

As the earliest christological paintings in the catacombs represented the divine Infant on his Mother's lap, so the devotion of the Church continues to adore him depicted in Mary's arms. The true Catholic knows that Mary is the masterpiece of Creation, and that the honour paid to her is a tribute to the divine Artifex. He knows that it was the will of Jesus himself, as her true Son, to be obliged to honour and love her infinitely; so, in honouring and loving Mary, the



faithful know that they do but follow, from afar it is true, the example of Jesus.

Second only to Mary comes he who, although not the father of Jesus, nevertheless had a father's authority over him. This is Joseph, who was not merely the putative father of the Saviour in the sense in which the Jews, ignorant of the mystery of the Incarnation, held him to be, nay, he was more, for he was the true representative of the authority of the eternal Father, and was consequently invested with the *patria potestas* in the bosom of the Holy Family of Nazareth.

Thus the angel delivers the commands of the Lord concerning the flight into Egypt and the return to Palestine to Joseph alone; he it is who, together with Mary, gives the divine Infant the name of Jesus; he it is who hastens his Immaculate Spouse to set forth into exile, as it is also on him that the responsibility rests for the maintenance of the Holy Family at Nazareth. As in the Holy House of Nazareth, under the paternal authority of Joseph, God was pleased to bless the first beginnings of the Church, so she rightly recognizes and venerates as her special patron, St Joseph, the first head of this family, the household of God upon earth.

The liturgical *cultus* of this great Patriarch developed considerably in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, through the instrumentality especially of St Bridget of Sweden, of John Gerson, and of St Bernardine of Siena. The Franciscan Pope Sixtus IV (1471-84) introduced the commemoration of St Joseph into the Roman Breviary as a simple feast, which was raised to a double by Clement IX; Gregory XV made the feast one of obligation,<sup>1</sup> and finally Pius IX gave to St Joseph the title of Patron of the Universal Church.

Christian Rome, besides the magnificent chapel dedicated to St Joseph in the Vatican Basilica itself, has named many churches and oratories after this glorious Patriarch, who holds the highest place amongst the saints, being by right of his office the nearest to Jesus and Mary. Among the less ancient of these churches we must mention that of St Joseph "dei Falegnami" on the *Custodia Mamertini* in the Forum Romanum; St Joseph *ad caput domorum* not far from the Porta Pinciana, St Joseph "alla Lungara" in the Leonine city; St Joseph *de linea* built by the celebrated Vittoria Colonna but now destroyed; St Joseph at the foot of the *Collis ortorum* close to the Piazza di Spagna, St Joseph "di Cluny" near the Via Merulana, etc.

It is not improbable that the tardy institution of the feast of St Joseph in the month of March was influenced by the commemoration which the Church makes of Joseph the great patriarch during Lent, when the words of St Ambrose pro-

<sup>1</sup> i.e., for Italy.



nounced in his praise are read after the second nocturn of the Third Sunday in Lent: *Ex libro S Ambrosii Episcopi, de sancto Joseph.*

The Mass is taken in part from the Common of a Confessor, or from other earlier Masses contained in the Sacramentary. The selection has, however, been made with good taste.

The Introit is as on January 15.

If St Joseph is compared to a flourishing palm-tree and to the stem of Jesse, the flower which adorns this stem is Jesus Christ, who, as St Augustine truly says, alone befits the sacred and virginal union of the Blessed Virgin with the holy Patriarch.

The Collect is derived from the feast of St Matthew: "Vouchsafe, O Lord, that we may be helped by the merits of the spouse of thy most holy mother, so that what we cannot obtain of ourselves may be given to us through his intercession: who livest."

The Lesson is from the Common of Abbots as on December 5, but is far more suited to St Joseph whom God placed at the head of his family upon earth, to whom he revealed the glory and the mystery of the Incarnation of the Word, and whom he honoured above all other mortals.

The Gradual and Tract are the same as on February 8. Three brilliant gems shine resplendent in the crown which God has placed on the head of Joseph, and these are Jesus, Mary, and Holy Church.

During Paschal time the Gradual and the Tract are omitted and the following alleluiatic verses are recited instead: (Ecclesiasticus xlv) "Alleluia, alleluia. The Lord loved him, and adorned him: he clothed him with a robe of glory. Alleluia."

The second verse (Osee xiv) is identical with that of the feast of St Paul the first hermit, and refers to the rod that blossomed which, according to tradition, marked out Joseph as the Spouse chosen by God for the Virgin Mary.

The Gospel (Matt. i, 18-21) is like that of Christmas Eve. In it we should note that, in accordance with the command of the Angel, Joseph, as the representative of the Eternal Father and as a sign of his *patria potestas* over the Incarnate Word, bestows on him the name of Jesus and, together with the name, entrusts him also with the mission of redeeming the human race by obedience even to the sacrifice of Calvary. Thus St Joseph enters into the designs of almighty God for our salvation and takes his part in the wondrous plan of the Incarnation of the Word.

The Offertory is that for the feast of St Raymund on



January 23, but, as applied to St Joseph, this verse from Psalm lxxxviii acquires a deeper meaning, for the truth and the mercy which the Psalmist here describes as being the ornament and strength of the just man, are in truth found in Jesus himself, who in the Holy Family was the sole treasure of his parents.

To-day's Secret has a special signification, for the offering of the host which we are about to present to God on the holy altar took place for the first time in the temple at Jerusalem when, forty days after the Nativity, Mary and Joseph brought the Incarnate Word thither, *ut sisterent eum Domino*. "We render thee, O Lord, the homage of our service, humbly entreating that thou wouldst preserve in us thy gifts by the prayers of blessed Joseph, the spouse of the mother of thy Son Jesus Christ our Lord; on whose holy festival we offer up to thee the sacrifice of praise. Through the same."

The Preface, too, is proper to the feast, and was approved by Benedict XV. "... everlasting God . . . and that we should magnify thee with due praise, bless and confess thee on the feast of holy Joseph, who, a righteous man, was given by thee to be the spouse of the virgin Mother of God, a faithful and wise servant was set over thy family, that with a father's care he should guard thine only-begotten Son conceived of the Holy Ghost, Jesus Christ our Lord."

The Antiphon for the Communion is drawn from the Gospel of the day, and its repetition at this moment of the sacred Liturgy is intended to stimulate our faith and our adoration of the majesty of him whom we have just received into our hearts. "Joseph, son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife: for that which is born in her is of the Holy Ghost."

In the Post-Communion the Church dwells for the second time to-day on the necessity of carefully guarding the gift of God and of his grace: "Be nigh to us, we beseech thee, O merciful God, and by the intercession of blessed Joseph the Confessor mercifully preserve thy gifts about us. Through our Lord."

As the Patriarch Joseph of old garnered the corn which was to save Egypt during the seven years of famine, so, too, did the most chaste Spouse of the Virgin Mary guard against the cruelty of Herod the true Bread of eternal life, which brings salvation to all mankind. This is still the mission of Joseph in heaven: and for this reason the Church dwells again and again upon the thought that it is his powerful intercession which shall preserve the mystical life of Jesus in our souls by causing us to respond faithfully to the grace which we have received.



MARCH 21

ST BENEDICT, ABBOT

The feast of the holy Patriarch of Western Monasticism was included in the Gregorian Sacramentary in the early Middle Ages, at a time, that is, when the Roman Pontificate itself, the episcopate, the hierarchy, the religious life, the apostolate among the heathen, and both sacred and profane learning, all appear to be closely bound up with the activities of the Benedictine Order. St Gregory the Great was the first to encourage the universal *cultus* of St Benedict, when less than fifty years after the death of the saint, he wrote his life and made known his rule. It was owing to him that this immortal code of perfection, kept for greater security in the papal archives at the Lateran, very soon superseded in Europe all other earlier forms of monastic life and became the *Regula Monachorum*, the eminently Roman and papal rule of the monastic devout life.

The following lines were written by a contemporary of St Gregory the Great, in praise of this ever enduring code of sanctity which that famous Pontiff held to be one of St Benedict's most wonderful achievements :

QVI · LENI · IVGO · CHRISTI · COLLA · SVBMITTERE · CVPIS  
REGVLAE · SPONTE · DA · MENTEM · DVLCIA · VT · CAPIAS · MELLA  
HIC · TESTAMENTI · VETERIS · NOVIQVE · MANDATA  
HIC · ORDO · DIVINVS · HICQVE · CASTISSIMA · VITA  
HOC · BENEDICTVS · PATER · CONSTITVIT · SACRVN · VOLVMEN  
SVISQVE · MANDAVIT · HAEC · SERVANDA · ALVMNIS  
SIMPLICIVS · FAMVLVS · CHRISTIQVE · MINISTER  
MAGISTRI · LATENS · OPVS · PROPAGAVIT · IN · OMNES  
VNA · TAMEN · MERCES · VTRISQVE · MANET · IN · AEVVM

Thou who art desirous of bending thy neck beneath the mild  
yoke of Christ,  
Zealously meditate on this Rule, and thou wilt find it sweet  
as honey.

In it is contained the teaching of the Old and the New Testaments.

Herein a divine Rule is set forth, and a life of purity.

The Patriarch Benedict composed this sacred code

And enjoined his followers to observe its laws.

Simplicius,<sup>1</sup> servant and minister of Christ,

<sup>1</sup> This Simplicius was the third Abbot of Monte Cassino, and St Gregory the Great quotes him among the witnesses from whom he obtained the historical facts related in his life of St Benedict: *Simplicio quoque, qui congregationem illius post eum tertius rexit.* (Dial. II, Prolog.), P.L. LXVI, col. 126.



Made everywhere known the word of the master, at first kept wellnigh hidden.

Thus both of them merited the same reward in eternity.

Medieval Rome, besides its eighty and more Benedictine monasteries charged with the singing of the divine Office in the chief basilicas, boasted of a considerable number of churches, oratories, and altars dedicated to the holy lawgiver of Roman Monasticism, who formerly had been one of its citizens, to him who, having abandoned his studies, fled from Rome and withdrew himself into the solitude of Subiaco, yet always kept the love of his own native city in his heart. For like Leo I (440-61), who arrested the advance of Attila and Genseric by his heroic firmness, Benedict also, by his threats and his authority, intimidated Totila and rendered less disastrous the taking of Rome at the hands of the king of the Goths.

We will confine ourselves to mentioning a few of the churches within the city dedicated to the great patriarch of Monte Cassino, in order to give our readers some idea of the importance and extent of the *cultus* of St Benedict amongst the devout Romans in early times. We note then the following churches: *S Benedicti in Arenula*, *S Benedicti de Cacabis*, *S Benedicti de Thermis*, *S Benedicti in Piscinula*, *S Benedicti Scottorum*, *S Benedicti "della ciambella."* In order to realize the place which the Patriarch of Latin Monasticism held in the Middle Ages, it is necessary that we should also recall a famous picture in the church of Sta Maria in Pallara where St Benedict is to be seen occupying a central position between the two Princes of the Apostles, Peter and Paul.

It may be said with truth that, in those days, owing to its great number of monasteries, the entire Eternal City was Benedictine; since the spirit of the *Regula Sancta*, as it came to be called, filled all the citizens. The iron age, alas! was soon to follow, when the number of monks began to decline. Moreover, with the rise of the new Mendicant Orders, who were especially intended for an active life consequent on the new requirements of the faithful, a number of other stars began to shine in the firmament of the Church.

St Benedict, however, still remained the great Patriarch of all these founders of religious Orders; for, like another Moses, he had guided the Church, during many centuries, through the arid desert of the early Middle Ages. Further, just as the glory of the Judges, who arose after Moses to carry on his work, in no way lessened the glory of Israel's great Lawgiver, so the fame of the great reformers of the religious life in the West, after the twelfth century, in no wise detracts from the splendour which surrounds the figure



of St Benedict, who is regarded as their father and law-giver by a glorious company of Popes, doctors, and apostles of all the nations of Europe, as well as by innumerable martyrs and saints.

The last two Pontiffs who professed the Rule of St Benedict, in the nineteenth century, were Pius VII and Gregory XVI. Pope Benedict XV also had a great devotion to St Benedict. He always kept a picture of the saint on his writing-table and recited every day special prayers to that great patriarch. He celebrated the feast of St Benedict as that of his papal namesake, and on that day he used to give to the picture of St Benedict which hung on the wall above his desk the place of honour, superior to that of the Apostle St James the Great, whose name he had received at his baptism.

Not infrequently we find in the ancient manuscripts of the Gregorian Sacramentary some grand Masses with Collects and Preface proper to the feast of St Benedict, whose name is also sometimes mentioned in the Canon. In our present Missal, however, the Mass is that of the Common of Abbots throughout as on December 5. The feast was only made a greater double in 1883 by Leo XIII, at the instance of the Benedictine Order, who saw with regret that the feast of their own founder was very often omitted from the Calendar of the Universal Church merely because it happened to coincide with a Sunday or a privileged feria in Lent, and could not be transferred to another day.

In some monastic Sacramentaries of the early Middle Ages, the feast of St Benedict was also preceded by a vigil. The Abbey of Farfa still preserves this ancient liturgical tradition.

St Gregory the Great, in describing a famous vision of the Patriarch Benedict, who, in a ray of supernatural light, was able to observe the whole of Creation, observes that, for this to be possible, it was not necessary that the world should become smaller, but that it sufficed that the soul of the saint, rapt in God, should be expanded in the vision of the divine glory; for, as the holy Doctor well says, to one who beholds the Creator all creatures appear insignificant.

This is the great secret by which we are enabled to overcome the fascination of the things of this world; and not be dismayed by the opposition of men, who can indeed threaten us, but who are powerless to harm a hair of our heads, unless by permission of the Providence of God.

In honour of the Patriarch and Lawgiver of countless abbeys scattered throughout Europe during the Middle Ages: of the inspired teacher in whose school were educated the Doctors of the Universal Church, such as Gregory the Great, the Venerable Bede, Peter Damian, Anselm, and Bernard; of the Father of more than twenty Popes, who came forth



from the ranks of his disciples; of the wonder-worker whose marvellous deeds were described by the authoritative pen of St Gregory I, and translated into Greek by Pope Zachary: we will give the Collects of to-day's feast which are to be found in several copies of the Gregorian Sacramentary:

*Natale sancti Benedicti abbatis.*

*Oratio: Omnipotens, sempiternus Deus, qui per gloriosa exempla humilitatis, triumphum nobis ostendisti aeternum; da quaesumus, ut viam tibi placitae oboedientiae, qua venerabilis Pater illesus antecedebat Benedictus, nos, praeclaris eius meritis adiuti, sine errore subsequamur.*

*Praefatio: Vere dignum . . . aeternus Deus, et gloriam tuam profusis precibus exorare; ut qui beati Confessoris tui Benedicti veneramur festa, eius sanctitatis imitari valeamus exempla. Et cuius merita nequaquam possumus coaequare, eius precibus mereamur adiuvari, per Christum, etc.*

In the *Ordo Romanus XI* of Migne's collection it is prescribed that in the month of March the papal *Concistorium* shall not sit during the three feasts of St Gregory the Great, St Benedict, and the Annunciation of the Blessed Virgin.<sup>1</sup>

We will close these notes on the ancient Roman solemnity in honour of St Benedict by quoting some verses from the *De Laudibus Virginum* of St Aldhelm, in which he has interwoven the praises of the holy Patriarch of Monte Cassino with those of St Gregory the Great, and the forty monks from Rome, who, by order of the saintly Pontiff, set forth from the Lateran to carry the Gospel to England, and introduce into that country the Rule of St Benedict:

*Cuius praeclaram pandens ab  
origine vitam*

*Gregorius Praesul chartis descrip-  
serat olim,*

*Donec aethralem felix migraret in  
arcem.*

*Huius alumnorum numero glomer-  
amus ovantes,*

*Quos gerit in gremio foecunda  
Britannia cives;*

*A quo iam nobis baptismi gratia  
fluxit.*

*Atque magistrorum veneranda  
caterva cucurrit.*

Pope Gregory has already de-  
scribed the marvellous life

Of St Benedict from his earliest  
years,

To his happy entrance into the  
realms above.

We take pride in belonging to the  
number of his disciples,

Whom Britannia, the faithful  
mother of citizens, nourishes  
in her bosom.

For from Benedict we received the  
grace of baptism

And the venerable band of our  
first teachers.

<sup>1</sup> P. L. LXXVIII, col. 1228.



MARCH 24

ST GABRIEL, ARCHANGEL\*

The festival of St Gabriel was appointed for this day in the Roman Missal by Pope Benedict XV. There already existed, however, historical precedents in its favour, for we find it in the earliest Coptic Calendar on December 18, and in the Syriac Lectionary it is recorded on March 26. In both instances, as may be seen, it is placed in relationship to the festival of the Annunciation of the Blessed Virgin, and, therefore, also the day recently dedicated to St Gabriel in the Roman Calendar has its cornerstone in the most ancient of the Eastern traditions.

The *cultus* of this holy Archangel who, in the Scriptures, announces the mystery of the Incarnation to the prophet Daniel, to the high priest Zachary, and to the Blessed Virgin, was to a certain extent popular in early times both in the Byzantine and in the Western world, for the initial letters of his name, together with those of Michael, or yet more frequently the paintings of the two Archangels, surround the Byzantine representation of Christ who as an infant is sitting on his Mother's lap. Among the best known Ikons it is sufficient to record here that one which is venerated at Rome on the Esquiline under the title of our Lady of Perpetual Succour, in which there appear in the sky on each side of the Child Jesus two angels poised in flight with the instruments of the Passion in their hands. Who these are we learn from the initials :

x x  
O A M

x x  
O A T

which signify the Archangels Michael and Gabriel. The Ikon of the Theotokos at Farfa is almost identical with this one on the Esquiline.

A beautiful Latin prayer introduced into the Roman rite of High Mass, when the priest at the Offertory blesses the oblations, made the invocation originally in these words : *intercessionem beati Gabrielis Archangeli, stantis a dextris altaris incensi*. In more recent times this prayer has undergone an alteration for which no justification is found in Holy Scripture ; since it no longer places Gabriel at the side of the altar of incense as do the prophet Daniel and St Luke, but Michael in his stead.

Armellini announced in the year 1875 the discovery which he had made of an ancient oratory on the Via Appia, dedicated to the Seven Martyrs, known also as the Seven Sleepers,



of Ephesus, and to the Archangel St Gabriel. This sanctuary stood near the deaconry of St Cesarius, and probably owed its origin to some Eastern community. It did not, however, have a long existence, for in the list of Roman churches of the fourteenth century it is mentioned as not having anyone in charge of it. "*Ecclesia sancti Archangeli, quae non habet servitorem.*"<sup>1</sup>

In the recess at the end of the chapel was represented the Blessed Virgin with the Archangel in the attitude of prayer, together with the name Gabriel, whilst above them was to be seen the Saviour surrounded by ranks of angelic spirits rendering him homage. Along the lateral walls there were a number of heads of monks, lowly and emaciated, and many of Byzantine saints, among whom must certainly have been included the martyrs of Ephesus from whom the neighbouring vineyard still takes its name.

In the twelfth century the same Beno de Rapiza and Maria Macellaria, his wife, who caused the Basilica of St Clement to be decorated with paintings, showed their pious generosity also towards the little church of St Gabriel on the Appian Way. Thus at the corners of the lunette over the principal altar were painted two portraits, of a man and of a woman, with the names Beno and Maria.

From the liturgical point of view the insertion of the feast of St Gabriel the Archangel into the Calendar of the Roman Church by decree of Benedict XV, far from being a novelty, represents, on the contrary, a return to the oldest traditions of Mother Church.

The Introit from Psalm cii is that of the ancient Mass of St Michael: "Bless the Lord all ye his angels; you that are mighty in strength and execute his word, listening to the voice of his orders."

What a beautiful description is this of the angels: contemplative spirits who delight in hearing the word of God and who find all their happiness in executing it, thus co-operating with the Word in the work of the salvation of the human race.

In the Collect we exalt the merits of the Archangel Gabriel, who, from among all the other blessed spirits, was chosen by God to share his great secret, the mystery of the Incarnation of the divine Word, a secret which, for the time being, was to be hidden from Satan. We therefore pray that through the merits of the Archangel, whose feasts we are celebrating, the Lord may grant us also his patronage in heaven.

The Lesson is derived from the Book of Daniel (ix, 21-26).

<sup>1</sup> Armellini, *Le Chiese di Roma*, II Ed., p. 596.



In answer to the prayers and fasting of the prophet, Gabriel comes down from heaven and declares to him that now not more than a few "weeks of years" remain before the coming of Christ who will put an end to sin and will inaugurate the Messianic Kingdom. But, alas ! Jerusalem, which is about to rise from its ruins by the action of Cyrus, will be unfaithful to the pact made by God with Israel, because after sixty-two "weeks of years" the Messias shall be slain and a new people under the command of a foreign leader shall destroy the temple and its ruins shall cover the desolate Mount of Moriah.

The Gradual comes from the same Psalm as the Introit : " Bless the Lord, all ye his angels ; you that are mighty in strength, and execute his word, listening to the voice of his orders. Bless the Lord, O my soul, and let all that is within me bless his holy name." This is the true gift which we must ask for on to-day's feast : the grace of imitating the promptitude and zeal of the holy angels in swiftly obeying the commands of God. This disposition of obedience and of perfect submission to the will of God must be universal and continuous so as to become that which St Paul calls *rationabile obsequium vestrum*.

The modern compiler of the Mass has taken the Tract from the Gospel narrative instead of from the Psalter as is customary. The merit of Gabriel is intimately connected with the mystery of the Incarnation which he announced to Mary—and it is her consent which the Archangel carries back to the Eternal Father.

Tract (Luke i, 28 *sqq.*) : " Hail, Mary, full of grace ; the Lord is with thee."

℣. " Blessed art thou among women : and blessed is the fruit of thy womb."

This second blessing is that given by Elizabeth.

℣. " Behold thou shalt conceive and shalt bring forth a son ; and thou shalt call him Jesus."

This Gospel interpolation is inspired by the well-known text of Isaias :<sup>1</sup> ℣. " The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Most High shall overshadow thee. ℣. And therefore the Holy which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God."

When this feast is kept at Eastertide, instead of the Gradual and the Tract, the alleluiatic verse is sung ; which the modern composer of the Mass has formed out of the two following verses : " Alleluia, alleluia."

℣. (Psalm ciii, 4) " Who maketh his angels winds and his ministers a burning fire. Alleluia."

<sup>1</sup> Isaias vii, 14.



Y. (Luke i, 28) "Hail, Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee: blessed art thou among women. Alleluia."

The Gospel (Luke i, 26-38), in which Gabriel, in the name of the most august Trinity and of all the heavenly court, salutes her who is blessed among all creatures, and announces to her that the Lord has called her to be the Mother of God, is the same as that for Ember Wednesday in Advent. Mary obediently accepts her vocation, and the *Fiat* which she pronounces in the presence of the Archangel represents the formula of her religious profession.

The Offertory (Apoc. viii, 3-4) is as on the feast of St Michael. It has reference to the incensing of the oblations and of the altar which takes place at this point in the liturgical action.

"An Angel stood near the altar of the Temple, having a golden censer in his hand: and there was given to him much incense: and the smoke of the perfumes ascended before God." This incense is a symbol of the divine Liturgy—that is, of our prayers and our sacrifices which the holy angels together with Christ our High Priest, of whom they are the ministers, offer for us before the throne of God. For this reason also in the Roman anaphora of the Mass, we pray that the holy angels may bear our eucharistic sacrifice from the earthly to the heavenly altar, and that they may obtain for those who partake thereof all grace and benediction in abundance.

The Secret is inspired by the Offertory verse and beseeches the Lord to accept our offering which to-day is accompanied by the prayers of the Archangel; so that as he is venerated on earth with special devotion, he may be our intercessor in heaven in our spiritual needs.

The Communion is from the Canticle of the three youths of Babylon (Dan. iii, 58): "O ye angels of the Lord, bless the Lord: sing a hymn and exalt him above all for ever."

In the Post-Communion we ask of God through the merits of the Angel Gabriel that, as he was the first to make known to us the mystery of the divine Incarnation, so he may both obtain for us its full fruition in ourselves and may also bring it about that we, being incorporated with Christ by virtue of the Blessed Sacrament, may live in him and may participate with him in his Father's inheritance.

The spiritual fruit to be derived from to-day's feast, besides that of a tender devotion to the Queen of Angels, is a great reverence for the presence of most blessed spirits to whom Jesus has committed the care and protection of his Church. It is because of this that St John, in the Apocalypse, instead of addressing himself directly to the seven Bishops of Asia, directs his admonitions to the guardian Angels of the several churches entrusted to them.



## MARCH 24

To-day the Martyrology of St Jerome notes also : *Romae Cyrini Martyris*. This martyr was a tribune in the time of Hadrian. His place of burial was venerated in the cemetery of Praetextatus on the Via Appia, and is mentioned in the ancient pilgrim itineraries : *Ibi intrabis in speluncam magnam et ibi invenies S Urbanum episcopum et confessorem, et in altero loco Felicissimum et Agapitum martyres, et diaconos Syxti, et in tertio loco Cyrinum martyrem, et in quarto Januarium martyrem*.

The tombs of all these martyrs were restored in the eighth century by Pope Adrian I; but later on the relics of St Quirinus must have been transferred to San Silvestro in Capite, since his name appears on this day in the *Notitia Nataliciorum* of that church.

Pope Damasus must doubtless have composed one of his epigrams for the tomb of St Quirinus the tribune. De Rossi believed that he had found some fragments of it, but it has not been possible to reconstruct its meaning.

## MARCH 25

FEAST OF THE ANNUNCIATION TO THE BLESSED VIRGIN  
MARY OF THE DIVINE INCARNATION

*Collecta at St Adrian. Station at St Mary Major.*

Such was the ancient title of this festival in the various medieval Sacramentaries and Martyrologies, from which we gather that, originally, it was considered as a feast of our Saviour, rather than of the Blessed Virgin.

The date of March 25 was not fixed arbitrarily, but arises from that of the Nativity, which occurs nine months later, and even as early as the seventh century the first date was supported by so venerable and universal a tradition that, when the Council of Trullo in 692 forbade the celebration of the feast of any martyr during Lent, it made a special exception for that of the Incarnation of our Lord on March 25. We know that, to this day, the Greeks suspend the daily celebration of the divine Sacrifice during the Lenten fast, except on Saturdays, Sundays, and March 25, unlike the ancient Spanish rite, which, in order to avoid this liturgical concession in favour of the feast of the Incarnation of our Lord, transfers it from the spring to the winter equinox about a week before Christmas.

It cannot be denied that whilst the spirit of the Liturgy is



already intent upon the contemplation of the mystical Lamb of God immolated upon Calvary on the eve of the Pasch, it appears a somewhat sudden and violent change to turn abruptly in the middle of Lent from the cross to the joyful mysteries of the House of Nazareth. But, of greater weight than all these considerations, which are largely of a subjective nature, is the solemn event and the historic date of March 25, which inaugurates the New Testament; so much so that, in the early Middle Ages, it was regarded among Christian nations as the true commencement of the civil year.

It appears that, at Constantinople, the feast was already kept in the time of Proclus, who died in 446, but in the West it appears later, for it is not to be found in the Gallican Missal, and is included only in the Gelasian and Gregorian Sacramentaries of the early Carolingian period. At Rome all indication of it is wanting in the Würzburg List of Gospels, while from the *Liber Pontificalis* we only learn that it was Sergius I who ordered it to be celebrated with due solemnity—that is to say, with a grand stational procession from the deaconry of St Adrian to St Mary Major. This custom was long maintained, and the *Ordines Romani* of the twelfth century describe at length the majestic ceremony which took place on this day, in exact resemblance to that other festival on February 2, of which we have previously spoken—namely, that of the Hypapante of the Byzantines.

The capital of the Catholic world has dedicated to this consoling mystery of the Annunciation of our Redemption several churches, which are of importance on account of their venerable antiquity. Besides the Oratory of the Annunciation at Tor de'Specchi—originally *Sancta Maria de Curte*—we may mention the four churches now destroyed: Sta Maria Annunziata in Camilliano, Sta Maria Annunziata on the Esquiline, Sta Maria Annunziata "alle Quattro Fontane," and Sta Maria Annunziata near the Ælian bridge.

On the other hand, there still exists on the Via Ardeatina the sanctuary of our Lady called by the inhabitants of Rome "l'Annunziatella," under which was found an ancient Christian vault. It was there, in all probability, that St Felicola was interred after her martyrdom. The *Libri Indulgentiarum* of the late Middle Ages mention this rural oratory as one of the *IX ecclesiae* which the pilgrims were wont to visit, so that the road leading to it was called simply *Via Oratoria* in a Brief of Urban V (1362-70). Even to this day the Roman populace flock on festivals to this sanctuary of our Lady on the Via Ardeatina, especially on the first Sunday in May.

The Mass, although we are in the middle of Lent, carries us straight back to Advent. Yet this white winter blossom



which recalls the snows of Christmas has its own deep significance, for it reminds us of Gideon's fleece—that gracious symbol of the spotless virginity of the Mother of God—which was found by the Prophet newly wet with the dew of spring in the midst of a sun-baked plain in Palestine.

The Introit is taken from the usual "Canticle of Virginity," as St Jerome used to call Psalm xlv. "All the rich among the people shall entreat thy countenance; after her shall virgins be brought to the King: her neighbours shall be brought to thee in gladness and rejoicing. My heart hath uttered a good word: I speak my works to the King. *Ps.* Glory be."

In the Collect the emphasis given to the words "we who believe her to be truly the Mother of God" points to the period following the disputes of Nestorius, and his condemnation at the first sessions of the Council of Ephesus.

Collect: "O God, who didst please that thy Word should take flesh at the message of an angel in the womb of the Blessed Virgin Mary, grant to us thy suppliants, that we who believe her to be truly the Mother of God may be helped by her intercession with thee. Through the same Lord."

The Lesson from Isaias (vii, 10-15) was read also on Ember Wednesday in Advent. In it is clearly foretold the miraculous conception of the Virgin, and also the divine nature of her offspring. Jews and rationalists deny that the Hebrew word *Almah* here used by the Prophet signifies exclusively "virgin" and not rather "young girl." The orthodox interpreters, on the other hand, reply that, as a matter of fact, each time—and it is not very often—that this word is used in Holy Scripture it always refers to a virgin; moreover, it can be inferred from the circumstances of the case that the marvellous sign announced by the Prophet must be a miraculous birth, one, that is, outside all the laws of nature. The word *Almah*, taken in the sense which rationalists desire to give to it, makes the prophecy of Isaias altogether meaningless.

The verses from Psalm xlv which form the Gradual must be understood primarily as referring to the Messiah, but in their liturgical use, consequent on the intimate union of the divine Son and his Mother, they apply also to her who is "blessed among women."

Gradual: "Grace is poured abroad in thy lips; therefore hath God blessed thee for ever. *Ps.* Because of truth, and meekness, and justice; and thy right hand shall conduct thee wonderfully."

Tract (Psalm xlv): "Hearken, O daughter, and see, and incline thy ear: for the King hath greatly desired thy beauty. *Ps.* All the rich among the people shall entreat thy countenance: the daughters of kings in thy honour. *Ps.* After her



shall virgins be brought to the King : her neighbours shall be brought to thee. *Ÿ*. They shall be brought with gladness and rejoicing ; they shall be brought into the temple of the King."

At Eastertide the preceding verses are omitted, and the following alleluiatic verses are recited in their stead : " Alleluia, alleluia. *Ÿ*. (Luke i, 28) Hail, Mary, full of grace : the Lord is with thee. Blessed art thou among women. Alleluia. *Ÿ*. The rod of Jesse hath blossomed : a virgin hath brought forth God and man : God hath given peace, reconciling the lowest with the highest in himself. Alleluia."

The Gospel is that of Ember Wednesday in Advent (Luke i, 26-38), which, in the Middle Ages, was recited with special solemnity in chapters and monasteries, as if to announce to the religious the near approach of Christmas. St Bernard, following a monastic custom which still exists, was in the habit of commentating fully upon it to his monks (of Clairvaux) assembled in chapter. Hence we possess the splendid collection of his homilies *Super Missus est*, the most beautiful passages of which are included in the Roman Breviary.

*Fiat mihi secundum verbum tuum*: that is the most complete and most perfect act of consecration which has ever been made. The Angel had announced to Mary the sublime dignity to which it was God's intention to raise her, and she on her part, in the supernatural light which filled her, realized the ineffable blending of love and suffering which was consequent on that position.

*Fiat mihi secundum verbum tuum*: by these words she who was so greatly blessed signified that she consented, not only to give life and human flesh to the Word of God, but also to share with him poverty and persecutions ; the insults and even the sorrows of Calvary. For this reason Mary in heaven is nearest to the throne of God, just as on earth her heart most closely resembled the Sacred Heart of her divine Son.

On this solemn festival we cannot refrain from calling to mind once more the praises of Mary contained in the verses which were formerly to be read in St Mary Major under the mosaics of Sixtus III representing the life of the Blessed Virgin :

*Virgo Maria, tibi Xystus nova tecta dicavi  
Digna salutifero munera ventre tuo.  
Te Genitrix, ignara viri, te denique foeta  
Visceribus salvis, edita nostra salus.*

The Offertory (Luke i, 28, 42) is identical with that appointed for the Fourth Sunday in Advent. It is important in regard to the history of the Angelic Salutation which appears here for the first time in its most ancient form, which form was preserved intact in its euchological use down to the fourteenth century. " Hail, Mary, full of grace : the Lord is with



thee. Blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb."

The Secret retains the thoroughly classical form of the Leonine period: "Strengthen, O Lord, in our minds, we beseech thee, the mysteries of the true faith; that we who confess him that was conceived of the Virgin to be true God and man may, by the power of his saving resurrection, deserve to arrive at eternal gladness. Through the same."

The Preface is that usually recited on the feasts of the Blessed Virgin as on December 8.

The Communion, which comes from Isaias vii, 14, "Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son; and his name shall be called Emmanuel," is that of the Fourth Sunday in Advent. It contains not only the prediction of the Virgin Birth, but also announces explicitly the definite and enduring character of the new Messianic Era. God will no longer enter into a temporary pact with Israel, nor will he appear henceforth merely for a brief moment to a few privileged prophets, but he will dwell perpetually in the midst of the redeemed and sanctified human race. This is the signification of the new divine title of Emmanuel: "God with us."

The Post-Communion is the same as that of the First Sunday in Advent. This shows still further the fortuitous character of this Mass, which was inserted in the Sacramentary long after the time of St Gregory. Posthumous additions to the work of the holy Doctor were avoided as far as possible; thus the new feasts which arose in the seventh century derived their Masses from those which were more ancient.

Post-Communion: "Pour forth, we beseech thee, O Lord, thy grace into our hearts, that we to whom the incarnation of Christ thy Son was made known by the message of an angel, may by his passion and cross be brought to the glory of his resurrection. Through the same."

As Jesus Christ in order to begin his life of suffering took flesh in the womb of the most Blessed Virgin in fulfilment of her trusting *Fiat*, so in order to commence his mystical life in our hearts by means of his grace, he desires that we too shall proclaim our own *Fiat*, and dedicate ourselves entirely to him. On this assent, complete, perpetual, intimate, and active, all our holiness and perfection must depend.

On the occasion of the feast of the Annunciation we may recall here one of the most celebrated compositions in the Byzantine Liturgy, that of the "Acathistic hymn," which treats of this mystery at some length. Sergius of Constantinople, the father of the Monothelite heresy, would seem to have been its author. It was composed as a hymn of thanksgiving to the Blessed Virgin, who in 626 had delivered the



Imperial city from the hordes of the Avars. It is called "Acathistic" because, unlike the other *καθίσματα*, it was sung standing on the Saturday after the Fourth Sunday in Lent by the clergy and people who spent the whole of the night in this way in vigil.

The following is one of the strophes containing the Angelic Salutation :

"The Archangel Gabriel was sent by God to say to the Virgin 'Hail.' And he, contemplating, O Lord, thine Incarnation, was frightened, and with angelic voice said to Mary : 'Hail, for through thee joy shall return to the world. Hail, thou resurrection of fallen humanity; Hail, thou who dost wipe away the tears of Eve; Hail, thou who art so sublime that the human mind cannot reach thee; Hail, O depth inscrutable even to the angels themselves; Hail, O Throne of the King; Hail, thou who dost bear him who sustains the universe. Hail, O star that reflects the Sun; Hail, O Seat of God Incarnate.' "

### MARCH 26

In the Martyrology of St Jerome, we find to-day : *Romae, in cimiterio via Lavicana, natalis sancti Castoli Martyris*, whose sepulchre is also indicated in the ancient itineraries. The cemetery of Castulus was on the right of the Via Labicana, near the aqueduct of the Aqua Felice,<sup>1</sup> but it is now unapproachable.

According to his *Acta*, Castulus was employed as *zetarius cubiculi Diocletiani Augusti* at the Imperial palace, when, during the persecution in that Emperor's reign, he was accused of being a Christian and was buried alive in a sand-pit on the Via Labicana. The tomb of the martyr of the same name is recorded in an inscription naming several deceased persons who were interred near that spot :

QVOR · SVN · NOMI  
NAE · MASIMI  
CATABATICV  
ISECVNDV  
MARTYRE  
DOMINV  
CASTOLV · ISCALA

The following inscription was placed over the tomb of St Castulus :

<sup>1</sup> Originally the Aqua Alexandrina constructed by Alexander Severus for the Thermæ of Nero, *circa* A.D. 226. Restored in 1586 by Sixtus V (Felice Peretti), hence the modern name.—TR.



TE · DVCE · VENERIVS · RABIDAS · COMPESCVIT · IRAS  
ATQVE · VESANA · NIMIS · INIMICI · IVRGIA · VICIT  
CASTVLE · TV · DIGNVS · PRAESTAS · CVLTORIBVS · ISTAS  
HAEC · TIBI · SERVATVS · NVNC · OFFERT · MVNERA · SVPPLEX

Venerius with thine aid broke down the hostile fury and overcame the senseless malice of the enemy. Thou, O Castulus, art generous of these favours to thy votaries. Venerius, whom thou hast kept safe and sound, offers thee now these gifts as a suppliant.

The body of St Castulus was transferred by Paschal I to the *titulus Praxedis*, as the marble inscription commemorating the translation testifies.

### MARCH 27

#### ST JOHN OF DAMASCUS, CONFESSOR AND DOCTOR OF THE CHURCH\*

This feast was introduced in 1890 and marks the first period of the pontificate of Leo XIII, when the question of the Eastern Church was very much in his thoughts. If the efforts of the Pope did not meet with all the success that was hoped for, it was certainly not for lack of zeal on the part of the Catholic Church, which then, as always, stretched out her motherly arms to welcome the disinherited daughters of the East, saddened by the schism of wellnigh one thousand years, and crushed in addition by their servitude under the Crescent.

The Mass, although compiled with great care, nevertheless reveals its modern character by the repeated historical reminiscences which illustrate it. That episode of doubtful authenticity which relates how the saint's arm was cut off, and the part played by him in defending holy images, must have especially struck the compiler. The eminent place which St John Damascene holds in the history of Catholic theology, his influence in the formation of the Catholic scholastic system; above all, the fact that with him the Eastern patristic era terminates, and that after him not a single Byzantine generation has contributed anything towards the building up of the theological structure—so wonderful in itself—erected by him, all these considerations appear to have made hardly any impression on the mind of the composer of to-day's Mass.

The Second Council of Nicea in the year 787 paid a noble tribute of praise to this holy monk of Jerusalem, of the *laura* of Mar Saba, and extolled him as being the most valiant champion of orthodoxy against the errors of the Iconoclasts. He was commonly known as the "Chrysorroa" and, as



early as 813, Theophanus<sup>1</sup> attests that this title of honour had been given to him "because of the spiritual grace bright as gold which shone in his teachings and in his life." The Greeks celebrate his feast on December 4, but the name of the *Χρυσορόας* of St Sabbas appears very often at the beginning of their liturgical hymns, for the splendid compositions of St John Damascene caused even those fine ones of Romanus the *melodos* to be completely forgotten.

The Antiphon for the Introit is drawn from Psalm lxxii: "Thou hast held me by my right hand: and by thy will thou hast conducted me, and with glory thou hast received me. How good is God to Israel, to them that are of a right heart. Glory be."

The Collect is as follows: "Almighty, everlasting God, who didst fill blessed John with heavenly learning and with a spirit of wonderful strength that he might spread devotion to holy images; grant us through his prayers and example that we who venerate these images may both imitate his virtues and enjoy his patronage. Through our Lord."

The Lesson from the Book of Wisdom (x, 10-17) has been chosen with much discrimination. That which has been written of Joseph and of Moses, showing that God did not abandon them in prison and in exile, but filled them with such great wisdom as to make them feared even by kings, is here applied to St John of Damascus, who had so much to suffer from the calumnies of the heretics in the time of Constantine Copronymus. The latter in derision changed the Arab name of the saint, "Mansur," into that of *Μάνζηρος*, which means "bastard." The iconoclastic *conciliabulum* which met at Constantinople in 754 vented its spite on St John Damascene by cursing him with a fourfold malediction, anathematizing him together with the Patriarch Germanus of Constantinople and a certain George of Cyprus: 'Η Τριάς τοὺς τρεῖς καθεῖλεν. "The Trinity has exterminated these three."

The Gradual from Psalm xvii again recalls the severed arm of the saint to which the Introit alludes: "God who hath girt me with strength, and made my way blameless. *Ÿ*. Who teacheth my hands to war, and thou hast made my arms like a brazen bow."

The Tract is taken from the same Psalm: "I will pursue after my enemies, and overtake them. *Ÿ*. I will break them, and they shall not be able to stand; they shall fall under my feet. *Ÿ*. Therefore will I give glory to thee, O Lord, among the nations, and I will sing a psalm in thy name."

During Eastertide, the preceding psalmody being omitted,

<sup>1</sup> Afterwards became Archbishop of Nicea in 845.—Tr.



these alleluiatic verses are recited: "Alleluia, alleluia. *Ÿ*. (1 Kings xxv, 26, 28) The Lord hath saved thy hand to thee: for thou fightest the battles of the Lord. Alleluia. *Ÿ*. (Psalm cxliii) Blessed be the Lord my God, who teacheth my hands to fight and my fingers to war. Alleluia."

Out of Eastertide the Gradual is as above, but the alleluiatic verse is the following: "Alleluia, Alleluia. *Ÿ*. Thou hast given me the protection of thy salvation; and thy right hand hath held me up. Alleluia."

The remembrance of the arm of the Damascene having been cut off suggested also the choice of the Gospel Lesson (Luke vi, 6-11), in which is related the healing of the man with a withered hand. Figuratively this miracle signifies that human strength is unable of itself to work what is good; it must be aided by divine grace. Thus we see the condemnation of the Pelagian heresy of the sufficiency of fallen human nature to attain to the supernatural life of grace and, later, to that of glory. "Yet not I," says St Paul, "but the grace of God with me."<sup>1</sup>

In the Offertory (Job xiv, 7) we find another allusion to the arm of the saint, which having been cut off was miraculously restored. The image chosen is very graceful—that of a tree which on being pruned acquires greater vigour and puts forth foliage in more abundance: "A tree hath hope; if it be cut, it groweth green again, and the boughs thereof sprout."

The Secret reminds us, somewhat arbitrarily perhaps, of the part played by St John Damascene in the controversy regarding sacred images; the composition is somewhat cramped in style, though the language is not without elegance: "Grant, O Lord, that the gifts which we offer up to thee may become worthy in thy sight through the loving intercession of blessed John, and of those saints who, through his means, are set before us for honour in our churches. Through our Lord."

The recollection of the severed arm is revived once more in the Communion, Psalm xxxvi: "The arms of the wicked shall be broken in pieces, but the Lord strengtheneth the just."

We would like to quote here a fine thought of St John Chrysorroas regarding the Church's independence of the civil power which then, as now, exercised such great authority over the so-called independent Churches in the East: *Ad imperatores spectat recta reipublicae administratio; ecclesiae regimen, ad pastores et doctores. Eiusmodi invasio latrocinium est, fratres. Quum Samuelis pallium scidisset Saul, quid ei contigit? Regnum ipsius abscidit Deus.*<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> 1 Cor. xv, 10.

<sup>2</sup> *Patr. Gr.* XCIV, col. 1295.



The Post-Communion is the following: "May the gifts which we have received, O Lord, shield us with heavenly armour; and may we be fortified by the protection of blessed John, joined with that of all thy saints whose images through his means are held in honour in the churches. Through our Lord."

The Christian religion does not condemn science, but pride, because this latter closes the door to truth. Learned men, therefore, especially those who join exemplary holiness of life to great knowledge, are most useful to the Church, since they not only walk in the way of salvation, edifying the faithful by their example, but they usually bring back a great number of souls to the truth. Such, briefly, was the work achieved by this saintly monk of the *laura* of St Saba at Jerusalem. He did not fill any prominent place in this world; he was neither a bishop nor a leader of men. Yet, because he loved the truth and preached it fearlessly, he merited the glory of being the true Chrysorroas, the last doctor of the Eastern Church, the one torch that was to shine in the dark night of the separation from the Apostolic Communion which even then was closing in.

### MARCH 28

#### ST JOHN OF CAPISTRAN,<sup>1</sup> CONFESSOR\*

Our forefathers, down to the seventeenth century, used great reserve in celebrating the feasts of saints during Lent; and this was in order that they might be able to attend with greater recollection, under the clear guidance given by the Liturgy, to the exercises of penance and purification which are meant to prepare us for the Paschal feast. The lukewarm faith of these later days has moved the Church to mitigate to a great extent the severity of the ancient Lenten regulations, so as to adapt them to the weakness of the modern spirit; the result of which has been that this holy time no longer differs very much from the rest of the year, and that the Lenten Liturgy is less understood and is relegated to a second place in our thoughts.

Almost all the days which had still remained unoccupied by feasts of saints in the Roman Calendar of Pius V were thus filled in later times by new offices, beautiful, no doubt, in themselves, and having both an historical and a theological importance, but on which rests the blame of having broken into and almost destroyed that marvellous cycle, so old and so deeply theological—namely, the Lenten Liturgy.

We are indeed far from those golden days when prepara-

<sup>1</sup> Capistrano, a town in the Abruzzi.—TR.



tion for Easter meant the closing of the theatres and the law-courts; when the whole Roman world, beginning with the *Basileus* of Byzantium, covered itself with sackcloth and ashes, and when the rigorous fast which lasted until sundown was so universal that it seemed to have become no longer a special act of devotion, but one of the essential forms of the religion of a world at once Roman and Christian.

Nowadays Lent makes very little difference to the ordinary mode of life as led throughout the year by the indifferent Christians of our time; hence the sacred Liturgy also, which in practice always accurately reflects throughout the ages the Christian spirit of the day, confines itself, for the greater part of Lent, to adding a special commemoration of the actual *feria* to the divine Office of the saint of the day.

During these last few years, however, a sound movement of reform has originated in Rome, which, it is hoped, will produce abundant fruits of devotion. Pius X, true to his desire of restoring all things in Christ, after having brought back to the Gregorian melodies all their original freshness, desired also to give again to the Psalter its ancient place in the prayer of the Church. The better to accomplish his intention he removed a few feasts from the Calendar and expanded the Offices of Sundays and *ferias* so that the primitive Office *De Tempore* has begun to show itself once more in its original classical lines, like an old masterpiece which is being freed by the hand of the restorer from the later additions that disfigure it.

The Mass of St John of Capistran, one of the Friars Minor, whose death occurred in 1456, the famous preacher of the Crusade against the Turks, was instituted by Leo XIII in 1890. The compiler was evidently deeply impressed by the splendid victory of Belgrade which was largely due to the prayers and exhortations of the saint. This Mass is much richer and more varied than the preceding one in honour of St John of Damascus. A great part of it alludes to the fervent devotion practised by the great Franciscan towards the holy name of Jesus.

The Introit is derived from the Canticle of Habacuc (iii, 18, 19), and refers to the triumph of Belgrade: "But I will rejoice in the Lord; I will joy in God my Jesus. The Lord is my strength. (Psalm lxxx, 2) Rejoice to God our helper; sing aloud to the God of Jacob. *V.* Glory be."

The Collect contains historical reminiscences: "O God, who by means of blessed John didst cause thy faithful to prevail over the enemies of the cross in the power of the most holy name of Jesus; grant, we beseech thee, that by his intercession we may overcome the wiles of the enemies of our



souls, and be found worthy to receive the crown of righteousness from thee. Through the same."

The ancient crusades against the Infidels are to be regarded from the supernatural point of view, from which our forefathers looked upon them. They represented the highest endeavour put forth by Christianity to prevent the brute-force of the Mohammedans from destroying the civilization brought about by the preaching of the Gospel. The soul of this powerful and constant resistance, eventually victorious at Lepanto and at Vienna, was the Holy See, which for more than five centuries, shrinking neither from sacrifices nor from expense, united in one body, under the banner of the Cross, the Catholic forces of all nations, and directing them against the Crescent, saved Europe from many an internal war whilst ensuring it the victory over Western Asia and Islam.

The Lesson (Wisdom x, 10-14) is, in greater part, that of the preceding day, with obvious allusion to the severe persecutions and imprisonment endured by the saint for the Faith. But the Lord also went down with him into the dark dungeon, and drew him forth in triumph, crushing his enemies who would have trampled upon him. They were enemies of the just man because they were also enemies of God; and for this reason the Omnipotent, in taking up the defence of his saint, judged and upheld his own cause according to the words of the Prophet: *Exsurge, Deus, judica causam tuam: memor esto impropiorum tuorum, eorum quae ab insipiente sunt tota die.*

As regards the observance of the Law, only two classes of persons were recognized by the orthodox Hebrew; that of the descendants of Israel, who by virtue of their circumcision alone could aspire to the full enjoyment of the Messianic promises; and the other, consisting of the Gentiles—the pariahs of Jehovah, who feared the God of Abraham, adopted circumcision, and bound themselves to observe the Law, but who only partook of the privileges of the Israelites in a secondary degree. In the Gradual (Psalm xxi, 24, 25) this distinction is made between the proselytes "who fear God" and the true seed of Israel, with whom the Lord has contracted a real bond of friendship.

Gradual: "Ye that fear the Lord, praise him; all ye the seed of Jacob, glorify him. *Ÿ.* Let all the seed of Israel fear him, because he hath not slighted nor despised the supplication of the poor man."

The Tract (Exodus xv, 23) is from the grand Canticle of Moses, after the defeat of Pharaoh's army at the passage of the Red Sea, and is well suited to the character of to-day's feast, which is, as it were, a yearly echo of the triumph over the Crescent before the fortress walls of Belgrade.



Tract : " The Lord is my strength and my praise, and he is become salvation to me : he is my God and I will glorify him. *Ps.* The Lord is as a man of war, Almighty is his name. *Ps.* (Psalm lxxv) The Lord, who destroyeth wars, the Lord is his name."

During Eastertide the Gradual and the Tract are omitted, and in their place the following alleluiatic psalm is said : " Alleluia, alleluia. *Ps.* (Psalm lviii) But I will sing thy strength, and will extol thy mercy in the morning. Alleluia. *Ps.* For thou art become my support and my refuge in the day of trouble. Alleluia."

Out of Eastertide, after the Gradual, is said instead of the Tract : " Alleluia, alleluia. *Ps.* (Psalm lviii) But I will sing thy strength and will extol thy mercy in the morning. Alleluia."

The Gospel (Luke ix, 1-6) describes the conditions and privileges of the Christian Apostolate; conditions which do not belong only to the story of the first preaching of the Gospel, but which still continue in the Catholic Church to this day. We need only call to mind the devoted missionaries who are spreading the knowledge of the kingdom of God through the inhospitable regions of Oceania, Africa and Asia, in order to be convinced that only the Spirit of God which animates, sanctifies, and upholds the mystical body of the Church can render men capable of such great heroism.

The Offertory (Ecclesiasticus xlvi, 6), in which the praises spoken of Joshua are applied to St John of Capistran, celebrates the victory of Belgrade, which was attributed not so much to the swords of the combatants as to the power of God in answer to the prayers of the saint.

Offertory : " He called upon the most high sovereign when the enemies assaulted him on every side, and the great and holy God heard him."

The Secret is in these words : " Mercifully look down upon the sacrifice which we offer up to thee, O Lord; that, through the intercession of blessed John, thy confessor, it may securely establish us under thy protection and crush the wiles of our enemies. Through our Lord."

The verse for the Communion is taken from Wisdom x, 20 : " They sang to thy holy name, O Lord, and they praised thy conquering hand."

After the Communion is read this prayer : " We who have been filled with heavenly food and refreshed with spiritual drink, beseech thee, almighty God, through the intercession of blessed John, thy confessor, to protect us from the wicked enemy and keep thy church in everlasting peace. Through our Lord."

Formerly it was the power of Islam which threatened the



Christian polity. Now, instead, the danger comes from the Jews, a people which has no country, and which, therefore, hates the fatherland of others, allied as it is with Freemasonry. Jews and Freemasons together make war on Catholicism and on Europe, and their attack is all the more dangerous and difficult to meet by reason of its secrecy.

Against this tremendous peril we must have recourse to the invincible power of prayer, and, as we are not allowed to hate anyone but are rather commanded to love all men, even our enemies, let us on this day pray for the conversion of all those erring souls, those especially who let loose the terrible scourge of a war from which they alone reaped anything of advantage; so that being all brought to repentance, "*Ecclesia . . . tranquilla devotione laetetur.*"

O wondrous right hand of the Most High! In order to accomplish great marvels he uses of choice the humblest instruments, sometimes even those that appear the least efficient and the most despised by men, that the result may not be attributed to the creature but to the Creator alone.

Thus in the fifteenth century, when the humanist influence was strongest, and the Christian Powers themselves, instead of listening to the voice of the supreme Pastor and joining forces against the Crescent which was threatening to overpower the liberties of the civilized world, were intriguing subtly against each other, God raised up a poor son of St Francis, who, emaciated, barefoot, and lacking all earthly resources, aroused half Europe by his fiery words, and led her to victory under the walls of Belgrade: *Digitus Dei est hic.*

Christian Rome can regard the ancient monastery of Sta Maria in *Capitolio* as a sanctuary of St John of Capistran, for having passed in the late Middle Ages from the hands of the Benedictine monks to those of the Friars Minor, it was sanctified as being the dwelling-place of the saint.

## FRIDAY AFTER PASSION SUNDAY

### FEAST OF THE SEVEN SORROWS OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY\*

This Office does not, strictly speaking, connote a festival, but a day on which we commemorate the sorrows of the Blessed Virgin, before beginning the liturgical cycle of the mysteries of our redemption and of the Passion of our crucified Saviour. Its origin does not go back beyond the late Middle Ages, and the Servite Order contributed greatly to



making it widely known. Nevertheless, a special devotion to the Sorrows of our Lady, "the Co-redemptress of the human race," had long held a place in the hearts of the Christian people.

Innocent XI, in 1688, instituted a second commemoration of the Sorrows of the Mother of God in the month of September, but this latter solemnity has a somewhat different character from that in March. In Lent, the Church unites with Mary in weeping beside Jesus crucified; whereas, the September festival, which follows closely upon the Exaltation of the Holy Cross, is rather a feast of the triumphs of our Blessed Mother, who, by her cruel martyrdom at the foot of the cross, co-operated with her Son in the redemption of the human race, and merited the glory of being exalted above all the choirs of angels and saints.

The composition of the Mass, though very devout, does not show much liturgical talent in the composer, nor an exact knowledge of the ancient laws and the rhythm which govern the various kinds of Church melody. Thus he has inserted on his own account a passage from the Gospels in place of the psalm for the Introit—a chant which primitive custom reserved to the deacon who sang it amid the splendour of lighted candles and the perfume of burning incense; the Collects, no longer following the rules of the *cursus*, are drawn out by a superfluity of words; the Gradual and the Communion are inspired by those of the votive Masses of the Blessed Virgin, but the text has been slightly altered in order to adapt it to the festival.

Introit (John xix, 25-27): "There stood by the cross of Jesus, his mother, his mother's sister Mary of Cleophas, and Salome, and Mary Magdalen. *Ps.* Woman, behold thy son, said Jesus; to the disciple, however, Behold thy mother. *Ps.* Glory be."

The Collect is far from showing the symmetrical and harmonious conciseness of the ancient collects of the Roman Sacramentaries. The modern compiler has filled it with various ideas, and amongst them there is a very beautiful one upon which we might well meditate to-day: "all the elect stand beside the cross." They live by the spirit of the crucified Saviour through Christian mortification, without which it is impossible to keep the grace of Christ, wherefore St Paul called the worldlings of his day: *inimicos crucis Christi*.

Collect: "O God, at whose passion, as foretold by Simeon, a sword of sorrow pierced the most sweet soul of glorious Mary, virgin and mother; grant in thy mercy that we who reverently call to mind her anguish and suffering, may be helped by the glorious merits and prayers of all the saints



who faithfully stand at thy cross, and win the happy fruit of thy passion : who livest."

In votive Masses throughout the year, the following prayer is said, which is more ancient and far better in construction than the preceding one :

Collect : " We beseech thee, O Lord Jesus Christ, let thy mother, the Blessed Virgin Mary, whose holy soul was pierced by a sword of sorrow at the hour of thy passion, implore thy mercy for us both now and at the hour of our death. Through our Lord."

The Lesson comes from the story of Judith (xiii, 22-25), and is eminently suitable for celebrating the glories of the " Co-redemptress " of the human race, who in order to save the world from final ruin did not spare herself nor her only-begotten Son, but, in perfect conformity with the will of the Eternal Father, she, his Immaculate Mother, offered him up in sacrifice on the altar of the cross.

The Gradual and the Tract are not drawn from the Psalter but from the Gospels and from other verses of the sacred Liturgy, applicable to the remembrance of the sorrows of the Mother of God.

Gradual : " Thou art sorrowful and tearful, O Virgin Mary, standing at the cross of the Lord Jesus, thy Son, our Redeemer. *℣*. O Virgin Mother of God, he whom the whole world doth not contain, the source of life made man, beareth this punishment of the cross."

Tract (John xix) : " Holy Mary, the queen of heaven and mistress of the world, stood by the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, full of sadness. *℣*. (Lam. i) O all ye that pass by the way, attend and see if there be any sorrow like to my sorrow."

In votive Masses throughout the year when the Tract is not recited, the following alleluiatic verse is said : " Alleluia, alleluia. *℣*. Holy Mary, the queen of heaven and mistress of the world, stood by the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, full of sadness. Alleluia."

At Eastertide there is added a second alleluiatic verse—not a very happy choice—from the Lamentations of Jeremias (i, 12), where he is mourning the destruction of Jerusalem : " Alleluia, alleluia. O all ye that pass by the way, attend and see if there be any sorrow like to my sorrow. Alleluia."

The hymn which now follows as the Sequence is one of the most inspired examples of Franciscan poetry. It is commonly attributed to Fra Jacopone da Todi, and while it breathes all the grace and ingenuous spontaneity of Umbrian art in the fourteenth century, it shows at the same time a deep religious feeling.

This much we may say from the literary point of view ;



as regards the liturgical aspect it should be noticed that, historically speaking, the Sequence is nothing more than the alleluiatic *melisma* to which, in the Middle Ages, a text was added in the place of mere vocalizations, at first in prose and later in verse. Therefore, consequent on its very origin, the Sequence should be omitted every time that the alleluia is not sung; as, for instance, during Lent, or in Masses for the Dead: but the Missal of St Pius V has sanctioned several exceptions to this rule, which had already been consecrated by the Church's use.

Stabat Mater dolorosa  
Juxta crucem lacrymosa,  
  
Dum pendebat Filius.  
Cujus animam gementem,  
  
Contristatam, et dolentem,  
Pertransivit gladius.

At the cross her station keeping,  
Stood the mournful Mother weep-  
ing,  
Close to Jesus to the last :  
Through her heart, his sorrow  
sharing,  
All his bitter anguish bearing,  
Now at length the sword had  
passed.

O quam tristis et afflicta  
Fuit illa benedicta  
Mater Unigeniti !  
Quae moerebat, et dolebat,  
Pia Mater, dum videbat  
Nati poenas inclyti.

Oh, how sad and sore distressed  
Was that Mother highly blest  
Of the sole-begotten One !  
Christ above in torment hangs ;  
She beneath beholds the pangs  
Of her dying glorious Son.

Quis est homo qui non fleret,  
Matrem Christi si videret  
In tanto supplicio?  
Quis non posset contristari,  
Christi Matrem contemplari  
Dolentem cum Filio?

Is there one who would not weep,  
Whelmed in miseries so deep  
Christ's dear Mother to behold?  
Can the human heart refrain  
From partaking in her pain,  
In that Mother's pain untold?

Pro peccatis suae gentis  
Vidit Jesum in tormentis,  
Et flagellis subditum,  
Vidit suum dulcem natum  
Moriendo desolatum,  
Dum emisit spiritum.

Bruised, derided, cursed, defiled,  
She beheld her tender child  
All with bloody scourges rent ;  
For the sins of his own nation  
Saw him hang in desolation,  
Till his spirit forth he sent.

Eja Mater, fons amoris,  
Me sentire vim doloris  
Fac ut tecum lugeam.  
Fac ut ardeat cor meum  
In amando Christum Deum,  
Ut sibi complaceam.

O thou Mother ! fount of love !  
Touch my spirit from above,  
Make my heart with thine accord :  
Make me feel as thou hast felt ;  
Make my soul to glow and melt,  
With the love of Christ my Lord.

Sancta Mater, istud agas,  
Crucifixi fige plagas  
Cordi meo valide.  
Tui Nati vulnerati,  
Tam dignati pro me pati,  
Poenas mecum divide.

Holy Mother ! pierce me through ;  
In my heart each wound renew  
Of my Saviour crucified :  
Let me share with thee his pain,  
Who for all my sins was slain,  
Who for me in torments died.



Fac me tecum pie flere,  
Crucifixo condolere,

Donec ego vixero.  
Juxta crucem tecum stare,  
Et me tibi sociare  
In planctu desidero.

Virgo virginum praeclara,  
Mihi jam non sis amara :  
Fac me tecum plangere.  
Fac ut portem Christi mortem,  
Passionis fac consortem,  
Et plagas recolere.

Fac me plagis vulnerari,  
Fac me cruce inebriari  
Et cruore Filii.  
Flammis ne urar succensus,  
Per te, Virgo, sim defensus  
In die Judicii.

Christe, cum sit hinc exire,

Da per Matrem me venire  
Ad palmam victoriae.  
Quando corpus morietur,  
Fac ut animae donetur  
Paradisi gloria. Amen.

Let me mingle tears with thee,  
Mourning him who mourned for  
me,

All the days that I may live :  
By the cross with thee to stay,  
There with thee to weep and pray  
Is all I ask of thee to give.

Virgin of all virgins best !  
Listen to my fond request :  
Let me share thy grief divine ;  
Let me, to my latest breath,  
In my body bear the death  
Of that dying Son of thine.

Wounded with his every wound,  
Steep my soul till it has swooned  
In his very blood away ;  
Be to me, O Virgin, nigh,  
Lest in flames I burn and die  
In his awful Judgement Day.

Christ, when thou shalt call me  
hence,

Be thy Mother my defence,  
Be thy cross my victory ;  
While my body here decays,  
May my soul thy goodness praise,  
Safe in Paradise with thee. Amen.

*(Out of Septuagesima and Lent the Alleluia is added.)*

The Gospel (John xix, 25-27) is that of the votive Masses of the Blessed Virgin during Eastertide. The penalty once pronounced upon Eve, *In dolore paries*, is now fulfilled, in a much higher sense, in the person of Mary most holy, who, by her bitter martyrdom at the foot of the cross on which hung her Son, regenerates us anew to God and thus becomes the Mother of all men.

The Offertory (Jeremias xviii, 20) refers primarily to Jeremias, who, in the persecutions and imprisonments which he suffered, symbolizes Jesus our Redeemer. The Prophet points out that, whilst his enemies hated him, he interceded for them before God, and restrained the divine anger, lest it should strike them down in their sins. Such indeed is the Office of our Advocate in heaven. The Church therefore applies this passage of Jeremias also to the Mother of God, on the day on which we commemorate the feast of our Lady of Mount Carmel, from which feast to-day's Antiphon is derived.

Offertory : " Be mindful, O Virgin Mother of God, when thou standest before the face of the Lord, to speak good things for us, and turn away his anger from us."



The Secret, which is full of pious thoughts, has the same defects from the literary standpoint as we noted in the Collect: "We offer up to thee prayers and victims, O Lord Jesus Christ, humbly entreating that even as in our prayers we recall the anguish of the most sweet soul of thy blessed mother, Mary, her intercession and that of her holy companions at the foot of the cross may be multiplied in our behalf, so that by the merits of thy death we may enjoy reward with the blessed: who livest."

The Preface is that of the other feasts of the Blessed Virgin, but with an allusion to the piercing of her soul.

The Communion is as follows: "Happy senses of the blessed Virgin Mary, which without dying deserved the palm of martyrdom beneath the cross of our Lord."

The Post-Communion is thus worded: "O Lord Jesus Christ, may the sacrifices of which we have partaken, while devoutly celebrating the anguish of the Virgin Mother, win for us from thy mercy all good and healthful fruit: who livest."

What great delicacy of feeling the Church shows in her Liturgy. Before entering on the great Paschal week and celebrating on the evening of the Parasceve the sacrifice of the immaculate Lamb, she draws close to the Blessed Virgin, because no one else can help us to enter into the contemplation of the sorrows of the Redeemer as she can, who shared them with him. We use the word "contemplation" in the sense which the Doctors of the Church give to this act, since it is not enough for us to know the story of the Passion and to reconstruct with accuracy all its scenes in our minds; in order to understand Jesus in his suffering we must "live" him, we must share his most intimate feelings, and make his bitter sorrows our own. This is precisely that which Jacopone da Todi wished to express by his concise and forcible verse: *Fac ut portem Christi mortem*.

## FEASTS IN APRIL

### APRIL 2

#### ST FRANCIS OF PAOLA,<sup>1</sup> CONFESSOR\*

This feast in honour of the humble and simple wonder-worker of "Charity," who died in 1508, dates only from the year 1585, under Sixtus V. Two famous churches in the Eternal City record the sojourn there of St Francis of Paola when on his way to France, whither he was going by order of Sixtus IV to visit the court of King Louis XI. The church on

<sup>1</sup> A town in Calabria.—Tr.



the ancient *collis ortonum*—the Pincian Hill—dedicated to the Blessed Trinity was built in 1493 by Charles VIII for the religious of the Order of Minims on the spot where their holy Founder had prophesied that the Mother house of his Order in Rome would one day stand.

A second church dedicated to St Francis of Paola rises on the Esquiline near the title of Eudoxia, and like SS Trinità on the Pincio is renowned for its works of art and the richness of its marbles. The Venerable Bernardo Clausi dwelt for many years in the neighbouring monastery.

The Mass for the feast of St Francis of Paola is the Common of simple Confessors, as on January 31, but the Collects are proper to the day.

The Collect dwells on the deep humility of the miracle-working saint of Paola, a humility that caused to be given to the Order which he founded the title of "Minims."

"O God, who liftest up the lowly and hast raised thy blessed confessor Francis to the glory of the saints; grant, we beseech thee, that through his merits and the example of his life we may happily win the rewards which thou hast promised to the lowly. Through our Lord."

The Lesson is that assigned to the feast of St Paul the first Hermit on January 15. It is necessary to give all in order to possess all; to give up, that is, all creation and all creatures in order to gain thereby the Creator.

The Secret is founded on an early text and refers to the primitive usage by which the faithful, as we have already seen, presented to the priest in their own person at the Offertory the bread and the wine required for the Sacrifice.

Secret: "May these offerings of thy devout people, which we heap upon thine altars, become, by thy mercy, O Lord, through the merits of blessed Francis, both pleasing to thee and healthful to ourselves. Through our Lord."

In the Post-Communion we pray: "May the heavenly sacraments which we have received, O Lord, we beseech thee, through the intercession of blessed Francis, thy confessor, give us help for this present life and for life everlasting. Through our Lord."

Humble simplicity and a clean heart are the conditions requisite in us so that the grace of God may work unhindered. This explains the extraordinary number of wonders performed by St Francis of Paola, some of which may not appear to us to have had any very important object in view; as, for instance, when he restored to life the fish which were already cooked and brought to table. By his loving humility and confidence he had power over the heart of God and, inspired by charity, he obtained from it all that he desired.



## APRIL 4

ST ISIDORE, BISHOP, CONFESSOR, AND DOCTOR  
OF THE CHURCH

The *cultus* of this true patriarch of Spain, at the time of the domination of the Visigoths, is very old, and the authority which he exercised throughout the Church in the early Middle Ages is beyond dispute, for the Venerable Bede and other writers of the Carolingian era are in a great measure indebted to him for their ecclesiastical learning. The eighth Synod of Toledo, in 653, praises him in the following terms: *Nostri saeculi doctor egregius, ecclesiae catholicae novissimum decus, praecedentibus aetate postremus, doctrinae comparatione non infimus, et, quod maius est, in saeculorum fine doctissimus.*<sup>1</sup>

His liturgical Office, however, in the Calendar of the Apostolic See dates only from the Renaissance, for, not only is the saint not a Roman, but the day of his death in 636 falls almost always in Lent or during Easter week.

The Mass is that of the Common of Doctors, as on January 29, the feast of St Francis de Sales; the Collect being the same as that for St Ambrose on December 7.

A monastery in Rome dedicated to St Isidore is mentioned in the biography of Leo III (795-816), who bestowed on it a silver coffer two pounds in weight. There was another church of St Isidore behind the deaconry of Sta Maria in Domnica, and it is mentioned in a Bull of Innocent III (1198-1216).<sup>2</sup> Lastly, an oratory named after this saint, now likewise destroyed, was erected near the Baths of Diocletian where formerly stood the granaries under the care of the *praefectus annonae*. Thus we find that this holy Doctor was honoured in olden days by an ancient and popular veneration in the Eternal City; therefore, when the Renaissance inserted the name of St Isidore in the Roman Calendar, it only revived an early and traditional devotion to this great Doctor of Catholic Spain.

## APRIL 5

## ST VINCENT FERRER, CONFESSOR

This is the "Angel of the Judgement," as he used to call himself, he who, during the schism of the West, when the papal pallium appeared on the point of being rent asunder in the struggle between the two or more aspirants for its possession, and when the corruption of the Christian nations

<sup>1</sup> Mansi, *SS Conc. Coll.*, X, 1215.

<sup>2</sup> Armellini, *op. cit.*, 503.



seemed the prelude to the end of the world, brought back to repentance by his powerful preaching and his miracles so great a multitude of the faithful.

St Vincent Ferrer was, at first, confessor to the antipope Pedro de Luna, who assumed the name of Benedict XIII, and also took his part very vigorously, but later, realizing the claim of the ambitious Spaniard to be indefensible, he left him, and, indeed, foretold that a day would come when the skull of the antipope would be tossed about the streets by children as a plaything. This happened, just as the saint had foretold; for when, in 1811, the French occupied the Castle of Illucca, where the body of Pedro de Luna lay still unburied, having first cut off the head, they threw the corpse out of the window.

The feast of St Vincent Ferrer, who died in 1419, was instituted by Pope Clement IX. The Mass is that of the Common as on January 23, with the exception of the Collect, which is proper to the feast.

"O God, who didst vouchsafe to make thy Church illustrious by the merits and preaching of blessed Vincent, thy confessor; grant unto us thy servants that we may be instructed by his example, and through his intercession may be delivered from all harm. Through our Lord."

God never forsakes his Church, and history shows that it is especially in moments of great religious and political danger that he sends his saints to save the nations from ruin.

We would like to note a fact connected with the Liturgy which is found in the life of St Vincent Ferrer: *Quotidie Missam summo mane cum cantu celebravit*. In early times, as now in the East, our fathers were not content merely to read the Mass; they used to celebrate it *cum cantu*, precisely as had been done by Jesus Christ with his apostles in the Supper-room.

## APRIL 11

### ST LEO THE GREAT, POPE, CONFESSOR, DOCTOR OF THE CHURCH

The date of the death of this famous Pontiff, whose memory recalls the great victories of the true Faith at the Councils of Constantinople and of Chalcedon, was November 10, 461; but as that day is consecrated at Rome to a famous group of martyrs buried in the Basilica of St Tryphon, the feast of St Leo became of secondary importance and was transferred to April 11, the day on which his body was first laid in the tomb, under the outer portico of St Peter.



A second remembrance of the holy Pontiff occurs, *S Leonis secundo*, on June 28, the anniversary of the translation of his body to the interior of the Vatican Basilica under Pope Sergius I. Afterwards, in later calendars, the festival of April 11 became universal, with the result that the name of the saint commemorated on June 28 gradually came to be identified with another Leo, the second of the name, a Pope of whom we find hardly any trace in history and whose pontificate lasted only a year.

The following is the fine inscription which Sergius I placed on the tomb of the great Pontiff in 668.

HVIVS · APOSTOLICI · PRIMVM · EST · HIC · CORPVS · HVMATVM  
QVOD · EO · DECET · TVMVLO · DIGNVS · IN · ARCE · PETRI  
HINC · VATVM · PROCERVMOVE · COHORS · QVOS · CERNIS · ADESSE  
MEMBRA · SVB · EGREGIA · SVNT · ADOPERTA · DOMO  
SED · DVDVM · VT · PASTOR · MAGNVS · LEO · SEPTA · GREGEMQVE  
CHRISTICOLAM · SERVANS · IANITOR · ARCIS · ERAT  
COMMONET · E · TVMVLO · QVOD · GESSERAT · IPSE · SVPERSTES  
INSIDIANS · NE · LVPVS · VASTET · OVILE · DEI  
TESTANTVR · MISSI · PRO · RECTO · DOGMATE · LIBRI  
QVOS · PIA · CORDA · COLVNT · QVOS · PRAVA · TVRBA · TIMENT  
RVGIIT · ET · PAVIDA · STVPVERVNT · CORDA · FERARVM  
PASTORISQVE · SVI · IUSSA · SEQVVNTVR · OVES  
HIC · TAMEN · EXTREMO · IACVIT · SVB · MARMORE · TEMPLI  
QVEM · IAM · PONTIFICVM · PLVRA · SEPVLCBRA · CELANT  
SERGIVS · ANTISTES · DIVINO · IMPVLSVS · AMORE  
NVNC · IN · FRONTE · SACRAE · TRANSTVLIT · INDE · DOMVS  
EXORNANS · RVTILVM · PRAETIOSO · MARMORE · TYMBVM  
IN · QVO · POSCENTES · MIRA · SVPERNA · VIDENT  
ET · QVIA · PRAEMICVIT · MIRIS · VIRTVTIBVS · OLIM  
VLTIMA · PONTIFICIS · GLORIA · MAIOR · ERIT  
SEDIT · IN · EPISCOPATV · ANNOS · XXI · MENSEM · I  
DIES · XIII · DEPOSITVS · EST · III · ID . . . (APRILES)  
ITERVM · TRANSLATVS · HVC · A · BEATO · PAPA  
SERGIO · IIII · KAL · IVL · INDICTIONE · I

Not until now was the body of this Pope interred  
Within the Basilica of Peter, in a tomb worthy of his fame.  
Here were already laid to rest the bones of the Fathers and  
the Pontiffs,  
That they might lie beneath the roof of this splendid fane.  
But Leo, like a shepherd watching o'er the flock  
And the fold of Christ, remained at the door of the Basilica,  
Still, as in life, lifting up his voice from the sepulchre,  
That the wolf might not destroy the sheep of the Lord.  
This truth is proved by the books that he wrote in defence of  
the Church,



Which are venerated by the faithful and feared by the evil.  
 The Lion roars and the hearts of the wild beasts tremble,  
 Whilst the sheep willingly obey the voice of their Shepherd.  
 His bones at first lay at the very threshold of the temple  
 Which is now wellnigh covered by the tombs of Popes.  
 Sergius the Bishop, moved by charity divine,  
 Places them to-day in the nave of the Vatican Basilica,  
 With shining marble adorning their tomb.  
 Those who pray beside this sepulchre obtain many graces.  
 And because in life Leo was famous for his unnumbered  
 virtues,  
 So will his glory still continue to grow.  
 He occupied this See for twenty-one years, one month, and  
 thirteen days,  
 And was laid in the grave on the eleventh day of April.  
 His body was transferred to this place by Pope Sergius on  
 June the twenty-eighth (Indictio I).

The Mass has nothing proper to the saint, but is taken in part from the Common of a Confessor and Bishop. The Gospel, however, is that of the feast of St Peter's Chair at Rome—that is to say, the same as was read at Rome on the anniversary of the Ordination of the Pope, and upon which St Leo had so often commentated to the people on such occasions : *in natale ordinationis suae*.

We must not forget, in honouring St Leo, that he also displayed his talents in the field of Liturgy. The so-called Leonine Sacramentary must of a certainty contain several compositions of the holy Doctor, to whom many students of Liturgy attribute with well-founded arguments the compilation of the magnificent Offices of Advent.

The Introit is that of December 7, the feast of St Ambrose. The following is the Collect : " Graciously hear, O Lord, we beseech thee, the prayers which we present to thee on the festival of blessed Leo, thy confessor and bishop; and through the merits and intercession of him who was found worthy to become thy servant, loose us from all sin. Through our Lord."

We have here a fine conception of the episcopal Office which demands a constant and deep-seated devotion to the service of God; and also a touching prayer of the Christian people to be loosed from all sin through the merits of him to whom Christ gave power to open or to close the doors of heaven.

The Lesson is from Ecclesiasticus (xxxix, 6-14). The wisdom of the Catholic Doctor is not so much a knowledge acquired from books as a gift freely given by divine grace,



to which the soul has corresponded obediently in humility, in sobriety, and, above all, in prayer. In this manner the servant of God not only cultivates his own soul, but, like a beneficent rain, dispenses blessings on the whole Christian society.

The Gradual with the alleluiatic verse and the Tract, when it occurs, are similar to those of January 29; at Eastertide, instead of the Gradual, these alleluiatic verses are recited: "Alleluia, alleluia. *Ps.* (Ecclesiasticus xlv, 9) The Lord loved him and adorned him: he clothed him with a robe of glory. Alleluia. *Ps.* (Osee xiv, 6) The just shall spring as the lily; and shall flourish for ever before the Lord. Alleluia."

The Gospel read on this feast of the Pontiff who asserted with so much determination the papal primacy over the universal Church is the same as that of February 22, on which Leo I so often commentated before the bishops and the Roman people assembled around the tomb of St Peter for the purpose of celebrating the anniversary of his own elevation to the papal throne.

The Offertory is as on February 4, the feast of St Andrew Corsini.

In Holy Scripture David has always been regarded as the type of Christ, and therefore of every worthy pastor of God's flock; this honour he merited by his docility to grace, and his conformity to the divine will, which won for him the praise given to him by the Holy Ghost himself of being a shepherd "after God's own heart."

The Secret is the following: "Let the yearly festival of St Leo, thy confessor and bishop, make us acceptable to thy loving-kindness, O Lord, we beseech thee; by means of this service of holy propitiation may it assure to him a blessed reward and win for us the gifts of thy grace. Through our Lord."

The offering up of the divine Sacrifice adds to the glory and the beatitude of the saints in heaven, because through it the thanks due to God are offered up to him by the faithful and his holy name is glorified through the merits which he has granted to his saints. This glory is reflected on the souls of the blessed and increases their happiness.

The Communion is drawn from the Gospel of St Matthew (xxiv, 46-47) as on January 23. The veneration which we pay to the saints in no way detracts from God's honour; rather it contributes to his glory, since we reverence them as faithful servants who have done worthily the work entrusted to them by the Lord and have merited from him grace for themselves and for us.

The Post-Communion is as follows: "O God, the rewarder of faithful souls, grant that by the prayers of blessed Leo,



thy confessor and bishop, whose holy festival we are keeping, we may win thy pardon. Through our Lord."

Many churches and oratories arose in the Middle Ages dedicated to this great Pope who saved Rome from destruction at the hands of Attila and Genseric on the Coelian, on the Esquiline, and beside the Tiber, not far from the Mausoleum of Hadrian. In the Vatican, where St Leo had built a monastery in honour of the martyrs John and Paul, a special chapel was dedicated to him which is mentioned in the life of Leo III. His memory also lives in the other basilicas of Rome, where extensive restorations, mosaics, apses, and fountains constantly recall his name.

In the Basilica of St Paul especially the grand triumphal arch with its mosaics still preserves the remembrance of Leo the Great, and the museum of inscriptions attached to that abbey also contains the epigraph of the Pope dedicating the great works of restoration undertaken by him in that venerable sanctuary. Medieval collections have preserved copies of the graceful verses which once adorned the *cantharus* or basin for the ablutions which stood in the centre of the atrium of that basilica.

We here give them :

Perdiderat laticum longaeva incuria cursus,  
Quos tibi nunc pleno cantharus ore vomit.  
Provida Pastoris per totum cura Leonis,  
Haec ovibus Christi larga fluenta dedit.  
Unda lavat carnis maculas, sed crimina purgat  
Purificatque animas mundior amne Fides.  
Quisque suis meritis veneranda sacraria Pauli  
Ingredieris supplex, ablue fonte manus.

Through long neglect the aqueduct no longer carried the  
water

Which to-day flows abundantly from the mouth of the can-  
tharus.

The care of Leo the Pastor, who provided for all,  
Gave to the flock of Christ this copious stream of water.  
Waters wash away bodily stains, but faith, purer by far  
Than water, takes away sin and cleanses the soul.  
Whoever thou art that by the merits of Paul the Apostle  
Dost as a suppliant traverse the threshold of his temple, wash  
here first thy hands.

The name of St Leo is also bound up with the basilica and monastery of St Stephen, which, through the bounty of Demetrius, he caused to be erected on the Via Latina. The following is the dedicatory inscription :



Cum mundum linquens Demetrias Amnia virgo,  
 Clauderet extremum non moritura diem,  
 Haec tibi, Papa Leo, votorum extrema suorum  
 Tradidit, ut sacræ surgeret aula domus.  
 Mandati completa fides, sed gloria maior,  
 Interius votum solvere, quam propalam.  
 Inviderat culmen Stephanus, qui primus in orbe  
 Raptus morte truci regnat in arce poli.  
 Praesulis hanc iussu Tigrinus presbyter aulam  
 Excolit insignis mente, labore vicens.

When the virgin Amnias Demetrias was about to leave the  
 world,  
 On the day which was her last before entering into a higher  
 life,  
 One last wish she entrusted to thee, Pope Leo,  
 That here this new temple should arise.  
 Faithfully hast thou carried out her desires, but still greater  
 merit  
 Is it to fulfil spiritual aims than those of earth.  
 Stephen had already seen heaven, when, first of believers,  
 He suffered a pitiless death and won a celestial crown.  
 Tigrinus, the priest, by order of the Pontiff,  
 Zealously laboured to erect this temple.

## APRIL 13

### ST HERMENEGILD, MARTYR\*

This saint is a martyr of the Paschal cycle, for he was put to death in prison by order of his heretical father in 586, because he refused to receive Communion at the hands of an Arian bishop on Easter Day. St Gregory the Great, whilst he was *apocrisarius* at Constantinople, learned the details of his martyrdom from the holy bishop Leander of Seville, and later, when chosen as Pope, he related them in the third book of his Dialogues. The name of St Hermenegild was not, however, included in the Roman Missal until the time of Urban VIII (1623-44).

The Mass is that of the Common of a Martyr at Eastertide, but the Collect is special to the feast.

The Introit comes from Psalm lxiii: "Thou hast protected me, O God, from the assembly of the malignant, alleluia: from the multitude of the workers of iniquity, alleluia, alleluia."

This protection is the grace of God which gives strength



to the just man to overcome evil and crowns him at last in the eternal kingdom. The persecutor aims at injuring the soul of the martyr and threatens him with torments, but God calls the soul to heaven, and there remains only a lifeless corpse in the tyrant's power, against which his rage vents itself in vain.

This is the Collect: "O God, who didst teach thy blessed martyr Hermenegild to choose the kingdom of heaven rather than an earthly kingdom, grant, we beseech thee, that, following his example, we may despise things that perish and pursue those that are everlasting. Through our Lord."

The Lesson is derived from the Book of Wisdom (v, 1-5): The just are unafraid in the presence of the tyrant, because the fear of the Lord strengthens them so that they do not fear men. In the world beyond the grave the scene will be changed and the positions will be reversed, for then those who were but lately oppressed will triumph together with Jesus their outlawed Saviour; the wicked will realize, too late, their folly and will confess that they have erred.

The alleluiatic chant at Eastertide is composed of two verses from the Psalms with four interpolated alleluias. Originally, however there were two distinct psalms following the two scriptural Lessons, which were read before the Gospel.

"Alleluia, alleluia. (Psalm lxxxviii) The heavens shall confess thy wonders, O Lord; and thy truth in the church of the saints. Alleluia." In this passage the heavens represent the Church triumphant, which, in the beatific vision, possesses so great a good that no human mind can conceive it. The "Church of the Saints" applies to the Church militant, which, through hope, anticipates the joy of possessing God hereafter. The foundation of this hope is the fidelity of God, for, as the apostle says: *Spes autem non confundit*.

"Alleluia. V. (Psalm xx) O Lord, thou hast set on his head a crown of precious stones. Alleluia." God himself by his grace is the shield of the just on earth, whilst in heaven he is the crown of the blessed.

The Gospel is that of the Mass *Statuit: Si quis venit*, as on January 24. It is chosen in order to remind us of the special circumstances of the martyrdom of St Hermenegild, who did not fear to take up arms against his own father, an Arian, in defence of the Catholic Faith. He fell a victim at last to the treachery of his father, but in heaven he obtained, not only his father's conversion in the hour of death, but, together with the salvation of the soul of the aged king, the conversion of the entire Visigoth nation to the Catholic Faith.

Should this feast fall in Lent, the whole Mass, with the



exception of the Collect and the Gospel, is taken from the Mass, *In virtute tua*, as on January 19, the feast of St Canute.

If the action of the monk who abandons his parents and his family and seeks the peace of the cloister is considered to be heroic, what words will suffice to praise the virtue of this young prince who, in defence of the Faith of Nicæa and of his oppressed people, takes arms against his heretical father? The love of God must indeed have been uppermost in his heart, since it made him despise even the strongest natural feelings in order to uphold the honour due to the divine nature of the Saviour.

## APRIL 14

SS TIBURTIUS, VALERIAN, AND MAXIMUS, MARTYRS

*Station at the Cemetery of Pretextatus.*

The history of these martyrs is closely connected with that of St Cecilia, for Valerian was her husband, and Tiburtius her brother-in-law. Maximus was a *Commentariensis* of the judge by whom they were condemned to death, and having been converted by the constancy shown by the two brothers in suffering martyrdom, he shared their torments and their reward.

Subsequently there arose over the tomb of these martyrs a basilica circular in form with five apses, which was rebuilt from its foundations by Adrian I. In course of time the solitude of the place and the incursions of the Lombards, who were then devastating the Agro Romano, determined Paschal I to remove these holy bodies to a safer resting-place within the city. Of their first sepulchre in the cemetery of Pretextatus on the Via Appia hardly a vestige remains, but the tombs of the martyrs are held in great veneration at the *Titulus Caeciliae*.

The Mass is the Common of many Martyrs at Eastertide. The feast of St Justin, which was introduced under Leo XIII, has caused that of the martyrs of the *Titulus Caeciliae* to take a secondary place, so they now appear merely in the form of a simple commemoration. Their Mass, however, forms part of the primitive Roman liturgical tradition, and is found in all medieval Sacramentaries.

The Introit is from Psalm cxliv: "Thy saints, O Lord, shall bless thee; they shall speak of the glory of thy kingdom, alleluia, alleluia."

With the dawning of Easter Day the time of suffering has



come to an end also for the martyrs, and their joyous triumph with Christ has begun. Therefore whilst on earth their bones are covered with flowers and perfumes, and are lovingly kissed by the faithful as if in anticipation of the final resurrection, their souls in heaven, reunited to Christ, the mystical head of the Church, already sing the glories and triumphs of the new Messianic kingdom.

The Collect is as follows: "Grant, we beseech thee, almighty God, that we who keep the solemn festival of thy holy martyrs Tiburtius, Valerian, and Maximus, may also follow the example of their virtues. Through our Lord."

The Lesson is the same as for the feast of St Hermenegild.

The alleluiatic Responsory, which is sung from the steps of the ambo, is apparently drawn from the apocryphal Book of Esdras, from which other parts of the Easter Office of the martyrs are taken. This derivation points to a very early liturgical period, and it may have been brought to Rome by means of the Byzantine Liturgy.

"Alleluia, alleluia. *℣*. Thy saints, O Lord, shall flourish like the lily, and shall be as the smell of balsam before thee. Alleluia. *℣*. (Psalm cxv) Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints. Alleluia." A precious death indeed, though in the eyes of carnal-minded men it may seem cruel and shameful, marked, as it often is, with the stigma of Calvary.

The Gospel Lesson, according to the Roman Lectionary of Würzburg, should be the one taken from St John (xx, 12-16), which is read at the vigiliary Masses of the apostles, and of which we treated on December 20; but our present Missal gives a different passage, also from our Lord's discourse at the Last Supper (St John xv, 5-11).

The condition which is essential for rendering our labours efficacious in spiritual things is that we should remain intimately united by faith and love with Jesus, the source itself of this supernatural life. To separate from him means to condemn ourselves to sterility; to loosen our bond with him is to fade and wither like a branch in which the sap no longer flows freely; to renounce him means to renounce also our eternal inheritance in heaven.

The Offertory is derived from Psalm xxxi: "Be glad in the Lord, and rejoice, ye just; and glory, all ye right of heart, alleluia, alleluia." As the firmament of the Church are the apostles and martyrs who have given proof of their sublime faith by the supreme sacrifice of their lives, and who now, after the combat, share the triumph and joys of their Saviour.

The following prayer is the Secret: "We beseech thee, O Lord, that this victim which we offer up in memory of the birthday of thy holy martyrs, may loose us from the bonds



of sin and win for us the gift of thy mercy. Through our Lord."

In the Gregorian Sacramentary this Preface is given for to-day: "*. . . aeterne Deus; et Te in Sanctorum Martyrum tuorum festivitate laudare, qui semper es mirabilis in tuorum commemoratione Sanctorum, et magnae fidei largiris effectum, et tolerantiam tribuis passionum, et antiqui hostis facis superare machinamentum, quo egregii Martyres tui ad capiendam supernorum beatitudinem praemiorum, nullis impediuntur retinaculis blandimentorum. Per Christum.*"

The Communion comes from Psalm xxxii: "Rejoice in the Lord, ye just, alleluia: praise becometh the upright, alleluia." The just are also called the "upright," because God has placed in the heart of man an irresistible impulse towards himself, and the wicked show a satanic fury in bending this motion of the will away from God and turning it to evil.

In the Post-Communion we pray thus: "We who have taken our fill of thy holy gift, humbly beseech thee, O Lord, that for the service which we duly pay to thee we may enjoy an increase of thy saving grace. Through our Lord."

In some MSS. of the Gregorian Sacramentary, however, the Post-Communion is thus expressed: *Caelesti munere saginati, quaesumus, Domine, Deus noster, ut haec nobis dona Martyrum tuorum intercessio beata sanctificet. Sanctificet*, that is to say, may this Communion, through the intercession of the martyrs, produce in us the blessed fruits of holiness.

## APRIL 14

### ST JUSTIN, MARTYR\*

Justin, philosopher and probably priest, is one of the earliest ecclesiastical writers, who passed through all the various schools of philosophy of his time before arriving at the sublime knowledge of the Cross. To-day he comes to lay at the feet of the Saviour his crown and martyr's palm.

Notwithstanding his great fame, the *cultus* of St Justin, as in general of all the Roman martyrs before the third century, was but very little developed in the Eternal City; Justin died about the year 165, but none of the ancient Itineraries has been able to point out to us his tomb, which some have wished to identify, though this is merely a conjecture on their part, with a *loculus* in the cemetery of Priscilla, where there is to be seen this inscription in "miniature" (i.e., in red lead):



Leo XIII, in 1882, prescribed the use of the Office throughout the whole Church.

A church dedicated to St Justin existed at one time in the vicinity of the Vatican Basilica, near the Lombard *Schola*, founded by Queen Ansa, but it is probable that it was called after another martyr of the name of Justin, whose sepulchre was venerated in the Agro Verano.

The Mass is modern and is full of historical reminiscences. We are dealing here with a philosopher who, after vainly seeking the truth in the various schools of the Stoics, the Pythagoreans, the Platonists, and others, each claiming to be the only possessor thereof, finds it at last in the foolishness of the cross, which he fearlessly proclaims in his *Apologies* to the Emperors and the Senate. In this appears the antithesis between human learning and divine knowledge, which the composer of this Mass of St Justin has taken as an ever-recurring motive running through all his elaborate liturgical construction. The matter is certainly well chosen and well arranged, but the whole composition is wanting somewhat in that freedom which gives so much beauty and fluency to the ancient liturgical compositions of the Roman Sacramentaries.

Introit (Psalm cxviii): "The wicked have told me fables, but not as thy law; but I spoke of thy testimonies before kings, and was not ashamed. Alleluia, alleluia. Blessed are the undefiled in the way, who walk in the law of the Lord. *Ps.* Glory be."

The Collect reveals clearly the sublime aim which Leo XIII had in view when he proposed the philosopher Justin to the veneration of the whole Church. In order to save modern society from a host of errors he aimed at the restoration of Catholic philosophy by leading all the Catholic schools back to the study of St Thomas Aquinas. It is easy, therefore, to understand the zeal of the venerable Pontiff in reviving the devotion to the ancient Doctors of the Church for whom St Thomas had so great a reverence.

Collect: "O God, who by the foolishness of the cross didst wonderfully instruct blessed Justin, martyr, in the excellent knowledge of Jesus Christ; grant that through his intercession we may drive forth the deceits of error and become steadfast in faith. Through the same."

The Lesson from the First Epistle to the Corinthians (i, 18-30) is one of the finest passages in the writings of the apostle, in which the wisdom of the cross is contrasted with that of this world, which is foolishness in the sight of God. Those especially who are called to preach the Gospel must meditate frequently on these words of St Paul in order to



become more thoroughly convinced that the conversion of souls does not depend on eloquence or human learning, but on the simple preaching of Christ crucified, in the spirit of Jesus, who, through the divine dispensation, has become to his faithful followers the only true wisdom, their justice, their sanctification, and their redemption.

The following alleluiatic verses are not in accordance with the rule of ancient psalmody, for they are simply prose extracts from the Epistles of St Paul, and therefore do not lend themselves easily to the traditional modes of Gregorian music.

"Alleluia, alleluia. *Ÿ*. (1 Cor. iii, 19, 20) For the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God, for it is written: The Lord knoweth the thoughts of the wise that they are vain. Alleluia. *Ÿ*. (Philipp. iii, 8) Furthermore I count all things to be but loss, for the excellent knowledge of Jesus Christ my Lord. Alleluia."

Out of Eastertide the following responsory is recited instead:

Gradual (1 Cor. iii, 19, 20): "The wisdom of this world is foolishness with God, for it is written: The Lord knoweth the thoughts of the wise, that they are vain. *Ÿ*. (1 Cor. i, 19) I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and the prudence of the prudent I will reject. Alleluia, alleluia. *Ÿ*. (Philipp. iii, 8) Furthermore I count all things to be but loss, for the excellent knowledge of Jesus Christ my Lord. Alleluia."

After Septuagesima in place of the alleluiatic verse the Tract is read, which, however, consists in a patchwork of selections from the Epistles of St Paul. This shows how much damage has been done to the magnificent liturgical monument of the Roman Church by ignoring the classical rules of Gregorian art.

Tract (1 Cor. ii, 2): "I judged not myself to know anything among you but Jesus Christ, and him crucified. *Ÿ*. (Verse 7) We speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, which is hidden, which God ordained before the world, unto our glory. *Ÿ*. (Verse 8) Which none of the princes of this world knew. For if they had known it, they would never have crucified the Lord of glory."

Departing from the ancient custom of the Roman Liturgy, which usually reserved the Gospel Lesson drawn from the last discourse of our Lord, according to St John, for the Sunday Mass and for the feasts of martyrs during the Paschal Easter cycle, we read to-day a passage from St Luke (xii, 2-8). The reason for this choice is that Justin was the Apologist of the Church of the Catacombs—that is to say, he was one of the first to make known to the Emperors and the general public, both Roman and Asiatic, that which



until then had been, as it were, whispered by the chiefs of the hierarchy with almost complete secrecy in the ears of the "initiated," amidst the semi-darkness of the *cubicula* in the subterranean cemeteries.

In the Church, all is order and progress. At the beginning the Faith is reserved to the faithful alone, but in the second century the Church is sufficiently ready and prepared to assume the offensive, even against the *sophists*. So Justin, with his two Apologies, initiates a new period for Christianity and carries the Gospel into the arena of the disputes of the great pagan public, in order that the Sun of Justice may henceforth illumine all men of goodwill.

The Offertory (1 Cor. ii, 2) shows the same quality as the preceding chants. "For I judged not myself to know anything among you but Jesus Christ; and him crucified. Alleluia."

Justin in his first Apology is the only one of the early ecclesiastical writers who, cautiously lifting the veil which hid the Sacrament of the Eucharist from the uninitiated, explained to the pagans its essence, its efficacy, and its rite. The author of the Secret drew his inspiration from this circumstance when recording the calumnies of the pagans who, through having probably misunderstood some allusion to the presence of the Saviour's body in the Eucharist, accused the Christians of the crime of feeding on the flesh of a child at their assemblies. This calumnious talk of the pagan populace is a valuable incident in the history of dogma, since it presupposes the faith of the first Christians in the real presence of the sacred Body of Christ in the Eucharist.

Secret: "Graciously receive, O Lord, these our offerings, the marvellous mystery of which thy holy martyr Justin resolutely defended against the calumnies of ungodly men. Through our Lord."

The Communion is from a passage in the Second Epistle of St Paul to Timothy (iv, 8): "There is laid up for me a crown of justice, which the Lord, the just judge, will render to me in that day. Alleluia."

In the Post-Communion we find another precious record of that part of the Apologia of St Justin in which he speaks of the holy Eucharist. "We who have been refreshed with food from heaven, humbly entreat thee, O Lord, that, following the admonitions of thy blessed martyr Justin, we may always give thanks for the gifts which we have received. Through our Lord."

We must have a great veneration for the truth, for it is the truth which frees us from error and from our passions, and leads us to God. We must, therefore, seek this truth



steadfastly, and not from idle curiosity; we must seek it not only outside ourselves, but also within us, for it is absolutely necessary that before everything else we should be *veri*. That passage of the Book of Job, which in the Vulgate runs thus: *Erat ille homo rectus*, is in other versions: *Erat ille homo verus*, as if to declare that it is not possible to be a "true" man except by possessing that full degree of rectitude which God desires in us.

## APRIL 17

### ST ANICETUS, POPE AND MARTYR\*

This feast was included in the Roman Calendar only towards the end of the Middle Ages, together with those of several other early Popes, but the *cultus* of the saint is considerably older. An oratory, rich in paintings and marbles, dedicated to the memory of this illustrious Pontiff is in the former palace of the Altemps family in Rome, where the body of the saint is also said to have been laid under Clement VIII. Early Roman tradition, however, as represented by the *Liber Pontificalis*, would have it that he was placed in the Vatican near the tomb of the Princes of the Apostles, where, indeed, all the Popes of the first two centuries were buried.

We know, further, from the writings of St Irenæus, that at the end of 154 or the beginning of 155, St Polycarp, the disciple of St John, came to Rome from Smyrna to consult St Anicetus about the questions which were disturbing the Church at that time, with regard to the date on which Easter should be kept. The reasons brought forward by St Polycarp in favour of the Asiatic use did not convince St Anicetus, nor did his argument in any way move St Polycarp. But in spite of this the personality of the aged disciple of St John inspired the Pope with so much respect, that, although they did not agree on a point which was purely a matter of discipline, Anicetus conceded to Polycarp the honour of celebrating the eucharistic synaxis in the presence of all the faithful of Rome.<sup>1</sup>

The Mass is that of the Common of a Martyr at Eastertide: *Protexisti*, as on the thirteenth of this month, with the following exceptions:

The Collects are the same as for the feast of St Blaise on February 3.

The Gospel Lesson should, properly speaking, have been

<sup>1</sup> Irenæus, *Epistol. ad Victor. apud Euseb., Hist. Eccl., V, c. 24, P.G. XX, col. 507.*



taken from the last discourse of our Lord in the Supper-room, according to St John, as was customary in Rome at the most solemn feasts during Eastertide. Instead of which, the feast of St Anicetus in the Missal not being of any great antiquity, the Gospel is a passage from the sixteenth chapter of St John's Gospel.

Out of Eastertide the Mass is identical with that described above for the feast of St Blaise. We should practise great devotion to these early patriarchs of the first ages of Christianity who *plantaverunt Ecclesiam sanguine suo*; from whose liturgical and dogmatic heritage and, even more, from whose merits we now derive so much light, comfort, and grace.

#### APRIL 20

On this day the Martyrology of St Jerome has: *Romae, in Coemeterio maiore via Nomentana, depositio Victoris episcopi, Felicis, Alexandri, et Papiæ.*

The remembrance of these martyrs is further revived in an inscription discovered in the Trastevere:

XVI · KAL · OCTOB · MARTYRORV(m in cimi)  
 TERV · MAIORE · VICTORIS · FELI(cis)  
 EMERENTIANETIS · ET · ALEXAN(dri)

All these saints belong to the group mentioned in the *Acta* of the martyrs Papias and Maurus, but it is not clear why the Martyrology of St Jerome commemorates them on this day instead of on September 16.

#### APRIL 21

##### ST ANSELM, BISHOP, CONFESSOR, AND DOCTOR

St Anselm, whose death occurred in 1109, had practically a right of insertion in the Roman Missal, since he resided for some time in Rome, and at the Council of Bari (1098), which was convened to deal with the schism of the Greeks, he was the right hand of Urban II in combating their errors.

In later days Leo XIII caused to be erected on the Aventine a fine basilica to the memory of the holy Doctor of Canterbury, adjoining the great university college of the Benedictine Order, which numbers the saint among its highest glories.

The Benedictine hymnal contains this striking Sapphic ode in honour of the great Doctor, whose merit it was to prepare, as it were, the way for the theological edifice of St Thomas Aquinas:



Fortis en Praesul, monachus  
fidelis,  
Laurea Doctor redimitus adstat.  
Festus Anselmo chorus aemuletur  
Dicere carmen.

Ante maturos sapiens hic annos,  
Saeculi florem pereuntis horret;  
Atque Lanfranci documenta quae-  
rens  
Intrat eremum.

Intimum pulsans penetrale Verbi  
Fertur immotae fidei volatu :  
Dogmatum puros latices an ullus  
Altius hausit?

Munus Abbatis, Pater alme,  
sumens,  
Te voves carae soboli; benignis  
Debiles portans humeris, alacres  
Praevius hortans.

Praesulum defert tibi rex cathe-  
dram.  
Quid times luctam? properant  
triumphi;  
Exteras gentes, generosus exsul  
Lumine replet.

Sacra libertas, ovibus redemptis  
Parta, cui Christus nihil ante-  
ponit  
Urget Anselmum; studio quis  
aequo  
Vindicat ipsam?

Clara fit Romae tua fama,  
Praesul;  
Pontifex summus tibi fert honores;  
Te fides poscit; siluere Patres  
Dogma tuere.

Sis memor sancti gregis, et  
Patronus  
Sis ad aeternam Triadem, prae-  
camur,  
Cuncta cui dignae resonent per  
orbem  
Saecula laudes. Amen.

Behold the fearless Bishop, the  
faithful Monk,  
The Doctor crowned with laurel,  
Let the joyous choir vie in singing  
A hymn to Anselm.

Ere he had come to years mature  
Wisely he turned from the lure of  
this fleeting world.  
And, seeking the guidance of  
Lanfranc,  
Entered the cloister.

Rising on the wings of an unshak-  
able faith  
He knocked at the inmost door,  
the heart of the Word;  
Who has drawn the pure waters of  
dogma  
From greater depths than he?

O holy Pastor, when thou assumest  
the burden  
Of the Abbot's Office, to thy flock  
thou wholly devotest thyself,  
Carrying on thy shoulders the  
weak and exhorting  
By thine example the strong.

The king offers thee the Archie-  
piscopal throne.  
Why dost thou fear the conflict?  
Triumphs await thee.  
A noble exile, thou must carry the  
light  
To nations afar.

Full of care is Anselm for the holy  
freedom  
Granted to the flock of the re-  
deemed, which Christ himself  
Placed first; and who better than  
Anselm shall defend  
Its sacrosanct rights?

Thy fame, O Pastor, becomes  
great even in Rome,  
The supreme Pontiff himself o'er-  
whelms thee with honours,  
The Faith hath need of thee. The  
Fathers are silent.  
Do thou uphold the truth.

Remember thy consecrated flock.  
Be thou our Advocate  
Before the Eternal Trinity, unto  
whom  
May due praises be sung through-  
out the wide world  
And for ages unending. Amen.



Leo XIII also, on his deathbed, composed some verses in honour of St Anselm, and caused them to be sent at once to the Abbot of his new basilica on the Aventine as a last proof of his devotion to this great Doctor and to the Benedictine Order in which he had been trained.

The Mass is of the Common of Doctors as on January 29. History preserves a notable saying of this famous Confessor of the Faith and defender of the Church's freedom, who, a fugitive and an exile like Athanasius, found at Rome and in blessed Urban II a warm welcome and a safe protection; a saying which is his special glory, because it is fearless and full of faith: "God loves nothing better in this world than the liberty of his Church."

#### APRIL 22

#### SS SOTER AND GAIUS, POPES AND MARTYRS

##### *Station at the Titulus Gaii.*

These two Popes were also inscribed very late in the Roman Calendar. But, especially in the case of St Gaius (who died on April 22, 296), some very early traces exist of the devotion which the faithful showed towards him, for his name is recorded on this day in the *Depositiones Episcoporum* of Philocalus. A *Titulus*, too, of some importance, which stood near the church of Sta Susanna and the Baths of Diocletian, was named after him. Urban VIII desired to revive the memory of this church by building there another small oratory, but this, also, has been destroyed.

An ancient tradition which is repeated in the "Passion of St Susanna," asserts that this martyr was the niece of Pope Gaius and the daughter of the priest Gabinus, the brother of the Pontiff. From this relationship arose the fact that: *Gaii episcopi domus beati Gabini domui iuncta erat, atque ex illo tempore Christianorum statio deputata est in duabus aedibus, usque in hodiernum. Factum est hoc Romae, in regione sexta, apud Vicum Mamurri, ante Sallustii forum.* So say the *Acta*, which are usually to be trusted in matters of topography and dates.

Pope Gaius did not die a violent death—the first issue of the *Liber Pontificalis* calls him "Confessor"—and he was buried in the cemetery of Callixtus in a splendid crypt adorned with marble columns.



De Rossi discovered some fragments of his sepulchral inscription :

ΓΑΙΟΥ ΕΠΙΣΚΟΠΟΥ  
ΚΑΤ  
ΠΡΟ Ι ΚΑΛ ΜΑΙΩΝ

Here is another inscription commemorating some Christians who had prepared a tomb for themselves *ad domnum Gaium*. The fifth line, with the obituary date which alters the meaning of the inscription, was incised at a later period.

BENEMERENTI · IOVINE · QVE · CVM · CO(niu)  
GEM · SVVM · HABVIT · ANNOS · V · ET · D(e)  
CESSIT · ANNORVM · XXI · QVE · COMPA(ra)  
BIT · SIBI · ARCOSOLIVM · IN · CALLISTI · AD · DOMN(um)  
DEPOSITA · DIE · III · IDVS · FEBRVARIAS  
CAIVM · FECIT · COIVGI · MERENTI · IN · PACE

Eusebius mentions a letter of Pope Soter, written about the year 170, to Dionysius, Bishop of Corinth, to which the latter replied in an epistle containing these memorable words : " To-day we have kept the holy day of the Lord, and on this day we have read your letter which we shall henceforth always read to our edification, as we read the preceding one which was written to us by Clement."¹

Harnack believed this letter of Pope Soter to be identical with the so-called Second Epistle to the Corinthians, which was formerly attributed to Clement, but his hypothesis has not been maintained.

According to the author of the *Praedestinatus* (fifth century), Pope Soter also wrote a work against the Montanists, but the evidence is to be received with reserve. St Soter was buried in the Vatican, as were his predecessors in the papacy.

The Mass is from the Common of Martyrs : *Sancti tui* as on April 14, with the exception of the Lesson from the Apocalypse (xix, 1-9), which with its repeated alleluias is so well adapted to the Easter cycle. The martyrs already enjoy in heaven the firstfruits of the new Messianic kingdom, and being one with Christ in glory as they were in torment, they celebrate the nuptial feast of the Lamb with his Bride the Church. They repeat unceasingly the sacred canticle : Amen, alleluia ; " Amen " refers to the Beatific Vision which crowns their faith ; " alleluia " is the hymn of praise from their grateful hearts.

Should, however, this feast occur out of Eastertide, the

¹ Eusebius, *Hist. Eccles.*, IV, c. 23, P.G., XX, col. 390.



Mass is not so joyous in character, and is the same as that of January 22.

The Collect is of the Common of many Martyrs who were Bishops: "May the festival of the blessed martyrs, Bishops Soter and Caius, shield us, O Lord, we beseech thee; and may their holy prayers make us well-pleasing unto thee. Through our Lord."

This will be our life in heaven, our life for all eternity. We shall contemplate that which we believed on earth, and we shall seal the profession of faith which we made in time with our "Amen" in the light of glory. Then shall we exult and give loving thanks to the Lord: "Alleluia." But this thanksgiving will be eternal, even as our communion will likewise be eternal. St John likens this true "Eucharist" of alleluias to clouds of fragrant incense which rise up for evermore: *Et fumus ejus ascendit in omnia saecula saeculorum*, since, in heaven, as our possession of God will never lessen, so, too, our praise of his glory will never cease.

## APRIL 23

### ST GEORGE, MARTYR

*Station at the Titulus "de Belabru."*

To-day, instead of a Roman saint, we have an Eastern martyr, who comes with palm and crown to render still more splendid the triumph of the risen Saviour. The *cultus* of St George emanates from the East, having been brought to Rome during the first Byzantine period.

Legend, has obscured the history of this great martyr, whom some persons connect with the city of Lydda or Diospolis in Palestine, where he is supposed to have met his death in 303 for having torn up the edicts proclaiming the persecution of the Christians.

From the time when Constantine won his great victory over the pagan Licinius, St George became renowned everywhere in the East as the armed defender of the Church, her *τροπαιοφόρος*, or he who carries the trophies of victory over the enemy, as were St Lawrence and St Sebastian at Rome. The *cultus* of St George pervaded not only that immense tract of country which is named "Georgia" after him, but found its way into the Ethiopian, Coptic, Syriac, and Latin Liturgies. In Europe St George became one of the most popular saints of the Middle Ages, and England still claims him as the heavenly patron of her realm.

From the early Middle Ages churches and altars arose in honour of St George, in the Vatican, at the Mausoleum of



Augustus, in the Velabrum, and elsewhere. When Belisarius repaired the walls of Rome in the sixth century, he placed an inscription above the gate of St Sebastian, in which the defence of that part of the city was entrusted to the Eastern martyrs Conon and George.



But the most celebrated sanctuary of all, the one to which the people of Rome flocked by preference to implore the patronage of the great martyr, was, throughout the Middle Ages, always the *Basilica Sancti Georgii in Velabro*. It was there, consequently, that Gregory II (715-31) instituted the stational Mass on the Thursday of Quinquagesima. The origin of this basilica appears to date from before the fifth century, for in an inscription of the year 482, mention is made of a *lector de Belabru*. However, its final dedication to the soldier martyrs, George and Sebastian, dates only from the time of Leo II (682-83).

The Mass is that of the Common of a Martyr at Eastertide as on April 13, excepting the Collects and the Epistle, the latter being taken from the Mass *Laetabitur*, which has already been described on November 29, the feast of St Saturninus.

The Leonine Sacramentary also contains the Mass of St George, with its proper Collects and Preface.

The following prayer is interesting, because it proves that the feast of St George was celebrated at Rome with a station, at least from the fifth century onwards: *Adspice nos, Domine, precibus exoratus venerandi Martyris tui Georgii; tua miseratione concedens, ut sicut nobis eius passio contulit hodiernum in tua virtute conventum, ita suffragetur et meritum.*

During the Byzantine period when the Lessons were read at Rome in Greek as well as in Latin, to-day's Gospel, as



that of April 14, in which Jesus compares himself to a vine and his Father to the husbandman (γεωργός), called very gracefully to mind the name of the martyr whose feast was being celebrated.

The three proper prayers are the following :

Collect : " O God, who dost gladden us by the merits and intercession of blessed George, thy martyr; grant in thy mercy that we who beg for thy blessings through him may obtain them by the gift of thy grace. Through our Lord."

Secret : " Hallow, O Lord, the gifts we offer up, and by the intercession of blessed George, thy martyr, cleanse us by means of them from the stains of our sins. Through our Lord."

In the Gregorian Sacramentary this Preface is assigned to St George . . . *per Christum Dominum nostrum; pro cuius nominis veneranda confessione, beatus martyr Georgius diversa supplicia sustinuit, et ea devincens, coronam perpetuitatis promeruit. Per quem maiestatem tuam, etc.*

Post-Communion : " We humbly beseech thee, almighty God, by the intercession of blessed George, thy martyr, that thou wouldst enable those whom thou dost refresh with thy sacraments to serve thee by a life well pleasing to thee. Through our Lord."

In some copies of the Gregorian Sacramentary we find instead this other prayer: *Beati Georgii martyris tui, Domine, suffragiis exoratus, percepta Sacramenti tui virtute defende. Per Dominum. . . .*

Out of Eastertide the Mass is that of the Common: *In virtute tua*, as on January 19; the Gospel is then as on January 24, but the Collects are proper to the day itself.

No state or condition of life is too far from God or from heaven. Therefore, it is quite possible to pass, in the school of Christian perfection, from the barracks to martyrdom, from the parade-ground to the altar, since our virtue does not depend on the exterior circumstances of our social life in the world around us. Holiness consists in serving God perfectly in whatever state the divine Providence has placed us.

## APRIL 23

### ST ADALBERT, BISHOP AND MARTYR\*

*Synaxis at the Basilica of St Adalbert on the Island in the Tiber.*

Many Missals of the late Middle Ages contain this feast, which may well be considered as truly Roman. The Eternal City, indeed, towards the end of the tenth century, witnessed



the edifying example of this zealous Bishop of Prague, who, laying aside his badges of honour, became a simple monk in the monastery of St Boniface on the Aventine, which, on account of the number of saints for whom it was at that time a meeting-place, was called by Baronius "*Seminarium Sanctorum*."

However, the clergy of Prague demanded of the Pope the return of their bishop, so that Adalbert was obliged more than once to leave his quiet retreat and the office of cook in the monastic kitchen, which had been assigned to him, and to take up his pastoral staff once more. At length, in the year 997, he received the palm of martyrdom at the hands of the pagans, and the Emperor Otho III, who had been his friend and admirer, caused to be built in his honour on the island in the Tiber a basilica which was mentioned for the first time in a document of 1029: *Ecclesia S Adalberti in insula Licaonia*.

With the object of attracting greater veneration to the sanctuary of his personal friend, who had become a martyr and a saint, Otho III compelled the people of Benevento to yield up to him the body of St Bartholomew, but it would appear that they deceived him and gave him instead the bones of St Paulinus of Nola, which the Emperor placed in the new basilica erected on the island. As time went on, the memory of St Adalbert was wellnigh forgotten, and the church was commonly called after the Apostle Bartholomew.

## **APRIL 24**

### **ST FIDELIS OF SIGMARINGEN, MARTYR\***

A humble son of St Francis of Assisi approaches us to-day bearing a palm in his hand. It is the protomartyr of the later reform of the Capuchin Friars Minor, who, in circumstances not unlike those in the life of St Boniface, the Apostle of Germany, again watered with his blood in 1622 that land which had become sterile through heresy. His feast was extended to the Universal Church by another son of St Francis, Pope Clement XIV (1763-74).

The Mass is the Common of a Martyr at Eastertide as on April 13, with the Gospel Lesson, however, assigned to the feast of the martyrs Tiburtius, Valerian, and Maximus.

The Collects are as follows :

Collect : " O God, who didst vouchsafe to inflame the soul of blessed Fidelis with seraphic fervour, and to adorn him with the palm of martyrdom and with glorious miracles in spreading the true faith ; we beseech thee, through his merits



and intercession, so to strengthen us in faith and love by thy grace, that we may be worthy to be found faithful in thy service even unto death. Through our Lord."

Secret: "Receive our offerings and prayers, O Lord, we beseech thee; cleanse us by thy heavenly mysteries, and graciously hear us. Through our Lord."

Post-Communion: "Grant, we beseech thee, O Lord our God, that we who during our mortal lives render joyful service in memory of thy saints, may rejoice at their presence in life everlasting. Through our Lord."

Out of Eastertide the Mass, *In virtute tua*, is the same as on November 29, with the Gospel: *Si quis venit*, as for January 24, the feast of St Timothy. The Collects, however, are those given above.

The grace of martyrdom is not a privilege only of the early generations of Christians; God grants it in every age. It usually presupposes, however, a high degree of virtue and a faithful correspondence to another succession of graces, which, in the divine plan, are intended to serve as a preparation to that final grace which, by the shedding of blood, completes the total sacrifice of one's whole being to God.

## APRIL 25

### ST MARK THE EVANGELIST

#### *Station at St Mark's.*

On this day there used to be celebrated at Rome the *Robigalia*, which were replaced in later days by the Christian procession that passed along the Via Flaminia to the Milvian bridge and from there to St Peter's. Consequently the feast of Mark the Evangelist was not regularly inserted in the Roman Calendar until about the twelfth century. This delay is all the more surprising because Mark was among the first heralds who, together with Peter, brought the glad tidings to Rome. Moreover, he wrote his Gospel in the Eternal City, at the request of the Romans themselves, and when, some time afterwards, Paul suffered there his first imprisonment, Mark, together with Luke, gave him the same devoted help as he had given to the Prince of the Apostles.

This forgetfulness, which some might think savoured of ingratitude, is not an isolated instance. John, too, came to preach at Rome and met there his martyrdom in a cauldron of boiling oil. Yet it would seem as though his stay in the Eternal City had left behind no trace; the same happened also in the case of Luke and of other famous persons of the Apostolic era.



The apparent anomaly is, however, easily explained. Originally the liturgical commemorations of the saints had merely a local and sepulchral character, being celebrated exclusively at their respective tombs. Therefore, as neither John, nor Luke, nor Mark, nor any other of the first companions of the apostles, as far as we know, ended their days in Rome, so the Roman diptychs did not mark either their burial or their feast day. The medieval calendars of Rome are based fundamentally on these lists, thus their silence is explained.

In the first half of the fourth century Pope Marcus erected a basilica near the portico *in Pallacinis*, which in course of time became known by the title of the Evangelist whose name he bore. Several other churches were called after St Mark in the Middle Ages, one *de calcarario*, another *in macello*, etc., but the magnificent Basilica of St Mark was renowned beyond all the others because of its architectural beauty and the exceptional historical interest which it acquired.

On this day the Greater Litanies conclude with the stationary Mass at St Peter's. The procession is, therefore, in no way related to the feast of St Mark; so far is this from being the case that, when the feast is transferred to another day, the Greater Litanies are not likewise transferred. The only exception is for Easter Sunday; because if it should fall on April 25, the procession would then take place on the following Tuesday.

In the late Middle Ages all recollection of the *Robigalia* had entirely passed away in Rome, together with the traditional route of the classic procession of the Roman youth along the Via Flaminia. Therefore the procession with the Litanies was accustomed to proceed from the Lateran to the Basilica of St Mark, and thence towards St Peter's, this rule continuing in force until the latter half of the nineteenth century.

The antiphons and responsories of the Mass of St Mark are taken from the Mass *Protexisti*, the Common of a Martyr at Eastertide, which we have already given on the feast of St Fidelis of Sigmaringen; the Collects and Lessons, however, are special to the day.

Collect: "O God, who by thy grace didst raise up blessed Mark the Evangelist to be a preacher of the Gospel; grant, we beseech thee, that we may both profit by his teaching and be defended by his prayers. Through our Lord."

The Word of God is often compared in Holy Scripture to a spring of water, which relieves a burning thirst, refreshes



an arid soil, rendering it fertile, and causes the trees and plants again to put forth green leaves.

In the early Middle Ages the public fountains had a certain religious character, inasmuch as they were symbols of the Word and of divine grace. Of this we find an example, among many others, in a *puteal* which still exists in the portico of the Basilica of St Mark *de Pallacine*, bearing this inscription :

DE · DONIS · DEI · ET · SANCTI · MARCI · JOHANNES · PRESBITER ·  
 FIERI · ROGABIT  
 OMNES · SITIENTES · VENITE · AD · AQVAS · ET · SI · QVIS · DE ·  
 ISTA · AQVA · PRETIO  
 TVLERIT · ANATHEMA · SIT

Having regard to the medieval mentality, we can only admire this anathema launched against him who would make money out of the water of the *puteal* solely because it was a symbol of grace, which it would be simony to sell for gain.

The Lesson, from Ezechiel (i, 10-14), appointed for to-day portrays the four holy Gospels which, dictated by the same Spirit, reflect in a fourfold ray the light and wisdom of the Eternal Word of God. When the unregenerate human eye, clouded by the veil of unbelief and passion, attempts to read the Holy Scriptures, it will perhaps find it the most simple and childish book imaginable. On the other hand, when the eye of the believer, pure and strong, rests with humble faith upon those sacred pages, its sight is dazzled by that divine light, and the created intelligence penetrating the secrets of uncreated Wisdom, realizes the vanity of all human reasonings.

This was the state of that sublime ignorance to which Paul—and after him many another saint—was raised when, rapt in the contemplation of Paradise, he could find no words in earthly language nor any thoughts capable of expressing that which he had seen.

The Gospel (Luke x, 1-9) is as on February 6, for the feast of St Titus, with the narrative of the calling and sending forth of the seventy-two disciples by our Lord. In all probability Mark was not of this number, but being called afterwards to fellowship with Paul, Barnabas, and, later, with Peter, he also nobly fulfilled the duties of the Apostolate.

Modern historians have claimed to get a glimpse in the Holy Scriptures of a certain timidity in the character of Mark. When on the evening on which Jesus was made a prisoner, the young man Mark, suddenly aroused from sleep, had gone out into the street wrapped only in a large linen sheet and was arrested, he, struck with fear, swiftly



threw off the sheet and escaped naked from the hands of the soldiers. This incident must certainly have alarmed him, and in consequence influenced his character, which was wanting in boldness and was more adapted for working faithfully in a subordinate position than for assuming the responsibility of venturesome enterprises.

Having been brought up in an honourable family at Jerusalem, and having lived among the apostles, when he accompanied his cousin Barnabas and Paul on their first apostolic mission to Pamphylia, the youthful Mark ended by losing courage in face of the daring zeal of the two Jewish missionaries, who, in a pagan country, held free intercourse with the Gentiles scorned by the Torah, and admitted them to a share in the inheritance of the sons of Abraham. In these circumstances Mark felt that his hour for serving in the vanguard had not as yet come; so, taking leave of the two missionaries, he returned to the quiet harbour of Jerusalem.

Yet there was within him, although dormant, the vocation to the apostleship, consequently Mark did not feel altogether at peace in the tranquillity of the Upper Room. Some time afterwards he desired to make amends, as it were, for that which he now considered to have been a weakness, and suggested to the two apostles that he should accompany them on their second mission. This time, however, Paul, who knew that his character was not yet fully formed, fearing that his presence would be rather a hindrance than a help in the conversion of the Greeks, refused to accept him, so Mark set off for Salamina with his cousin.

When at last in 61-62, Paul is kept a prisoner at Rome, we find Mark, together with the Evangelist Luke, again in the immediate surroundings of the apostle. After a brief absence in Asia Minor and at Colossæ, he is recalled to Paul's side by means of the Second Epistle to Timothy, as being a person *mihi utilis in ministerium*.<sup>1</sup> It is evident that in those great and generous minds the momentary disagreement between Paul, Barnabas, and his cousin had left no trace.

During the journey of Paul to Spain, Mark remained at Rome, and acted as interpreter to Peter, whose teaching he afterwards wrote down at the request of the faithful. After the martyrdom of the two apostles, an old tradition asserts that Mark went to Alexandria, where, at the beginning of the fourth century, a sepulchral memorial of the Evangelist was to be seen.

Secret: "We who offer up to thee these gifts on the

<sup>1</sup> II Tim. iv, 11.



festival of blessed Mark, thine evangelist, beseech thee, O Lord, that even as he became glorious by the preaching of the Gospel, so through his intercession we may become acceptable to thee both in our words and in our deeds. Through our Lord."

The Preface is the Common of the Apostles, but in some MSS. we find the following text: . . . *per Christum Dominum nostrum. Cuius gratia beatum Marcum in sacerdotium elegit, doctrina ad praedicandum erudit, potentia ad perseverandum confirmavit, ut per sacerdotalem infulam perveniret ad martyrii palman; docensque subditos, instruens vivendi exemplo, confirmans patiundo, ad Te coronandus perveniret, qui persecutorum minas intrepidus superasset. Cuius interventus, nos, quaesumus, a nostris mundet delictis, qui tibi placuit tot donorum praerogativis. Per quem, etc.*

Post-Communion: "May thy holy mysteries, O Lord, afford us continual aid, and through the prayers of blessed Mark, thy evangelist, may they ever defend us from all adversities. Through our Lord."

Out of Eastertide the Collects and the two scriptural Lessons remain unaltered, but the Introit is that of the Common of the Apostles as on the feast of St Andrew.

The Gradual is from Psalm xviii: "Their sound hath gone forth into all the earth: and their words unto the ends of the world. *Ÿ*. The heavens show forth the glory of God and the firmament declareth the work of his hands."

Alleluia, alleluia. (John xv, 16) "I have chosen you out of the world, that you should go and should bring forth fruit, and your fruit should remain. Alleluia."

In order that the fruit should remain, it is necessary for the suckers to be nourished by a living sap which can never fail. To this we shall attain, if we never separate ourselves from Jesus. It is by him and not by ourselves that we must work.

The Antiphon for the Communion is the same as on the feast of St Matthias.

When God calls us, we must not draw back through fear of danger or of our own weakness. In such a case his grace will supply the deficiencies of nature, as it did in that of St Mark. Of a naturally timid disposition, after the first moment of diffidence, grace took entire possession of him, so that he became the "interpreter" of Peter, the glorious Evangelist, the Apostle of Egypt, and the founder of the throne of the Patriarchs of Alexandria, who were the Christian heirs of the power of the ancient Pharaohs.

These verses of Pope Gregory IV (827-44) inscribed under the apsidal mosaic of the *Titulus Marci in Pallacine* are not without interest:



VASTA · THOLI · PRIMO · SISTVNT · FVNDAMINE · FVLCRA  
 QVAE · SALOMONIACO · FVLGENT · SVB · SIDERA · RITV  
 HAEC · TIBI · PROQVE · TVO · PERFECIT · PRAESVL · HONORE  
 GREGORII · MARCE · EXIMIO · CVM · NOMINE · QVARTVS  
 TV · QVOQVE · POSCE · DEVM · VIVENDI · TEMPORA · LONGA  
 DONET · ET · AD · CAELI · POST · FVNVS · SYDERA · DVCAT

On foundations firm the cupola with its apse arises,  
 Which like the Temple of Solomon shines resplendent in the  
 starry sky.

In thine honour, O Pontiff Mark, he raised this roof,  
 Who was the fourth to bear the illustrious name of Gregory.  
 Do thou in thy turn obtain for him from God  
 A long life here, and after death, the heavenly kingdom.

We see from this that in the ninth century the basilica continued to be dedicated, not to the Evangelist of Alexandria, but to *Marcus Praesul*—that is, to the Pontiff who had founded the title *de Pallacinis*, and who had been honourably interred there a short time previously.

## APRIL 26

### SS CLETUS AND MARCELLINUS, POPES AND MARTYRS\*

According to the testimony of St Irenæus, Cletus is to be identified with Anacletus, who governed the Church after Linus and before Clement. Of his actions we know nothing beyond the notice in the *Liber Pontificalis* to the effect that he embellished the tombs of the Princes of the Apostles, and that he himself was buried in the Vatican. The fact that Cletus was raised to the supreme pontificate, whilst the immediate disciples of Peter and Paul were still living, testifies to his great merits, which were foreshadowed by his very name.

Even more obscure is the history of Pope Marcellinus, concerning whom the strangest legends were circulated from very early days. According to certain apocryphal writings, dating from the time of the disputes of Symmachus, he had formerly offered incense to idols, but had afterwards expiated his apostasy like Peter, and had voluntarily exposed himself to martyrdom.

In the list of the *depositiones episcoporum* his name is left out, it is true; but this omission need not at once be attributed to a *damnatio memoriae*: it may be simply an oversight on the part of the amanuensis of the Philocalian *Laterculus*. In fact, Pope Marcellinus not only received a



distinguished burial in the cemetery of Priscilla, near the martyr Crescention, but his tomb was visited with such devotion by pilgrims that in the book *De locis Sanctorum Martyrum* he is given the title of "saint."

The apocryphal writings themselves, which speak of his martyrdom, testify indirectly to the veneration in which Pope Marcellinus was held at Rome in the fifth century, since they seek to get some advantage from it, in the interest of the cause of Pope Symmachus, holding up Marcellinus as an early example of the fall of a pontiff and his subsequent rehabilitation. Some obscurity still remains with regard to Pope Marcellinus, but the antiquity of his *cultus* is thoroughly proved by the "Itineraries" of the Catacombs.

A religious congregation which arose about the year 1197 under Celestine III, and which has now for several centuries been extinct, prided itself on having been founded by St Cletus, its members carrying a cross in their hands as a badge. They occupied in Rome the church of Sta Maria in *Xenodochio* or in *Trivio*, where up to last century there was an altar dedicated to the saint. To this day the neighbouring *piazza* is called after the *Crociferi*.

The name of Cletus is included in the primitive list of the Roman episcopal diptychs, which are still recited during the prayer of the great intercession (*Communicantes*). His feast, on the other hand, only appears on this day in the Calendar of the Vatican Basilica of the twelfth century; Marcellinus follows about a hundred years later, in the Breviary of the Papal Curia.

The earliest tomb of Marcellinus was found in the cemetery of Priscilla in *cubiculo claro*, as the *Liber Pontificalis* describes it, near that of the martyr Crescention. The crypt is adorned with paintings, among which is one very rarely met with of the three youths of Babylon refusing to adore the golden statue of Nabuchodonosor. Many *graffiti* have been scratched there by pilgrims.

Marcellinus is commemorated also in an inscription cut on a marble *transenna* in a crypt in the cemetery of Callixtus. It concerns a *cubiculum duplex cum arcisoliis et luminare iussu papae sui Marcellini diaconus iste Severus fecit mansionem in pace quietam sibi suisque*.

The Mass *Sancti tui* is the Common of many Martyrs at Eastertide.

The Collect is the following: "Lord, let the glorious confession of the blessed bishops and martyrs Cletus and Marcellinus be our defence, and let their loving intercession continually protect us."

In the Secret we pray thus: "Be nigh, O Lord, unto our



prayers which we bring to thee in memory of thy saints; so that we who trust not in our own righteousness, may be helped by the merits of those who are well-pleasing unto thee."

Our prayers, in order that they may please God, must be humble, as that of the poor publican in the Temple. Unlike the proud Pharisee who placed all his trust in his own merits and despised his neighbour, the humble Christian has no contempt for any except himself. In others he sees only the gifts of God; therefore he invokes the immense merits of the Communion of Saints to make up for his own spiritual deficiencies.

Out of Eastertide the Mass is *Intret* as on January 20.

This is the prayer of thanksgiving after Communion: "We who are filled with thy healthful sacraments, beseech thee, O Lord, that we may be helped by the prayers of those whose festival we are keeping."

God jealously protects and makes manifest the good fame of his servants, according to that which is written of Joseph: *Sapientia . . . mendaces ostendit qui maculaverunt illum*. Thus, strange stories may have been spread abroad concerning Marcellinus by persons with their own interests to serve; but his tomb in the cemetery of Priscilla has been held in reverence from remote ages, and the Church, which is assured of the unfailing assistance of the Holy Ghost in proposing him to the veneration of the faithful, implores to-day his compassionate intercession.

## APRIL 28

### ST VITALIS, MARTYR

#### *Station at the Title of Vestina.*

For this day the Bernese Calendar notes: *Romae Vitalis Martyris*. It is not, however, the feast of a Roman martyr that is here spoken of, for the history of the catacombs is altogether silent on this point, but it is merely that of the dedication of the Roman title of Vestina, in the fourth ecclesiastical region, in honour of one of the most celebrated saints of Ravenna.

The fame of the Ravennese martyr Vitalis, to whose memory Justinian caused to be erected one of the most splendid basilicas in Italy, very quickly spread beyond the city of the Exarchs so that the Eternal City, too, desired to possess a church dedicated to him. It stands in the valley between the Quirinal and the Esquiline, precisely in the *vicus longus*, which led from the Quirinal to the Baths of Diocletian.



The *Liber Pontificalis* describes Vestina, the foundress of this title, as a contemporary of Pope Innocent I (402-17). In fact, an inscription deciphered by Bosio in the cemetery of St Agnes makes mention of a certain acolyte *Abundantius, Regionis Quartae, tituli Vestinae*. At one time the names of the Milanese martyrs Gervase and Protase were associated with that of Vitalis; but in the announcement of the *litania septiformis* in the time of St Gregory the Great, it is simply ordered that the widows are to form in procession *in basilica beati Christi martyris Vitalis*. In the Middle Ages a monastery was also joined to the titular church.

According to the *Acta* of his passion, St Vitalis was buried alive up to his waist, and then stoned; his tomb was venerated in Ravenna, where it is also mentioned as being by Venantius Fortunatus: *Martyris egregii tumulum Vitalis adora*.<sup>1</sup>

The Mass is the Common of a Martyr at Eastertide as on April 24, with the exception of the Collects which are here given.

Collect: "Grant, we beseech thee, almighty God, that we who are keeping the festival of blessed Vitalis, thy martyr, may through his intercession be strengthened in the love of thy name."

Secret: "Receive our offerings and prayers, O Lord, we beseech thee; cleanse us by thy heavenly mysteries, and graciously hear us."

Post-Communion: "Grant, we beseech thee, O Lord our God, that we who during our mortal lives render joyful service in memory of thy saints, may rejoice at their presence in life everlasting."

In ancient times the feast of St Vitalis was much more solemn. The Gregorian Antiphonary assigns to it this alleluiatic verse: *Alleluia. Beatus vir qui timet Dominum, etc. Alleluia. Iustus non conturbabitur, quia Dominus firmat manum eius*.

The Offertory was as follows: *Repleti sumus mane misericordia tua et exultamus et delectati sumus. Alleluia. Domine, refugium factus es nobis a generatione et progenie. Priusquam montes fierent aut formaretur orbis terrae, a saeculo et in saeculum tu es Deus. Alleluia*.

The Secret was in these words: *Accepta sit in conspectu tuo, Domine, nostra devotio, et eius nobis fiat supplicatione salutaris, pro cuius solemnitate defertur*. "May our devotion be pleasing to thee, O Lord, and may his intercession render it profitable to us in whose honour we celebrate this feast."

<sup>1</sup> *Vita S Martini*, IV, 682. *P.L.*, t. LXXXVIII, col. 425.



The Communion was derived from the Gospel: *Ego sum vitis vera et vos palmites; qui manet in me et ego in eo, hic fert fructum multum. Alleluia. Alleluia. Exaudi, Deus, deprecationem, etc.*

The Post-Communion also was proper to the feast: *Ad complendum. Exultet, Domine, populus tuus in Sancti tui commemoratione Vitalis, et cuius votivo laetatur officio, suffragio relevetur optato.* "May thy people, O Lord, rejoice on the feast of Vitalis, thy saint, and may they be assisted by his patronage which they so much desire, whilst they joyfully celebrate his festival."

According to the ancient Roman rite, the Mass at the dedication of a church was that of the saint whose name it was about to bear; because of this, many anniversaries of the dedication of basilicas at Rome became later the feasts of the martyrs after whom they were named.

## APRIL 28

### ST PAUL OF THE CROSS\*

This apostle of our own times, powerful in word and in deed, by whose preaching the wonders of the early years of the Church were renewed, gave up his soul to God October 18, 1775, and was buried in the title of Pammachius, where his feast is solemnly kept. As, however, the feast of St Luke falls on that day, Pius IX, in 1869, at a time, that is, when the Roman liturgical tradition was very little studied and consequently much neglected, decreed that the feast of St Paul should be celebrated throughout the Church on April 28. Thus the Mass of St Vitalis, noted in all the ancient documents and belonging really to the traditional liturgical treasure of the Eternal City, has disappeared, whilst only a commemoration of it remains.

The Mass of St Paul, as a composition, has all the merits and all the defects of modern Masses. Its compiler has given no thought to the musical and psalmodic character of the antiphons and responsories of the Introit, the Offertory, etc., altogether of which he himself was probably ignorant. He then simply collected from the Epistles of St Paul and St Peter, a number of passages relating to Jesus crucified, and boldly distributed them like mosaics throughout his composition. Thus, in the Gradual, from the Epistle to the Galatians we jump to those addressed to the Corinthians, and from them to the *secunda Petri*. In the Tract, from St Peter to the Corinthians, thence to the Hebrews, forgetting entirely that these are liturgical parts belonging



to a whole, and of their very nature rhythmical and musical. On the other hand, the entire composition is full of fervour, and excites devotion to the passion of our Saviour.

Introit (Gal. ii, 19-20): "With Christ I am nailed to the Cross: but I live, now not I: but Christ liveth in me: I live in the faith of the Son of God, who loved me and delivered himself for me. Alleluia, alleluia. (Psalm xl) Blessed is he that understandeth concerning the needy and the poor: the Lord will deliver him in the evil day. *V.* Glory be."

Jesus Christ has no desire to remain alone; he is come into the world for us, and in all that he has wrought he has done it for our good. Hence Jesus wills that we live again his life, so that he may be able to continue in us the mystery of his incarnation, passion, and death. It is in this sense that the apostle lived in Christ, and was even, as he said, nailed with him to the cross.

Collect: "O Lord Jesus Christ, who didst endow holy Paul with singular charity in preaching the mystery of the cross, and wast pleased that through him a new family should flourish in the Church; grant, through his intercession, that we who continually recall the memory of thy passion while we are on earth, may be deemed worthy to receive the fruit of it in heaven: who livest."

The text of the Lesson is almost identical with that of the Mass of St Justin, and is, perhaps, even better suited to it.

The religious congregation founded by St Paul of the Cross does not devote itself to parochial works, to schools or educational institutions, but its members by preference give missions in country districts, or in poor quarters, preaching Christ crucified to sinners. It should be noticed that the Passionists at their profession add to the usual religious vows that of spreading devotion to the passion of the Saviour amongst the faithful.

Alleluia, alleluia. (2 Cor. v, 15) "Christ died for all; that they also who live may not now live to themselves, but to him who died for them and rose again. Alleluia."

*V.* (Rom. viii, 17) "And if sons, heirs also: heirs indeed of God, and joint heirs with Christ; yet so if we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified with him. Alleluia."

Out of Eastertide is said the Gradual (Gal. vi, 14): "But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ; by whom the world is crucified to me, and I to the world. *V.* (1 Cor. ii, 2) I judged not myself to know anything among you, but Jesus Christ, and him crucified. Alleluia, alleluia. *V.* (1 Peter ii, 21) Christ also suffered for us, leaving you an example that you should follow his steps. Alleluia."



After Septuagesima the alleluiatic verse being omitted, the Tract is said.

Tract (1 Peter iv, 1): "Christ therefore having suffered in the flesh, be you also armed with the same thought, for he that hath suffered in the flesh, hath ceased from sins. *Ÿ*. (2 Cor. iv, 10) Always bearing about in our body the mortification of Jesus, that the life also of Jesus may be made manifest in our bodies. *Ÿ*. (Hebrews xii, 2) Looking on Jesus the author and finisher of our faith, who, having joy set before him, endured the cross, despising the shame, and sitteth on the right hand of the throne of God."

The Gospel Lesson is the same as on the feast of St Mark. It is touching to remember how this new apostle of the crucified Saviour in the eighteenth century practised the most severe penances as he preached, going always bare-footed. It sometimes happened that even robbers were moved with compassion as St Paul of the Cross made his way through the thick undergrowth of the forests, and spread their cloaks on the ground before him, in order to protect his feet from the thorns.

Offertory (Eph. v, 2): "Walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath delivered himself for us, an oblation and a sacrifice to God for an odour of sweetness. Alleluia."

Secret: "May these mysteries of thy passion and death, O Lord, bring upon us that heavenly fervour with which holy Paul, when he offered them up, presented his body as a living sacrifice holy and pleasing to thee: who livest."

Communion (1 Peter iv, 13): "If you partake of the sufferings of Christ, rejoice that when his glory shall be revealed you may also be glad with exceeding joy. Alleluia."

Post-Communion: "We have received, O Lord, the divine Sacrament, which is a perpetual memorial of thy boundless love: grant, we beseech thee, that through the merits and example of holy Paul, we may draw from thy fountains water springing up to life everlasting, and in our conduct and in our lives keep thy most holy passion imprinted in our hearts: who livest."

The active life of the Church springs from the life of prayer and contemplation; it is a fatal illusion, therefore, to suppose that we can enlighten others, if the flame of divine love does not first burn within ourselves. St Paul of the Cross and St Leonard of Port Maurice were the two great restorers of the Apostolic life in Italy in the eighteenth century; but both of them felt that in order to form apostles and missionaries, it is necessary to have retirement from the world, seclusion, spiritual recollection, strict poverty, and austere penance.

Hence it was that St Paul of the Cross founded the Con-



gregation of the Passionists far from the noise of the city, amid the solitary rocks of Monte Argentaro; St Leonard, too, in the bosom of the Seraphic Order was the promoter of a special reform, adopted by the so-called "Convents of Retreat," which contributed very greatly towards keeping alive amongst the Friars Minor the primitive Franciscan ideal.

APRIL 29

ST PETER, MARTYR\*

This holy Dominican, who became a martyr for the Faith in 1252, during his Office of inquisitor in regard to the Manichean heretics, was the object of widespread veneration in Italy in the fifteenth century, many altars being raised and many paintings produced in his honour. His introduction into the Calendar of the Universal Church dates only from the time of Sixtus V; as St Pius V had omitted his feast when he reformed the Breviary.

The Mass is of the Common of a Martyr at Eastertide, *Protexisti*, as on April 24, but the Collects are proper to the day.

Collect: "Grant, we beseech thee, almighty God, that we may follow the faith of blessed Peter, thy martyr, with befitting devotion, who for the spread of the same faith was found worthy to win the palm of martyrdom. Through our Lord."

The Epistle is of the Common of Martyrs out of Eastertide as on the feast of St George, April 23, but it has been chosen, not only because it treats of the resurrection of Jesus Christ, but also because in describing the hardships, the persecutions, and the sufferings borne by Paul and Timothy while spreading the Christian Faith, it sets forth the rule of life to be followed by every truly evangelical labourer. *Quasi male operans*. This is the way the world judges the Apostle of Christ, and under this accusation condemns him to death. St Paul, however, declares that the "Word of God is not bound." Martyrdom sows the seed of new Christians, and for one Confessor of the Faith whose life is taken a hundred others arise to continue his work.

Secret: "Mercifully regard the prayers which we offer thee, O Lord, by the intercession of blessed Peter, thy martyr, and keep under thy protection the defenders of thy faith. Through our Lord."

Post-Communion: "May the sacraments which we have received keep thy faithful, O Lord, and by the intercession



of blessed Peter, thy martyr, defend them from all assaults of the enemy. Through our Lord."

Faith is the most valuable of all treasures, not only for the individual soul in particular, but for all conditions of life and for the world in general. For this reason, in times such as the Middle Ages when religious fervour was very active, heresy was regarded as a crime against both the Faith and the State, and after the anathema of the Church, was punished by the civil authority with the most severe penalties of the criminal code.

When we call to mind the horrors of the wars of religion caused by the Lutherans in Germany and by the Calvinists and the Huguenots in France, we cannot refrain from approving the wise ecclesiastical ordinance which instituted the Inquisition. This tribunal, freed from the abuses imposed on it by the Spanish Government for political purposes, was intended by the Popes to safeguard the religious and social unity of Christendom. Thus the repression of heretical propaganda by means of the Inquisition was truly regarded as a *Sanctum Officium*, since by protecting the greatest treasure possessed by the nations—viz., their Faith—it at the same time removed from amongst the various States those germs of hatred, revolution, and war which so often have their origin in religious disputes.

## APRIL 30

### ST CATHERINE OF SIENA, VIRGIN\*

The very name of this saint brings with it a breath of innocence and purity. A second Deborah of the New Testament, she is honoured by the Church as a prophetess, as the restorer of the Papal See at Rome, the mouthpiece of Popes and princes, the mediator of peace between warring factions, the inspired guide to many souls on the highest paths of sanctity, she who was a wonder of mortification and a victim of divine love, whose flame consumed her short life and ended it in 1380 at Rome, before her time, in the flower of her youth.

Pius II, in the Bull announcing the canonization of this saint, ordered that her feast should be held on the first Sunday in May, but Clement VIII transferred it to this day.

The Mass is of the Common of a Virgin as on February 10; but the Collects are proper, and were composed by the Jesuit Alciati under Urban VIII. The virginal body of St Catherine reposes under the high altar in the beautiful church of Sta Maria *sopra Minerva* in Rome. Another church dedicated to



her name near the Quirinal Hill keeps alive the memory of the spiritual family of Dominican tertiaries that she had gathered around her.

Collect: "Grant, we beseech thee, almighty God, that we who celebrate the festival of blessed Catherine, thy virgin, may rejoice at her yearly festival, and profit by the example of so great a virtue. Through our Lord."

Secret: "May there rise up before thee, O Lord, the prayers which we offer up on the festival of blessed Catherine, and also this healthful victim, fragrant with virgin sweetness. Through our Lord."

The Confession of St Peter in the Vatican Basilica is still sweet-scented with this virginal fragrance. It was there that Catherine spent a great part of each morning, during the last months of her life, absorbed in prayer for the welfare of the Church, to which she had dedicated herself as a victim.

Post-Communion: "May the heavenly table whereat we are fed confer on us eternity, O Lord: as it also nourished the temporal life of blessed Catherine the virgin. Through our Lord."

That soul has few needs to whom God is all in all, and it is a test by which we may know whether we really possess God in our hearts, if our minds are detached from all the many requirements, the little worries and needs which our indolence and lack of mortification often create for us. St Catherine once passed the whole of Lent up to Pentecost fasting, nourished by the eucharistic bread alone; but, without having recourse to such prodigies of penance, we always find in the lives of all the saints that their needs were but few, and in inverse proportion to the impelling hunger for God which consumed their souls.

### WEDNESDAY AFTER THE SECOND SUNDAY AFTER EASTER

THE SOLEMNITY OF ST JOSEPH, SPOUSE OF THE BLESSED  
VIRGIN MARY. PATRON OF THE UNIVERSAL CHURCH.  
CONFESSOR\*

This feast, established by Pius IX at the very beginning of his Pontificate, only later became obligatory on the Universal Church—that is to say, when, after the occupation of Rome by the troops of Victor Emmanuel II, the Pope proclaimed St Joseph Patron of the oppressed Household of the Faith, and entrusted to him the defence of the Catholic Church.



## *Wednesday after 2nd Sunday after Easter 131*

This solemnity was designed to honour the special Office mysteriously conferred upon the most chaste spouse of Mary, by virtue of which as he became the representative of the Eternal Father in the Holy Family of Nazareth and exercised the *patria potestas* over Jesus and Mary, so he still continues to exercise his fatherly care over the Catholic Church, which is indeed an extension and continuation of the family life of Bethlehem and of Nazareth.

In other words, the decree of the Sacred Congregation of Rites dated December 8, 1870, in which St Joseph is declared to be Patron of the Universal Church, is not so much a free choice on the part of Pius IX as is sometimes the case when other saints are chosen as patrons of various cities or institutions, but is rather the true recognition of a mystery contained in the Gospel, and of an ineffable dispensation of God on behalf of the Catholic Family.

At first the feast of the Patronage of St Joseph was appointed for the Third Sunday after Easter, but when, in the liturgical reform of Pius IX, it was desired to restore to the Sunday Offices their precedence over those of the saints, the feast of St Joseph had also to give way and was anticipated on the preceding Wednesday.

To compensate for this it was raised to the rank of a feast of the first class with an Octave.

The Introit is modern, as may easily be seen by its structure, for the Antiphon is derived from Psalm xxxii, whereas the next verse is from Psalm lxxix.

Psalm xxxii: "The Lord is our helper and protector: in him our heart shall rejoice, and in his holy name we have trusted."

Psalm lxxix: "Give ear, O thou that rulest Israel: thou that leadest Joseph like a sheep."

The Collect sets forth with great clearness the reason of the immeasurable holiness and power of St Joseph, which is to be found in the Office itself assigned to him in the Holy Family: "O God, who in thine unspeakable providence wast pleased to choose blessed Joseph for thy most holy mother's spouse; grant, we beseech thee, that we may become worthy to have him for our intercessor in heaven whom we venerate as our protector upon earth."

The Lesson is drawn from Genesis (xlix, 22-26), and narrates the blessings bestowed by the dying Jacob upon his beloved Joseph. The vicegerent of Pharaoh is the type of another Joseph on whose head all the Messianic benedictions granted to the patriarchs and prophets of old were to be poured forth in order that he in his turn, having been exalted to the honour of being called in the Gospel the father



of Jesus, should transmit them to the true and only heir of the eternal and heavenly Father, Jesus Christ, our Lord.

Of the two alleluiatic verses the first is from the Antiphon of the Introit, originally assigned to the Nineteenth Sunday after Pentecost. The passage is not to be found in the Vulgate, consequently some have thought it to be taken from the Itala version: "In whatever tribulation they shall cry to me, I will hear them, and be their protector always."

The second verse is a distich: "Obtain for us, Joseph, grace to lead an innocent life; and may our life ever be shielded by thy patronage."

The Gospel comes from Luke (iii, 21-23), and tells of the twofold generation of Jesus Christ. While the voice of the Eternal Father proclaims from heaven that he who is humbling himself by descending into the waters of Jordan under the ministry of the Baptist is his well-beloved Son, the Holy Ghost, guiding the mind and the pen of the Evangelist, attests that the same Christ is truly the son of Mary, the spouse of Joseph, and therefore is the son of David, of Abraham and of Adam.

The Offertory is taken from Psalm cxlvii: "Praise the Lord, O Jerusalem, because he hath strengthened the bolts of thy gates: he hath blessed thy children within thee." This strengthening of the gates is a symbol of the intercession of the saints, who obtain for us divine grace, so that we may derive the greatest possible benefit from the holy Sacraments. These are, in truth, the gates of the Church and of the kingdom of God, the arteries of the Christian life.

In the Secret we pray: "Supported by the patronage of the spouse of thy most holy mother, we beseech thy clemency, O Lord: that thou wouldst make our hearts despise all earthly things, and love thee, the true God, with perfect charity." Charity is here called "perfect," because in it is comprised all Christian perfection. Perfect charity is that which *quae sua sunt non quaerit*, but which orders a man and all his acts to the glory of God.

The first part of the Canon, which is incorrectly termed the Preface, has the following insertion adapted to to-day's feast, but of quite recent composition: . . . *aeterne Deus. Et te in festivitate beati Ioseph debitis magnificare praeconiis, benedicere et praedicare. Qui et vir iustus, a te Deiparae Virgini sponsus est datus; et fidelis servus ac prudens, super Familiam tuam est constitutus: ut Unigenitum tuum, Sancti Spiritus obumbratione conceptum, paterna vice custodiret, Iesum Christum Dominum nostrum. Per quem, etc.*

The classical Roman *cursus* is here missing; but the glory and dignity of St Joseph are suitably expressed.

The Antiphon for the Communion of the people, contrary



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to the ancient rule, is derived from another part of the Gospels, (Matt. i, 16), and not from that assigned to to-day's Mass : " But Jacob begot Joseph, the husband of Mary, of whom was born Jesus, who is called Christ." This name he received from God who united his sacred human nature to the nature of the divine Word in the hypostatic union, and made him the head of men and of angels, the Saviour of mankind, and the first-born of all creation.

This is the prayer of Thanksgiving after Communion : " We who have been refreshed at the fountain of divine blessing, beseech thee, O Lord our God ; that as thou dost gladden us by the protection of blessed Joseph, so by his merits and intercession thou wouldst make us partakers of his glory in heaven."

In her Liturgy the Church attributes to St Joseph a special power of intercession on behalf of the dying. This most holy patriarch was assisted in his own agony by Jesus and Mary, in whose arms he gave up his soul to God, more by the force of love than by that of suffering. A death so privileged won for him the glory of being appointed by the Lord patron and advocate of the faithful who put their trust in him at that supreme moment *a quo pendet aeternitas*.

### *FEASTS IN MAY*

#### *MAY 1*

#### *SS PHILIP AND JAMES, APOSTLES*

#### *Station at the Twelve Holy Apostles.*

Originally, the James whose feast is kept to-day at Rome, in accordance with the Eastern tradition and with the Syrian Lectionary of Antioch, was James the Great, the brother of John, who was put to death about the time of the Paschal festival. As, however, there were others who bore the name of James among the apostles and disciples of our Lord, and as on May 1, at Rome, there was also celebrated the feast of the dedication of the *Apostoleion*, where there were some relics of the Apostles Philip and James the Just, the latter in course of time took the place of his namesake, whose feast was transferred to July 25. The Syrian tradition gives the date of the death of St James, the first Bishop of Jerusalem, as December 27, on which day the feast of St John the Evangelist, his brother, is also kept.

The same uncertainty rules with regard to Philip. An old Roman liturgical tradition identifies him with that Philip, the Evangelist of Cæsarea, who baptized the eunuch of the



queen of the Ethiopians, but he was one of the first seven Hellenist deacons of Jerusalem, and is altogether distinct from the apostle of that name.

Notwithstanding all the variations of the tradition, it is clear from reliable sources that the Roman *Apostoleion*, begun by Julius I and rebuilt by Pelagius I, was dedicated by John III (560-73) to the memory of all the apostles, and in particular of Philip and James, so that the two titles *ad Sanctos Apostolos* or *Basilica Apostolorum Philippi et Iacopi* were for some time both in use. Finally, the liturgical name *Sancti Apostoli* prevailed, and is still borne by the basilica.

The inscription in the apse formerly told the history of the church :

PELAGIVS · COEPIT · COMPLEVIT · PAPA · IOHANNES  
VNVS · OPVS · AMBORVM · PAR · MICAT · ET · PRAEMIVM

In 1873, when the basilica was thoroughly restored, there was found under the high altar the ancient reliquary placed there by John III on the day of its dedication; it contained some fragments of bone, pieces of silken wrappings, and the remains of some aromatic substances.

At one time the following verses related the history and the glories of the Roman *Apostoleion* to the people :

HIC · PRIOR · ANTISTES · VESTIGIA · PARVA · RELIQVIT  
SVPPLEVIT · COEPTVM · PAPA · IOHANNES · OPVS  
LARGIOR · ET · EXISTENS · ANGVSTO · IN · TEMPORE · PRAESVL  
DESPEXIT · MVNDO · DEFICIENTE · PREMI  
FLVCTIBVS · HVMANIS · PORTVM · SCIT · FERRE · SALVTIS  
CVI · SEMPER · CVRAE · EST · REDDERE · VOTA · DEO  
NOMINE · CENSURA · MENTE · ET · SERMONE · IOHANNIS  
QVI · SIBI · COMMISSAS · PASCERE · NOVIT · OVES  
HOC · OPVS · EXCOLVIT · QVO · PLEBS · FESTINA · RECVRRENS  
ERIPITVR · MORSV · DILACERANDA · LVPI

His predecessor had scarcely begun this building  
Which Pope John brought to completion.

A great-minded Pontiff, in those days of trouble,  
He was not deterred by fear of the world's destruction,  
But against the storms of man he opened this harbour of  
safety,

Whilst he made perpetual supplication to God.

A second John he was in name, in austerity, in thought, and  
in word,

Who wisely fed sheep committed to his charge.

He built this refuge whither his people might fly  
To escape from the fangs of the ravening wolf.



The Mass composed on that occasion clearly shows in what exceptional circumstances it was compiled; especially the Introit, in which is revealed the joy and the emotion of the Romans at being delivered from Totila by the eunuch Narses. It is possible that this personal deed of the great Byzantine leader may have had something to do with the choice of St Philip as patron, because the latter was mistakenly identified with the deacon who baptized the eunuch of Candace, the Narses of those times.

The Introit is from 2 Esdras ix, 28: "In the time of their tribulation they cried to thee, O Lord, and thou heardest them from heaven. Alleluia, alleluia. (Psalm xxxii) Rejoice in the Lord, O ye just: praise becometh the upright. *℣*. Glory be."

In the Collect we pray: "O God, who dost gladden us by the yearly festival of Philip and James, thy apostles; grant, we beseech thee, that as we rejoice in their merits, so we may be taught by their example. Through our Lord."

Formerly at Rome a double scriptural Lesson was read on this day from both the Old and the New Testament. This latter (Eph. iv, 7-13) has disappeared, and only the first has remained, which, however, belongs to the Common of Martyrs at Eastertide. It has already been given on April 13, the feast of St Hermenegild.

The double alleluiatic verse follows. The first is taken from the Psalter. Alleluia, alleluia. *℣*. (Psalm lxxxviii) "The heavens shall confess thy wonders, O Lord; and thy truth in the church of the saints. Alleluia."

The second is from the Gospel for to-day: Alleluia. *℣*. (John xiv, 9) "So long a time have I been with you, and have you not known me? Philip, he that seeth me, seeth my Father also. Alleluia."

In traditional use according to some MSS., we find, instead, this other verse from the Psalms: "Alleluia. *Nimis honorati sunt,*" etc.

The Gospel (John xiv, 1-13), as is the rule in Paschal time, is a passage from the last discourse of the divine Master, in which he replies to the request of Philip that he may see the Father. The present is a time of faith and not of sight; therefore we must content ourselves with seeing the Father and the most Blessed Trinity through Jesus Christ, who as God and as man is the perfect image of the Godhead. As God, he is the splendour of his substance, as man, he is the faultless pattern of the human race, which more nearly than any other reproduces in created form the original uncreated archetype.

The Antiphon for the Offertory is the same as the first alleluiatic verse after the Epistle. The heavens which are spoken of here and which reveal the wonderful works of



God represent the holy apostles who, having received the firstfruits of the Spirit, hold in consequence the highest place in the hierarchy of the Church.

The Secret is thus expressed: "Favourably receive, O Lord, the gifts which we bring in honour of the festival of thine apostles, Philip and James, and turn from us all the evils which we deserve. Through our Lord."

The Preface now is of the Common of the Apostles. In the Gregorian Sacramentary, on the other hand, it is the following: . . . *aeterne Deus, qui ecclesiam tuam in Apostolica soliditate firmasti, de quorum consortio sunt beati Philippus et Iacobus, quorum passionis hodie festa veneramus; poscentes ut sicut eorum doctrinis instruimur, ita exemplis muniamur et precibus adiuvemur, per Christum, etc.*

The Communion comes from to-day's Gospel (John xiv, 9-11): "So long a time have I been with you, and have you not known me? Philip, he that seeth me, seeth my Father also, alleluia: believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? Alleluia, alleluia."

How much gentleness there is in this reproach which Jesus makes to those souls whom he has called to be his intimate friends by means of a special religious or priestly vocation: "You have not yet understood me," he says. Indeed, to know and to understand Jesus means to imitate him and to reproduce him faithfully in our own lives. Every time, therefore, that we commit the least fault, we separate ourselves from this blessed contemplation of Jesus.

This is the Post-Communion: "We who have been filled by thy healthful mysteries, beseech thee, O Lord, that we may be helped by the prayers of those whose festival we keep. Through our Lord."

The Gregorian Sacramentary adds this prayer *super populum*, which at that time served as a final blessing: *Beatorum Apostolorum Philippi et Iacobi honore continuo, Domine, plebs tua semper exsultet: et his praesulibus gubernetur, quorum et doctrinis gaudet et meritis. Per Dominum. . . .*

There are many who say with Philip: "Lord, show us the Father, and it is enough for us," but not a few of these are mistaken with regard to their own spiritual state, and think that a sentimental devotion suffices and can take the place of purity of spirit and of detachment from all created things. A very small speck of dust in the pupil is sufficient to cloud the sight and is the occasion of great pain to the eye. So it is with the soul; an irregular affection deprives it of the clear vision of God and causes it great harm. Gerson used to say on this subject: *Omnis copia quae Deus tuus non est, tibi inopia est.*



## MAY 2

ST ATHANASIUS, BISHOP, CONFESSOR, AND DOCTOR OF  
THE CHURCH\*

The feast of this unconquerable champion of the consubstantiality of the *Logos* does not appear in the Roman Breviaries until the late Middle Ages, and was not enriched with proper Lessons and with the rank of a double until the time of St Pius V. The reason is easily to be found. The primitive Roman Calendar was of a distinctly local character; for the early Eastern Fathers were never very popular in Latin lands, so much so that even now many of those great Doctors have no liturgical celebration whatever. St Gregory of Nyssa, St Dionysius of Alexandria, St Epiphanius, and others are not commemorated at all in the Roman Breviary.

Athanasius, however, has special merits for acquiring the rights of citizenship, as it were, in the Eternal City; for, being condemned by the Arians, deposed from his See, and having become a fugitive throughout the world, which appeared to have formed a league against him, he sought a safe asylum in Rome, where he found in Pope Julius a powerful defender of the justice of his cause.

It was there, on the Aventine, in the palace of the noble Marcella, whose guest he was, that the exiled bishop described for the first time to the Romans the wonderful life of Antony and Pachomius in Egypt. In a short time, the first seed of the monastic ideals, scattered by Athanasius on the Aventine, was followed by so rich a harvest of monasteries and religious that, in the words of St Jerome, the frivolous capital of the Roman world became a new Jerusalem.

A church was erected in honour of St Athanasius under Gregory XIII, which is attached to the Greek Pontifical College, and is, therefore, served according to the Byzantine rite.

It should be remembered that it was Pope Julius I (341-52), who, having annulled the unjust deposition of Athanasius, restored him to his patriarchal throne. Both Socrates<sup>1</sup> and Sozomen, in relating the event, attribute it expressly to the supreme authority of the Pope over the whole Church: *Οἱ αὖ δὲ τῆς πάντων κηδεμονίας αὐτῷ προσηκούσης διὰ τὴν ἀξίαν τοῦ θρόνου, ἐκάστῳ τὴν ἰδίαν Ἐκκλησίαν ἀπέδωκε.*<sup>2</sup> Because to him, on account of the dignity of his See, there appertained the care of all, he restored to each (Athanasius of Alexandria and Paul of Constantinople) his own Church.

The Mass is partly from the Common of Confessors and

<sup>1</sup> *Hist. Eccl.*, II, c. 15, *P.G.* LXVII, col. 211-212.

<sup>2</sup> *Hist. Eccl.*, III, viii, *P.G.* LXVII, col. 1051-52.



partly from that of Doctors, but with special allusions to the persecutions and the exiles undergone by Athanasius.

The Introit is the same as that on December 7, the feast of St Ambrose.

The Collects are taken from the Mass *Sacerdotes tui*, as are those on April 11 for St Leo I.

The Lesson (2 Cor. iv, 5-14) speaks of the sufferings of the apostle, and of their ultimate object in the life of a Christian. It is that the soul shall live again the life of Christ in his passion and in his suffering, before enjoying the life of glory. Thus, however great may be his tribulations, however much his spirit may feel his own inability to overcome the storm, yet his faith sustains him, because it shows him that, in God's design, adversity is not intended to crush him, but to train him for victory, since, as the apostle himself says, *Virtus in infirmitate perficitur*.

The first alleluiatic verse is derived from Psalm cix. "*Tu es sacerdos*," etc., as on December 4, the feast of St Peter Chrysologus. This divine promise is very fittingly applied to St Athanasius. He was repeatedly deposed from his patriarchal throne by the intrigues of the Arians, until at last there was no spot in the whole world where he could feel safe from their vengeance. On his account Popes and many holy Bishops were likewise persecuted, because they would not take part in the campaign against him. Yet he, alone against so many, was able at length to return to Alexandria, and, as the Breviary relates, *mortuus est in suo lectulo*.

The second alleluiatic verse is similar to that for the feast of another holy bishop, who also was persecuted and driven into exile : St John Chrysostom, whose feast is on January 27.

After Easter-tide the Gradual and the alleluiatic verse are as in the Mass of St John Chrysostom.

The Gospel (Matt. x, 23-28) seems, as it were, to describe the life followed by Athanasius in the midst of persecution. It has been splendidly illustrated by himself in his *Apologia de fuga sua*. Even in time of persecution one must not be careless of one's own life, any more than any other gift of God. A man's life, especially the life of a bishop, is not his alone, but belongs to the Church, and he must not expose it needlessly, when by so doing it might result in harm to other souls without compensating gain to himself. In this case, to escape the fury of the enemy by flight is often equivalent to prolonging his own martyrdom for love of the flock of Jesus Christ, and it is proof of a generous and prudent soul voluntarily to continue to endure hardships.

The Offertory is like that assigned to February 4, whilst the Communion, drawn from to-day's Gospel, is that of the



Mass "Salus" for Many Martyrs. It also occurs on February 15 for the feast of SS Faustinus and Jovita. The meaning is this: The world, when it can do nothing else, seeks at least to silence us, so that we may not preach to the people that Gospel by which the precepts of the world are condemned. Nor is it permissible for us so to do, for, as Peter and John declared before the Sanhedrim: *Non enim possumus quae vidimus et audivimus non loqui.*<sup>1</sup>

This is indeed the means of our victory over the world—viz., our Faith. The entire world had combined against Athanasius, yet, for nearly half a century, he defied his opponents. An invisible patriarch was he, for he came and went from Alexandria so secretly that the Arians never succeeded in seizing him, whilst he governed his Church with so much authority that to be in communion with him was equivalent in those days to being Catholic, true, that is, to the dogma of the consubstantiality of the Word, as defined at Nicæa.

We cannot refrain from quoting here, in honour of this great Doctor, a powerful utterance of his regarding the Church's independence of the civil power. It occurs in his *Historia Arianorum ad Monachos*, n. 54 (P. G. XXV, col. 755-6):

Εἰ γὰρ ἐπισκόπων ἐστὶν κρίσις, τί κοινὸν ἔχει πρὸς ταύτην βασιλεύς; . . . Πότε γὰρ ἐκ τοῦ αἰῶνος ἠκούσθη τοιαῦτα; Πότε κρίσις Ἐκκλησίας παρὰ βασιλέως ἔσχε τὸ κῦρος, ἢ ὅλως ἐγνώσθη τὸ κρίμα; Πολλαὶ σύνοδοι πρὸ τούτου γεγόνασι; Πολλὰ κρίματα τῆς Ἐκκλησίας γέγονεν· ἀλλ' οὔτε οἱ πατέρες ἐπεισάν ποτε περὶ τούτων βασιλέα, οὔτε βασιλεὺς τὰ τῆς Ἐκκλησίας περιειργάσατο.

"If the decision rests with the bishops, what has the Emperor to do with it? . . . When has such a thing ever been heard? When, at any time, has an ecclesiastical decree received authority from the Emperor or obtained recognition from him? Many councils have been assembled before now; many ecclesiastical decrees have gone forth; but never have the Fathers solicited such approbation from the Emperor and never has he interfered in the affairs of the Church."

### MAY 3

SS ALEXANDER, EVENTIUS, AND THEODULUS, MARTYRS,  
AND JUVENAL, BISHOP AND CONFESSOR

The group of martyrs recorded to-day is to be found in the Gospel list of Würzburg; but Juvenal belongs to a somewhat later tradition. Neither of these feasts, although they are more ancient than the *Exaltatio Crucis*, is really Roman,

<sup>1</sup> Acts iv, 20.



since, in the primitive list of the *Natalitia Martyrum*, the three far-off martyrs of the Via Nomentana were certainly never included. They were probably entered in the *Feriale Romanum* about the time of Pope Damasus.

Alexander, Eventius, and Theodulus are interred at the tenth kilometre on the Via Nomentana near the ancient village of *Ficulea*, which was at one time an episcopal See. The *Acta* of these martyrs identifies Alexander with the first Pope of that name; but the document, which is of no great antiquity, must not be accepted without considerable reserve, and especially is this supposed identification of the martyr of Ficulea with the Pope, who succeeded Evaristus, confronted with strong archæological objections.

Apart from the fact that the most ancient MSS. of the *Liber Pontificalis* make no mention of the martyrdom and burial of Pope Alexander on the Via Nomentana, the Roman Canon of the Mass also, while commemorating the martyr Alexander of Ficulea at the end of the Great Intercession, by the very place which it assigns to him appears to distinguish him from the Pope of the same name, who would naturally have been invoked in the episcopal diptychs, after Linus and Clement.

We know, moreover, from the Itineraries of the pilgrims that the bodies of SS Eventius and Alexander were buried together, whereas Theodulus, on the other hand, was interred in a crypt close by. In the course of the excavations undertaken in that cemetery under Pius IX, a fragment of a votive *transenna* came to light bearing this inscription :

ET . ALEXANDRO . DELICATVS . VOTO	(posu)	IT
	TE	DEDI
		CAN
		AE
		PIS
		COP
		URS

It is hardly necessary to point out that here, whilst the local Bishop Ursus, who dedicated the altar, is given his



hierarchical title, the Alexander mentioned in the inscription not only receives no title of either *episcopus* or *papa*, but is placed last after the other martyrs.

Some of the local bishops whose sepulchral inscriptions have been recovered had the honour of being buried near these saints. Amongst them we find an *Adeodatus* of the time of Theodosius; another, who died in 569, and who had been a famous singer in his youth, but whose name is obliterated; a *Petrus* of the fourth century, and several other ecclesiastics.

The bodies of the three martyrs were transferred by Paschal I to the oratory of St Agnes at St Praxedes, as an inscription by the same Pope, still in existence, attests. In the thirteenth century the chapel had also received the dedication of St Alexander, as we gather from the following epigraph now preserved in the Lateran Museum :

DEO · AD · HONOREM  
BEATORVM · MARTYRVVM  
AGNETIS · VIRGINIS · ET  
ALEXANDRI · PP · OBTVLIT  
PRATVM · MARCVS · ABBAS  
MONASTERII · HVIVS · SAN  
CTAE · PRAXE  
DIS

The *titulus Sabinae* and also that of Lucina claim to possess relics of these three martyrs.

\* \* \* \* \*

Bishop Juvenal of Narni was included in the Sacramentaries long before his episcopal city came to form part of the Patrimony of St Peter, and, as such, became the object of troublesome disputes between the Popes and the Lombard invaders. Indeed, the veneration paid to St Juvenal must have been very popular, for the *Liber Pontificalis* in the biography of Vigilius relates that Belisarius built and endowed a monastery at Orte dedicated expressly to this famous Bishop.

St Gregory in the fourth book of his Dialogues tells us that this same saint appeared to Bishop Probus of Rieti during his last illness;<sup>1</sup> and in his thirty-seventh Homily on the Gospels, he adds that St Cassius, likewise Bishop of Narni, was in the habit of celebrating the holy Sacrifice daily on the tomb of St Juvenal.<sup>2</sup>

The saint died on August 13; his commemoration is made on May 3 in the Roman Calendar, either because this was

<sup>1</sup> *Dialogues*, Bk. IV and XII. *P.L.* LXXVII, col. 317.

<sup>2</sup> *P.L.* LXXVI, col. 1279 *sqq.*



possibly the anniversary of his episcopal ordination, or because the *natalis* of the martyr Hippolytus, who was formerly very greatly venerated, occurs at Rome on August 13.

On the tomb of Juvenal, to whom some have mistakenly given the title of martyr, was placed this inscription :

SECRETVS · LOCVS · INTVS · INEST · SANCTIQVE · RECESSVS  
QVEM · DVM · SVMMA · PETIT · IVVENALIS · MORTE · DICAVIT  
QVO · SIBI · POST · OBITVM · PLACVIT · DARE · CORP(us  
humandum)  
IN · CAVTE · MANIBVS · SCINDENS · NE · POLLV(at imber)  
IDIBVS · AVGVSTI · DOMINO · PRAESTANTE · SEPVLTVM

This is the secret retreat of a saint,  
Which Juvenal consecrated by his death when he was called  
on high.  
He ordered that here should rest his body,  
After having hollowed out for himself a tomb in the rock  
with his own hands,  
So that the rain should not moisten his bones.  
Here on the Ides of August was he buried, by the disposition  
of God.

The Basilica of St Juvenal at Narni was reconsecrated in the twelfth century by the Blessed Eugenius III.

St Cassius, Bishop of Narni, who died in 558, chose his own tomb beside that of his wife, St Fausta, near the sepulchre of the saint. His marvellous life was related by St Gregory the Great to the Romans in his thirty-seventh Homily on the Gospels. We give here the epigraph :

CASSIVS · IMMERITO · PRAESVL · DE · NVMERO · CHRISTI  
HIC · SVA · RESTITVO · TERRAE · MIHI · CREDITA · MEMBRA  
QVEM · FATO · ANTICIPANS · CONSORS · DVLCISSIMA · VITAE  
ANTE · MEMM · IN · PACE · REQVIESCIT · FAVSTA · SEPVLCHRVM  
TV · ROGO · QVISQVIS · ADES · PRECES · NOS · MEMORARE ·  
BENIGNA  
CVNCTA · RECEPTVRVM · TE · NOSCENS · CONGRVA · FACTIS  
SD · ANN · XXI · M · IX · D · X · RQ · IN · PACE  
PRID · KAL · IVL · P · C · BASILII · V · C · ANN · XVII

I, Cassius, the least among the Pontiffs of Christ,  
Here restore to earth the body I received from her ;  
Where Fausta, the dear companion of my life, already rests  
In peace ; whose sepulchre is beside my own.  
Whoever thou art, I pray thee remember us in thy prayers,  
Knowing that thou wilt receive a reward in accordance with  
thy merits.



I ruled XXI years, IX months, X days, and fell asleep in peace

On June 30, in the seventeenth year of the consulate of that great man Basil.

The Mass *Sancti tui* of to-day's group of saints is that of the Common of Many Martyrs at Easter-tide, as on April 26, only the Collects are special for the feast.

In the Collect we pray: "Grant, we beseech thee, almighty God, that we who celebrate the birthday of thy saints Alexander, Eventius, Theodulus and Juvenal, may by their intercession be delivered from all the evils which threaten us."

In the Würzburg Codex, the Gospel Lesson is taken from John xv, 17-25, as in the present Roman Missal for the feast of SS Simon and Jude.

The Secret is like that of January 28, the Nativity of St Agnes.

The Post-Communion is thus worded: "We who have been refreshed by partaking of thy sacred gift, beseech thee, O Lord our God, that by the intercession of thy saints Alexander, Eventius, Theodulus, and Juvenal, we may enjoy the fruit of the service which we pay."

*Et folium ejus non defluet et omnia quaecumque faciet prosperabuntur.*<sup>1</sup> According to the promise made in the first psalm of the psalmist David, the saints produce a fruit which never fails. For they not only confer honour by their virtues on their family, their country, and their own generation, but, throughout the ages, they exert a great influence on the Church by their intercession, by the fame of their miracles, and by the attraction of their holiness.

## MAY 3

### THE FINDING OF THE HOLY CROSS

This date commemorates the recovery of the True Cross in the reign of the Emperor Heraclius and its delivery by him about the year 629 into the hands of the Patriarch Zacharias of Jerusalem, from which city it had been carried away some years previously by the Persians with the object of transporting it to their own country. The feast was largely inserted in the various Western Liturgies, but this was not the case in the East, where only the solemnity of the *Exaltatio Sanctae Crucis* was kept, on which occasion in commemoration of the discovery of the True Cross on September 14, 320, it was solemnly shown every year to the people.

<sup>1</sup> Psalm i, 3.



As time went by, the Latins confused the aim of the two feasts; the "Recovery" of the Cross was identified with the *Exaltatio* on September 14, and the festival of May 3 was devoted to celebrating its finding under Constantine. It is, however, to be noted that the *Exaltatio* was included, somewhat late, in the Sacramentary of Adrian, because the *natalis* of St Cornelius fell on that day at Rome.

The Mass is post-Gregorian; consequently the Antiphons of the Introit and the Offertory are chosen from other more ancient Masses.

The Antiphon for the Introit is as that of Tuesday and Thursday in Holy Week, being inspired by a passage in the Epistle to the Galatians vi, 14.

Introit: "But it behoves us to glory in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ: in whom is our salvation, life, and resurrection; by whom we are saved and delivered, alleluia, alleluia. (Psalm lxvi) May God have mercy on us, and bless us; may he cause the light of his countenance to shine upon us, and may he have mercy on us. *℟*. Glory be."

The Collect is also found in the Gelasian Sacramentary; it alludes to the resurrection of the dead woman on whom the Bishop of Jerusalem is said to have laid the True Cross, in order to distinguish it from those of the two thieves. The wonders accomplished at the time of the passion of Jesus are those of the resurrection of the patriarchs and saints of Jerusalem at the moment when our Saviour died on the Cross.

Collect: "O God, who by the glorious discovery of the cross of salvation didst renew the wonders of thy passion; grant, we beseech thee, that through the ransom brought us by this tree of life we may obtain election unto life everlasting: who livest."

The Epistle (Philipp. ii, 5-11) is the same as on Palm Sunday. In it the apostle exhorts us to imitate the humility and obedience of Christ, enduring our passion in him and with him, in order to be associated with him in the glory of the resurrection.

The feast of the Holy Cross coming amidst the splendours of paschal time has a deep liturgical significance. Our Lord calls his crucifixion his day of triumph and exaltation: and such indeed it is. Upon the cross he conquers death, sin, and the devil, and on that triumphal tree he erects his new throne of grace, mercy, and salvation. Such is the meaning of the following melodious chant which is derived from Psalm xcv: "Alleluia, alleluia. *℟*. Say ye among the Gentiles that the Lord hath reigned from the wood. Alleluia." This reading of the psalm no longer corresponds with the actual Hebrew



text; but it has been transmitted to us by some of the early Fathers, who, like Justin, accuse the Jews of having mutilated the passage.

The second alleluiatic verse is as follows: "Alleluia. V. Sweet the wood, sweet the nails, sweet the burden which thou bearest, who alone wast worthy to bear the King of heaven and the Lord. Alleluia."

A proof that the Mass did not originate from the Gregorian Sacramentary may be found in the fact that the Gospel (John iii, 1-15), instead of being taken from the last discourse of Jesus, according to the Roman use at the Paschal season, comes from another part of the Gospel of St John. However, the choice has been a happy one, for the brazen serpent lifted up by Moses in the desert is a prophetic type of to-day's *Exaltatio Sanctae Crucis*, and points to a time when the original Exaltation of the True Cross, which was instituted by the Emperor Heraclius, was still celebrated on May 3.

In the Offertory we no longer mourn, as in Lent, over the humiliation of the Passion, but, on the contrary, we exalt the glory of the triumphant banner, giving voice to a hymn of thanksgiving in honour of the risen Christ.

Offertory (Psalm cxvii): "The right hand of the Lord hath wrought strength, the right hand of the Lord hath exalted me: I shall not die but live, and shall declare the works of the Lord. Alleluia."

The following prayer from the Gelasian Sacramentary evokes the memory of those times which were disturbed by wars and hostile invasions, probably on the part of the Lombards.

Secret: "Look down in thy clemency, O Lord, upon the sacrifice which we offer up to thee, that it may deliver us from all the evil of war; and through the standard of the holy cross of thy Son may establish us securely under thy protection, so that we may crush all the wiles of the enemy. Through the same."

The Preface is that in honour of the cross as during the last two weeks of Lent. The Sacramentaries, however, give this text: . . . *per Christum Dominum nostrum. Qui per passionem Crucis mundum redemit, et antiquae arboris amarissimum gustum, crucis medicamine indulcavit; mortemque quae per lignum vetitum venerat, per Ligni trophaeum devicit; ut mirabili suae pietatis dispensatione, qui per ligni gustum a florigera sede discesseramus, per Crucis lignum ad paradisi gaudia redeamus. Per quem, etc.*

The Communion also betrays the same anxiety with which the minds of the Romans were filled at the time when to-day's feast was included in the Gelasian Sacramentary: that of imploring the help of God against the invaders of the Roman



Duchy: "By the sign of the cross, deliver us from our enemies, O thou our God. Alleluia."

After the Communion is recited this prayer: "Being filled with food from heaven, and strengthened with the spiritual cup, we beseech thee, almighty God, that thou wouldst defend from the wicked enemy those whom thou hast commanded to triumph by the wood of the holy cross of thy Son, which is the armour of righteousness for the salvation of the world. Through our Lord."

God has been pleased to give so much power to the cross that at its sign alone the demons fly; by it the priest blesses the faithful, the devout receive abundant graces. The early Christians had so much devotion to it that, according to the ancient Fathers, they never began any action without first making the sign of the cross upon themselves. It is said that Julian the Apostate himself, during a pagan sacrifice, drove away the devil more than once, because he instinctively made the sign of the cross at the very first moment of his appearance.

In the Middle Ages no public deed, inscription, law, etc., was begun to be written without first tracing upon it the sign of the cross. This sign was accepted as the signature of the uneducated; it often preceded that of ecclesiastics, and in many country districts even the dough and the bread were marked with a cross before they were baked. At Rome, on the gates of the city which were restored during the Byzantine period, may still be seen engraved the equilateral cross, which is found also on the mouths of cisterns, on ancient walls, on the apertures of ovens, and on domestic utensils.

Until quite recently a little book was used in first teaching children their letters and syllables, called "Santa Croce," from the holy sign of salvation which, following the tradition of at least fifteen centuries, preceded the alphabet. There have also been handed down to us from very ancient times cases and caskets in the form of a cross for holding relics on which a formula of exorcism was sometimes engraved, as was done on a golden cross which Pius IX himself found in a tomb in the cemetery of Cyriaca. The most celebrated of these crosses having such inscriptions with exorcisms is that which is known by the name of "the medal of St Benedict," which is still used very efficaciously against the molestations of the Evil One.

MAY 4

ST MONICA, WIDOW\*

The beautiful figure of the Mother of Augustine, as she is described to us in the ninth book of his "Confessions," will



continue to live in the Church as one of the finest examples of a Christian mother. It is, then, not to be wondered at that one of Augustine's friends, the Consul Anicius Bassus the elder, placed on the tomb of the saint at Ostia a marble tablet—the inscription on which has been copied in the ancient collections—to record her merits for posterity.

The wording is as follows :

*Versus illustrissimae memoriae Bassi exconsule, scripti in  
tumulo sanctae memoriae Municae matris Sancti  
Augustini.*

HIC · POSVIT · CINERES · GENETRIX · CASTISSIMA · PROLIS  
AVGVSTINE · TVIS · ALTERA · LVX · MERITIS  
QVI · SERVANS · PACIS · CAELESTIA · IVRA · SACERDOS  
COMMISSOS · POPVLOS · MORIBVS · INSTITVIS  
GLORIA · VOS · MAIOR · GESTORVM · LAVDE · CORONAT  
VIRTVTVM · MATER · FELICIOR · SVBOLIS

Here, O Augustine, did thy most chaste Mother lay to rest  
her mortal frame.

She whose merits shone with a brightness that added to  
thine own.

Thou who, as a faithful bishop, dost strengthen amongst thy  
people the sacred rights of peace

And teach those entrusted to thy care by thine example.

A far greater glory is that which crowns you both, that of  
your good works.

O truly happy Mother, happier still in possessing such a son.

Monica died at Ostia in 387, and the ex-Consul Bassus composed this epitaph when Augustine was still ruling the Church of Hippo in Africa—that is, after 395. The third line of the inscription probably alludes to the celebrated conference with the Donatists, held in 411.

The body of St Monica remained at Ostia until the year 1162, when a certain Walter Prior, of the Canons Regular of Aroasia, in Belgium, removed the body secretly from its tomb and carried it off to his own monastery. The *Acta* of this translation, which are related by the Bollandists, appear to be absolutely reliable, the more so as the presence in Belgium of the relics of St Monica for more than seven centuries is proved by existing documents.

As the date of the death of St Monica was not known, the Canons of Walter's monastery, who already kept the feast of the Conversion of St Augustine on May 5, appointed the preceding day as that of the feast of his mother. From this monastery the *cultus* of St Monica spread through Belgium,



Germany, and France, so that the solemnity of May 4 gradually came into general liturgical use.

At a time when the recognition of the liturgical *cultus* to be rendered to the saints still rested with the bishops, the ninth book of the "Confessions" of St Augustine was equivalent to a Bull of Canonisation.

The Mass is of the Common of Holy Women not Virgins, as for the feast of St Frances of Rome on March 9.

The Collect is proper: "O God, the comforter of them that mourn and the salvation of such as hope in thee, who didst show mercy to the pious tears of the blessed Monica in the conversion of her son Augustine; grant us through their united intercession grace to deplore our sins, and to find pardon and favour with thee. Through our Lord."

The Epistle of the Common (1 Tim. v, 3-10) is assigned to the feasts of holy widows, because in it are described their duties towards God, towards their own family, and towards the Christian community. St Paul, however, is not speaking here of widows in general, but of the deaconesses who, precisely because of their widowed state, their mature age, and their experience of life, were of great assistance to the clergy in the distribution of alms and in the care of the sick, the poor, and of young girls.

In a word, they used to do that which is now done by many congregations of religious women, but without living in community, and upon condition that they had already passed their sixtieth year. This last requirement, as well as that of widowhood, was necessitated by the special moral conditions of society in the time of the apostles. In later days, when the first companies of virgins sprang up without, however, as yet forming regular religious communities, the Church in part adapted for their benefit the rules laid down by St Paul concerning the deaconesses, and St Leo I prescribed that no woman was to be allowed to consecrate herself solemnly to God until she had attained the age of sixty.

The alleluiatic verse is drawn from Psalm xliv, which has already been quoted several times: "Alleluia, alleluia. *Ps.* With thy comeliness and thy beauty set out, proceed prosperously, and reign. Alleluia. *Ps.* Because of truth and meekness and justice; and thy right hand shall conduct thee wonderfully. Alleluia."

The life of a Christian is a battle; our shield is our Faith, our arms are our virtues, God is the crown and the reward.

The Gospel (Luke vii, 11-16), with the narrative of the raising to life of the widow's son at Naim, has reference to the conversion of Augustine, which was obtained by the tears of Monica. The return of a soul to God is the effect of grace



alone; human arguments can avail but little. The soul must meet with Jesus so that he may command the passions which are dragging it away from the city of life to eternal death, to be still. Calm being obtained, the soul is once more in a condition to hear the voice of God: *Adolescens, tibi dico, surge*. At that omnipotent word which accomplishes that which it expresses, the soul feels itself aroused from its deadly langour and returns to life.

## MAY 5

## ST PIUS V, POPE, CONFESSOR\*

The name of Fra Michele Ghislieri, Pope Pius V, adorns the front page of the Roman Missal and Breviary, because it was by his authority that the revision of the liturgical books, which had been expressly reserved to the Holy See by the Council of Trent, was brought to a conclusion. Besides this distinction in the field of Liturgy, St Pius V had the glory of being the Pope of the reform, which for two centuries before his time had been invoked in vain by his predecessors in the Pontificate, by the councils, and by a large number of bishops and saints of that strangely complex age, which is commonly known as the Renaissance.

St Pius V, then, is the Pope of the ecclesiastical reform, not, indeed, in the sense that he was the first to desire it and to begin it; for when Michele Ghislieri was raised to the See of Peter, the Council of Trent had already been closed for some time. But he was the Pope of the reform in so far as he, by his authority and his example, set the Roman Curia and the entire hierarchy definitely on the road to that salutary revival of the ecclesiastical spirit which many of his predecessors, whilst desiring it in their hearts, had not been able, or had lacked spirit and perseverance, to accomplish.

It is astonishing that St Pius V, who came of a family in poor circumstances, a humble Dominican friar, should have reached so high a dignity for the good of the Church; but he was a saint, the secret of whose power lay in seeking the glory of God alone, and in his constant attention to prayer. It was by this latter means especially that he overcame the insolence of the Turks, and that he sanctified the people entrusted to his care.

The last occasion on which this holy Pope left the Vatican, April 21, 1572, ten days before his death, is of great interest.

Although very weak, he determined to visit on that day the seven principal basilicas of Rome for the last time, in the hope, he said, of seeing the martyrs again very shortly in



heaven. He followed, almost entirely on foot, the long, rough road which leads from the Basilica of St Paul to that of St Sebastian. Having at length arrived almost exhausted at St John Lateran, his followers begged him to allow himself to be carried in a litter, or to put off the rest of the pilgrimage to the next day. He replied in Latin: *Qui fecit totum, Ipse perficiat opus*, and continued on his way.

He did not reach the Vatican until the evening, where, having rested a while, he had read to him the seven penitential psalms, and the account of our Lord's passion, having no longer even the strength to raise his *camauro*<sup>1</sup> for himself at the mention of the Holy Name of Jesus.

On April 28 he attempted to say Mass, but was unable to do so. Having received the last sacraments, he yielded up his blessed soul to God on the evening of the first of May, and his last words were those of a liturgical invocation from the Breviary:

*Quaesumus, Auctor omnium,  
In hoc Paschali gaudio,  
Ab omni mortis impetu  
Tuum defende populum.*

Sixtus V transported his sacred body to a noble chapel in St Mary Major, where it is still venerated. The rochet which covers the body is that one which was presented to Pius VII by Napoleon I.

The Mass is of the Common of a Bishop and Confessor, as on February 4. Only the first Collect, which contains markedly historical allusions, is proper to the feast: "O God, who, in order to crush the enemies of thy Church and to restore divine worship, didst vouchsafe to elect blessed Pius to the supreme pontificate; grant us to be defended by his patronage, and so to cleave unto thy service, that, overcoming all the snares of the enemy, we may rejoice with perpetual peace. Through our Lord."

We read in the life of Pius V, that during the sufferings of his last illness he used to repeat the following beautiful ejaculation as he clasped the crucifix to his breast: *Domine, adauge dolorem, dum adaugeas et patientiam.*

In the evidence of the Auditors of the Rota put forward on behalf of his canonization, it is declared that one eyewitness and four other persons who had been within hearing at the time testified to the following occurrence:

One day an envoy of the King of Poland, about to return to his own country, met St Pius V on the Piazza of St Peter and asked him for some relics which he had promised him.

<sup>1</sup> Red cap of satin or velvet usually worn only by the Pope.—TR.



The Pope got out of his litter and, gathering up a little earth from the ground, wrapped it in a handkerchief and gave it to the envoy. The latter, thinking that he was being made fun of, said nothing, but, on returning to his house, unfastened the handkerchief and found it all stained with blood. Frightened at this miracle, he hastened to the Pontiff and told him what had happened. Pius replied: "We well know that the soil of the Vatican is soaked with the blood of the martyrs; it is for this reason that we have forbidden public games to be held here."

Those who take up their abode in Rome must look upon it with the eyes of faith, if they desire to appreciate its sacred beauty in all its fulness.

## MAY 6

## ST JOHN, APOSTLE AND EVANGELIST

*Station before the Latin Gate*

A feast of St John the Evangelist appears on this day in the Gothic Missal, but without any indication as to where it was held. At Rome, on the other hand, after the ninth century, the festival was assigned to a basilica near the Latin Gate, connecting with it all that Tertullian relates concerning St John, how, having been thrown at Rome into a cauldron of boiling oil, he came out of it unharmed and even more vigorous than before.<sup>1</sup>

This account of the martyrdom of St John is wholly reliable, for Tertullian was thoroughly well informed as to the Roman traditions of the third century; but that the *dolium* of boiling oil stood on the site of the Church before the Latin Gate is very far from being proved, especially as the Latin Gate itself forms part of the circuit of the city walls, constructed under Aurelian.

However this may be, the Liturgy to-day does not give so much importance to the question of locality; but, at the space of a few days from the ancient *natalis* of James, the brother of John, who was slain by the sword about Paschal-tide, it celebrates the martyrdom of the evangelist who, according to the prophecy of the Saviour, was also, like his brother, to drink of the chalice of the passion, in order that he might have the right to one of the highest thrones in the Messianic kingdom, which his Mother had begged for him.

The Mass is of the Common of Martyrs at Easter-tide, *Protexisti*, as on April 24.

<sup>1</sup> *De praescriptione*, 36, P.L. II, col. 59.



The Collect is as follows: "O God, who seest that evils harass us on every side; grant, we beseech thee, that the glorious intercession of blessed John, thy apostle and evangelist, may always protect us. Through our Lord."

The first alleluiatic verse is like that of the feast of St Nicholas on December 6; the second, like that of the feast of St Paul the first Hermit, on January 15. In them the holy apostle, on account of his unstained virginal innocence, is compared to a flourishing tree and to a sweet flower which never fades.

The Gospel (Matt. xx, 20-23) contains the prophecy of our Saviour concerning the martyrdom of John, in which we should note that the first condition which Jesus lays down before a soul can aspire to enter into his kingdom, is that it must first have part with him in drinking of the chalice of his passion.

There are no exceptions to this rule; for, as the Eternal Father did not dispense his only-begotten Son from such great suffering, so he also did not will that his beloved disciple should be exempt therefrom. We must, then, take courage. If the bitter chalice were other than this one, we might not be able to overcome the shrinking of our nature, but Jesus tells us that this chalice is his, to which he has placed his own lips, and of which he has drunk deeply. Therefore, it is only a small portion which remains for us, and, moreover, it has been sanctified by the blessing of the Saviour.

The Secret is that of the Common of a Martyr, not a Bishop: "Receive our offerings and prayers, O Lord, we beseech thee; cleanse us by thy heavenly mysteries, and graciously hear us. Through our Lord."

The Preface is that of the apostles.

The Post-Communion is worded thus: "Being refreshed, O Lord, with the bread of heaven, we beseech thee that we may be nourished to life eternal. Through our Lord."

The ancient Collects of the Roman Missal, also those recited after the Communion, are admirable in their conciseness and brevity.

It must, however, be remembered that originally they were intended only as the conclusion to the private prayer which, following the invitation of the priest, each person made previously on his own account. The sacerdotal Collect marked the end of this individual and independent prayer, uniting the desires of the faithful in one brief formula, in order to offer them up to God.

Moreover, the faithful had formerly plenty of time for private prayer immediately after the Communion, whilst the priest was distributing the divine mysteries to all the people. This ceremony always occupied a certain amount of time, so



that when at last all had received Communion and the sacred vessels had been cleansed and replaced, the eucharistic prayer of the priest duly signified the end of the Sacred Action.

This concise brevity shows us, too, the Church's admirable spirit of discretion, that in her public acts of devotion she knows how to make allowance for the weakness of her children; in such a manner that no one shall be kept back from the service of God by having too heavy burdens laid upon him, but rather that the very simplicity and ease of her methods shall draw all souls and win them for heaven.

## MAY 7

## ST STANISLAUS, BISHOP AND MARTYR\*

The death of this heroic bishop, who was cut in pieces at the foot of the altar by King Boleslaus of Poland, on May 8, 1097, bears a tragic resemblance to the killing of Zacharias in the court of the priests in the Temple just before the Holy of Holies.<sup>1</sup> St Thomas of Canterbury had suffered a similar death in his own cathedral, December 29, 1170; for which reason, in order the better to draw attention to the resemblance between these two heroes of the pastoral Office, to-day's Collect is practically the same for both feasts.

St Stanislaus suffered martyrdom on the feast of the Appearing of St Michael, whilst he was celebrating High Mass in the Oratory of the Holy Archangel in the outskirts of Cracow. As, however, that day has been dedicated from the early Middle Ages to St Michael, when the feast of the martyred bishop was introduced into the Calendar of the Universal Church by Clement VIII, it was kept in anticipation on the eve of his death.

The Mass is that of the Common of Martyrs at Easter-tide : *Protexisti*, as on April 24.

The first Collect is proper, the other two are from the Mass *Sacerdotes*, which is usually said out of Easter-tide; the whole being as on December 29.

Collect : "O God, for whose honour the glorious bishop Stanislaus was slain by the swords of the wicked; grant, we beseech thee, that all who implore his protection may obtain the wholesome fulfilment of their prayers. Through our Lord."

A short analysis of the Martyrology shows that the immense majority of the saints named therein are bishops. The reason of this is that the episcopal Office and, as a rule,

<sup>1</sup> Matt. xxiii, 35.



all the Offices to which the care of souls is attached, besides the special graces which form an integral part of the Office itself, make it necessary for the soul to aim at sanctity and perfection, under pain of not being able otherwise to carry out adequately the pastoral Office.

No one must ever put himself forward on his own initiative, or desire eagerly a state of life to which perhaps God does not call him; this would be to place oneself on the edge of a precipice. But when the Lord chooses a soul for the pastoral Office through his legitimate representatives, that soul, although distrusting itself, must place all its confidence in God, showing itself humble, grateful for having been placed by him in the necessity of attaining at once to its own sanctification, as an essential condition for procuring the sanctification of those committed to its care, and of whom it will have to render strict account to the divine Shepherd and Bishop.

## MAY 8

### THE APPEARING OF ST MICHAEL, ARCHANGEL

This feast recalls the dedication of one of the most celebrated Lombard sanctuaries, that of Sant'Angelo on Monte Gargano in Apulia, near the ancient Sipontum,<sup>1</sup> the origin of which goes back to the first half of the sixth century. Rome, which, from the time of St Leo the Great, used to celebrate the *natalis* of the Basilica of the Archangel at the sixth milestone on the Via Salaria on September 29 or 30, refrained for several centuries from celebrating also that of the Sipontine sanctuary, for the reason that it in no way concerned her.

However, towards the eleventh century, when the basilica of the Via Salaria was already completely forgotten, both the anniversaries, without further ado, were attached to Monte Gargano; the feast of May 8 being thereafter considered as the date of the *apparitio* of St Michael on that mountain, and September 29 as that of the *dedicatio* of the primitive oratory erected by the Bishop of Siponto in the cave where the Archangel was said to have appeared.<sup>2</sup>

In the Sabine country, on Monte Tancia, there was also a grotto, once the site of a pagan oracle, which about the seventh century was dedicated by the Lombards to St Michael, and which became very famous. The history of this sanctuary is altogether similar to that of Monte Gargano, but the Sabine

<sup>1</sup> The modern town of Manfredonia was built in 1266 by Manfred, mostly from the ruins of Sipontum.—Tr.

<sup>2</sup> In 491 to S Lorenzo Maiorano, Bishop of Siponto.—Tr.



sanctuary is said to be the older of the two, because, according to an old tradition of Farfa, it was consecrated by Pope St Silvester himself. Its dedication also occurred on May 8, a circumstance which probably contributed to the spreading of to-day's festival throughout the Sabina, the Reatino, and the Ducato Romano, wherever, in fact, the influence of the Abbey of Farfa, to which the Lombard Dukes of Spoleto had given the sanctuary, made itself felt.

The Mass is derived from that of September 29.

The Introit comes from Psalm cii: "Bless the Lord, all ye his angels; you that are mighty in strength and execute his word, listening to the voice of his orders." These are the special characteristics of the holy Angels: adoration, obedience, and the service of God.

The Collect in its original Latin is equivalent to a whole treatise on this subject: "O God, who in wonderful order providest ministries both of angels and of men; grant in thy mercy that those who ever stand before thy face and minister to thee in heaven may also guard our lives upon earth." This prayer applies to all the angels, because the feast is not in honour of St Michael alone, but of all the angelic hosts of heaven.

The Lesson is taken from the Apocalypse (i, 1-5), in which to the blessing of grace and peace imparted by the most August Trinity are also added those of the seven mysterious spirits which are before the throne. These, in homage to the Word of God, are also his ministers in executing the wondrous plan of the predestination of his other creatures to eternal glory.

The twofold alleluiatic verse does not seem to be drawn from the Scriptures. "Alleluia, alleluia. *Ÿ*. Holy Archangel Michael, defend us in battle, that we may not perish in the tremendous judgement." The battle here alluded to is that described by Daniel (xii, 1 *sqq.*), and by St John in the Apocalypse (xii, 7-9). It commenced in heaven at the beginning of time, and continues now on earth, where all the good and all the evil done by man represent so many separate episodes in this immeasurable drama of infinite love on the one side, and of malice incomprehensible on the other.

"Alleluia. *Ÿ*. The sea was shaken and the earth trembled, when Michael the Archangel came down from heaven. Alleluia."

The Gospel is from St Matthew (xviii, 1-10). In it Jesus—after teaching us to be ready to sacrifice everything that is most dear to us rather than imperil our souls—in order to frighten the more those who do not fear to place hindrances in the way of the salvation of others by their evil example,



threatens them with the anger of the Guardian Angels who watch over souls.

The Offertory is taken from the Apocalypse (viii, 3-4), but in order to appreciate its exquisite beauty, it is necessary to hear it sung to the lovely melody with which the Gregorian composer of the *Antiphonarium* has clothed it, a melody which enters into the soul and fills it with heavenly thoughts. "An angel stood near the altar of the temple, having a golden censer in his hand; and there was given to him much incense: and the smoke of the perfumes ascended before God." The incense here symbolizes our prayers, which are offered to God by the ministry of his holy Angels, as is expressly said in the Book of Tobias (xii, 12).

The presence of the holy Angels in the Temple and at the time of prayer must therefore inspire us with a deep respect for the majesty of God and for the sanctity of the blessed Spirits, hence the Psalmist says: *in conspectu angelorum psallam tibi*. This respect should, however, be joined to a feeling of great confidence, since in time of prayer when, that is, heaven opens above us and the Paraclete who is within us pleads together with us, the holy Angels place themselves at our side to help our infirmity, to carry our words on high, and to bring down to us from God his grace in return.

*Ascendit oratio*, says St Augustine, *et descendit Dei miseratio*. Therefore, the Church, at the most solemn moment of the holy Sacrifice, invokes the assistance of the angels, in order that they themselves in our name may present the offering on the heavenly altar and may bring back to us in recompense the fulness of benediction.

In the Secret we pray in this manner: "We offer up to thee, O Lord, a sacrifice of praise, and humbly beseech thee that through the prayers of the angels who plead for us thou wouldst be appeased, and wouldst receive it, and grant that it may avail for our salvation."

The fitting disposition of the mind in preparation for a fruitful reception of the sacraments is one of the most important things in our spiritual life, and one for which we must pray diligently. The phrase attributed to St Augustine: *timeo Jesum transeuntem*, refers to the many graces which are offered to us by God and which, alas! remain fruitless for want of the right dispositions on our part.

The Gregorian Sacramentary gives us also the proper Preface for to-day, which has not been included in our Missals: . . . *aeterne Deus: Sancti Michaelis Archangeli merita praedicantes; quamvis enim nobis sit omnis angelica veneranda sublimitas, quae in maiestatis tuae consistit conspectu, illa tamen est propensius honoranda, quae in eius*



*ordinis dignitate coelestis militiae meruit principatum. Per Christum, etc.*

The Antiphon for the Communion is derived from the Canticle of Daniel (iii, 58): "Bless the Lord, all ye angels of the Lord; sing a hymn and exalt him for ever." The unending hymn which the angels sing in heaven is their own sanctity by which they render adoration to the boundless and substantial holiness of God. *Sanctus, Sanctus, Sanctus*. So, too, when we say in the *Pater Noster: sanctificetur nomen tuum*, we pray for the extrinsic sanctification of God through our own justification.

The Post-Communion is thus expressed: "We who lean on the intercession of blessed Michael the Archangel humbly entreat thee, O Lord, that we may carry in our hearts the service which we pay with our lips."

The Sacramentaries also contain an *oratio super populum* for to-day. *Adesto plebi tuae, misericors Deus; et ut gratiae tuae beneficia potiora percipiat, beati Michaelis Archangeli fac supplicem deprecationibus sublevare.*"

*Quis ut Deus?* In these words we have a complete profession of humility which consists essentially in acknowledging the infinite rights which God has over us and the obligation which binds us, profitless creatures that we are, to dedicate to him ourselves and all that we possess. Thus is humility both truth and justice.

We can deduce the importance of the Office which St Michael holds in regard to the Church principally from the holy Scriptures, in which, in the struggle against the Evil One that is carried on at all times, both in the Old and in the New Testament, he is always depicted as the invincible champion of God. According to that which St Paul writes to the Thessalonians, the mystery of iniquity, which shall be boldly revealed in the last ages of the world and which has already begun its work of perversion, meets at present with an obstacle which hinders it from developing in its entirety its malign power, and this shall be so until the day of the final struggle permitted by God to Antichrist.

Many exegetes interpret this obstacle as being the protection of St Michael. Therefore devotion to this great Archangel, the conqueror of Satan, is something more than the devotion we give to other saints. These may intercede for us with God and may be the advocates of our cause; but St Michael is appointed by God himself to be the protector and defender of the Church. He belongs, therefore, not merely to hagiography, but to christological theology, and after the office held by the foster-father of Jesus, there is no other on earth of such great importance and sublimity as that conferred upon St Michael.



MAY 9

ST GREGORY NAZIANZEN, BISHOP, CONFESSOR, AND  
DOCTOR OF THE CHURCH\*

The feast-day of Gregory the "Theologian," as the Greeks call him by reason of his intellectual pre-eminence, a man of gentle spirit and eminently poetical mind, who, through humility and love of peace, renounced the See of Constantinople in order to withdraw himself into the country and lead there the life of a monk, was not placed in the Calendar earlier than 1505, when, that is, the humanistic studies and the Greek culture of the Renaissance caused his merits to be more widely appreciated.

The Mass is that of the Common of Doctors throughout, with the Epistle, *Justus*, as on April 11, since it is more in keeping with the mystical disposition of the Doctor of Nazianzus.

For, indeed, though Gregory succeeded after some years, by struggling and suffering with energetic firmness at Constantinople, in bringing back the city to the faith of Nicæa, yet this was the result of his truly inspired zeal, for by nature he was a man who shrank from contentions and from difficult positions. He gave proof of this when, having been created against his will Bishop of Sasima by St Basil, he found that he was not equal to carrying out that heavy task, and soon afterwards returned to his own country. Gregory's whole heart was set on the contemplative life and on monastic discipline, to which he remained firmly attached all the days of his life, which ended in 389 or 390.

In order to give our readers an example of St Gregory's literary power we here quote an extract descriptive of his own life :

## EPITAPHION (Carm . XXX)

CVR . CARNEIS . LAQVEIS . TV . ME . PATER . IMPLICVISTI?  
CVR . SVBSVM . VITAE . HVIC . QVAE . MIHI . BELLA . MOVET  
DIVINO . PATRE . SVM . GENITVS . SANCTAQVE . PARENTE  
HAEC . MIHI . LVX . VITAE . NAMQVE . PRECANTE . DATA . EST  
ORAVIT . SVMMOQVE . DEO . ME . VOVIT . ET . ORTVS  
EST . MIHI . PER . SOMNVN . VIRGINITATIS . AMOR  
ISTA . QVIDEM . CHRISTI . POST . AT . SVBIERE . PROCELLAE  
RAPTA . MIHI . BONA . SVNT . FRACTA . DOLORE . CARO  
PASTORES . SENSI . QVALES . VIX . CREDERET . VLLVS  
ORBATVSQVE . ABII . PROLE . MALISQVE . GRAVIS  
GREGORII . HAEC . VITA . EST . AT . CHRISTI . POSTERA . CVRAE  
QVI . VITAE . DATOR . EST . EXPRIMAT . ISTA . LAPIS



"Why, O heavenly Father, do I find myself entangled in the snares of the flesh? Why am I constrained to endure this life which wars against my spirit? I was born of a father who was a holy bishop, and my mother, too, was holy, through whose prayers I came into the world. She consecrated me at once to God, and in a dream I was filled with the love of chastity. All this was the gift of Christ. Then storms overtook me. I was deprived of my goods and my body was broken with pain. I came to know pastors such as could hardly be imagined; I left (Constantinople) bereft of children and afflicted with grief. Such until now has been the life of Gregory. May Christ the Lifegiver watch over my future. May this stone preserve this record."

It is said that an ancient oratory was dedicated at Rome to the memory of St Gregory near the Convent of Sta Maria in Campo Marzio. Indeed, the local tradition of the nuns maintains that, when they removed to Rome from Constantinople, in the time of Pope Zacharias (741-52), they brought the body of St Gregory Nazianzen with them and laid it in that spot, hence the oratory was dedicated to him. The truth of this story is, however, difficult to prove, since in the biography of Leo III in the *Liber Pontificalis* mention is made of some gifts offered in *oratorio Sancti Gregorii quod ponitur in Campo Martis*.<sup>1</sup> On the other hand, we know that the relics of St Gregory Nazianzen were transferred from Cappadocia to the Basilica of the Apostles at Constantinople only about the middle of the tenth century—that is to say, after the nuns had already established themselves in the ancient Campo di Marte at Rome for quite two hundred years.

## MAY 10

## SS GORDIAN AND EPIMACHUS, MARTYRS

*Station at the Cemetery of Gordian on the Via Latina.*

These martyrs were buried on the Via Latina, and are mentioned in the Itineraries of the pilgrims; the ancient Roman lists, however, record only the feast of Gordian on this day. Epimachus must have had at first a separate Mass, and it was only in the late Gregorian Sacramentary that the two liturgical stations were united. Adrian I restored their basilica, and it was probably about this time that the bodies of the two saints were placed in the same tomb.

The Martyrology of St Jerome associates with the memory

<sup>1</sup> *Lib. Pontif.* (ed. Duchesne), II, p. 25.



of these martyrs that also of the Martyrs Quartus<sup>1</sup> and Quintus, who, according to the Itinerary of Salzburg, *iuxta ecclesia, in cubiculo pausant*. It will be observed that the medieval Liturgy of Rome tended to reunite in one single festival the various feast-days of those saints who were buried in the same cemetery.

Here is the fine epigraph which the ancient transcribers of Roman inscriptions have copied from the tomb of the martyr Gordian. There is no mention of Epimachus.

HAEC · QVICVMQVE · VIDES · NIMIO · PERFECTA · LABORE  
 DESINE · MIRARI · MINVS · EST · QVAM · MARTYR · HABETVR  
 HIC · AETATE · PVER · RVDIBVS · IAM · VICTOR · IN · ANNIS  
 TEMPORE · SVB · PAVCO · MATVRA · LAVDE · TRIVMPHANS  
 ASPERA · INNOCVO · MACVLAVIT · TELA · CRVORE  
 ET · SITIENS · TENERO · LVSIT · SIBI · SANGVINE · PRAEDO  
 SIC · VICTOR · SVPERAS · AVRAS · REGNVMQVE · PETIVIT  
 ET · NOS · CAELESTI · PLACIDOS · DE · SEDE · REVISIT  
 NOMINE · GORDIANVS · CHRISTI · QVEM · PALMA · CORONAT  
 MARMORE · CONCLVDENS · ARCAM · CINERESQVE · BEATOS  
 PRESBYTER · ORNAVIT · RENOVANS · VINCENTIVS · VLTRO

“O thou, who dost admire this mausoleum erected with so much labour, do not wonder at it, for it is far inferior to the merit of the martyr. He was still young in years, when in the fervour of his youth he showed himself a conqueror, acquiring in a very short time an immense glory. Well might the persecutor stain his cruel darts with that innocent blood, making of the bleeding body his target. The martyr ascended a victor to the heavenly kingdom, whence he now looks down upon us serenely. He is Gordian who is crowned with the palm of Christ. The priest Vincent of his own accord renewed the decorations and placed the holy relics in a marble tomb.”

The Mass is that of the Common of Many Martyrs at Easter-tide, *Sancti tui*, as on April 26.

Collect: “Grant, we beseech thee, almighty God, that we who celebrate the solemn festival of thy blessed martyrs Gordian and Epimachus, may be helped by their intercession with thee. Through our Lord.”

The Lesson is the same as for the feast of SS Soter and Gaius on April 22. It is drawn from the Apocalypse, and is well suited to the triumph of the martyrs in the holy joy of Easter.

According to the Würzburg List of Gospels, that one in *natale sci Gordiani* comes from St Matthew (x, 34-42).

<sup>1</sup> Romans xvi, 23.



Secret : " Graciously receive, O Lord, the offerings presented to thee by the merits of thy blessed martyrs Gordian and Epimachus ; and grant that they may prove to us a help for evermore. Through our Lord."

Post-Communion : " We beseech thee, almighty God, that we who have received food from heaven may be protected by it against all adversity, by the intercession of thy holy martyrs Gordian and Epimachus. Through our Lord."

How sweet it must be to close one's eyes on the world, in the presence of an angry tyrant, of a cruel executioner, of a pagan crowd shouting in the arena : *Christianos ad leones*, and in the same moment to awaken in the arms of the angels in heaven, in the presence of Christ, to receive from him the eternal crown ! Martyrdom is, after the grace of predestination, the greatest gift that the soul can receive from God, it is the shortest road to heaven. It was for this reason that the early witnesses for the Faith before the pagan tribunals, when the sentence of death was pronounced upon them, exclaimed : *Deo gratias !* as with serene dignity and constancy they bowed their necks to the sword.

## MAY 10

## ST ANTONINUS, BISHOP AND CONFESSOR\*

The finest tribute of praise to this great Bishop of Florence, who died in 1453, one of the brightest glories of the Order of the Friars Preachers, was pronounced by the ambassadors of his city when, being received in audience on one occasion by Eugenius IV, they begged of him various favours for several persons whom they recommended to the Pontiff. " And have you no recommendation to make for your Archbishop?" asked the Pope. " Holy Father," replied the messengers, " the Archbishop is his own recommendation." So great was the impression made by the sanctity of this man who, in the gay and thoughtless city by the Arno, whilst the false Renaissance was already beginning to give a tone of classical paganism to society, set an example of fervent pastoral zeal joined with the love of study and of the most austere virtues of the cloister.

The Mass is of the Common, *Statuit*, as on February 4, with the exception of the Collect, which is proper.

Collect : " Grant us, O Lord, to be assisted by the merits of St Antoninus, thy confessor and bishop ; that as we acknowledge thy wonderful power in him, so we may glory in thy mercy towards ourselves."



MAY 12

SS NEREUS, ACHILLEUS, AND DOMITILLA THE VIRGIN,  
MARTYRS*Station at the Cemetery of Domitilla on the Via Ardeatina.*

ST PANCRAS, MARTYR

*Station at the Cemetery of Ottavilla on the Via Aurelia.*

Nereus and Achilleus are two martyrs of the cemetery of Domitilla on the Via Ardeatina, on the occasion of whose *natalis* St Gregory the Great pronounced at their tomb one of his beautiful Homilies on the Gospel, which is still recited in the Breviary.

Domitilla is supposed to be the originator of the cemetery, although De Rossi has proved that there existed two persons of the name of Flavia Domitilla. One was the wife of the Consul Flavius Clemens, cousin of Domitian; she was exiled for the Faith to the island of Pandataria off the Pontine marshes. The other was the grand-daughter of the first Domitilla and was exiled to the island of Pontia, whither, in the fourth century, St Paula of Rome went to venerate the place in which, according to St Jerome, she *longum duxit martyrium*.

It is probable that the cemetery of the Flavi was originated by the wife of Flavius Clemens, whilst the virgin Domitilla, who is celebrated to-day in the Martyrology, is certainly the second foundress. Her feast occurs on the seventh of this month in the Roman Martyrology, but Baronius caused its solemn liturgical celebration to be transferred to this day, so that it may record the fresh deposition of her relics in the ancient title of Fasciola, where they were placed near those of Nereus and Achilleus.

St Jerome's words recalling the memory of Domitilla are well known: *Delata est Paula cum filia Eustochio ad insulam Pontiam, quam clarissimae quondam foeminarum sub Domitiano principe pro confessione nominis christiani Flaviae Domitillae nobilitavit exilium. Vidensque cellulas in quibus illa longum martyrium duxerat, sumptis fidei alis, Hierosolymam et sancta loca videre cupiebat.*<sup>1</sup>

The following is the inscription composed by Pope Damasus, which was formerly to be seen on the sepulchre of Nereus and Achilleus:

<sup>1</sup> P.L. XXII, col. 882.



## NEREUS ET ACHILLEUS MARTYRES

MILITIAE · NOMEN · DEDERANT · SAEVVMQVE · GEREBANT  
 OFFICIUM · PARITER · SPECTANTES · IVSSA · TYRAMNI  
 PRAECEPTIS · PVLSANTE · METV · SERVIRE · PARATI  
 MIRA · FIDES · RERV · SVBITO · POSVERE · FVROREM  
 CONVERSI · FVGIVNT · DVCIS · IMPIA · CASTRA · RELINQVNT  
 PROIICIVNT · CLYPEOS · PHALERAS · TELAQVE · CRVENTA  
 CONFESSI · GAUDENT · CHRISTI · PORTARE · TRIUMPHOS  
 CREDITE · PER · DAMASVM · POSSIT · QVID · GLORIA · CHRISTI

The martyrs Nereus and Achilleus had enrolled themselves in the army and exercised the cruel office of carrying out the orders of the tyrant, being ever ready through the constraint of fear to obey his will. O miracle of the Faith! Suddenly they cease from their fury; they become converted, they fly from the camp of their wicked leader, they throw away their shields, their armour, and their blood-stained darts, and, confessing the Faith of Christ, they rejoice to give their testimony to its triumph. Learn now from the words of Damasus what great things the glory of Christ can accomplish.

The fragments of the small marble columns which formerly supported the *tegurium*, or canopy, erected over the altar still remain in their sepulchral basilica on the Via Ardeatina. On one of them is sculptured the martyrdom of Achilleus: ACILLEVS, and one can see the figure of a man beside a stake with his hands tied behind his back about to receive the fatal blow from the executioner.

The whereabouts of the burial-place of Flavia Domitilla in Rome was not known even to the faithful in early times, so she is never mentioned either in liturgical documents or in the Itineraries. Some medieval writers suppose that her tomb was at Terracina. We know, on the other hand, the text of the inscription placed by Honorius I (625-38) on the tomb of St Pancras:

OB · INSIGNE · MERITVM · ET · SINGVLARE · BEATI · PANCRAII ·  
 BENEFICIUM  
 BASILICAM · VETVSTATE · CONFECTAM · EXTRA · CORPVS · MARTYRIS  
 · NEGLECTV · ANTIQVITATIS · EXTRVCTAM  
 HONORIVS · EPISCOPVS · DEI · FAMVLVS  
 ABRASA · VETVSTATIS · MOLE · RVINAQVE · MINANTE  
 A · FVNDAMENTIS · NOVITER · PLEBI · DEI · CONSTRVXIT  
 ET · CORPVS · MARTYRIS · QVOD · EX · OBLIQVO · AVLAE · IACEBAT  
 ALTARI · INSIGNIBVS · ORNATO · METALLIS  
 LOCO · PROPRIO · COLLOCAVIT

Because of his great merit and the graces imparted by the blessed Pancras, Bishop Honorius, the servant of the Lord,



for the convenience of the people of God, pulled down the ancient building which was threatening to fall into ruins, and which, through the neglect of those of former days, did not contain the Martyr's tomb. He built a new one from the foundations, and the relics of the Martyr, which had been placed beside the church, he laid in a worthy position under an altar adorned with splendid marbles.

St Gregory the Great erected near the sepulchre of St Pancras a monastery which was called after the Milanese martyr Victor, in order not to confuse it with another monastery at the Lateran also dedicated to St Pancras.

It is interesting to note that the Benedictine monks who were sent by St Gregory the Great to convert England, among the first churches erected in that country, immediately dedicated one to St Pancras, as though to preserve the memory of their beloved monastery at the Lateran.

The fourteen-year-old Pancras suffered martyrdom probably in the reign of Diocletian, and was buried by the matron Ottavilla in a property belonging to her on the Via Aurelia, where the basilica dedicated to him still stands. There the station is celebrated on Low Sunday, when the neophytes, newly born in the Spirit, used to put off their white baptismal garments. In the Middle Ages it was the custom that the most solemn oaths should be taken at the tomb of the martyr Pancras, as though the simple innocence of a childhood consecrated by the blood of martyrdom would ensure a safer guarantee of their genuineness.

The *cultus* of St Pancras in Rome was full of fervour, as is shown among other things by the two monasteries which arose in his honour. That of the Lateran is very old, and probably dates from the last years of the Patriarch Benedict himself.

In the ancient Sacramentaries the Mass of St Pancras, often the only one noted for to-day, is quite distinct from that of the martyrs Nereus and Achilleus, a certain proof that at Rome on this day there were two stations, if not three, one on the Via Aurelia, one on the Ardeatina, and perhaps another in the Basilica of St Pancras at the Lateran.

This reduplication of liturgical ceremonies has resulted in the early lists of Epistles and Gospels not being in agreement. St Gregory, at the tomb of SS Nereus and Achilleus, commentated on the Gospel narrative of the miraculous cure of the son of the ruler at Capharnaum, whereas in the Würzburg List of Gospels there is appointed for to-day that passage from St Matthew which has reference to eunuchs. We may here remark that while Pope Damasus speaks of Nereus and Achilleus simply as pretorian soldiers, the author of their *Acta*, employing the Byzantine terminology, describes



them as being eunuchs—that is, officials in the service of the imperial household.

The Codex of Würzburg gives to the Mass of St Pancras the Gospel Lesson which now is found in the Roman Missal for the feast of SS Simon and Jude. The *Comes*, too, of Alcuin has a special Mass for St Pancras, the first scriptural Lesson of which is drawn from the Book of Wisdom: *Beatus homo qui invenit sapientiam*.

The Mass of St Domitilla does not appear anywhere, and it was Baronius who first put forward her commemoration.

The Introit is taken from Psalm xxxii: "Behold the eyes of the Lord are on them that fear him, hoping in his mercy, alleluia; to deliver their souls from death: for he is our helper and protector, alleluia, alleluia."

The Collect is the following: "May the happy festival, O Lord, of thy martyrs Nereus, Achilleus, Domitilla, and Pancras defend us from evil, and render us worth to serve thee. Through our Lord."

The Lesson *Stabant justi* is the same as for April 13.

How often does not the world, even now, regard the virtues of the saints as madness, and consider it the height of misfortune to submit, as they do, to the hatred and persecution of evildoers. Yet in this is the wisdom of God, the "perfect joy," which the carnal man cannot taste nor understand; to live again the passion of Jesus, to love and to suffer: to suffer in order to love, to love in order to suffer, and thus to have a part with him in the resurrection.

The twofold alleluiatic verse is not derived from Holy Scripture: "Alleluia, alleluia. V. This is the true brotherhood, which overcame the guilt of the world: they followed Christ, and attained the glorious kingdom of heaven."

The second verse comes from the *Te Deum*, the famous hymn of Bishop Nicetas of Remesiana: "Alleluia. V. The white-robed army of martyrs praise thee, O Lord. Alleluia."

The Gospel with the story of the ruler (John iv, 46-53) contains a clear allusion to the spread of the Christian Faith among the members of the Imperial House of the Flavi. The words *et credidit ipse et domus ejus tota* must have made a deep impression when pronounced by the deacon under those tufa vaults in the cemetery of the Via Ardeatina, where lay hidden the tombs of Nereus and Achilleus, of Flavius Clemens, of Flavius Sabinus, and other members of the family of Domitian.

The Offertory *Confitebuntur* and the Communion *Gaudete* are the same as on April 22.

Next comes this beautiful prayer over the Oblations: "We beseech thee, O Lord, that the confession of thy holy martyrs



Nereus, Achilleus, Domitilla, and Pancras, may be pleasing to thee; and may it commend our offerings, and ever implore thy pardon for us. Through our Lord."

A violent death voluntarily suffered for the Faith was from the first century described in the early Christian vocabulary as "martyrdom," that is, "testimony"; because the magnanimity of the confessor of the Faith, in shedding his blood for the Gospel, bears testimony before the world of the divine origin of a religion which alone can infuse in its sons such strength as to overcome death.

The Post-Communion is in these words: "We beseech thee, O Lord, that by the prayers of thy blessed martyrs Nereus, Achilleus, Domitilla, and Pancras, the holy Sacrament we have received may procure for us an increase of thy favour. Through our Lord."

Out of Easter-tide the Mass is of the Common of Many Martyrs: *Salus autem*, as on February 15, with the Collects and the Gospel Lesson given above. The Lesson *Communicantes*, however, is taken from the First Epistle of St Peter (iv, 13-19), of which a further portion (1 Peter v, 6-11) is read on the Third Sunday after Pentecost.

The Gradual *Gloriosus* is as on January 20, with the alleluiatic verse: *Haec est vera*, as before.

The Offertory *Anima nostra* we have already seen on January 19.

The Communion comes, indeed, from the Gospel text (Matt. xxv, 40, 34), but as it does not accord with the Gospel of to-day's Mass as by rule it should do, it betrays at once its late origin. "Amen, I say unto you: whatever ye have done to one of these my least brethren, ye have done it to me: Come, ye blessed of my Father; receive the kingdom prepared for you from the beginning of the world."

It is not fitting for us to give way to pessimism. The world, it is true, has corresponded very badly to the benefits of the redemption, but how much blood, how much saintly heroism, how many flowers of virtue has not the Church offered to God in all these twenty centuries? It is very right, then, that at the foot of the holy altars on which the Crucified One is enthroned, the chosen Bride of Christ should offer to the Lord also her sufferings, the labours, the wounds, and the blood of her martyrs, which attest with how much gratitude and love she has always corresponded to the infinite love of the Bridegroom.



## MAY 13

## FEAST OF THE BASILICA OF ST MARY "AD MARTYRES"

The anniversary which we are celebrating to-day is that of the dedication of the ancient Pantheon of Agrippa, which Pope Boniface IV converted into a Christian basilica and consecrated on May 13, 610, in honour of the Blessed Virgin and of all the holy martyrs. The account, written at a later date, of the cart-loads of relics which were said to have been brought thither on this occasion from the catacombs is merely a legend which anticipates in the seventh century that which Paul I and Paschal I actually did in the eighth and ninth centuries for other Roman basilicas.

In the Middle Ages there was kept in the Pantheon the representation of the Saviour called the "Veronica," but which Dante, during the jubilee of 1300, venerated in St Peter's. It was preserved in a case locked with thirteen keys, of which one was kept by the chief official of each *rione* or district of the city. In the thirteenth century the *Senator Urbis*, when about to take office, was obliged to swear that he would defend and guard for the Pope *Sanctam Mariam Rotundam*.

Besides the Papal Mass at St Mary *ad Martyres* on the Sunday after the Ascension, during which, as we have already described in its proper place, a shower of roses *in figura Spiritus Sancti* used to descend upon the people through the opening in the roof, a no less characteristic ceremony was held there on the feast of the Assumption. In order to represent the bodily taking up of the Blessed Virgin into heaven, a figure representing the Mother of God was raised by means of mechanical devices and wooden angels up to the top of the cupola, and then made to disappear through the opening in the centre of the roof.

The Mass of the dedication of St Mary *ad Martyres* is one of the few additions allowed in early days to the Antiphony of St Gregory, which was then regarded as sacred and unalterable. The text of this Mass has been used in more recent times as a model for the Mass said at all subsequent church dedications. It should, however, be noted that the more ancient Roman basilicas customarily have in the Sacramentaries their own Mass of Dedication, and that this Mass is always in honour of the saint or saints after whom the church itself is called, in contrast to the modern liturgical tradition which considers such a festival as *festum Domini*.

It was the custom at Rome in the early Middle Ages that



when this feast of the *dedicatio sanctae Mariae ad Martyres* fell on a weekday, it was transferred to the following Sunday : *Dominica in natali Sanctorum*.

The Introit is derived from Genesis (xxviii, 17), where Jacob, after seeing in a dream a ladder raised between earth and heaven with angels ascending and descending by it, exclaimed : "How terrible is this place ! this is no other but the house of God and the gate of heaven." In memory of this wonder he poured oil on the stone which had served him for a pillow and dedicated it as a votive monument to Jehovah.

That anointing of the stone with perfumed oil was the starting-point whence was developed the entire rite for the consecration of Christian churches, a rite which is perhaps the most solemn and symbolical among all those contained in the Roman Pontifical, and which, when meditated upon seriously, is equivalent to a whole treatise on asceticism and mysticism.

God, who by his power dwells in the temple consecrated to him, is a symbol of the special indwelling of the Blessed Trinity in the soul of the Christian through grace. The sprinkling with holy water, the incensing, and the anointing with holy oil of the temple by the bishop before it be fit to receive the divine Victim on the altar signify the absolute purity required of the soul to make it worthy of God, and foreshadow all those awful, mystical purifications of which the sacred writers speak as being necessary before the soul can be admitted to that degree of intimate union with the Creator which in the lives of the saints is called spiritual espousals and spiritual marriage. The Gospel sets forth all this mystical process in that passage of St John (xiv, 21-23), so full of mystery : *Qui diligit me . . . diligetur a Patre meo . . . et Pater meus diliget eum, et ad eum veniemus, et mansionem apud eum faciemus*.

The Collect refers to the martyrs to whom the Pantheon was dedicated in the following terms : "Grant, we beseech thee, O Lord, that we may one day share the eternal joy of those whose unshaken constancy we celebrate by this yearly festival."

According to the Codex of Würzburg there should be two scriptural Lessons to-day before the Gospel : the first is drawn from the Apocalypse (vii, 2-12), and in later Missals is assigned to the feast of All Saints on the first of November. The second is the continuation of the same chapter from the thirteenth verse to the end, and it was afterwards appointed to be read in the Mass of St Maurice and his companions on September 22.

The coincidence of the first Lesson with that of the feast of All Saints is significant, because it marks one of the steps or



stages through which this joint festival passed in honour of all the saints collectively. We find it originally in Syria, where it was kept in the fourth century on the first Friday after Easter. Antioch and Constantinople fixed the ΑΓΙΩΝ·ΙΛΑΝΤΩΝ for the Sunday after Pentecost, whilst Rome, on the other hand, in the time of Boniface IV placed it in the very middle of the Paschal cycle on May 13 or on the following Sunday.

At first the feast was one for martyrs only, but when Gregory III (731-41) built a chapel in St Peter's in honour of all the saints in the world, including martyrs, confessors, and virgins, and desired that they should be commemorated daily in the divine Office, it was quickly felt that the original local and restricted festival of May 13 no longer satisfied the more eager aspirations of popular devotion. Finally, Gregory IV (827-44) did justice to these desires, and instituted throughout the Western Church a new and more magnificent festival, *Omnium Sanctorum*, which he transferred to the first day of November.

Thus the *dedicatio sanctae Mariae ad Martyres* of May 13 succumbed little by little to the greater attraction of the other feast of November 1. Officially, however, at Rome room was made for both of them, it being arranged that to-day's *natalis* of the Rotunda of Agrippa should keep its traditional place in the Roman liturgical documents as the anniversary of the dedication of the Pantheon to the worship of the true God and the veneration of his martyrs.

In our present Missal, the Lesson to-day comes from the Apocalypse (xxi, 2-5), being the passage in which St John describes the new Jerusalem in all the splendour of her bridal adornment coming to meet the Lamb of God. This Lesson is noted in the Würzburg Codex under the title *In dedicatione ecclesiae*.

The Gradual appointed by the Gregorian Antiphonary is the following: *Locus iste a Deo factus est, inaestimabile sacramentum; irreprehensibilis est. V. Deus, cui adstat angelorum chorus, exaudi preces servorum tuorum.*

The material temple of God is called a mystery and an inscrutable sacrament because it symbolizes the indwelling of the Lord in the soul of the just through divine love. Nor is this all: the Church is the visible throne of divine mercy, it is the channel by which the waters of grace are brought to us, it is the door at which we must knock with insistence so that it may be granted to us to enter into heaven. The temple and the altar, moreover, form the essential difference which exists between the Church militant and the Church suffering. In the latter there is no altar, and consequently no mercy, but only justice. Here, on the contrary, in the Church militant we



have an altar, therefore the oil of chrism and of mercy which flows from it is so abundant that it even falls upon the poor souls in Purgatory.

The alleluiatic verse comes from Psalm cxxxvii: *Alleluia. Adorabo ad templum sanctum tuum et confitebor Nomini tuo.* God may be adored at all times and in all places; nevertheless, having regard to the essentially social nature of the human family, he has himself desired to be honoured by man in community in places, times and ways which he was pleased to describe minutely in the Old Testament to the people of Israel. This divine worship ordered, social, and therefore solemn, constitutes precisely that which is expressed by the Greek word "Liturgy."

The Gospel (Luke xix, 1-10) tells of Zacheus, one of the chiefs of the publicans, in whose house Jesus was received with courteous hospitality, and to whom, rich in earthly wealth only, he gave in return abundance of grace. This entrance of the Saviour into the house of the publican is a symbol of our Lord coming to dwell in the temple of the soul; the effect is the same in both cases: *Hodie salus domui huic facta est.*

The Antiphon for the offering of the oblations is taken from the First Book of Paralipomenon (xxix, 17-18), and quotes from the prayer of Solomon when he dedicated the temple at Jerusalem: *Domine Deus, in simplicitate cordis mei laetus obtuli universa, et populum tuum qui repertus est vidi cum ingenti gaudio; Deus Israel, custodi hanc voluntatem, Domine Deus.* V. (1) *Maiestas Domini aedificavit templum et omnes filii Israel videbant Dominum descendentem super domum, et adoraverunt et collaudaverunt Dominum dicentes.* V. (2) *Fecit Salomon solemnitatem tempore illo. Et prosperatus est et apparuit ei Dominus.* Antiphon. *Domine Deus.*

The Offertory in early times was very lengthy, because it had to fill in all the time during which the people were presenting their gifts to the celebrant. For this reason the Offertory, unlike the Gradual, is an antiphonal chant sung by the *Schola* alone, and in the manuscripts has, as a rule, several verses, between which was inserted the Antiphon, this being the only part left in the present Missal.

The Secret invokes the intercession of the martyrs whose *cultus* has in the Pantheon succeeded that of the tutelary gods of the *gens Julia*: *Super has, quaesumus, hostias, Domine, benedictio copiosa descendat, quae et sanctificationem in nobis clementer operetur et de Martyrum nos solemnitatem laetificet.*

Here we find the explanation of the many benedictions invoked and traced in the Mass upon the Oblations and the Sacred Species during Mass. They have reference to our-



selves that the divine grace may so dispose our hearts that we may draw abundant fruit from the holy Sacrifice.

The first part of the Antiphon for the Communion is from a different part of the Gospel (Matt. xxi, 13) from that given above, but perhaps it had to be used sometimes as an alternative Lesson.

Luke xi, 9: *Domus mea domus orationis est. In ea omnis qui petit accipit, et qui quaerit invenit, et pulsanti aperietur.*

Psalm xcii: *Dominus regnavit, decorem indutus est, etc.*

God hears our prayers according to the measure of confidence that we place in him. How greatly must not we then hope in the Lord, since Jesus himself has willed to become the temple in which we adore the Father in spirit and in truth; the door at which we must knock until it is opened to us; the thurible in which we place the incense of our prayer, that it may rise up with a sweet odour before the throne of the Most High?

The Post-Communion is of a general character and recurs in the Missal in various circumstances: *Supplices te rogamus, omnipotens Deus, ut quos tuis reficis Sacramentis, tibi etiam placitis moribus dignanter deservire concedas.*

It should be remarked that all these formulas of prayer presuppose as a matter of course that the great mass of the people take part in the solemn festal sacrifice by receiving Holy Communion.

If God requires so much purity and holiness in his material temple, what sanctity will he not require of the Christian soul, which, washed as it has been in the waters of Baptism, and anointed with the chrism of the Paraclete, is consecrated as the temple of the living God, the tabernacle of the most adorable Trinity?

## MAY 14

### ST BONIFACE, MARTYR

This saint, mentioned in the Martyrology of St Jerome under *Romae Isidori, Bonifacii*, and represented in the somewhat late *Acta* of his martyrdom as being a Roman citizen who had suffered death at Tarsus, but who was buried on the Via Latina, finds no mention in the early liturgical documents at Rome. If the titular saint of the *monasterium Sancti Bonifacii* on the Aventine is not the same person as the martyr *Bonifatius* or *Bonifacianus* mentioned in the ancient Itineraries when speaking of the Via Salaria Vecchia, the church on the Aventine, which was already a deaconry in the time of Leo III, must doubtless have come into existence through the influence of Orientals resident in the Eternal City.



Indeed, the traditional story of St Boniface bears traces of an Eastern origin; furthermore, the martyr is celebrated in the Greek Menea on December 19.

Notwithstanding the difficulty of identifying the Eastern Boniface with one of the many martyrs of that name, his basilica soon attained great fame, and under Benedict VII (974-88) a monastery was attached to it which was called by Baronius the "Seminary of Saints," on account of the many saints who had lived there. It is certain that, on the heights of that Aventine which had played so important a part in the early history of Rome, and on which, in the time of Athanasius and Jerome, St Marcella had inaugurated the religious life in the city, the Mistress of the World, there were unfolded under the patronage of St Boniface *Ad limina sancti Martyris invicti Bonifatii*, the finest pages in the story of Roman monasticism.

The Mass *Protexisti* is altogether that of the Common, as it is on April 24.

Collect: "Grant, we beseech thee, almighty God, that we who keep the solemn feast of blessed Boniface, thy martyr, may be assisted by his intercession with thee. Through our Lord."

One of the pages of the Gospel to which too little thought is given in these days, and which is too rarely put before the people from the pulpit, is that which treats of the evangelical counsels of perfection, that once filled the desert places with monasteries. It is true that they are only counsels, not precepts, but it is well to meditate upon those words written by a Roman, Gregory the Great, to the Emperor Maurice, when the latter attempted to hinder the entrance of the soldiers into the monasteries: "There are many who can save their souls though living in the world; but there are also many who cannot work out their eternal salvation except in the shelter of the cloister."

The Post-Communion is the same as that of January 26, the feast of St Polycarp.

## MAY 15

### ST JOHN BAPTIST DE LA SALLE, CONFESSOR\*

The saint of whom we now treat was canonized by Leo XIII, who also extended the observance of his feast to the universal Church. His place in ecclesiastical history is chiefly important from the social point of view, since at least two centuries before world changes rendered necessary the education of the masses, and before technical schools had gained



for themselves the all-important place in the training of the young which had up till then been held exclusively by classical teaching, God gave him an intuition of this need as though by a prophetic vision. St John Baptist de la Salle, answering the divine call, resigned his honourable position as a canon of Rheims, and, overcoming much opposition and many difficulties, founded the Society of the Teachers of the "Christian Schools," which still is productive of so much good throughout the Church.

The Mass *Os justi* is of the Common of a Confessor not a Bishop as on February 8, but the Collect and the Gospel are proper. The tone of the Collect is devout, but from a desire to include too much, as if it had to be a summary of the life of the saint, it has become too long and quite out of keeping with the laws of the rhythm employed in the ancient *cursus*.

Collect: "O God, who didst raise up the confessor John Baptist to promote the Christian education of the poor and to direct the young in the way of truth, and by his means didst bring together a new band of thy servants with the Church; mercifully grant through his intercession and example that we may burn with zeal for thy glory in saving souls and may share his crown in heaven. Through our Lord."

The Gospel (Matt. xviii, 1-5) is the first portion of that of May 8. In it Jesus praises the innocence of childhood which he holds up as a model for all Christians. The child is simple, pure, and, above all, humble, for without effort he acknowledges himself to be small and weak and of less account than those older than himself. This natural humility in a child is most pleasing, hence we must try to think lowly of ourselves out of love for truth, not with some end in view nor from affectation, but to please God who, being all in himself, wishes to be all in ourselves also.

## MAY 16

### ST UBALD, BISHOP AND CONFESSOR\*

This holy Bishop of Gubbio, who had so much power over evil spirits, died in 1160, but his name was not included in the Calendar of the universal Church until the time of Paul V (1605-21). The Mass *Statuit* is of the Common, except the Collect, which is proper to the day.

The mitre of St Ubald is preserved in the Eudoxian Basilica on the Esquiline<sup>1</sup> at Rome, where his feast is kept.

<sup>1</sup> San Pietro in Vincoli; the basilica is so called from the Empress Eudoxia, wife of Valentinian III, who founded it in 442.—Tr.



Collect : " Be appeased, O Lord, we beseech thee, and lend us thy help; and by the intercession of blessed Ubald, thy confessor and bishop, stretch forth the hand of thy mercy upon us against the wicked assaults of the devil. Through our Lord."

That man overcomes the devil who practises more especially those virtues which are most opposed to his malice, as, for instance, the love of God, humility, chastity, and the love of peace. The devil once appeared to St Macarius and asked him : " Macarius, what do your monks do more than we? They fast often, but we eat no food of any kind; they sleep but little, while we never rest at all; they are chaste, whereas we have not even a body. In what then are the monks better than we?" The saint replied : " You are proud, and the monks are humble. It is through this that they are superior to you." Then the devil fled from him in confusion.

## MAY 17

## ST PASCHAL BAYLON, CONFESSOR\*

St Paschal Baylon, " seraphic in fervour," whose death occurred in 1592, carries on in truth the tradition of saintliness in the Order of the Friars Minor, and may well be considered as one of the most illustrious examples of devotion to the Blessed Sacrament of the Altar. The words of the Psalmist may be applied to him : *cor meum et caro mea exultaverunt in Deum vivum*; for even after death his body moved and his eyes opened in an act of adoration, when the priest raised up the sacred Host at the elevation in the Mass.

The feast dates from the time of Pius VI. The Mass *Os justi* is that of the Common of a Confessor not a Bishop, as on February 8, with the exception of the Collect, which is proper.

In Rome there are two churches dedicated to this humble friar, who has been chosen by the Holy See to be the heavenly patron of all eucharistic congresses and assemblies. The first of these churches stands near the *titulus Callisti* and was dedicated originally to the Forty Martyrs of Sebaste, and remained so until the Spanish Alcantarini<sup>1</sup> put forward the name of their famous compatriot, about the year 1735. The other church is near the Basilica of St Cecilia and has a religious house attached to it.

Collect : " O God, who didst adorn blessed Paschal, thy confessor, with a wondrous love for the sacred mysteries of

<sup>1</sup> Franciscans who follow the reform of St Peter of Alcantara in Spain.—Tr.



thy body and blood; mercifully grant that we may be worthy to receive those same rich spiritual graces which he received from this divine banquet. Who livest."

As a magnet draws iron to itself, so may Jesus in the Eucharist draw our souls to himself. May an irresistible force attract us continually towards the tabernacle, so that we may find rest only at the feet of the King of glory, hidden for love of us under the sacramental veil.

## MAY 18

## ST VENANTIUS, MARTYR\*

The feast of this martyr of Camerino was instituted by Clement X, after the company of the Piceni resident in Rome had restored and dedicated to their own patron and fellow-countryman the ancient church, formerly that of St John in Mercatello, at the foot of the Capitol. That little old church, dating from before the thirteenth century, is still in existence under the name of St Venantius.

The Mass *Protexisti* is of the Common as on April 24, but the Collects are proper to the festival.

Collect: "O God, who hast made this day holy by the triumph of thy blessed martyr Venantius; graciously hear the prayers of thy people, and grant that we who venerate his merits may follow the example of his constancy in the faith. Through our Lord."

Secret: "May the merits of blessed Venantius render this oblation acceptable to thee, O almighty God; that being helped by his intercession, we may become his companions in glory. Through our Lord."

Post-Communion: "We have received, O Lord, the sacraments of eternal life, and humbly beseech thee that by the intercession of thy blessed martyr Venantius they may procure for us pardon and grace. Through our Lord."

If the festival be kept out of Easter-tide, the Mass is *In virtute tua*, the same as for the feast of St Canute on January 19.

How great is the dignity of martyrdom for Christ! The blood of the martyr not only washes away all personal sins, but through the merits of the blood of Jesus, it becomes a strong power of intercession in favour also of the Christian people. A martyr's death sheds glory on the city where it takes place, and sanctifies it, hence St Cyprian, Bishop of Carthage, foreseeing that his execution was imminent, in order not to deprive his Church of so much honour, returned



to the city from the place of his retreat, so that his martyrdom should not be carried out away from his metropolis.

MAY 19

SS CALOCERUS AND PARTENIUS, MARTYRS

*Station at the Cemetery of Callixtus.*

This feast and station are indicated in the Philocalian Calendar thus : *XIIII Kal. iun. Partheni et Caloceri in Calisti, Diocletiano VIII et Maximiano VIII consulibus* (in 303). History represents them as being employed in the royal palace at the time of the persecution under Decius, and their relics must have been held in much veneration in early days, since during the great persecution of 303 they were hidden and conveyed to the humble crypt of the Region of Eusebius, in the cemetery of Callixtus, where their names can still be seen inscribed :

III · IDVS · FEFRVA  
PARTENI · MARTIRI  
CALOCERI · MARTIRI

The two martyrs died on February 11, 250; so that the date of May 19 refers to the year 303 recorded in the Philocalian Calendar, when the two bodies were translated to a safer place.

The Roman Liturgy formerly kept two separate feasts in honour of the martyrs Calocerus and Partenius, which are mentioned also in the Martyrology of St Jerome. The first feast occurred on February 11 (*III id. Fefrua . . .*), as is proved also by the list of feasts celebrated at St Silvester *in Capite*:

MENSE · FEBR · DIE · XI · N̄ · SC̄OR · CALOCERI · ET · PARTHENII

The other festival commemoration, according to the Philocalian Feriale, was kept at the cemetery of Callixtus on May 19.

In the ninth century the relics of the two saints were transferred to St Silvester *in Capite*, a part of them being placed also in the venerable title of Tigridis near the *monasterium Corsarum* on the Via Appia, thus at no great distance from their first place of burial.



## MAY 19

## ST PUDENTIANA, VIRGIN

*Station at the "Ecclesia Pudentiana."*

The traditions of the Roman Church concerning St Peter's sojourn in the house of the Pudenti on the Viminal are of very great antiquity; Pudentiana and Praxedes are believed to have been the daughters of the fortunate host of the Prince of the Apostles. Their tomb is indicated in the ancient Itineraries as being in the cemetery of Priscilla, but, in the ninth century, their bodies were brought within the city, that of Praxedes to her titular church on the Esquiline, that of Pudentiana to the ancient *domus Pudentianae*, or title of Pudens, which had in the meantime taken also the name of the saint.

Most probably it is she, with the crown of victory in her hand, who is represented in the mosaic of the apse of the basilica, which dates back to the time of Pope Siricius, about the year 398.

The feast of St Pudentiana is found in the Antiphonary of the Vatican Basilica of the twelfth century, but it is certainly far older.

The Mass *Dilexisti* is entirely of the Common as on April 30, except the Collects, which are those for December 13, the feast of St Lucy. There is nothing more glorious and more meritorious than to serve the Church. If he who gives alms to the poor gives them to the Son of God made man, who became poor for love of us, what homage does not he who serves the Church render to the most Holy Trinity, of which she is the reflection and glory?

## MAY 19

## ST PETER CELESTINE, POPE AND CONFESSOR\*

Long before this holy solitary and spiritual son of St Benedict, several other Pontiffs, as, for instance, St Pontian, St Martin, John XVIII, and Benedict IX, had resigned the power of the keys in circumstances which made it extremely difficult for them personally to govern the Church. In the thirteenth century these instances had been almost forgotten, and the canonists disputed amongst themselves whether it was lawful for the supreme Pontiff ever to make such a



renunciation. Celestine V, in a solemn decree, decided the question according to primitive Roman tradition; then, claiming a similar right in his own case, he laid aside the papal robes and returned to his former monastic life.

He was accused of excessive simplicity in public affairs; *de plenitudine simplicitatis*—rather than *potestatis*—as his enemies astutely remarked, nor did he deny the truth of this accusation. Yet God, both during his pontificate and especially after his humble abdication, was pleased to distinguish him by a great number of miracles.

When, by order of Boniface VIII, he was taken to the Castle of Fumone,<sup>1</sup> which was thenceforth to be his place of residence for the remaining months of his life, Celestine worked very many cures on the way, as though it pleased God to exalt all the more the greatness of his servant, because the world failed to appreciate his merits. He died on May 19, 1296, and was buried in the church of Ferentino.

The Mass is of the Common of a Confessor and Bishop, *Statuit ei*, as on February 4, only the first Collect being proper.

The Gospel is of the Common of Abbots as on January 17, the feast of St Anthony, in order to remind us of Celestine's renunciation of the highest dignity of the Church and of his return to the humble state of a monk which he so greatly glorified by his virtues.

Dante, in the *Divina Commedia*, through party feeling, places in Hell:

. . . l'ombra di colui  
che fece per viltade il gran rifiuto.<sup>2</sup>

The Church, on the contrary, praised the humility of Pope Celestine, and held it up for the imitation of the faithful, for it is more prudent and more sure to serve the Lord in the simplicity of one's own heart, than to desire eagerly important places of grave responsibility, for the bearing of which our weak shoulders are possibly not gifted nor prepared.

Collect: "O God, who didst raise up blessed Peter Celestine to the supreme pontificate, yet didst teach him to account little of it in comparison with humility of heart; mercifully grant that, following his example, we may despise all the things of this world, and so deserve to attain to the rewards which thou hast promised to the lowly. Through our Lord."

It is certainly the sign of a humble spirit not to covet

<sup>1</sup> Near Ferentino in Latium.—TR.

<sup>2</sup> *Inferno*, III, 59-60.—TR.



honours and appointments, while to renounce, as did St Celestine, the position of supreme Pontiff at a moment when his great sanctity, the veneration of the people, and the gift of miracles, seemed much more to enhance its glory, is the proof of a soul which, habitually absorbed in the contemplation of God, has plumbed the very depth of its own nothingness. Not even all the glory of the world can succeed in inspiring pride in such a soul.

## MAY 20

## ST BERNARDINE OF SIENA, CONFESSOR\*

In the most celebrated cities of Central Italy, as, for example, Siena, Perugia, Florence, there remains to this day a vivid memory of the preaching of this holy Minorite who died in 1444, and who, in a time of civil discord and moral laxity, thundered from the pulpit like a prophet of the Old Testament against vice, and brought back the faithful to the way of the Gospel.

The feast of St Bernardine, the fervent apostle of devotion to the holy Name of Jesus, was inserted in the Roman Calendar in the fifteenth century, but at the time of the revision of the Breviary a century later it was removed, to be introduced again later. The fame of St Bernardine, indeed, is universal, and in Italy he occupies one of the most important places in the history of the Catholic reform which prepared the way for the Lateran and Tridentine Councils.

The Mass *Os justi* is of the Common of a Confessor as on March 4, but the Collect is proper.

Collect: "O Lord Jesus Christ, who didst vouchsafe to the blessed Bernardine, thy confessor, an especial love for thy holy name; mercifully pour into our hearts, by virtue of his merits and intercession, the spirit of thy love. Who livest."

The Gospel is identical with that for the feast of St Peter Celestine. As the mission of Jesus Christ was to manifest before the world the name of his Father in heaven, so the aim of every Christian must be to bear witness for Jesus in his own life, so that his thoughts, affections, words and acts may all express holiness, kindness, gentleness, and goodwill. We too, when at the point of death we look back, like our Redeemer, on our mortal course, must be able to say to the Lord: *Pater, manifestavi nomen tuum hominibus . . . nunc autem ad te venio*. What a high standard of sanctity this would entail!



MAY 20

ST BASILLA, MARTYR

*Station at the Cemetery of Hermes on the Via Salaria Vecchia.*

Under to-day we find in the Martyrology of St Jerome: *Romae, via Salaria Vetere, Baselae*. The tomb of this St Basilla, which is always mentioned in the Itineraries of the pilgrims as a place to be visited with devotion, was restored by Pope Adrian I. The entire cemetery, which was otherwise called that of St Hermes on the Via Salaria *vetus*, took its name from Basilla, and here were interred the martyrs Basilla, Hermes, Protus, and Hyacinth.

The Philocalian *Laterculus* again gives the feast of St Basilla on September 22. *X Kal. Octob. Basillae, Salaria Vetere, Diocletiano IX et Maximiano VIII Conss.* This was therefore in the year 304, which is the date of a translation of the body of Basilla to a more secret and a safer place. In an ancient inscription we read of some sorrowing parents invoking the prayers of the saint for their little children.

DOMINA · BASSILLA · COM  
MANDAMVS · TIBI · CRES  
CENTINVS · ET · MICINA  
FILIA · NOSTRA · CRESCEN  
QVE · VIXIT · MENS · X · ET · DES



This epigraph is now in the Lateran museum.

Paschal I transferred the body of St Basilla to the church of St Praxedes, as is attested by the marble tablet which records the collective translation of the bodies of many early martyrs.

MAY 21

ST HELENA, EMPRESS AND WIDOW

*Station on the Via Labicana.*

The synaxis of St Helena took place on this day at her mausoleum in the cemetery of the martyrs Peter and Marcellinus. This venerated tomb is often mentioned in the Itineraries of the pilgrims; indeed, that which the Salzburg Itinerary calls simply *sancta Helena in sua rotunda* becomes at once a basilica in the biography of Adrian I: *Coemeterium . . . iuxta basilicam beatae Helenae renovavit et tectum eius.*

In the list of cemeteries contained in the *Mirabilia*, that of



Peter and Marcellinus is called *Coemeterium inter duas lauros ad sanctam Helenam*.

In a Greek *graffito* near the apse of the basilica of the same martyrs, they are invoked together with the holy mother of Constantine the Great :

✠ Ο · ΘΕΟΣ · ΤΗ · ΠΡΕΣΒΗΡΑ  
ΤΩΝ · ΑΓΩΝ · ΜΑΡΤΥΡΩΝ · ΚΑΙ · ΤΗΣ  
ΑΓΙΑΣ · ΕΛΗΝΗΣ · ΚΟΙΝΩΝ  
ΤΟΥΤΩ · ΚΟΙΝΩ · ΔΟΥΛΩ  
ΙΩΑΝΝΗ. . . .

To-day is the anniversary of the death of the Emperor Constantine, but for many centuries the Greeks have joined to his liturgical feast that of St Helena: τῶν ἁγίων ἐνδόξων, μεγάλων θεοσέπτων καὶ ἰσαποστόλων βασιλέων, Κωνσταντίνου καὶ Ἑλένης.

The memory of St Helena in Rome is kept alive to this day by the Sessorian Basilica of Holy Cross in Jerusalem, which was originally also called *Basilica Heleniana*. This church was erected at the instance of St Helena by the Emperor Constantine in the immense building of the Baths of Helena, mentioned in an inscription in the Vatican Museum, where the mother of the Emperor had her abode. In order to render this new sanctuary still more venerable, for it was to be at Rome that which the *Martyrion* of Constantine was on Mount Calvary, St Helena placed there a large portion of the Cross of our divine Saviour, which she had been fortunate enough to discover some years previously near the Holy Sepulchre.

## MAY 25

ST URBAN I, POPE AND MARTYR

*Station at the Cemetery of Pretextatus.*

To-day the Martyrology of St Jerome announces the *natalis* of a St Urban, who was buried on the Via Appia in the cemetery of Pretextatus, and who was the object of great devotion at Rome. It is, however, very probable that we must distinguish this bishop and martyr of the *trionfium* of Herodius Atticus from the Pope of the same name who was buried in the papal crypt of Callixtus (224-31), and of whose sepulchre a fragment has been found, which had formed part of the marble cover of the sarcophagus bearing this inscription :

ΟΥΡΒΑΝΟΣ Ε (πισκοπος)



Indeed, for many reasons both chronological and hagiographical, which it would take too long to set forth here, it would appear that the Urban of the cemetery of Pretextatus, whom the *Acta* of St Cecilia connect with the martyrs Tiburtius and Valerian, had been Bishop of the small *pagus* that had sprung up around the *triopium*, of which there were several at that time in the Roman Campagna.

Urban, however, fell a victim to the same persecution in which SS Cecilia, Tiburtius, Valerian, and Maximus were put to death. He was given burial by a certain Marmenia or Armenia in the local cemetery of Pretextatus in the *crypta magna*, where, in fact, the Itineraries of the early pilgrims always point it out to us : *Intrabis in speluncam magnam, et ibi invenies sanctum Urbanum episcopum et confessorem* (Itin. Salisburg.). The Abbot John of Monza, in the sixth century, also collected the oil from the sepulchre lamp, which he added to the other oils from the tombs of the martyrs venerated in the two cemeteries : *Ad Catacumbas* and that of Pretextatus.

The body of St Urban remained in that spot until the time of Paschal I, who, as he transferred to the church of St Praxedes the relics of St Urban I, also transported to the transeverine basilica of St Cecilia the bones of Urban the bishop. This latter still rests in peace beside the Virgin Cecilia, beside Tiburtius, Valerian, Maximus, and also Pope Lucius.

An ancient classical building close to the cemetery of Pretextatus was consecrated in very early times to St Urban. It has been identified by archæologists as the temple dedicated by Herodius Atticus, the preceptor of Marcus Aurelius, to the memory of his first wife, Annia Regilla (165). That neighbourhood had been the scene of Urban's missionary labours, and it was therefore fitting that the building, which perhaps was the most important of the *triopium*, should be named after him. This church, adorned with old and very valuable paintings, kept alive the memory of the martyr for a very long time in that Region of the Via Appia which he had evangelized, and now in our own days, after a long period of neglect, it has been once more restored to the veneration of this early bishop of the Roman *suburbium*.

At Easter-tide the Mass is of the Common of Martyrs, *Protexisti*, as on May 7, but with proper Collects. Out of Easter-tide the Antiphon for the Introit is *Sacerdotes tui*, as on December 30, the feast of St Silvester I.

The first Collect is as follows : " Grant, we beseech thee, almighty God, that we who keep the festival of blessed Urban, thy martyr and pontiff, may be helped by his intercession with thee."



The Lesson is the same as on the feast of St Eusebius, December 16.

The Gradual *Inveni* is also appointed on December 6 for the feast of St Nicholas; while the alleluiatic verse is taken from the beginning of Psalm cxxxi: "O Lord, remember David and all his meekness." The life of a bishop is in itself a crucifixion, because he who represents Christ in his Church also shares with him his labours and his sufferings.

The Gospel with the parable of the five talents is derived from the Common of a Confessor and Bishop, as on February 4. A bishop has reached the summit of hierarchical dignity in the Church. The Lord, therefore, requires of him that he not only returns intact the five talents which he has received, but that he brings other five talents as well.

The verse for the Offertory is identical with that for January 24.

The Secret is the following: "May these sacrifices, O Lord, we beseech thee, cleanse away our sins, and sanctify the bodies and minds of thy servants for the celebration of this sacrifice."

The Communion is as on February 4, whilst the Post-Communion is that of St Timothy on January 24. The Gregorian Sacramentary, however, gives a different one. *Beati Urbani martyris tui atque pontificis, Domine, intercessione placatus, praesta, quaesumus, ut quae temporali celebramus actione, perpetua salvatione capiamus.*

Although, in the Middle Ages, the Bishop Urban, who is mentioned in the *Acta* of St Cecilia, was mistakenly identified as the Pope of that name, the relics of the latter have a history wholly distinct from that of the Urban of the cemetery of Pretextatus. The body of St Urban, the Pope, as is proved by the inscription of Pope Paschal I still existing at St Praxedes, was transferred on July 20, 818 to this basilica, where it is still preserved in the crypt under the high altar.

## MAY 25

### ST GREGORY VII, POPE AND CONFESSOR\*

The story of this most valiant of the Popes (Hildebrand), at one time a most zealous Abbot of the monastery of St Paul at Rome, has many points of resemblance to that of the great Athanasius, for, if the latter in the fourth century was the invincible champion of the divine nature of the Word, in the eleventh, at a time, that is, when the Church lay degraded at the foot of the imperial throne of Germany, to which it had been enslaved by the ineptitude, the weakness, and the



venality of many of its ministers, Gregory rose up fearlessly and, placing his trust in God, fought courageously, one against all, for the divine character of the mystical Spouse of Christ.

Athanasius was forced to wander through the world without being able to find a safe spot to which to withdraw himself from the snares that the whole world seemed to have laid for him; Gregory, in his turn, hated by his enemies, misunderstood by his friends, deprived of means and of all human help, rested calmly on the wings of his faith in God, and thus endured, unshaken, the burning of his pontifical metropolis, the anger of the populace, and even death in exile (1085).

The last words of this determined Pontiff reflect the energetic temper of his mind: "I have loved justice and hated iniquity, therefore I die in exile." He does not regret the past; on the threshold of eternity his judgement of men and of events does not differ from that which he had formed during his life. Gregory blesses those who bow to his pontifical position, but at the very moment when he is about to pass through the gates of heaven, he resolutely closes those gates in the face of the Emperor Henry IV and his ministers, and of all who refused to submit to his apostolic authority.

Christian Rome still preserves many records of this great Pope, the most vigorous of her sons. He was indeed born at the foot of the Capitol, near the deaconry of St Mary in *Portico*, which he caused to be restored after he had become Pope, reconsecrating the high altar. In his early youth Hildebrand was professed in the Order of St Benedict in the little monastery of St Mary on the Aventine, where the Priory of the Knights of Malta now stands.

When his beloved master Giovanni Graziano became Pope under the name of Gregory VI, Hildebrand followed him first to the Lateran, and then, after his abdication of the papal See, on the road to exile in Germany. Having returned to Rome with Leo IX, Hildebrand was chosen by him as Abbot of St Paul's, where he restored the relaxed monastic rule, and brought the monks to such a degree of discipline that in his subsequent struggles for the liberty of the Church, he placed immense confidence in their earnest prayers.

In order to beautify the Basilica of St Paul, Hildebrand, aided by the Consul Pantaleone of Amalfi, caused two magnificent bronze doors with reliefs in silver to be cast at Constantinople. On these, which still exist, are represented, in as many partitions, various scenes from the life of our Lord, the Acts of the Apostles and their martyrdoms. This precious artistic treasure was executed as the dedicatory inscription informs us:



ANNO · MILLESIMO · SEPTVAGESIMO · AB · INCARNATIONE · DÑI ·  
 TEMPORIBVS  
 DÑI · ALEXANDRI · SANCTISSIMI · QVARTI · ET · DÑI · ILDEPRAN  
 DI · VENERABILI · MONACHI · ET · ARCHIDIACONI  
 CONSTRVCTE · SVNT · PORTE · ISTE · IN · REGIA · VRBE · CONP  
 ADIVVANTE · DÑO  
 PANTALEONE · CONSVLI · QVI  
 ILLE · FIERI · IVSSIT

The Abbey of St Paul possesses another valuable relic of Gregory VII; the marvellous Bible of Charles the Bald, splendidly illuminated by miniature paintings which Gregory had received as a gift from Robert Guiscard in token of faithful homage to the See of Peter. On the first page we can read the Norman's oath of fealty to the Pontiff, who was desirous that to his beloved monks of the Abbey of St Paul should be entrusted the care of this precious treasure.

In the interior of this monastery there is a graceful oratory solemnly consecrated and rich in indulgences and relics, named after the holy Pontiff. It is, perhaps, the only church in the world erected to the memory of Gregory VII.

An inscription in the *ecclesia Pudentiana* shows that it was restored during the pontificate of St Gregory VII :

TEMPORE · GREGORII · SEPTENI · PRAESVLIS · ALMI

In the crypt of the Basilica of St Cecilia in Trastevere there is preserved the commemorative inscription of the dedication of an altar which also mentions him by name. More important still is the marble *cippus* under the high altar of the ancient deaconry in *Porticu Gallatorum*, on which we may read a long inscription beginning with the following lines :

SEPTIMVS · HOC · PRAESVL · ROMANO · CVLMINE · FRETVS  
 GREGORIVS · TEMPLVM · CHRISTO · SACRAVIT · IN · AEVVM

Then follows a long list of relics placed on that occasion in the altar by the great Pontiff.

In the collection of Pietro Sabino there is an epigraph copied in *domo cuiusdam marmorarii ad radices caballi*, which also mentions Gregory VII :

TEMPORE · QVO · GREGORIVS · ROMANAE · VRBIS · SEPTIMVS  
 AD · LAVDEM · MATRIS · VIRGINIS · SIMVLQVE · ALMI · BLASII

It is not easy to identify this church of St Blaise, for there were several at that time in Rome dedicated to that celebrated Armenian martyr.



From all this it can be seen that the statement of Gregorovius in his history of the Eternal City is inaccurate, when he practically condemns St Gregory to the *damnatio memoriae* by asserting that Rome no longer possesses any memorial of him. On the contrary, she still preserves St Gregory's precious treasures and relics, a part of his *Registrum epistolarum*, and various inscriptions on her edifices. Moreover, although his body lies in exile at Salerno, the spirit of the great Pope still hovers over the Basilicas of the Apostles Peter and Paul, for the Roman See ever continues to carry out fearlessly the great mission of Hildebrand, a mission of liberty and sanctity for the salvation of the redeemed.

The Office of St Gregory VII was extended to the whole Church in 1728 by Benedict XIII; it met, however, with fierce opposition in Upper Italy, in France, in the Low Countries, and in Austria, an opposition which lasted wellnigh a century. Hated during his lifetime by the partisans of royalty and by the enemies of the sanctity of the Church, Gregory still aroused after more than six hundred years from his death, the passions, hatreds, and animosities which in all those years had lost none of their violence in regard to himself. But this fierce hatred of the enemies of the Church towards the unyielding Pope crowns his brow with the brightest halo of glory, for his very name is a symbol of the sanctity and liberty of the Bride of Christ. She venerates Gregory among the saints, whilst the enemies of religion speak evil of his name.

The mortal remains of the heroic Pontiff still lie in exile in the cathedral of Salerno, since none has ever dared to remove them from that place where Gregory succumbed to the hardships and troubles of his pontificate. His exile marks his place in history; it is the background of the picture in which he appears and against which his noble figure stands out marvellously as a champion of the liberty of the Church and of the sanctity of the priesthood.

The Mass *Statuit* is of the Common of a Confessor and Bishop as on February 4, but the Gospel is drawn from St Matthew (xxiv, 42-47).

The Lord has appointed the bishops as stewards of his house during his absence. It is their office to watch and to provide for the spiritual needs of their fellow-servants, as well as to frustrate the wiles of Satan, who continually roams around the flock, seeking whom he may devour. The Lord will come in the night, when least expected. Blessed is he whom death shall find at his post, watchful and prepared.

The Collect is proper to the day and reveals the secret of



Hildebrand's great constancy and intrepidity. He trusted in God, and God was stronger than Henry IV and his allies.

Collect: "O God, the strength of all them that put their trust in thee, who didst strengthen blessed Gregory, thy confessor and pontiff, with the virtue of constancy, to the end that he might defend the liberty of thy Church; grant us, by his example and intercession, to overcome with a good courage all that is against us. Through our Lord."

It is, as St Peter says, a special grace of God to a soul when he allows it to suffer so much for his sake. For, as our entire perfection consists in the imitation of Jesus Christ, nothing else can enable us to share his spirit more intimately than the cross and its suffering.

## MAY 26

## ST SEMETRIUS, MARTYR

*Synaxis at the Cemetery of Priscilla.*

On this day the Martyrology of St Jerome assigns to Rome the following feast: *Romae Simeirii martyris*. His tomb is pointed out in the ancient Itineraries of the pilgrims as being in the cemetery of Priscilla, and it must probably have been near that of the martyr Crescention, not far from the Basilica of St Silvester. *Et in spelunca Crescentius martyr, et Firmitis pausat in cubiculo quando exeas* (Itiner. Salisburg.).

*Iuxta eandem viam Salariam sanctus Sylvester requiescit . . . sanctus Felicis, unus de septem, sanctus Philippus, unus de septem, sanctus Semetrius* (Itinerary of William of Malmesbury).

In honour of St Semetrius there arose on the Via Appia in later times a convent of nuns, founded by St Leo IV (847-55), in the ancient abode of the Pontiff: *Fecit ipse mitissimus (Pontifex) in aede propria, quam ipse a fundamentis fieri disposuit, quam ex iure parentum suorum ipse accessisse videbatur, monasterium ancillarum Dei, in honorem sanctorum Simitrii et Caesarii, ubi et dona largitus est, patenam et calicem sanctum de argento exauratum habentes diversas gemmas . . . Ubi supra obtulit thymiamateria cum canthara una . . . canistra de argento mundissimo tria, et gabathas . . . vestes de fundato tres habentes unam tabulam acupictilem interclusam. Fecit ibidem regnum ex auro mundissimo cum gemmis prasinis et hyacinthinis, quod pendet super altare.*<sup>1</sup>

Such richness of liturgical vessels shows not only the devo-

<sup>1</sup> *Lib. Pontif.* (ed. Duchesne), Vol. II, p. 120.



tion of St Leo, but also the fame of the *cultus* of St Semetrius in Rome.

Some relics of St Semetrius were conveyed in the Middle Ages to the famous Imperial Abbey of Farfa, in the Sabine country, and are mentioned in the ancient lists of its reliquary.

MAY 26

ST PHILIP NERI, CONFESSOR\*

This holy priest, who died in 1591, exercised the Apostolic ministry at Rome for about fifty years, and in the midst of a frivolous and corrupt society became the oracle of Popes, of Cardinals, and of some of the most distinguished persons of his time. He deserved so well of the Holy See that, until recent years, his feast was kept to-day in Rome as a holiday of obligation, and the Pope himself used to go in state to celebrate Mass at the tomb of the saint in St Mary in *Vallicella*.

It is almost impossible in a few words to recount the virtues of St Philip and the very important part he played in the ecclesiastical reform of the sixteenth century. The friend of St Carlo and of Cardinal Federico Borromeo, the confessor of St Ignatius and the spiritual director of Baronius, who in his turn was the confessor of Clement VIII, it may be truly said that his salutary influence was brought to bear on all the diverse aspects of the reform in such a manner that even if it were possible to ignore his sanctity, the activity of Philip would of itself, without any doubt, have won for him a place of honour in the history of the sixteenth century.

By instituting the Congregation of the Priests of the Oratory, St Philip aimed, although in a much more limited field and with somewhat different ideas, at the same object as St Ignatius—that is, the reawakening of the religious spirit in Christian society, through the frequenting of the holy Sacraments and through catechetical instruction.

At a time when the Protestants in Germany were accusing the Catholic Church of having taken the Bible away from the people, St Philip ordered that St Paul's Epistle to the Romans should be explained in his own church of St Jerome; he replied to the "Centuries" of Magdeburg<sup>1</sup> by charging Baronius to expound first the history of the Church at least five or six times in his evening conferences, and finally to commit it to writing in his twelve powerful folio volumes.

<sup>1</sup> The volumes of certain Lutheran self-styled ecclesiastical historians of the sixteenth century.—TR.



The Lutheran heresy, by its errors on grace and freewill, had dried up the very sources of happiness, whereas St Philip by his musical and poetical entertainments, which took the name of "Oratorios" from the place where they were first given; by his recreations on the Janiculum, where, under the shade of an oak, he wisely became "a child among children"; by his pilgrimages to the tombs of the martyrs and to the seven principal churches of the Eternal City, gave back to Catholic life its true tone, which was that desired by St Paul when he wrote to his followers: *Gaudete in Domino semper; iterum dico gaudete.*<sup>1</sup>

Stern and severe towards himself, Philip was full of gentleness towards others, and, indeed, at times even humorous when the occasion required it, anticipating in practice that which, some time after, St Francis de Sales found necessary to teach, that *un saint triste est un triste saint*. In a moment of need St Philip was able to raise the dead to life, to hear their confession, to converse with them, and then, at their request, to open to them once more the gates of eternity by the sign of the cross. Then, lest these unaccustomed miracles should attract the admiration of the people, he took pleasure in behaving in such a way as to render himself ridiculous and to cause him to be considered a fool, as when, on the feast of St Peter in *Vincoli*, he began to dance in front of that basilica.

Philip always steadfastly refused the Cardinal's hat which the Popes offered to him on several occasions, and he was happily able to infuse this same spirit of humility in his disciples, especially in Tarugi and Baronius, with such effect that, when the latter was created a cardinal, it became necessary to use force to divest him of his Oratorian garments in the sacristy of St Mary in *Vallicella*, in order to clothe him in the scarlet cassock and rochet in obedience to the orders of the Pontiff.

The Office of St Philip Neri was introduced into the Roman Breviary by Urban VIII. The Mass is, in part, proper to the feast, and this exception has been fitly made for him who deserved so well of the sacred Liturgy, and who, by reason of the flame of divine love which consumed his heart, used to spend three hours at least in offering the holy Sacrifice.

The Introit is the same as on the Saturday after Pentecost, and evidently refers to the miracle which took place in the cemetery *ad Catacumbas*, when, as the saint was praying in the night-time in the crypts of the martyrs, the Holy Ghost descended upon him. From that moment the ardent heart of

<sup>1</sup> Philippians iv, 4.



St Philip began to beat so violently with the love of God that some of his ribs were extended and bent by it.

This is the Collect, so restrained and classic in feeling : " O God, who hast exalted blessed Philip Neri, thy confessor, with the glory of thy saints ; mercifully grant that we who rejoice in his festival may profit by the example of his virtues. Through our Lord."

The Lesson is identical with that of the feast of St Thomas Aquinas, March 7, and alludes to the supernatural wisdom which irradiated the whitened head of St Philip, when, sitting for long hours in the confessional, he directed the consciences and instructed the minds of his numerous penitents, in the ideals of true holiness.

The Gradual common to Feria IV of the great Lenten Scrutinies is derived from Psalm xxxiii, and develops still further this idea of the school or *didascaleion* of religious fervour directed by the saint : *Ps.* " Come, children, hearken to me : I will teach you the fear of the Lord."

In the following verse the Hebrew text varies somewhat from that of the Vulgate : *Ps.* " Come ye to him and be enlightened : and your faces shall not be confounded."

The alleluiatic verse (Lam. i, 13) refers again to the miracle of the cemetery *ad Catacumbas*: Alleluia, alleluia. *Ps.* " From above he hath sent a fire into my bones, and hath instructed me. Alleluia." The literal meaning of this verse is, however, very different, for it alludes to the Babylonians who had set fire to various parts of Jerusalem.

At Easter-tide this verse from the Lamentations of Jeremias is recited as the first alleluiatic verse ; the second being taken from Psalm xxxviii : " My heart grew hot within me, and in my meditation a fire shall flame out. Alleluia." This fire is the Holy Ghost who communicates to us the divine life of Jesus, and who is rightly compared to a fire because, like fire, he purifies, destroys, warms, and enlightens. There is no surer nor shorter way to holiness than to surrender ourselves entirely to this sacred flame of love. God himself repeats in several parts of the Holy Scriptures : *Dominus Deus tuus ignis consumens est.*

The Gospel is that of the Common of a Confessor not a Bishop, as for the feast of St Anthony on January 17.

The Offertory returns to the miracle of the expansion and bending of St Philip's ribs owing to the violent beating of his heart.

Psalm cxviii : " I have run the way of thy commandments, when thou didst enlarge my heart." This enlargement of the heart of the Psalmist signifies that those things which at the beginning of our spiritual life we accomplish with difficulty, later, thanks to the good habits we have formed, and the



love of God which the Holy Ghost pours into our hearts, we accomplish without any trouble, indeed, with inexpressible joy. For it is the nature of love to strive and to suffer without ever wearying.

To-day's Secret is inspired by the beautiful Secret of the Friday within the Octave of Pentecost. "We beseech thee, O Lord, be appeased and look upon these sacrifices; and grant that the Holy Ghost may inflame us with that fire with which he wonderfully pierced the heart of blessed Philip. Through our Lord . . . in the unity of the same."

The Communion is as follows (Psalm lxxxiii): "My heart and my flesh have rejoiced in the living God."

The compiler of this Mass has not been able to detach his mind from the miraculous enlargement of St Philip's heart, and we find that this is generally the case with all composers of modern Masses, who are struck by some characteristic incident in the life of a saint, and then with the help of a scriptural Concordance arrange all their liturgical composition so as to fit it. In truth, there is so much to say regarding St Philip that the Mass might well have been far more varied.

The Post-Communion is merely an adaptation of an earlier prayer: "Having fed on heavenly delights, we beseech thee, O Lord, that through the merits and example of blessed Philip we may ever pursue those things by which we truly live. Through our Lord."

One saying of St Philip is especially memorable; placing two fingers on the forehead of one of his disciples, he used to say that all sanctity is contained in that small space, since it consists entirely in "controlling one's reasoning faculties."

## MAY 26

### ST ELEUTHERIUS, POPE AND MARTYR\*

Pope Eleutherius succeeded Soter between 174 and 189, and is mentioned by Irenæus, who, making a list of the popes in the third chapter of his third book against heresies, gives his name thus: *Nunc duodecimo loco episcopatum ab Apostolis habet Eleutherius*. It has been thought by some writers that the Bishop of Rome, who, according to Tertullian, first granted and then withdrew the letters of Communion for some of the Montanist communities of Asia, was this Pope Eleutherius.<sup>1</sup> The *Liber Pontificalis* declares that he was buried in St Peter's, and that his feast had been kept on this day from the second half of the Middle Ages.

<sup>1</sup> *Adversus Praxeam*, c. i.



The Mass *Protexisti* is wholly that of the Common, as on April 17, if it falls during the paschal cycle; otherwise the Mass *Statuit* is said, as for the feast of St Timothy on January 24.

The Lesson is drawn from the Epistle of St James (i, 12-18), in which the Apostle of hope sings the praises of Christian endurance, and whilst he attributes the cause of the tests and trials of this life to the malice of the devil and the frailty of our nature, he teaches us, nevertheless, that God causes all these same temptations to form part of the marvellous design of our predestination to our greater merit and as a pledge of our future happiness.

The Collects are the same as for St Timothy.

During the years 177-178, the clergy and other martyrs of Lyon and of Vienne lying in prison because of the persecution of Marcus Aurelius, sent to Pope Eleutherius, by the hand of the priest Irenæus, a letter concerning the Montanist heresy, at the same time recommending the bearer as one "zealous for the Testament of Christ." The Pope received with deference this heir of the tradition of St John, and disciple of Polycarp of Smyrna, and it was especially on this occasion that St Irenæus acquired that strong spirit of attachment to Roman orthodoxy, by which he is so greatly distinguished.

## MAY 27

### ST BEDE THE VENERABLE, CONFESSOR AND DOCTOR OF THE CHURCH\*

The feast of this Anglo-Saxon monk was given a place in the Calendar of the Catholic Church by Leo XIII, after the Sacred Congregation of Rites had recognized the title of Doctor which for many centuries had been granted to him by universal suffrage. Indeed, this veneration for Bede had begun while he was still living; so that when his works were read publicly, as the title of saint could not be applied to him during his lifetime, he was called by his contemporaries *venerabilis presbyter*, and this name is still given to him by posterity.

To a knowledge which was truly all-embracing Bede united the highest virtues of a Benedictine monk, in such a manner that in his life prayer and study alternated; *ora et labora*. He had many disciples, and left so many writings that they may be said to have constituted the entire ecclesiastical library of the Anglo-Saxons in the early Middle Ages. The vast erudi-



tion of this monk recalls in a measure the figure of St Jerome, with whom he had some points in common. St Boniface, the Apostle of Germany, hailed St Bede without hesitation as the "light of the Church," whilst the Council of Aachen gave him the title of "*doctor admirabilis*."

St Bede died at an advanced age on May 26, in the year 735, and his last prayer was the Antiphon from the Office: *O Rex gloriæ, qui triumphator hodie super omnes caelos ascendisti, ne derelinquas nos orphanos, sed mitte promissum Patris in nos Spiritum veritatis*.

As he was about to die he intoned the *Gloria Patri*.

At Rome the Pontifical College for the English clergy preserves the name of the Venerable Bede.

The Mass is of the Common of Doctors, as on January 29, except the Collect which is proper: "O God, who makest thy Church illustrious by the learning of blessed Bede, thy confessor and doctor; mercifully grant to us thy servants that we may always be enlightened from his wisdom and helped by his merits."

Historians relate of the Venerable Bede that *numquam torpebat otio, numquam a studio cessabat; semper legit, semper scripsit, semper docuit, semper oravit, sciens quod amator scientiæ salutaris vitia carnis facile superaret*.

What a lesson this is for our self-indulgence, which is fostered by our ease and slackness!

## MAY 27

### ST JOHN I, POPE AND MARTYR\*

This holy Pontiff has been given the title of martyr because he died of privations at Ravenna, a victim to the Arian policy of King Theodoric. St Gregory the Great in his Dialogues tells us of the miracles performed by him during his journey to Constantinople,<sup>1</sup> and how the tradition of the blind man cured by him at the gates of the Imperial City still lived among the Greeks in his day. Worn out by labours and sufferings, John I passed from this life on May 18, 526, but his body was carried to Rome, and there laid to rest under the portico of the Vatican Basilica on the twenty-seventh of the month, the day on which Usuard fixes his commemoration.

The sepulchral epigraph of John I has been preserved, but in a terribly mutilated condition, by the single codex of Paris 8071 of the inscriptions in the Vatican Basilica. De Rossi has put it together as far as is possible:

<sup>1</sup> Book III, chap. ii.



(Quisquis) · AD · AETERN(a)M · FESTINAT · TENDERE · VITAM  
 (Ille · viam · ex)QVIRAT · QVA · LICET · IRE · PIIS  
 TRAMITE · QVO · FRETUS · CAELESTIA · REGNA · SACERDOS  
 INTRAVIT · MERITIS · ANTE · PA(rata) · SVIS  
 . . . MAGIS · VIVENS · COMMERCIA · GRATA · PEREGIT  
 PERDIDIT · VT · POSSET · SEMPER · HABERE · DEVM  
 ANTISTES · DOMINI · PROCVMBIS · VICTIMA · CHRISTI  
 PONTIFICES · SVMMO · SIC · PLACVERE · DEO

Let him who hastens to attain to life eternal  
 Follow the path that the saints have trodden.  
 By this path made smooth by his merits,  
 This holy Pontiff reached the heavenly realm,  
 Here below he made a happy exchange,  
 Giving his own life to possess God for ever.  
 Thou, O Priest of the Lord, didst die as a victim for Christ;  
 Thus have the Pontiffs rendered themselves pleasing to God  
 the Almighty.

The Legation of John I at Constantinople is important in the history of the Papal primacy, for on that occasion it was solemnly recognized by the Byzantines; so much so that the Emperor Justin desired to receive the imperial crown once more from the hands of John I, although he had already been crowned by the Patriarch Epiphanius. Marcellinus adds: (*Philoxeno et Probo cons.*) that John *Dexter dextrum Ecclesiae insedit solium, dieque Domini nostri resurrectionis, plena voce, romanis precibus celebravit.*

Therefore, in order to show the supremacy of Rome, not only was the Pope placed on the right hand, but on Easter-day itself he celebrated the solemn Sacrifice *Romanis precibus*—that is, according to the usual Roman rite. John I deserved very well of the *cultus* of the martyrs, and the *Liber Pontificalis* attributes to him extensive restorations which were carried out in the cemeteries of Priscilla, Felix, Adauktus, and Domitilla.

During Easter-tide the Mass is the same as for St Eleutherius; out of that time it is as on December 16; in both cases the Collects are those of the feast of St Eusebius.

MAY 28

ST AUGUSTINE, BISHOP AND CONFESSOR\*

This feast was placed in the Calendar by Leo XIII, and was intended by that great Pontiff as an expression of great affection and as a loving salutation from the Mother Church to the glorious isle of Britain, once so fruitful in saints.



Augustine was a Roman monk, and was sent by Pope Gregory the Great with forty companions to England in order to convert that land to the Faith. The result far surpassed the expectations of the Pope, for God set his seal on the preaching of St Augustine by so great a number of miracles that the age of the apostles seemed to have come again. Ethelbert, the King of Kent, together with the chief persons of his court, was the first to receive baptism from the hands of the saint, who gave bodily health to the sick as well as salvation to their souls.

By command of St Gregory, Augustine was consecrated the first Bishop of the English by Virgilius of Arles. Returning to England, he consecrated bishops for other Sees and established his own See, as Primate, at Canterbury, where he also built a monastery. He died on May 26, 609, and was at once venerated as a saint.

As, during his life, Gregory had shared the consolations which his disciple Augustine enjoyed in winning for God that fruitful kingdom, so, after his death, he was still associated with his merits, and was at once recognized, especially by the English, as the Apostle of England.

Indeed, this glorious title is to be seen in the sepulchral inscription of St Gregory :

AD · CHRISTVM · ANGLOS · CONVERTIT · PIETATE · MAGISTRA  
ADQVIRENS · FIDEI · AGMINA · GENTE · NOVA

The English attribute the glory of this conversion also to the Patriarch St Benedict, whose rule was introduced among them by Augustine and his companions. These are the words used by St Aldhelm on the subject :

*Huius (Benedicti) alumnorum numero glomeramus ovantes*

\*                      \*                      \*                      \*                      \*

*A quo iam nobis baptismi gratia fluxit*

*Atque Magistrorum (Augustine and the forty monks) veneranda caterva cucurrit.*

The Mass *Sacerdotes tui* is of the Common of Confessor Bishops as on December 31, except that which follows.

The Collect is proper : " O God, who didst vouchsafe to make the light of the true faith shine upon the English people through the preaching and marvellous works of blessed Augustine, thy confessor and bishop ; grant that through his intercession the hearts of those who have gone astray may return to the unity of thy truth, and may we all be of one mind in doing thy will."



The Lesson is derived from the First Epistle to the Thessalonians (ii, 2-9). St Paul recalls in what circumstances he had begun his preaching in Thessalonica; how untiring had been his labours in those early days, how pure his Gospel, and, finally, how disinterestedly he had refrained from accepting from his followers even the modest bodily support to which the preacher of the Gospel had a right. Such purity of intention and such arduous labour are not, however, to be wasted; the faithful must zealously guard that deposit of Catholic Faith which has been entrusted to them.

The Gradual comes from Psalm cxxxi: "I will clothe her priests with salvation: and her saints shall rejoice with exceeding great joy. *V.* There will I bring forth a horn to David: I have prepared a lamp for my Anointed."

These glorious Messianic prophecies are applied by the Church also to the saintly Pontiffs, in as far as they participate in the dignity of the priesthood of Christ. This Catholic priesthood will be for many as a robe of eternal salvation, since they will be predestinated precisely according to their faithful correspondence to their vocation. And what does this vocation to the priesthood imply? An ordinary degree of virtue is not enough; one thing only is required; sanctity, and, indeed, an eminent sanctity.

The alleluiatic verse *Iuravit* is like that on December 7, the feast of St Ambrose.

The Gospel Lesson for the festival of this great Apostle of England can only be that which is read on the solemnities of the first companions of the apostles, Mark, Luke, Titus, and others. We have already noted it on April 25.

The preaching of Augustine, as that of the first apostles, whom our Lord in to-day's Gospel commands to perform miracles and to heal the sick, was confirmed by God with many prodigies. The fame of these reached St Gregory at Rome, and it is beautiful to see how this most humble Pontiff exhorts his disciple, in a letter, to cherish the virtue of humility, notwithstanding the great miracles which he worked.<sup>1</sup>

The Secret and the Post-Communion are thus worded:

Secret: "We offer up sacrifice to thee, O Lord, on the festival of blessed Augustine, thy bishop and confessor, and humbly beseech thee that the sheep which are lost may return to the one fold and be fed with this healthful food." There is a clear allusion here to the greatly desired return of England to the Faith of her fathers, and to the invalidity of Anglican Orders.

Post-Communion: "We who have been refreshed by this

<sup>1</sup> *Registr.*, XI, *Ep.* 28.



saving victim, humbly entreat thee, O Lord, that through the prayer of blessed Augustine interceding for us, it may continually be offered up to the honour of thy name in every place." The final expression is taken from Malachias, but it refers here to the island of Great Britain.

The Antiphon for the Communion of the people is identical with that of December 3.

We cannot leave St Augustine without calling to mind the suggestive and impressive scene of his first landing in England. While Italy was being overrun by the barbarians who burnt the churches and put to death the bishops, Gregory the Great decides upon a bold step.

He sends out his peaceful bands to the conquest of far-off Britain, where even the armies of the Cæsars had barely succeeded in firmly planting the Roman Eagles. The handful of forty missionary monks, full of courage and singing psalms, at length sets foot on English soil, and, taking possession of it in the name of the Catholic Church, goes forward in processional order. A silver cross and a picture with a representation of the divine Redeemer heads the procession; Augustine and his monks follow, chanting that beautiful prayer from the procession of the *Robigalia* at Rome: *Deprecamur te, Domine, in omni misericordia tua, ut auferatur furor tuus et ira tua a civitate ista et de domo sancta tua, quia peccavimus tibi.*

What conquest has ever been more peaceful than this one?

## MAY 29

### ST MARY MAGDALEN DE' PAZZI, VIRGIN\*

The feast of this seraphic Carmelite of Florence, who died May 25, 1607, was at first inserted in the Calendar on the twenty-seventh of the same month, but as a semidouble. When, however, in 1900, Leo XIII extended the Office of the Venerable Bede to the universal Church on the same day, the feast of St Mary Magdalen had to give way to that of the new Doctor, and was transferred to May 29.

The Mass is that of the Common of Virgins, as on February 10, but the Collect is proper: "O God, the lover of virginity, who didst inflame the blessed virgin Mary Magdalen with thy love, and adorn her with heavenly gifts; grant that, as we honour her by keeping her festival, so we may follow the example of her purity and love."

Among the special gifts for which St Mary Magdalen, who belonged to the noble family of the Pazzi of Florence,



is celebrated, may be noticed the sweet perfume which to this day is given out by the pure and incorrupt remains of this holy virgin.

Many of the revelations granted to this saint are also famous, such as one concerning the immense glory attained by St Aloysius Gonzaga in heaven. One of her maxims, too, is memorable. St Teresa used to repeat: "Either suffering or death"; St Mary Magdalen altered the words, whilst carrying the idea still further: "Not death, but suffering."

In truth, all our future glory depends upon the way in which we have participated in the Passion of Jesus. It is this alone which makes life precious to us.

## MAY 30

### ST FELIX I, POPE AND MARTYR

The celebrated archæologist Bosio found in the pavement of the Basilica of St Cecilia in Trastevere an inscription taken from a *basilica domni Felicis*, which the Itineraries all point out as being on the Via Aurelia:

GAVDIOSA • DE  
POSITA • IN • BAS  
ILICA • DOMNI  
FILICIS

Who was this Felix who afterwards came to be identified with the first Pope of the name? The Itineraries, when they mention him, give him at most the title of martyr; and for this reason Bosio has been able to form the theory that this man was a martyr of Ostia, mentioned in the *Acta* of St Hippolytus. However this may be, we must entirely exclude the identification of this *domnus Felix* with St Felix I, Pope, because the latter, as the *Liber Pontificalis* testifies, was buried in the papal crypt at the cemetery of Callixtus.

The martyr Felix of the Via Portuensis was greatly venerated at Rome, so much so that his name was given to the gate which led from the Trastevere by the right bank of the river to the Port of Rome. His festival, however, occurs on July 29, and it was only through a misunderstanding that the medieval martyrologies anticipated it on May 29, which was considered as the date of the death of Felix I. Thus the feast of the latter has passed into the Breviary through the fame of the other Felix. As a matter of fact, Felix I died on December 30, 274.

It is unnecessary to add that the Martyrology of St Jerome



says nothing about either the martyr of the Via Portuensis or the Pope who was buried in the crypt of St Callixtus.

The Bollandists quote this graceful epigraph by Cornelius Hazart in praise of Felix I, who, according to the *Liber Pontificalis*, restricted to martyrs only the honour of having the divine Sacrifice offered on their tomb :

SANGVINE · ROMANVS · FELIX · PRIMAE · QVE · CATHEDRAE  
SESSOR · ET · INSIGNIS · MORIBVS · HIC · TEGITVR  
VT · REGERET · SACRAM · FELICI · SYDERE · NAVIM  
NON · TIMVIT · STRICTAS · IN · SVA · FATA · MANVS

The Mass during Easter-tide is the usual *Protexisti* as on May 7 ; out of this period it is the same as for St Eleutherius, on the twenty-sixth of this month. The Collects in both instances are taken from this latter Mass.

## MAY 31

## ST PETRONILLA, VIRGIN

*Station at the Basilica of Petronilla in the Cemetery of Domitilla.*

This holy virgin, whose story was shrouded in so much mystery by the apocryphal writers, when trying to show that she was a daughter of St Peter, is given the title of martyr in a fresco at the back of the apse of her own church in the cemetery :

PETRO  
NELLA  
MART

Everything leads us to believe that this notice is genuine ; it explains the great veneration in which Petronilla was held in early times, and at the beginning of the Middle Ages, when liturgical *cultus* was confined to martyrs only. The Itineraries all point out her tomb as being near that of the martyrs Nereus and Achilleus, and in the list of the oils in the tombs of the martyrs, which were brought to Monza under Gregory I, St Petronilla is named together with the same local martyrs.

De Rossi has pointed out a very important architectural peculiarity in the basilica in the cemetery of Domitilla, which explains why it was dedicated to the three saints Nereus, Achilleus, and Petronilla in common. The apse of the build-



ing was irregularly shaped on the left-hand side, having its curve broken by a *cubiculum*, which it was desired to preserve at all costs, and a communication was even opened out between the hemi-cycle of the apse and the *cubiculum* adorned with paintings.

A few feet away we find the tomb of a certain *Veneranda*, with the fresco referred to above, in which the deceased person is represented as being introduced into heaven by her patron Petronilla, *Petronella Martyr*. The saint is of youthful appearance and points with her left hand to the bronze case of the scrolls of the Holy Scriptures, as though to sum up all her spiritual teaching in the counsel she gives to observe that which the Scriptures command.

In the *cubiculum*, therefore, between the tomb of the *Veneranda* and the sepulchre of the martyrs Nereus and Achilles in the apse of the basilica, stood the tomb of Petronilla, containing a marble sarcophagus on which could be read the inscription from which the apocryphal writers deduced that she was the daughter of the Apostle Peter.

AVRELIAE · PETRONILLAE · FIL · DVLCISSIMAE

She belonged, then, to the Roman family of the Aurelii, who were related to the Flavi, which connection explains how she came to be buried there.

A *stationem annuam in coemeterio sanctae Petronillae* is recorded in the life of Gregory III, who made an offering of many valuable fittings to that sanctuary. This, however, did not prevent its sharing the common fate of all the other Roman cemeteries which fell into neglect after that time; so that Paul I in 755 solemnly translated the body of the saint to the Vatican, and placed it in the ancient *mausoleum Augustorum* of Valentinian II, which then became the church of St Petronilla under the patronage of the Carolingian kings. By oaths taken on the tomb of this virgin saint, the Pope and the Roman Church formed a spiritual relationship with the family of Pepin and with France, which thenceforward became like Petronilla, the spiritual daughter of the Apostle Peter.

In the reconstruction of the Vatican Basilica the circular church of St Petronilla—which stood almost where is now the altar of SS Simon and Jude, in St Peter's—was destroyed, and the imperial treasures discovered there in the tombs of Theodosius II, Honorius, Valentinian III, and the Empress Maria were sent to the mint. In 1574 the original sarcophagus of St Petronilla was broken up for building material, and in 1606 her sacred relics were translated and laid under the new altar in St Peter's, over which is seen the magnificent



mosaic reproduced from the well-known painting by Guercino, representing the burial of St Petronilla.

The Antiphon for the Introit is the same as for the Nativity of St Agnes on January 28; the Collect, however, is that of St Pudentiana on May 19.

The Lesson is taken from the First Epistle of St Paul to the Corinthians (vii, 25-34), in which the apostle lays down the rules of Christian virginity. This virtue, he says, is so sublime that our Lord did not make of it a precept but only a counsel of perfection. It anticipates in a measure that blessed state of incorruption with which our glorified bodies shall be endowed; for, revealing to us the vanity and brevity of time, it allows of our dedicating ourselves entirely, body and soul, to the service and love of God.

The Gradual is drawn as usual from Psalm xliv: "The King hath greatly desired thy beauty, for he is the Lord thy God. *Ps.* Hearken, O daughter, and see, and incline thy ear. Alleluia, alleluia."

When God loves us, he first places in us and then finds again in us his grace, which is his gift to us, since it is the only thing that can be worthy of the love of God.

*Ps.* "This is a wise virgin, and one of the number of the prudent. Alleluia."

The prudence which is praised in the Gospel, in reference to the five wise virgins, is equivalent to foresight. To be prudent, therefore, means to have foresight; that is, to look beyond the present semblance of things, to that which is yet to be; to see eternity whilst time is passing. By what light, then, does the virgin soul see beyond the things of this world, and look upon the future kingdom of God? It is by the light of faith, by means of which the just live here below and labour for the hereafter above, according to the words of the apostle: *Sancti per fidem vicerunt regna, operati sunt iustitiam, adepti sunt repromissiones.*

During the paschal cycle instead of the Gradual and verse given above, the following is sung: "Alleluia, alleluia. This is a wise virgin and one of the number of the prudent. Alleluia. *Ps.* (Wisdom iv, 2) O how beautiful is the chaste generation with glory. Alleluia." This glory is a reflection of that of Jesus, to whom these virgin souls are espoused by the bond of fervent love. The bride always shares the rank and honour of the bridegroom.

The Gospel is that of January 28, whilst the Offertory is the same as that assigned to January 21 for St Agnes. The Secret and the Post-Communion are like those for St Pudentiana on the nineteenth of this month.

The Communion is derived from the Gospel read above



(Matt. xiii, 45-46): "The kingdom of heaven is like to a merchant seeking good pearls, who, when he had found one pearl of great price, gave all he had and bought it."

The true Christian gives all that he has and gains one jewel only of great price; for God is a treasure of such immense value that he does not suffer himself to be joined in the heart of man with any created thing.

MAY 31

ST ANGELA MERICI, VIRGIN\*

The feast of the foundress of the Ursulines under the rule of the Third Order of St Francis was inserted in the Calendar of the Universal Church by Pius IX in 1861. The devout pilgrimages of St Angela to the Holy Land and to Rome recall, in a manner, those made by St Bridget of Sweden some two centuries earlier. She showed the same faith and enjoyed equal respect with the Popes, so much so that Clement VII would not allow her to leave the Eternal City. After having brought together a band of holy women, who devoted themselves to the Christian education of girls, St Angela passed away from this life, full of merits, on January 27, 1540.

The Mass is the same as that of St Pudentiana, with the exception of the Collects.

Collect: "O God, who didst bring to pass that through blessed Angela a new company of holy virgins should grow up within the Church; grant, through her intercession, that we may live as angels in the purity of our lives, and, renouncing all earthly joys, may be found worthy to enjoy those that are everlasting."

St Augustine remarks that in the Gospel every Christian soul is spoken of as a virgin, inasmuch as it refrains from illicit pleasures and keeps the body and the heart pure and free from every stain of sin.

Secret: "May the victim which we offer up to thee, O Lord, in honour of the memory of blessed Angela, entreat the forgiveness of our sins and win for us the gifts of thy grace."

We should note the order of these petitions. First we must practise the exercises of the purgative way in order to rid ourselves of our sins, and then the works of the illuminative way in order to build, on this foundation, our spiritual temple.

Post-Communion: "We who have been refreshed with heavenly food, beseech thee, O Lord, that by blessed Angela's



prayers and example we may be cleansed from the stain of sin and become pleasing to thee both in body and mind."

## FEASTS IN JUNE

### FRIDAY AFTER THE OCTAVE OF CORPUS CHRISTI

#### FEAST OF THE SACRED HEART OF JESUS

The origin of this feast is similar to that of the Blessed Sacrament. The symbolism surrounding the wound in the side of Jesus made by the lance of Longinus, from which flowed blood and water, was already familiar to the early Fathers of the Church. There are wonderful pages in the writings of St Augustine and St John Chrysostom about the Church which, radiant with youth, springs from the side of the new Adam asleep upon the cross, as well as about the divine Sacraments which flowed from the loving Heart of the Redeemer.

This tradition of the Fathers was preserved and developed by the Benedictine school of piety; so that when, finally, in the twelfth century, St Bernard directed the mystical devotion of his monks of Clairvaux towards a special *cultus* of the human nature of the Saviour, the devotion to the Sacred Heart after the manner now paid to it by the Liturgy may be said to have come into being. From simply meditating on the wounds of Jesus, the Benedictine mystics had developed a special devotion to that in his side, and entering through the opening made by the lance of Longinus, had penetrated to his very Heart wounded by the lance of love.

To St Bernard the Sacred Heart represents that cleft in the rock in which the heavenly Bridegroom invites his dove to find rest. The soldier's spear, therefore, has reached the heart of the crucified One in order to unveil to us all the secrets of his love. It has, indeed, revealed to us the great mystery of his compassion, those bowels of compassion which induced him to descend from heaven to visit us.<sup>1</sup>

The disciples of St Bernard were still unfolding with marvellous power the mystical doctrine of their Master, when the great revelations of the Sacred Heart of Jesus were made to St Lutgarde,<sup>2</sup> St Gertrude, and St Mechtilde.

Our Lord deigned one day to exchange the heart of St Lutgarde for his own, and one night when, in spite of illness,

<sup>1</sup> *In Cantic. Serm.* 61, n. 3-4. *P.L.* CLXXXIII, col. 1071-72.

<sup>2</sup> She died in 1246.



the saint had arisen for the vigiliary Office, Jesus, in order to reward her, invited her to place her lips to the wound in his Heart, whence Lutgarde imbibed such gentleness of spirit that thenceforth she always felt the greatest strength and facility in the service of God.

About the year 1250 occurred the well-known revelation of the Sacred Heart to the famous Mechtilde of Magdeburg, who later became a member of the Community of Helfta, in which St Gertrude and her sister St Mechtilde were already living.

"In my great sufferings," she writes, "Jesus showed me the wound in his Heart, and said: 'Behold, how much I have suffered.'" This vision made such a lively impression on her, that henceforward she never ceased to contemplate that impassioned and outraged heart, which at the same time appeared to her like a mass of molten gold in the midst of an immense furnace. Jesus brought the heart of Mechtilde near to his own that it might live by the same life.

When Providence led this holy mystic of Magdeburg to Helfta, it was for the purpose of bringing her into contact with two other daughters of St Benedict, Gertrude and Mechtilde, who also had been the recipients of similar favours. The special character of St Gertrude's fervour towards the Incarnate Word is shown by her tender devotion to the Sacred Heart, which is for her the symbol of the Saviour's love, and a kind of mystical Sacrament by which the saint is able to share not only the merits, but the feelings of Jesus.

One day, when St Gertrude was invited by St John to rest like him on the Sacred Heart of our Lord, she asked the evangelist how it was that he had never revealed to the Church the mysteries of love, the delights of which he had tasted at the Last Supper, when he laid his head on the breast of his divine Master.

St John replied that his mission had been that of revealing to men the divine nature of the Word, whereas the language of love expressed by the beatings of the Sacred Heart to which he had listened was to be the revelation of the latter days when the world, grown old and callous, would require to have its fervour renewed by means of this mystery of burning love.

St Gertrude understood that the Apostolate of the Sacred Heart of Jesus was entrusted to her, and therefore in her words and in her writings she set forth the whole theology, as we may call it, of that sacred wound, and sought to propagate that devotion. In this mission of evangelisation she was assisted by the pious *cantrix* Mechtildis, who had been similarly bidden by our Lord to make her dwelling-place in the wound of his Sacred Heart. Like her companion, St



## *Friday after the Octave of Corpus Christi* 205

Mechtilde, too, set down in writing her revelations in which the Sacred Heart was compared, now to a golden chalice from which the saints slaked their thirst, now to a lighted lamp, and then again to a lyre filling heaven with sweet harmonies. One day our Saviour and St Mechtilde exchanged hearts, and thenceforward the saint seemed to breathe with the very heart of her divine Spouse.

The revelations of the two mystics of Helfta met with great favour, especially in Germany, in a country, that is, which had already been trained in devotion to the Heart of Jesus through the preceding influence of the Benedictine School. Dominican and Franciscan writers speedily followed this movement and spread it abroad, especially through the labours of St Bonaventure, Blessed Henry Suso, St Catherine, and St Bernardine of Siena.

Thus we come to the time of St Frances of Rome, who, in her revelations concerning the Sacred Heart, in which she lost herself as in a burning ocean of love, only accentuates the ascetic spirit of the ancient mystical school of the sons of St Benedict. The action of the foundress of the convent of *Turris Speculorum* at Rome was, it is true, confined to that city, but she represents one of the most precious links in a long chain of saints and ascetic writers who, in Germany, Belgium, and Italy, prepared the way for the wonderful revelations of Paray-le Monial.

When, finally, these were made known to the faithful, especially through the Venerable Claude de la Colombière and Père Croiset, the triumph of the Heart of Jesus and of the reign of his love was now assured to Catholic devotion. In 1765 Pope Clement XIII approved an Office in honour of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, but this was granted only to certain dioceses. However, in 1856, Pius IX, whose mind had been much influenced by the great restorer of the Benedictine Order in France, Abbot Guéranger, made this feast obligatory for the whole Church. Leo XIII, in 1889, raised it to the rank of a double of the first class.

When, in 1765, Clement XIII authorised the liturgical *cultus* of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, a prophecy was fulfilled, which had been made thirty years earlier to Maria Cecilia Bai, the holy Abbess of St Peter, of Montefiascone. Our Lord had said one day to this servant of God, showing her his heart: "A day will come when my Heart will advance triumphantly in the Church Militant, and this, by reason of the solemn feast which will be celebrated in its honour, with the Office of the Sacred Heart." "I do not know," added the holy Benedictine nun, "whether this will happen in our time."

Maria Cecilia Bai, however, had the happiness of seeing this long-desired day at last, and she must then certainly have



remembered those other words which her divine Spouse had spoken to her several years before : " The time will come when you will do an action pleasing to my heart, by making it known to and adored by a great number of persons, by means of the veneration and acts of devotion due to it."

In 1899, Leo XIII put forth an Encyclical, in which he prescribed that the whole Catholic world should consecrate itself to the most Sacred Heart of Jesus. The Pope came to this decision in consequence of a formal command which the holy Superior of the Good Shepherd at Oporto, Sister Maria Droste zu Vischering, declared that she had received from our Divine Redeemer himself, in order that she should communicate it to the Pope.

This private revelation bore all the marks of being genuine, the Sister's spirituality having already been approved by the wise and prudent Abbot of Seckau, Ildephonsus Schober. Thus it was that the Benedictine Hildebrand de Hemptinne, Abbot of St Anselm's on the Aventine, took the matter in hand and presented the petition of Sister Maria Droste to Leo XIII. On June 9, 1899, whilst the bells of all the churches of Christendom were announcing the feast of the Sacred Heart and the new act of Consecration ordered by the Pope, the Seer of Oporto, as if to show that her earthly mission was ended, gave up her pure soul to God.<sup>1</sup>

The Mass was composed under Clement XIII. The Introit comes from the Lamentations of Jeremias (iii, 32-33, and 25) : " He will have mercy according to the multitude of his mercies : for he hath not willingly afflicted nor cast off the children of men : the Lord is good to them that hope in him, to the soul that seeketh him."

The Prophet, indeed, speaks truly : the cause of the compassion of God is to be found in the excess of his love alone. Hence all the wickedness of the world cannot dry up that ocean of goodness, and instead of looking upon our sins, he looks upon our weakness and upon himself, in whom he sees our human nature, exalted and united by an indissoluble bond to that of the divine Word.

The Collect is far from possessing the *concinnitas* of the early composers. " Grant, we beseech thee, almighty God, that we who, glorying in the most Sacred Heart of thy beloved Son, celebrate the singular benefits of his love towards us, may rejoice alike in their operation and in their fruit."

The Lesson is taken from Isaias (xii, 1-6). It is very

<sup>1</sup> Cf. U. Berlière, *La dévotion au Sacré-Cœur dans l'Ordre de St Benoît*, Paris, 1923.



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beautiful, but is out of place here, for this passage is the celebrated Canticle which, from the most remote antiquity, has formed part of the collection of Odes which the Church received from the Synagogue, together with the Psalter. The place appointed in early times for these Odes or prophetic Canticles, distributed through the days of the week, was the morning Office, and, indeed, the Benedictine *Cursus*, which in this particular reflects the Roman use of the fifth century, still assigns the *Canticum Esaiae* to the Office for Monday at dawn.

Consequently, this is a Canticle for the night Office, and not a Lesson for the Mass.

Isaias gives thanks to the Lord because his tender mercy has taken the place of inexorable justice. The nations will hasten with joy to draw the waters of grace from the fountains of the Saviour—from his heart, that is, whence flows blood and water, and the hymn of thanksgiving shall re-echo throughout the earth. God will no longer withdraw himself from his people, but will dwell in the midst of them. Here we have a prophecy of the Holy Eucharist, which ensures for us the nearness of Jesus and his constant presence in the tabernacles, which are in our cities and in our villages, and which carry on from generation to generation the gift and the benefits of his divine Incarnation.

The Gradual instead of being drawn from the Psalter, is partly from the Lamentations and partly from the Gospel. The eighteenth-century compiler was probably ignorant of the musical structure of this part of the Mass, and therefore he was content simply to string together verses from the Scriptures which could be adapted to his theme.

Gradual (Lam. i, 14): "O all ye that pass by the way, attend and see if there be any sorrow like to my sorrow."

The cause of these sufferings of Jesus is explained in the following verse (John xiii, 7): "Having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them unto the end."

What is the meaning of these words: *in finem dilexit eos*? Love is the great artificer, the gifted artist, whose works are all masterpieces, who never leaves his work unfinished. Jesus, then, loved us infinitely, we might even dare to say desperately; as his love could have no end or exhaustion in his divine nature, he sought this *finis* in his human nature, which especially in the Eucharist and on the cross was inflamed and consumed by love.

The alleluiatic verse is derived from St Matthew. It seems extraordinary that the composer of this Mass did not realise, that far more than any other book of Scripture, the Psalter is that one which interprets to us the inmost feelings of the Heart of Jesus.



Alleluiatic verse (Matt. xi, 29): *Ÿ. Alleluia, alleluia.* "Learn of me, because I am meek and humble of heart; and you shall find rest to your souls. Alleluia."

Here we see the cause of so much of our interior unrest; the want of humility. Humility means truthfulness—that is, the practical recognition of what we really are in the sight of God and of our neighbour. As, however, this virtue is so contrary to human nature distorted by original sin, in order to make it easier for us and, indeed, attractive, Jesus has sanctified it and elevated it in his own person. It must no longer be difficult for us always to keep on the level of that humility which is befitting to us, from the moment that wherever we turn we find that Jesus has humbled himself still more. *Exinanivit semetipsum*—that is the measure which the Holy Ghost has set to the humiliation to which Jesus has descended.

The Gospel from St John (xix, 31-35) has been gracefully summarised by Paulinus of Aquileia, who died in 802.<sup>1</sup>

*Quando se pro nobis sanctum  
Fecit sacrificium,  
Tunc de lateris fixura  
Fons vivus elicuit;  
De quo mystice fluxerunt  
Duo simul flumina:  
Sanguis nam redemptionis  
Et unda baptismatis.*

The Offertory is taken from Psalm cii, and is a fervent thanksgiving to Jehovah, who is generous in his reward, and whose graces satisfy our just desires and fulfil the confidence which we place in him.

The following beautiful prayer is the Secret: "Defend us, O Lord, who offer up to thee thy whole-burnt offerings; and that our hearts may be more fervently prepared for them, enkindle therein the flames of thy divine charity."

We should recall in this connection that which the Epistle to the Hebrews tells us of the inward dispositions of the Heart of Jesus when on the cross: *Qui per Spiritum Sanctum semetipsum obtulit immaculatum Deo*, for which reason in the Egyptian anaphora of Serapion of Thmuis, the Holy Ghost is invoked upon the oblations as being *testis passionum Christi*. It is, therefore, necessary that the same fire which consumed the divine Victim upon the altar of the cross should envelop the holy table, the celebrant, the eucharistic oblation, and as many as approach to partake thereof.

The Preface is that of the Cross as on May 3.

<sup>1</sup> Cf. A. Wilmart, *L'Hymne de Paulin sur Lazare dans un manuscrit d'Autun*, *Rev. Bénéd.* XXXIV, p. 42, 1922.



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The Communion comes from Psalm lxxviii, and describes the heaviness of heart of Christ crucified as he prayed to his heavenly Father to save him: "My heart hath expected reproach and misery; and I looked for one that would grieve together with me, but there was none; and for one that would comfort me, and I found none."

In the Post-Communion the soul already tastes the sweetness of the heavenly manna. The union of the divine Heart of Jesus with our own has finally given it peace and, calming its unruly desires, renders it meek, humble, and averse from the proud vanities of the world, which it renounced once before in holy Baptism.

To the praises of the Sacred Heart of Jesus by the Western Fathers we will add to-day those of the Byzantine Church:

Ἡ ζωηφόρος σου πλευρά,  
ὡς ἐξ Ἑδὲν πηγὴ ἀναβλύζουσα,  
τὴν Ἐκκλησίαν σου, Χριστέ,  
ὡς λογικὸν ποτίζει παράδεισον  
Ἐντεῦθεν μερίζουσα,  
ὡς ἐξ ἀρκῆς, εἰς τέσσαρα  
Εὐαγγέλια,  
τὸν κόσμον ἀρδεύουσα,  
τὴν κτίσιν εὐφραίνουσα,  
καὶ τὰ ἔθνη πιστῶς,  
διδάσκουσα προσκυνεῖν,  
τὴν Βασιλείαν σου.

From thy life-giving side,  
A fount like that which flowed  
from Eden  
Waters thy Church, O Christ,  
As if it were a spiritual garden.  
Thence it divides,  
As from one stem  
Into four Gospels.  
It waters the universe,  
It rejoices creation,  
Teaching the nations  
Faithfully to revere  
Thy gracious rule.

### JUNE I

#### DEDICATION OF THE BASILICA OF NICOMEDES

##### *Station on the Via Nomentana "prope muros Urbis"*

On this day the Sacramentary of Adrian I and various medieval martyrologies record the dedication of the Basilica of Nicomedes, the origin of which goes back to the time of Boniface V (614-25). The different Itineraries, indeed, make mention of the tomb of the martyr on the Via Nomentana, but they do not take much notice of the new church, which, on the other hand, was restored and acquired a certain importance, especially through the action of Pope Adrian I. According to the Itinerary used by William of Malmesbury, there was a time when the Via Nomentana itself took its name from St Nicomedes: *Ibi sanctus Nicomedes presbyter et martyr, itemque via eodem modo dicitur.*

The cemetery with the basilica of the martyr was situated according to the *Acta*, *in orto Iusti, prope muros*; where, in fact, the subterranean galleries were explored in 1901, some




of which may date from the second century. Nicomedes is said to have been put to death under Domitian.

This suburban basilica and cemetery of St Nicomedes outside the city is, however, not to be confused with the *titulus Nicomedis*, whose clergy signed the *Acta* of the Roman Council convened in St Peter's on March 1, 499, under Pope Symmachus. The *titulus* itself most certainly stood within the city, but it, too, has disappeared, leaving no trace, so its exact position is now no longer certain.

It is probable that, according to the Roman custom, the *titulus Nicomedis* consecrated the site of the private dwelling of the martyr; but, if we accept the identification of the two Nicomedes—of the *titulus* and of the cemetery—we shall have to put the date of the former much later, and to place his martyrdom at the end of the third century, when the present Roman titles arose.

In the ambo of the Basilica of St Lawrence in the Agro Verano, the medieval statuary made use of a sepulchral slab of the fifth century, which clearly mentions a priest of the title of Nicomedes. It is all that remains to-day of that church :

(Hic p)OSITVS · EST · VICTOR · PRESB  TITVLI · NICOME(dis)  
XII · KAL · DECEMB

The Collects of the Mass of the Dedication feast are the following :

Collect : *Deus, qui nos beati Nicomedis Martyris tui meritis et intercessione laetificas, concede propitius, ut qui eius beneficia poscimus, dona tuae gratiae consequamur.*

Secret : *Munera, Domine, oblata sanctifica, et intercedente beato Nicomede Martyre tuo, nos per haec a peccatorum nostrorum maculis emunda.*

Post-Communion : *Supplices te rogamus, omnipotens Deus, ut quos tuis reficis Sacramentis, intercedente beato Nicomede Martyre tuo, tibi etiam placitis moribus dignanter tribuas deservire.*

It is not fitting to ask the martyrs for the temporal prosperity which scatters roses along the path of life. The sons and heirs of the Faith whom those martyrs sprinkled with their blood cannot be less generous than they, but as ready to spend themselves for Christ and for the Gospel. This is that which the Church causes us to pray for to-day in the holy Liturgy.



## JUNE 2

SS MARCELLINUS, PRIEST, AND PETER, EXORCIST, MARTYRS

*Station at the Cemetery "inter duas lauros" on the  
Via Labicana*

The Bernese Codex of the Martyrology of St Jerome contains to-day the following notice: *Romae, in cimiterio inter duas lauros, via Lavicana, milliario quarto, Marcellini presbyteri et Petri exorcistae*. These two martyrs suffered death for the Faith during the persecution of Diocletian. Having been decapitated at the place known as *silva nigra*, on the Via Cornelia, their bodies were transferred to the fourth milestone on the Via Labicana, near the tomb of Tiburtius, and in the neighbourhood of what became later the imperial villa of Constantine—*inter duas lauros*.

During the excavations of 1897 their sepulchral crypt was discovered, and it was evident that it had been widened so as to form a small basilica, the *cubicula* and passages which originally surrounded the tomb of the martyrs having been levelled to the ground. The tomb consequently remained isolated, and upon it was erected the altar.

Pope Damasus relates, in a well-known hymn, how he had heard, as a child, the details of the martyrdom of the two saints from the executioner who had beheaded them:

MARCELLINE • TVOS • PARITER • PETRE • NOSSE • TRIVMPHOS  
PERCVSSOR • RETVLIT • DAMASO • MIHI • CVM • PVER • ESSEM  
HAEC • SIBI • CARNIFICEM • RABIDVM • MANDATA • DEDISSE  
SENTIBVS • IN • MEDIIS • VESTRA • VT • TVNC • COLLA • SECARET  
NE • TVMVLVM • VESTRVM • QVISQVAM • COGNOSCERE • POSSET  
VOS • ALACRES • VESTRIS • MANIBVS • MVNDASSE • SEPVL CRA  
CANDIDVLO • OCCVLTE • POSTQVAM • IACVISTIS • IN • ANTRO  
POSTEA • COMMONITAM • VESTRA • PIETATE • LVCILLAM  
HIC • PLACVISSE • MAGIS • SANCTISSIMA • CONDERE • MEMBRA

O Marcellinus, and thou, too, O Peter, behold your triumphs. When I was still a child, your executioner himself related to me how he had been commanded by the cruel tyrant to sever your heads from your bodies in the midst of a wood, so that no man should know the place of your burial. Diligently with your own hands you then prepared a tomb. But having lain for some time unknown in the cave which you had cleansed, you deigned to apprise Lucilla, who preferred to lay your holy bodies here.

The thick wood at the tenth milestone on the Via Cornelia, which was consecrated by the martyrdom of these two saints,



was soon afterwards named *silva candida* in memory of the *candidulum antrum* in which their bodies lay, and in the early Middle Ages it was an episcopal See.

The names of Peter and Marcellinus were almost immediately added to the second part of the "great intercession" at Rome, after the name of Alexander, the martyr of the Via Nomentana. Not far from the Lateran, on the Via Merulana, there arose in the fourth century an urban title dedicated to them. In 1750, in the course of some excavations, marble fragments were found of a dedicatory epigraph:

NATAL . . . SIRICI ✠ PAPA • (ecc)LESIAE  
RIQVE OR

and on another piece of marble:

(Sump)TV • PROPRIO • FECIT

If the two inscriptions belong to the locality where they were found, as everything would lead us to believe, we must admit that a personal memorial of some kind of the two martyrs was venerated in that place in olden times, which, in accordance with the Roman usage, was altered by Pope Siricius into a *titulus*.

In the notes on the homilies of St Gregory upon the Gospels it is stated that he delivered his discourse on the Third Sunday of Advent in *basilica sanctorum Marcellini et Petri*—that is to say, in the church on the Via Merulana.

To the names of the two martyrs of the Via Labicana is added to-day also that of St Erasmus, Bishop and Martyr, but originally there were two separate Masses.

The Antiphon *ad Introitum* is the same as for the Forty Martyrs of Sebaste on March 10, whilst the Collect is similar to the one we have already had on February 15 for SS Faustinus and Jovita.

The first Lesson is derived from the Epistle of St Paul to the Romans (viii, 18-23), and is also read on the Fourth Sunday after Pentecost. The apostle speaks of the expectation in which the whole creation waits, constrained to the service of sinners, but longing eagerly for the day of its deliverance and freedom. We also, in our present affliction, endure, as it were, the pangs of birth, but these will be quickly forgotten in the day of the *parousia*, when suffering and grace will bring forth glory.

The Gradual is like that of February 15, and repeats the same words as the Introit.

The alleluiatic verse, however, is taken from the Gospel



(John xii, 16): "Alleluia, alleluia. You have not chosen me: but I have chosen you, and have appointed you, that you should go and bring forth fruit, and your fruit should remain. Alleluia." The saints always bring forth excellent and abundant fruit, because, like suckers, they draw the vital sap from Christ, who is the sacred vine. Their fruit, moreover, is lasting, because whilst on earth the fame of their virtue is a continual proclaiming of the Gospel; in heaven their merits are immortalized by glory.

In the Gregorian Antiphonary the following from Psalm cxliv is the alleluiatic verse: *Sancti tui, Domine, benedicent te, gloriam regni tui dicent.*

According to the Würzburg Codex to-day's Gospel is drawn from St Luke (xxi, 9-19). We have already seen it on January 22, the feast of the martyrs Vincent and Anastasius, but we must reflect to-day upon what Jesus teaches us, as to how we should possess our soul—that is, in what manner we should hold it, so as not to lose it. *In patientia.* In suffering, therefore, and by grafting it, as St Paul says, upon the tree of Christ Crucified.

The Offertory comes from Psalm xxxi, and is common to the Mass of SS Fabian and Sebastian on January 20.

The Secret is the same as that of April 14 for the festival of the martyrs SS Tiburtius, Valerian, and Maximus; but in the Sacramentary this prayer is given: *Votiva, Domine, munera deferentes, in tuorum Marcellini et Petri martyrum passione, tuam magnificentiam veneramus, et per eam nobis imploramus tue pietatis auxilium.*

Originally the Preface was proper to the feast: . . . *aeterne Deus; apud quem semper est praeclara vita Sanctorum, quorum nos pretiosa mors laetificat et tuetur. Quapropter Martyrum tuorum Marcellini et Petri gloriosa recensentes natalitia, laudes tibi referimus, et magnificentiam tuam supplices exoramus, ut quorum sumus martyria venerantes, beatitudinis mereamur esse consortes.*

The Communion is from the Book of Wisdom (iii, 1-3): "The souls of the just are in the hands of God; and the torment of death shall not touch them. In the sight of the unwise they seemed to die, but they are in peace."

God has permitted that evil men should rend the limbs of his servants as he allowed them to revile the sacred human nature of his Son. He is the eternal Lamb immolated, as, says St John, from the beginning of the world, who, not being able himself to suffer except during the short years of his earthly life, continues to suffer and to sacrifice himself in the person of his saints.

These persecutions which the just endure are, however, merely external and visible. As the storm only ruffles the



waves of the sea, but is not able to disturb the water of the ocean's depth, so exterior trials cannot move the ineffable serenity and peace of the saints, whose spirit remains unshaken in the centre of the heart of God.

The Post-Communion is also that for the feast of SS Tiburtius, Valerian, and Maximus.

In the ancient Sacramentaries the Collect *ad complendum* is as follows: *Intercedentibus Sanctis tuis, Domine, Marcellino et Petro, plebi tue presta subsidium; ut ab omnibus noxiis expedita, cuncta sibi profutura perficiat.* This is the great grace which we should obtain from the martyrs; this is the standard by which we should act—namely, to accomplish that alone which will truly profit us in eternity. *Cuncta sibi profutura perficiat.* *Cuncta*, that is to say, not one good in particular but all the good which is possible; in other words, to attain to that measure of grace and holiness which the Lord has destined to each one of us, *secundum mensuram donationis Christi.*

During Paschal time the Lessons and Collects are the same. The Antiphons are as on April 14.

The alleluiatic verses after the Lesson are these: Alleluia, alleluia. (John xv, 16) *℣.* "You have not chosen me . . . (as before). Alleluia. *℣.* (Psalm cxv) Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints."

## JUNE 2

### ST ERASMUS, BISHOP AND MARTYR

*Station at the Monastery of St Erasmus in the Xenodochium Valerii.*

The Martyrology of St Jerome records for to-day: *in Campania Herasmi.* This bishop was martyred in fact at Formia at the beginning of the fourth century, but his feast was kept throughout Latium and Campania at the very beginning of the Middle Ages. It very soon found a place in the Roman Liturgy, chiefly owing to the fame acquired by the monastery dedicated to him on the Cœlian Hill, where at one time stood the house of Melania and Pinianus, which afterwards became the Xenodochium of the Christian Valeri. /

That monastery, even if we do not ascribe its foundation to St Benedict or to St Placid, as does Constantine Gaetani without sufficient proof, certainly dates from the sixth century, since Pope Adeodatus I, who died in 619, was brought up there from childhood. Having become Pope, he enriched the monastery with great possessions which were afterwards



ceded to the Abbey of Subiaco, to which St Erasmus was eventually attached.

The excavations which have been made at different times in that historical spot, now occupied by two hospitals, have always brought to light very interesting archæological treasures. Thus Ficoroni discovered a leaden seal of the monastery, on the face of which was stamped :

✠ SCS ERASMVS

and on the reverse :

IOH · ET · DECIBIVS · V · P · A

Then in the sixteenth century various bronze "diplomas" granted to Q. Aradius Valerius Proculus were found in that place, together with the celebrated bronze lamp in the form of a ship on which was engraved :

DOMINVS · LEGEM · DAT · VALERIO · SEVERO

This represented a charming baptismal gift.

In the *Liber Pontificalis* the Roman monastery of St Erasmus is often mentioned, sometimes in normal conditions ; at other times in circumstances not so favourable. Here was kept a prisoner for a while by rebels Pope Leo III, who afterwards gave to the altar of the martyr a valuable liturgical vestment and a silver lamp, possibly in memory of his unexpected deliverance. Gregory IV also gave a set of church hangings to St Erasmus.

At the present time the monastery of St Erasmus on the Coelian Hill no longer exists, but an altar in the Vatican Basilica dedicated to him keeps his memory alive in the city. Outside Rome, two monasteries dedicated to St Erasmus are mentioned by St Gregory the Great, one at Naples and the other on the slopes of Monte Repperi.<sup>1</sup>

## JUNE 4

### ST QUIRICUS, BISHOP OF SISCIA, MARTYR

*Station on the Via Appia at the Cemetery "ad Catacumbas."*

Prudentius, in the *Peristephanon*, wrote a famous poem (Hymn VI)<sup>2</sup> in honour of this celebrated Bishop of Pannonia, whose festival is announced to-day in the Martyrology of St

<sup>1</sup> *Registr.*, I, 23, ix, 172. *Ewald-Hartmann*, I, p. 27, Vol. II, p. 169.

<sup>2</sup> *P.L.* LX, col. 424.



Jerome, and of whom honourable mention is made by the same Father of the Church in his work *De Scriptoribus Ecclesiasticis*. St Quiricus was put to death by being thrown into the River Danube. When Siscia was afterwards invaded by the Barbarians, his body was brought to Rome in the fifth century, and buried as a mark of honour in the crypt at the side of the apse of the Basilica *Apostolorum* at the second milestone on the Via Appia, not far from the spot which Roman tradition pointed out as having been the place where the bodies of the two Princes of the Apostles were at one time hidden. *Aedificantes nomini eius dignam ecclesiam*, as the *Acta* express it. That sacred spot seemed indeed the most fitting to offer temporary hospitality to the body of the exiled martyr of Pannonia.

Around the crypt—which is very often identified as the Platonica—runs an inscription, in verse, in praise of St Quirinus, which De Rossi partly reconstructed :

. . . mentemque DEVOTAM  
QVAE . TIBI . MARTYR . EGO . REPENDO . MVNERA . LAVDIS  
HOC . OPVS . EST . NOSTRVM . HAEC . OMNIS . CVRA . LABORIS  
VT . DIGNAM . MERITIS . (dent haec limina sedem)  
HAEC . POPVLIS . (cunctis clarescet) . GLORIA . FACTI  
HAEC . QVIRINE . TVAS . (laudes ipsa aula) . PROBABIT

. . . a devout mind.

May I offer to thee, O martyr, my praises.

May this be the work reserved to us, this the object of our labour,

That this apostolic sanctuary may offer thee a resting-place worthy of thy merits.

This circumstance shall be related among all nations.

And the temple itself, O Quirinus, shall prove thy worth.

St Quirinus must have inspired great devotion at Rome in early days, and we find a proof of this, not only in the feast which is still celebrated to his memory on June 12, as we shall presently see, but also in the fact that his picture was painted, together with that of Policamus and Sebastian, in the *lucernarium* of the crypt of St Cecilia in the cemetery of Callixtus.

Also in the list of the Oils sent from Rome to Queen Theodolinda mention is made of that taken from the tomb of St Quirinus, whose body, it is said, was afterwards transferred to the Basilica of St Mary in Trastevere.

When in 550 Bishop Maximian consecrated the Basilica of St Stephen at Ravenna, he placed there, amongst many others, a small portion of the relics of the martyr Quirinus of Siscia.



## JUNE 4

## ST FRANCIS CARACCILO, CONFESSOR\*

The seraphic founder of the Clerks Regular Minor, whose memory is celebrated to-day in the Roman Missal, belongs to that band of privileged souls whom God gathers to himself in the flower of their manhood, so that they shall not be withered nor spoiled by the breath of this world. St Francis, who was of the noble house of Caracciolo of Naples, did not live to be forty-five, but those forty-four years of life were so profitable in the sight of God that their fruit will ever remain imperishable in the Church.

The saint edified by his holy life and ardent devotion not only Naples and Rome, where he won the admiration of the court of Paul V by constantly refusing all the dignities that were offered to him, but also distant Spain. He died on June 4, 1608, and was canonized by Pius VII, who introduced his feast into the Roman Missal. The Mass shows signs of the modern taste in Liturgy; it is wanting in variety, but is composed in a certain devotional spirit in keeping with the character of St Francis Caracciolo.

The Introit is derived from Psalms xxi and lxviii; it was on the lips of our Lord in his last agony, and therefore reveals to us the tenderness of his most loving heart. "My heart is become like wax melting in the midst of my bowels: for the zeal of thy house hath eaten me up." Then follows Psalm lxxii: "How good is God to Israel: to them that are of a right heart!" Perhaps the compiler was not aware that the antiphonic psalmody *ad Introitum* must be taken by a regular rule from the psalm with which it was originally combined.

The Collect especially gives evidence of its recent compilation; for, having set aside the ancient incisive *concinnitas* of the Sacramentary, it has become a kind of meditation on the actions and qualities of the saint: "O God, who didst call blessed Francis to be the founder of a new Order, and didst adorn him with zeal in prayer and the love of penance; grant that we thy servants may so walk in the footsteps of his holy life, that, praying always, and bringing our bodies into subjection, we may be found worthy to attain to the glory of heaven."

This evangelical precept of uninterrupted prayer was interpreted in this manner by the medieval canonists: *Semper orat, qui statutis horis psallit*. For, at that time, the whole people came to church to chant the canonical hours in common, both by day and by night.



The Lesson comes from the Book of Wisdom (iv, 7-14). Age must not be counted by years, but by the understanding of the mind, which, by constantly avoiding sin, passes unstained through the mire of the world. This is so great a miracle of grace that he who co-operates with it obediently shows the wisdom of old age, and, though young in years, is already as full of merit as another in decrepitude. Because of this the Lord is sometimes pleased to transplant these flowers to Paradise, so that they may not be soiled nor poisoned by the malice of the serpent. "He whom the gods love dies young." "Ον οί θεοί φιλοῦσιν ἀποθνήσκει νέος."<sup>1</sup>

The Gradual is drawn from Psalm xli, as that on Holy Saturday, when the neophytes descend to the font; but the modern composer has proceeded with greater freedom: "As the hart panteth after the fountains of water, so my soul panteth after thee, O God. *℣*. My soul hath thirsted after the strong living God."

This thirst with which the Psalmist here burns, is caused by the flame of love which the Holy Ghost kindles in the heart of the saints, whereby, having once tasted the sweetness of the Lord, it becomes a passion, a fire which consumes them. They are then filled with disgust for the false joys of this world, they desire nothing and know nothing, apart from God.

The alleluiatic verse is from Psalm lxxii, and seems to carry on the thought suggested in the Gradual: "Alleluia, alleluia. *℣*. My flesh and my heart hath fainted away. Thou art the God of my heart, and the God that is my portion for ever. Alleluia." This is the reason of the early death of the young saint whose festival we are celebrating to-day. His body was not strong enough to sustain the ardour of his soul, which was consumed with this thirst for God. He consequently succumbed, and his soul was set free to seek him through whom it lived.

If the feast falls during the Paschal cycle, instead of the Gradual and the alleluiatic verse the four customary alleluias are said with the following verses: "Alleluia, alleluia. *℣*. (Psalm lxiv) Blessed is he whom thou hast chosen and taken to thee; he shall dwell in thy courts. Alleluia. *℣*. (Psalm cxi) He hath distributed, he hath given to the poor, his justice remaineth for ever and ever. Alleluia." The call from God to dwell in his courts may be taken to represent the religious vocation, which is the easiest, the safest, the most meritorious way, and the one most pleasing to God and men by which to ascend *de cella ad caelum*.

The Gospel is the same as on January 23 for St Raymund

<sup>1</sup> Menander, *apud Stob. Flor.* cxx. 8.—TR.



of Pennafort. We must always be in readiness for the coming of our Lord, who, according to the picture in the Gospel, may come in the night like a thief. St Francis Caracciolo, in fact, died on a journey at Agnone, where he had been given hospitality in the house of the Philipppines.

The Antiphon *Iustus*, from Psalm xc, for the Offertory is like that for St Francis de Sales on January 29.

The Secret alludes to the tender devotion of this saint towards the Blessed Sacrament, before which it was his custom to spend many hours of the night in prayer. "Grant us, O merciful Jesus, that we who commemorate the illustrious merits of blessed Francis, may burn with the same fire of charity with which he was inflamed, and may be able to assist worthily about this thy holy table."

The Communion is taken from Psalm xxx: "Oh, how great is the multitude of thy sweetness, O Lord, which thou hast hidden for them that fear thee!" Thus the saints, attracted by this sweetness, pass from fear to love. It is said by the Psalmist to be hidden because the joys of the spirit are of such a kind that only he who tastes them can understand and desire them.

The following is the Post-Communion, in which the modern compiler has sought in vain to veil the poverty of his ideas by the grandeur of his phrases: "We beseech thee, O Lord, that the delightful remembrance and fruit of the most holy Sacrifice, which we have this day offered to thy majesty on the solemnity of blessed Francis, may ever remain in our minds."

The Holy Ghost desires not only that we should work, but he tells us: *instanter operare quodcumque potest manus tua*. The reason of this is that life is very short, and that the sheaf which we gather for eternity must be an abundant one, so there is no time to be wasted. Moved by this salutary thought some saints, like St Alphonsus, made a vow never to waste a single minute.

## JUNE 5

ST FELICOLA, VIRGIN AND MARTYR

*Synaxis on the Via Ardeatina.*

On this day the Martyrology of St Jerome records, at the sixth milestone on the way to Ardea, a group of martyrs, Felicitas, Gregory, and others; amongst whom the Virgin Felicola, who is also mentioned in the *Acta* of St Nicomedes. This fearless priest, when the body of St Felicola was thrown into a sewer, recovered from it the holy remains and buried



them in a vineyard belonging to him on the Via Ardeatina, where, in the sixth century, many miracles were wrought at the sepulchre of the holy Virgin.

The cemetery of Felicola on the Via Ardeatina has still remained undiscovered, unless we have to identify it with that existing under the rural church now dedicated to the Annunciation, which was held in great veneration throughout the whole of the Middle Ages.

The body of the martyr remained in its original place of burial until the time of Paschal I, who transferred it, at least, in part, to St Praxedes. But in 1112 under Paschal II a certain Benedict, titular priest of St Lawrence in Lucina, also began a quest for relics, and he, too, transported the bones of St Felicola from the Via Ardeatina to his own basilica. The record of this occurrence may still be seen on a stone at that church: . . . *In eodem quoque anno, idem presbyter invenit corpora sanctorum via ardeatina Gordiani videlicet Martyris (=Gregorii?) et Feliculae Virginis et Martyris, et in eodem altari iussu praefati Pontificis superposuit.*

An Oratory dedicated to St Felicola is mentioned as being at Ravenna from the end of the sixth century.

As we are speaking here of a martyr whose sepulchre was at some distance from the city, the Sacramentaries naturally omit any liturgical indication of her feast, but the fame of the *cultus* of St Felicola is well supported in many documents, so we could not do otherwise than mention it in these pages.

## JUNE 5

### *Synaxis on the Via Ardeatina.*

Although in some ways the figure of the great Apostle of Germany in the eighth century recalls that of St Augustine of Canterbury, yet in others we find a great difference between them, because the apostolic work done by Boniface was more complete, more extensive, more powerful, and more lasting in its effects. This courageous son of St Benedict, the confines of whose diocese stretched from Holland, on one side, to Tirol on the other, thus embracing nearly the whole of Central Europe, appears as one of those commanding characters whose activities are unnumbered, yet each of them perfect. For, whether we consider Boniface as a monk, as a bishop, as a teacher and evangelizer of nations, as a diplomat, or as a martyr, he is always truly great, and at all times consistent.

There is, however, one thing to be especially noted in the activities of the saint which must not be forgotten. Boniface



had received from Gregory II (715-31), together with his episcopal position, the Office of Legate of the Holy See to the German people; and in all the varied achievements which he accomplished later, amongst the Franks and the Teutons, it was always in the name of the Pope that he intervened and acted.

It may be said of him that no one at that time understood better than he the "Latinity" of his mission, no one exemplified it with so much faith and zeal. Boniface looked upon himself as the herald of Peter and the Roman Pontiff, and it was in this character that he sustained for years upon his mighty shoulders, like a second Paul, the care of all the churches of Germany.

One glory alone was wanting to him—the halo of martyrdom—and this, too, he coveted. Already bowed with years, he embarked for Frisia, the scene in his youth of his first battles in the time of St Willibrord. Now, however, the apostle, as though foreseeing his death, carried with him the winding-sheet in which he desired to be wrapt, and ordered that his body should be buried in his beloved monastery of Fulda. Here we see the monk, constrained to live away from his cloister in the body, but whose heart is closely attached to its solitude. A horde of pagans, on June 5, 755, assailed Boniface and his companions, among whom were some bishops and not a few monks, and massacred them out of hatred to the Faith.

Pius IX extended the Office of St Boniface to the whole Church.

The Mass was originally composed for use in the Teutonic countries, since in them the saint is venerated as the apostle and patron of the race. This nationalism would seem to be somewhat out of place in the Missal, now that the Office has been appointed to the universal Church.

The Introit is taken from Isaias (lxv, 19-23): "I will rejoice in Jerusalem and joy in my people; and the voice of weeping shall no more be heard in her, nor the voice of crying. My elect shall not labour in vain, nor bring forth in trouble; for they are the seed of the blessed of the Lord, and their posterity with them."

Psalm xliii follows: "We have heard, O God, with our ears; our fathers have declared to us the work thou hast wrought in their days."

The Christian nations will be able, like the trees, to renew their faded leaves; they will never altogether perish because their own special apostles watered the Gospel seed with so much anguish and so much blood that God will be mindful of the merits of their fathers, and will never deprive their



children of all his blessing, even though they may be quite unworthy of it. The Catholic districts of Germany bear ever in remembrance the great wonders which God wrought for their country in the days of Boniface, of Sturm,<sup>1</sup> of Lull, and of Willibald, and feel that the magnificence of the past is a guarantee of that future grace which, according to sacred Scripture, is to heal the nations.

In the Collect we pray thus : " O God, who, by the zeal of blessed Boniface, thy martyr and bishop, didst vouchsafe to call many peoples to the knowledge of thy name ; grant, we beseech thee, that we may enjoy the protection of him whose festival we are keeping."

At times our slothfulness causes us to think that the mission which has been entrusted to us is too hard, or to imagine that we have already done great things for God. In order to drive away these thoughts it is well to turn our minds to what the saints have done and suffered, and we shall then feel very small indeed beside those great heroes of energy and virtue.

The Lesson in which the merits of the forefathers are praised by their lagging descendants is the same as that for the Seven Holy Founders of the Servite Order, on February 12. The Holy Ghost himself has fashioned and perfected those mighty figures, such as the apostles of the different nations, the founders of the great religious Orders, etc. They are complete and universal in themselves, for to them are lacking none of the gifts of the Holy Ghost ; workers of miracles, and at the same time prophets, apostles, doctors, and teachers of the nations, they participate to some extent in the universality of God.

The choice of the verses for the Gradual is most irregular. Instead of taking them from one of the Psalms, the compiler of the Mass has gone to the Epistle of the festival of St Martin I, and thence extracted some verses for the feast of St Boniface. The actual words are excellent, but are out of their proper place ; it is the liturgical rules which have here been infringed.

Gradual (1 Peter iv, 13, 14) : " Rejoice, being partakers of the sufferings of Christ, that when his glory shall be revealed you may also be glad with exceeding joy. *℣*. If you be reproached for the name of Christ, you shall be happy ; for that which is of the honour, glory, and power of God, and that which is his spirit, resteth upon you." This is why the martyrs conquered the world and rose above themselves and the frailty of human nature. It was not so much they who endured with such

<sup>1</sup> Apostle of Saxony and founder of the Abbey of Fulda ; died 779.—T.R.



fortitude under their torments as the Blessed Trinity who dwelt in them by grace.

The alleluiatic verse comes from Isaias (lxvi, 12), and is intended to convey the thought of the sweetness and peace which characterizes all the apostolic energy of St Boniface: Alleluia, alleluia. *Ÿ*. "I will bring upon her, as it were, a river of peace, and glory as an overflowing torrent. Alleluia." The sacred text is here speaking of Jerusalem.

At Easter-tide the Gradual is omitted, and the following verses are substituted for the preceding (Isaias lxvi, 10-14): "Alleluia, alleluia. Rejoice with Jerusalem, and be glad with her, all ye who love the Lord. Alleluia." The original text has here: *eam*—that is, all ye who love the holy city.

*Ÿ*. "You shall see, and your heart shall rejoice; and the hand of the Lord shall be known to his servants. Alleluia."

The Gospel is drawn from the Mass for All Saints Day (Matt. v, 1-12). The world in its gospel teaches that to be happy is to be rich, powerful, successful, and applauded by one's fellow-men. Besides our daily experience, which shows us how even in the midst of these so-called good things, our heart is restless and dissatisfied, Jesus, in order to dispel the ill-fated charm of these false promises, proclaims to-day from a mountain-top his own true beatitudes. Blessed are the poor in spirit; blessed are they that suffer persecution for justice' sake; blessed are they that mourn, for their reward in heaven shall be very great.

We must, however, carefully consider where we shall find this blessedness which is promised to us. Not, indeed, in this world, where, on the contrary, the Gospel warns us clearly not to expect anything but labour and sorrow; but in heaven where Christ, too, attained to his glory after the ignominy of his passion. *Nonne oportuit pati Christum, et ita intrare in gloriam suam?*

The Offertory is from Psalm xv, as on the Monday after the second Sunday in Lent: "I will bless the Lord, who hath given me understanding; I set the Lord always in my sight; for he is at my right hand, that I be not moved." This is the secret of the saints: to walk always in the sight of God and never to separate themselves from him.

The prayer preceding the Anaphora is derived from the Mass for the feast of St Agnes, on January 28. In it we implore that a plentiful blessing may come down upon the oblations and upon those that offer them, so that the feast of the martyr may implant in the hearts of the faithful the seeds of a continuous and complete sacrifice of one's self to God. This is the true holiness; this is Christian martyrdom, to which, in one way or another, we all are called.

The Antiphon for the Communion is taken from the



Apocalypse (iii, 21): "To him that shall overcome I will grant to sit with me in my throne; so as I also have overcome and have sat with my Father in his throne." As the Son is seated on the throne of the Father because he is consubstantial with him, so the martyrs share the glory of Christ, because they have participated more fully than others in his passion.

The Post-Communion is similar to that for St Paul, on January 18.

The expression *patrocinio gubernari*, whilst appropriate on the lips of the Romans, who acknowledge themselves to be governed and protected by the two princes of the apostles, loses its significance when applied to St Boniface, except when it is made use of in Germany.

We must include here the beautiful hymn of St Boniface, which we owe to the pen of Blessed Rhabanus Maurus:

Praesulis exsultans celebret Germania laudes,  
 Et Bonifatii opus Martyris almificum.  
 Ordinatus hunc Roma, mittit Britannia mater,  
 Doctorem populis et decus Ecclesiae,  
 Pontificem summum, signorum fulmine clarum,  
 Eloquio nitidum, moribus egregium.  
 Quem Francus Frisoque simul Saxoque ministrum  
 Aeternae vitae praedicat esse sibi.  
 Quod terra moritur frumentum, plurima confert  
 Semina, fructumque multiplicare studet.  
 Sicque Sacerdotis Domini laetissima crescit  
 Paucis ex granis multiplicanda seges.  
 Gloria summa Patri, compar sit gloria Nato;  
 Laus et in aeternum, Spiritus alme, tibi. Amen.

Let Germany joyfully sing the praises of her Pastor,  
 And glorify the wonderful works of Boniface the Martyr.  
 Rome ordains him, Britain gives him birth and sends him hither  
 To be the teacher of the peoples and an ornament of the Church.  
 A great Bishop was he, illustrious by reason of his miraculous  
 powers.  
 His speech was golden and his actions just.  
 The Franks, the Frisians, and the Saxons all honour him,  
 The great bringer to them of life eternal.  
 As the grain ripening in the earth produces many ears of corn,  
 And yields an abundant harvest,  
 So from a few seeds the harvest of this priest of the Lord  
 Increases and multiplies with joy.  
 May all glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and all praise  
 to thee,  
 O Holy Ghost, in all eternity. Amen.



## JUNE 6

## ST NORBERT, BISHOP AND CONFESSOR\*

The feast of this holy Archbishop of Magdeburg, founder of the Premonstratensian Canons, was at first included in the Calendar as a semi-double, but was raised by Clement X to a double. The Apostolic See is especially indebted to him, because during the schism caused by the Antipope Anacletus II, he exerted himself, together with St Bernard and the saintly Abbot Adinolphus of Farfa, in bringing back the nations to the obedience of Innocent II. In fact, when, at the beginning of May, 1133, the army of King Lothair restored the exiled Pope to Rome, we find at his side as the life and soul of the undertaking the Abbots of Citeaux and Farfa, also the holy Archbishop of Magdeburg, who at that time was also acting as the royal Chancellor. This was, however, the last effort of the saint, for he died on June 6, 1134, worn out by his severe penances and labours.

Formerly a little church on the Viminal, built by the Premonstratensians, commemorated the saint's coming to Rome; but having in later days been confiscated, it is no longer in existence.

The Mass is of the Common of a Confessor and Bishop, as on February 4, but the Collect is proper. "O God, who didst make blessed Norbert, thy confessor and bishop, an illustrious preacher of the Word, and through him didst beget a new family to thy church; grant, we beseech thee, that his merits may so plead for us, that by thy help we may be able to practise what he taught both by word and example. Through our Lord."

The chief characteristic of the mission of St Norbert was his eloquent preaching of the Word of God. This is an entirely apostolic mission which is not always appreciated as much as it should be. The preaching of the Gospel is indeed such a necessary thing that it must even precede the administration of the holy Sacraments; for no man can believe the Word of God and be saved except there be an apostle to preach it to him.

But souls are not born again except through the Holy Ghost; therefore the preacher must speak, not by his own spirit, but by the Spirit of God. The blessed apostles acted thus when, leaving to the deacons the ministry of external things, they dedicated themselves to prayer and the continual preaching of the Gospel. *Nos autem orationi et praedicationi verbi instantes erimus.* They therefore made the work of



preaching one of the most essential duties of a bishop, and St Luke adds, showing in what dispositions they approached their great office: *Repleti sunt omnes Spiritu Sancto, et coeperunt loqui.*

## JUNE 9

SS PRIMUS AND FELICIANUS, MARTYRS

*Station at St Stephen on the Cœlian Hill.*

These two martyrs belong to the Church of Nomentum, but when, in the seventh century, it was reduced to ruins by the Lombards, Pope Theodore I caused their bodies to be brought to the circular church of St Stephen on the Cœlian, where he placed them under an altar adorned with mosaics. The upper portion of the apse still remains, in which are to be seen on each side of the cross Primus and Felicianus with the nimbus and with a scroll of the sacred Law in their hands.

The Pope committed the record of these works to two inscriptions, of which we give the text:

ASPICIS · AVRATVM · CAELESTI · CVLMINE · TECTVM  
ASTRIFERVMOVE · MICANS · PRAECLARE · LVMINE · FVLTVM

Here dost thou behold the golden roof which rises heaven-wards

And upon which are reflected the rays of the sun.

EXQVIRENS · PIETAS · TECTVM · DECORARE · SACRATVM  
PASTORIS · SVMMI · THEODORI · CORDEM · EREXIT  
QVI · STUDIO · MAGNO · SANCTORVM · CORPORA · CVLTV  
HOC · DEDICAVIT · NON · PATRIS · NEGLECTA · RELIQVIT

The divine goodness desirous of adorning the roof of this holy place,

Inspired the heart of the supreme Pontiff Theodore,  
Who with great care dedicated this tomb to receive the bodies of the saints,

Nor thus did he leave neglected the bones of his father.

In this way Primus and Felicianus were the first martyrs to be brought into the Holy City from the extra-mural cemeteries.

The Würzburg List of Gospels assigns to their Mass the passage from St John: *Hoc est praeceptum meum*, but this is no longer to be found in the present Missal.

The Introit (Ecclesiasticus xlv, 15, 14) is the same as that which was composed at Rome when Felix IV dedicated the



*Templum sacrae Urbis* to Cosmas and Damian, the Anargyri of Cyrrhus in Syria. The Antiphon, therefore, aims at exalting the wisdom of the two martyred doctors. "Let the people show forth the wisdom of the saints, and the Church declare their praise; and their names shall live unto generation and generation."

Then comes Psalm xxxii: "Rejoice in the Lord, ye just: praise becometh the upright."

At Easter-tide all the chants of the Mass are like those for the feast of SS Tiburtius, Valerian, and Maximus on April 14, except the alleluiatic verses after the Lesson, which are drawn from the Mass of SS Nereus and Achilleus on May 12.

The Collect is as follows: "Grant, we beseech thee, O Lord, that we may ever honour the festival of thy holy martyrs Primus and Felicianus, and by their prayers may obtain the gift of thy protection." What is this gift which the Church here desires to obtain? The gift is a pledge and a result of love, it is the love which is given to another; therefore the Holy Ghost, who is love, is the first gift, *altissimi donum Dei*.

The Lesson comes from the Book of Wisdom (v, 16-20). The life of the just man does not end at his death, nor is the conflict between good and evil brought to a conclusion in this world. The martyrs receive in heaven the glory which they have merited, but God avenges them even here on earth, and makes use of creatures and of inanimate elements in order to punish guilty nations with wars, pestilences, earthquakes, and calamities of all kinds. This is the lesson of the past which may be seen in the case of schismatical Russia, of Lutheran Germany, of Jacobin France; it is the story of bygone centuries when, on the eve of the downfall of the Roman Empire, Lactantius was writing his *De mortibus persecutorum*. It will also be the story of the future.

The Gradual is taken from Psalm lxxxviii: "The heavens shall confess thy wonders, O Lord, and thy truth in the church of the saints. V. Thy mercy, O Lord, I will sing for ever, to generation and generation."

Who is this who, whilst the generations come and pass away, rejoices in the freshness of eternal youth, and now will raise her voice in song? It is the Church which, as Hermas says in his *Pastor*, was created before any other thing, and will never perish. She praises, not love alone, but pity, which is the special attitude of love towards the sorrowful and the needy.

The alleluiatic verse is identical with that for May 12. "Alleluia, alleluia. V. This is the true brotherhood, which overcame the guilt of the world: they followed Christ, and attained the glorious kingdom of heaven. Alleluia."



The Gospel Lesson, although originally different (John xv, 12-16), is now similar to that for the feast of St Matthias on February 24-25. God abandons the rich—that is, the proud—who do not want him, and instead he gives himself to the poor and needy—that is, to the humble. Thus we see to-day two obscure sons of the country district of Nomentum attain to the supreme glory of the martyrs; and whilst the bodies of the proud Cæsars were burnt and buried beyond the *Pomoerium*, in order that their *Manes* should not trouble the *Sacra Urbs*, the holy relics of Primus and Felicianus ascend triumphantly the Coelian Hill in a gilded coach, and are placed in the most honourable part of the Imperial Palace.

The Antiphon for the Offertory is as on January 22.

This beautiful prayer is the Secret: "May this victim, which is to be consecrated in memory of a glorious martyrdom, appease thee, O Lord, we beseech thee; may it cleanse us from our sins and render acceptable to thee the prayer of thy servants."

In the ancient liturgical language the blood of the martyrs is frequently called "precious," and this expression seems to have displeased the person who corrected the vesper hymn of SS Peter and Paul, for he changed the line:

*Es purpurata pretioso sanguine*

in the apostrophe to Rome, into

*Es consecrata glorioso sanguine.*

The Blood of Jesus Christ alone is the price of universal redemption, but, nevertheless, the blood of the martyrs may also be called "precious" in the sense in which the Holy Scriptures declare that the death of his saints is precious in the sight of the Lord. All the virtuous acts which we accomplish in a state of grace, through the merits of Christ, are deserving of eternal life, and therefore precious, because they are, as it were, its price. Now, martyrdom for the Faith which derives its cause and its merit from Christ is especially called precious because by virtue of the divine promise it opens to the martyr the gates of heaven.

The Communion (John xv, 16) recalls the original Gospel Lesson assigned to this feast: "I have chosen you out of the world, that you should go, and should bring forth fruit, and your fruit should remain." St Augustine explains that our fruit is charity, which draws its essence and its vigour from our remaining closely united to Jesus.

The following is the Post-Communion: "We beseech thee, almighty God, that the festival of thy holy martyrs Primus



and Felicianus, which we celebrate by these heavenly mysteries, may win for us thy merciful forgiveness."

How prudent it is of the Church to exercise us in humility and self-distrust even when we have received absolution of our sins, and participated in the holy Sacraments, as long as we still bear the scars of old wounds and all danger of their reopening is not at an end. In this she is carrying out the counsel of the Wise Man (Ecclesiasticus v, 5): *De propitiato peccato noli esse sine metu*. Humility and diffidence—these are the best guarantees that we shall not fall again into sin.

## JUNE 10

## ST MARGARET, QUEEN OF SCOTS, WIDOW\*

The life of this holy queen confirms the words of St Paul, when he wrote that a woman who is full of faith is able to sanctify her husband and her whole household. Indeed, Margaret did more, for she was the guardian angel of all her people, on account of which Clement X proclaimed her to be the patron of Scotland. She died in 1093.

The Mass is the same as for St Frances of Rome on March 9; the Collect only being proper. "O God, who hast made blessed Margaret Queen of Scotland the wonder of all times by reason of her great charity to the poor; grant that through her intercession and example thy love may be continually renewed in our hearts."

Our Lord has said that it is better to give than to receive. God has touched the powerful and the rich with a ray of his own grandeur, so that by sharing with the needy the riches which they possess, they may become, as it were, the instruments and ministers of divine Providence. Wealth has, therefore, a sacred and divine mission, and because of this God has declared many times in Holy Writ that he himself has created the rich, no less than the poor.

## JUNE 11

## ST BARNABAS THE APOSTLE\*

St Paul constantly gives to Barnabas the title of apostle, which has therefore been ascribed to him in the Liturgy. Barnabas was specially marked out and called by the Holy Ghost, who destined him, together with Paul, for the evangelizing of the Gentiles in like manner as he had at first sent Peter to the Jews. The Holy Ghost himself in the Acts



of the Apostles speaks in praise of Barnabas, calling him *vir bonus et plenus Spiritu Sancto et fide*;<sup>1</sup> and Paul, in spite of their momentary difference of opinion with regard to the disciple Mark, always retained a deep sense of respect for Barnabas, his first comrade in arms.

The life of Barnabas after his separation from St Paul is almost entirely unknown to us. He went first with Mark to Cyprus, but to what place did he go after that? When St Paul was a prisoner at Rome for two years, we find St Mark in his company. What had become of his cousin, whose very great authority St Paul had already cited in writing to the Corinthians as being one with his own? *Numquid non habemus potestatem mulierem sororem circumducendi, sicut et ceteri Apostoli, et fratres Domini, et Cephas? Aut ego solus et Barnabas non habemus potestatem hoc operandi?*<sup>2</sup>

What did the Corinthians know of Barnabas, and why should Paul couple his name with his own, when so many years had passed since their mutual separation? Had they, perhaps, come together once more, and could Barnabas boast like Paul of an apostle's rights over the Corinthians? This much might be deduced from St Paul's argument. Ancient writers, moreover, attributed to Barnabas a long epistle, which was held in great veneration by Clement of Alexandria and by Origen, but of which modern critics in general dispute the authorship, though the arguments of these latter are not altogether convincing, so the question still remains undecided.

The body of St Barnabas is said to have been found at Salamina, about the year 488, and in consequence of this the people of Cyprus obtained the recognition of their ancient independence from the Patriarch of Antioch.

In the sixteenth century a new religious community was founded at Milan by St Antonio Maria Zaccaria, which took the name of Barnabites, from the Church of St Barnabas, near which it was instituted. It was greatly esteemed by St Francis de Sales, who used to say affectionately that he too was a Barnabite—that is, a "Son of Consolation."

The feast of St Barnabas was placed at a comparatively late date in the Roman Calendar, whereas it already appears on the marble tablet of San Giovanni Maggiore at Naples, which is of the ninth century. At Rome, on the other hand, the name of the apostle of Cyprus was, from the first, joined to those of Stephen and of Matthias in the second part of the "Great Intercession": *Nobis quoque*.

The Turin List of the churches of Rome in the fourteenth century mentions near the Porta Maggiore a little church, *Sancti Barnabae de porta*, which was served by a single priest, but all trace of it has now disappeared.

<sup>1</sup> Acts xi, 24.

<sup>2</sup> 1 Cor. ix, 5, 6.



The Mass has been altogether refashioned, the chants being taken from other and earlier feasts.

The Introit is like that for November 30.

The Collect runs thus: "O God, who dost gladden us by the merits and intercession of blessed Barnabas thine apostle; grant in thy mercy that we who implore thy blessings through him may obtain them by the gift of thy grace."

All that we obtain from God is always the result of his mercy; not only because we are sinners and no longer deserve anything from him, but because the gift of God is the out-pouring of his love, and this is of such great value that nothing can be compared to it. Therefore says the Wise Man: *Si dederit homo omnem substantiam domus suae pro dilectione, quasi nihil despiciet eam.*<sup>1</sup>

The Lesson is drawn from the Acts of the Apostles (xi, 21-26 and xiii, 1-3), in which are described the first journey of Barnabas to Antioch, and his election to the Apostolate. He must already have been a man of much merit and one held in great esteem, seeing that the apostles destined him for so difficult and important a mission as that of spreading the Gospel in the capital of Syria.

The saint duly proved himself worthy of the choice, and as he was keen-witted he divined at once that Saul was the very man for the work. He went therefore to Tarsus to fetch him, and bringing him back with him to Antioch, they succeeded by their joint labours in filling the community on the banks of the Orontes with such a spirit of activity and expansion that it was at Antioch that the followers of the Nazarene first received the name which was henceforth to distinguish them through the centuries, that of "Christians."

Paul himself occupied at that time a subordinate position, for in the Acts he comes last in the *presbyterium* of Antioch, but the Lord, who takes pleasure in the humble and from the very stones can raise up sons unto Abraham, on a day of solemn Liturgy, when the assembled faithful were intent on fasting and prayer, commands that Saul and Barnabas be set apart for the great mission to the Gentiles, to which he destined them.

In those days of heroic faith there was re-established between the body of the faithful and the Holy Ghost the ancient familiarity with God which Adam had formerly enjoyed in Eden. The Paraclete intervened directly in the affairs of the community by means of the pouring out of his gifts of grace. He spoke and they answered; he ordered and they obeyed; he instructed and they listened.

So when, at Antioch, on the occasion of the solemn fast,

<sup>1</sup> Cant. viii, 7.



his voice was heard saying : *Segregate mihi Saulum et Barnabam*, no one hesitated or delayed the execution of this command ; the whole *presbyterium jeiunantes et orantes, imponentesque eis manus*—here we see the three original elements which from apostolic times accompany the conferring of the hierarchical power—consecrate them apostles.

The Gradual comes from Psalm xviii, as that for the feast of St Mark when out of Easter-tide : “ Their sound went forth into all the earth, and their words to the ends of the world. *Y*. The heavens show forth the glory of God, and the firmament declareth the work of his hands.” Symbolically these stars which gild with their rays the firmament of the Church, and proclaim to all the glory of God, are the preachers of the Holy Gospel.

The Gospel is from St Matthew (x, 16-22). Jesus declares that he sends his apostles like sheep in the midst of wolves, not to fight against them, but to change them from wolves to sheep. It stands to reason that going amongst wolves the sheep must not expect to keep their fleece always intact ; the body indeed is in danger, but it is enough that the soul does not perish.

An excessive prudence would consequently be out of place here ; therefore our Saviour desires that it should be accompanied with the simplicity of the dove. In place of human prudence, which they will be obliged to set aside to a great extent, Jesus inspires in his heralds a prudence wholly divine, suggesting to them, when the time comes, what they must answer to their judges in the tribunal ; for as he suffers in his martyrs so he constantly, by their mouth, renders testimony to the truth, as he on one occasion declared unto Pilate.

The Offertory and the Communion are the same as on the feast of St Matthias, February 24-25.

The Secret follows : “ Sanctify, O Lord, the gifts which we offer up—that is, grant that we may devoutly celebrate the holy Sacrifice—and by the intercession of blessed Barnabas thy apostle cleanse us through them from the stain of our sins.”

This is the Post-Communion : “ We humbly beseech thee, almighty God, that by the intercession of blessed Barnabas, thy apostle, thou wouldst enable those to serve thee worthily whom thou dost refresh by thy sacraments.”

During Easter-tide all the chants of the Mass are taken from the festival of St Mark on April 25.

The first act of Barnabas, that of divesting himself of all his goods and of laying the proceeds at the feet of the apostles, was that which marked him out more especially for the apostolic mission. The herald of the Gospel must be free from every tie and from all earthly attachment, so that,



being independent of all men and unrestrained as the air, he may by his manner of life show plainly to others that he seeks nothing but the salvation of souls. *Da mihi animas, caetera tolle.*

## JUNE 12

## ST BASILIDES, MARTYR

*Station on the Via Aurelia, at the Cemetery of Basilides.*

On the same day : ST CYRINUS, BISHOP AND MARTYR, *on the Via Appia*; SS NABOR AND NAZARIUS, *on the Via Aurelia.*

The Martyrology of St Jerome leads us to-day to the ninth milestone on the Via Aurelia : *Romae Via Aurelia milliario VIII natale Basilledis*, to whom were added later as companions Cyrinus, Nabor, and Nazarius. The earliest liturgical documents, however, celebrate to-day Basilides alone, to whom there was also dedicated a church within the Eternal City, on the Via Merulana. Following the Roman custom this will probably have been the dwelling-house of the martyr converted into a church. Mention is made of it in the *Liber Pontificalis* in the biography of Leo III, who restored its roof. *Verum etiam et sarta tecta basilicae beati Basilidis martyris, sitae in Merulana, noviter restauravit.*<sup>1</sup>

The Codex of Würzburg notices only the Mass of St Basilides, which is also marked in the Roman Lectionary of G. Fronteau, in which the Gospel Lesson is derived from John iii, 1-15, as for the feast of May 3.

On the other hand, the different codices of the Gelasian Sacramentary which give us the Collects of SS Cyrinus, Nabor, and Nazarius always omit the name of Basilides, and we find a trace of this in the Martyrology of St Jerome, in which the last two martyrs, without Basilides, are announced for June 8 : *Romae, Via Aurelia, Naboris, Nazarii.*

The mysterious Cyrinus, however, is missing, for he is not included in the double feast of the Milanese saints. Who, then, can he be? The various copies of the *Acta* have confused and entangled the matter to an extraordinary degree, but those edited by the Bollandists from the Codex of St Maximin of Trèves furnish us with an important topographical particular, which gives us a key to the puzzle. According to this account, instead of being buried on the Via Aurelia, as all the other documents assert, the entire group, consisting of Basilides, Cyrinus, Nabor, and Nazarius, was buried on the *Via Appia, tertio milliario ab Urbe, in basilica Apostolorum, ubi corpora eorumdem Principum*

<sup>1</sup> *Lib. Pont.* II, 29.



*aliquando iacuerunt, videlicet Petri et Pauli, et sanctus Sebastianus Martyr Christi requiescit in eodem loco qui dicitur catacumbas, aedificantes sanctitati eorum ecclesiam.*<sup>1</sup>

Basilides was interred on the Via Aurelia; Nabor and Nazarius were at Milan. Cyrinus, indeed, lay in the *Platonica ad Catacumbas*; yet he was not a soldier after all, but the famous Bishop of Siscia, whose feast we described a few days ago. This, then, is the solution of the enigma.

We have here three festivals which were originally distinct, one in honour of Basilides on the Via Aurelia, another for Cyrinus on the Via Appia, and, finally, a third for the Milanese saints Nabor and Nazarius, the finding of whose relics by St Ambrose was celebrated on this day. This translation was probably commemorated at Rome on the Via Aurelia, since there stood near the Basilica of St Pancras an oratory with a monastery dedicated to St Victor, another of the group of Milanese martyrs. The same thing happened here in the course of time, upon which we have already remarked more than once in these notes; three distinct synaxes, occurring about the same time, have been fused together in the Martyrologies and Sacramentaries, giving rise in this instance to extraordinary confusion on the part of later hagiographical writers.

The Mass described in our present Missal is precisely that of the group of Milanese martyrs. The Introit is the same as on January 20.

This is the Collect: "We beseech thee, O Lord, that the festival of thy holy martyrs Basilides, Cyrinus, Nabor, and Nazarius may shine brightly upon us; and may the everlasting glory which they enjoy be increased by the fruits of our devotion." The meaning is not at all clear; but taking into consideration the variations in the MSS, which instead of *excellencia sempiterna* have *excellenciam sempiternam*, we think that the correct interpretation is as follows: *Quod illis contulit excellenciam sempiternam*—that is, the merit of the martyrdom which gave to the saints eternal glory—*fructibus nostrae devotionis accrescat*—that is to say, may it increase yet more, bestowing graces and rendering our devotion fruitful and profitable.

The two Lessons are as for the martyrs Marius, Martha, Audifax, and Abachum on January 19.

The Gradual is taken from Psalm lxxviii: "Revenge, O Lord, the blood of thy servants, which hath been shed. ¶ They have given the dead bodies of thy servants to be meat for the fowls of the air: the flesh of thy saints for the beasts of the earth."

<sup>1</sup> *Act. SS. Jun., III, 11.*



Jesus tells us in the Gospel: "Fear not those who, when they have slain you, can do you no further harm." "The fury of the persecutors, therefore, is vain," adds the Venerable Bede, "when they throw the bodies of the martyrs to the wild beasts or cast them into the sewers." The saints have ended their suffering, and all the efforts of the wicked cannot prevent the power of God from raising up their bodies to eternal glory. This is the *excellentiam sempiternam* of the Collect.

The alleluiatic verse is from Ecclesiasticus (xliv, 14): "The bodies of the saints are buried in peace, and their name liveth unto generation and generation." As it is written of Eliseus: *mortuum prophetavit corpus eius*,<sup>1</sup> so also the tombs of the saints are not merely sepulchres but trophies of our Faith. The devotion of the peoples seems to vivify those dead bones whence a divine virtue emanates which drives away evil spirits and heals the sick.

The Offertory comes from Psalm cxlix: "The saints shall rejoice in glory, they shall be joyful in their beds: the high praises of God shall be in their mouths." The saints here are the faithful themselves, who must glorify God at all times and in all places, both in public and in the privacy of their own homes, and even in their beds before going to sleep. This unceasing hymn of praise is sung by those who walk in the sight of God with a right intention and who direct every action of the day to his greater glory, uniting them to the most holy actions and intentions of the sacred human nature of Jesus. *Ut in omnibus glorificetur Deus*, according to the maxim of the great Patriarch St Benedict.

The Secret testifies to the truth that *Eucharistia martyres facit*. "In honour of the blood of thy saints Basilides, Cyrinus, Nabor, and Nazarius, we solemnly offer up these victims unto thee, O Lord, celebrating thy wonderful works, by whom so great a victory was won."

The Communion (Psalm lxxviii, 2, 11) is from the same Psalm as the Introit: "They have given the dead bodies of thy servants to be meat for the fowls of the air: the flesh of thy saints for the beasts of the earth. According to the greatness of thy arm, take possession of the children of them that have been put to death." We are the children of those who were slain, the young shoots which have sprung from a soil watered with blood, or rather as Tertullian says, from the very blood itself of the martyrs, which *est semen Christianorum*. Having regard, therefore, to the nobility of our origin, let us pray the Lord to take possession of us so that his reign over us may be complete, undisputed, and peaceful. *Adveniat regnum tuum*.

<sup>1</sup> Ecclesiasticus xlviii, 14.



The Post-Communion is the following: "Grant, we beseech thee, O Lord, that we who ever celebrate the glory of thy holy martyrs Basilides, Cyrinus, Nabor, and Nazarius, may always enjoy their intercession."

\* \* \* \* \*

The SS Victor, Nabor, and Felix are the three martyrs originally venerated at Milan in the time of St Ambrose. To these two other pairs of saints were added later: Gervase and Protase, Nazarius and Celsus. The Martyrology of St Jerome unites the three groups in one, and the Roman Liturgy accepts this fusion. Victor, as we have already said, had his monastery near the Basilica of St Pancras. Celsus and Nazarius are commemorated on July 28, but at the same time the commemoration of St Nazarius coincides with that of the martyrs Nabor and Felix mentioned in the Martyrology of St Jerome, on the tenth, thirteenth, and fourteenth of this month.

The following are the fine lines which St Ambrose caused to be inscribed in the Basilica of the Apostles at Milan, where he laid the body of St Nazarius:

CONDIDIT · AMBROSIVS · TEMPLVM · DOMINOQVE · SACRAVIT  
 NOMINE · APOSTOLICO · MVNERE · RELIQVIIS  
 FORMA · CRVCIS · TEMPLVM · EST · VICTORIA · CHRISTI  
 SACRA · TRIVMPHALIS · SIGNAT · IMAGO · LOCVM  
 IN · CAPITE · EST · TEMPLI · VITAE · NAZARIVS · ALMAE .  
 ET · SVBLIME · SOLVM · MARTYRIS · EXVVIIS  
 CRVX · VBI · SACRATVM · CAPVT · EXTVLIT · ORBE · REFLEXO  
 HOC · CAPVT · EST · TEMPLO · NAZARIOQVE · DOMVS  
 QVI · FOVET · AETERNAM · VICTOR · PIETATE · QVIETEM  
 CRVX · CVI · PALMA · FVIT · CRVX · ETIAM · SINVS · EST

Ambrose built this church and dedicated it to the Lord under the title of the Apostles, whose relics are here. The church in the form of a cross symbolizes the victory of Christ, and his triumphant sign is traced by its walls. At the point of intersection of the cross is the martyr Nazarius of holy life, who, with his relics, sanctifies the building. At the place where the upper arm of the cross is lengthened in the form of a semicircle is the sepulchre of Nazarius and the *bema* of the basilica. Christ the victor gives in that spot eternal rest to his sacred bones, since to him to whom the cross was the prize of his combat it is now his refuge and repose.

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We have now only to speak of Cyrinus of Siscia, who is mentioned several times this month in the Martyrology of St Jerome.



The information, which the above-mentioned codex of St Maximin of Trèves gives us, that the martyr was buried *ad Catacumbas*, where the faithful built: *aedificantes sanctitati eorum ecclesiam*, coincides literally with the *Acta* of the martyred Bishop of Siscia, so that no doubt on the subject is possible. The manner in which the feast of Cyrinus is moved in the Martyrology of St Jerome from June 4 to June 13, or 14, does not surprise anyone who is familiar with the disorder which reigns in that assemblage of saints. The Martyrology afterwards brought its influence to bear on the Calendar, so we see Cyrinus carried off on this day to the Via Aurelia, changed again into a soldier, and associated once more with Basilides and Nabor, of whom he finally becomes a companion in martyrdom.

Let us especially retain in our hearts as a precious lesson the last line of the Ambrosian verses in the *Apostoleion* at Milan :

The cross is not only a symbol of victory, but also a place of safety.

*Crux cui palma fuit, Crux etiam sinus est.*

## JUNE 13

### ST ANTHONY OF PADUA, CONFESSOR\*

This illustrious saint, who was canonized by Gregory IX within a year of his death, acquired immense popularity owing to his numerous miracles, and the zeal of the Friars Minor who, since the fourteenth century, have spread his *cultus* in all countries.

Nothing is lacking to the glory of St Anthony; he had a great desire for martyrdom, and on that account he entered the Franciscan Order and set sail for Mauretania. He was an apostle, and the fame of his fervent preaching filled Italy and Rome, where he proclaimed the Word of God in 1327. He attained to great celebrity as a Doctor of the Church, and was called by Gregory IX the "Ark of the Testament." Both during his lifetime and after his death in 1331, St Anthony became renowned as a worker of miracles, and there are few cities which do not possess a church or an altar dedicated to him, covered with votive tablets and ex-votos.

By the order of Nicholas IV (1288-92)—a Franciscan Pope—the representation of the saint was introduced, together with that of St Francis, into the ancient mosaic in the upper part of the apse of the Lateran, as though to call to mind that, as the "Poverello" of Assisi was seen in a dream to sustain the falling structure of the Basilica of the Saviour, so, too, the



Saint of Padua by his evangelizing labours helped greatly in consolidating that symbolical edifice of the Catholic Faith.

The feast of St Anthony appeared at first in the Roman Calendar as a semi-double, until Clement X raised it to the rank of a double.

The Introit is similar to that on January 17, the feast of St Anthony, Abbot. *Lingua eius loquetur iudicium*. God has glorified that holy tongue which uttered so many profound truths and converted so many souls to him, because already for six hundred years the tongue of the wonder-working Saint of Padua has been preserved intact from the corruption of the grave.

The Collect is the following: "Grant, O Lord, that the festival of blessed Anthony thy confessor may gladden thy Church, so that her children may ever be defended by spiritual help and may become worthy of everlasting bliss. Through our Lord."

The festivals of the saints are days of rejoicing because God on these occasions, in order to honour them, shows himself more bountiful in granting to the faithful his favours and more inclined towards pity. It is for this reason that God usually works miracles on these days, which he does not grant on others, as when he causes the blood of St Januarius and of St Pantaleone to liquefy at Naples and at Ravello on the day of their feast.

The Lesson and the Gradual are as for January 31; the alleluiatic verse, on the other hand, is from the Common of Doctors as on January 29, the feast of St Francis de Sales.

The Gospel and the two Antiphons for the Offertory and the Communion are from the Common of Confessors, as on January 23, for St Raymond of Pennafort, but the Secret and the Post-Communion are proper to the festival.

Secret: "May this present offering, O Lord, bring salvation to thy people, for whom thou didst vouchsafe to offer thyself a living victim to thy Father: who with the same God the Father and the Holy Ghost livest and reignest God, world without end."

As Jesus on the night of the Last Supper assumed the character of a victim, and by means of the Eucharist anticipated in a mystical manner by eighteen hours the bloody sacrifice of Calvary, so now that he is risen and is glorious in heaven he continues the immolation of himself in the divine Sacrament, prolonging throughout the ages that sacrifice which was already begun in the Supper-room two days before Easter.

Post-Communion: "We who have taken our fill of divine gifts, beseech thee, O Lord, that by the merits and inter-



cession of blessed Anthony thy confessor, we may enjoy the fruit of this healthful sacrifice. Through our Lord."

Such fruit is to die to ourselves more and more each day—this is the mystery of the death of Christ which we must reproduce in our hearts—in order to live afterwards to God in Jesus Christ risen from the dead—this is the mystery of life.

We quote here the medieval verses in honour of the great Wonder Worker which form the so-called responsory dedicated to him :

*Si quaeris miracula: mors, error, calamitas,  
Daemon, lepra fugiunt; aegri surgunt sani:  
Cedunt mare, vincula; membra resque perditas  
Petunt et accipiunt iuvenes et cani.  
Pereunt pericula, cessat et necessitas;  
Narrent hi qui sentiunt; dicant Paduani.  
Gloria Patri et Filio, et Spiritui Sancto.  
Cedunt mare, etc.*

## JUNE 14

### ST BASIL, BISHOP, CONFESSOR, AND DOCTOR OF THE CHURCH\*

This outstanding figure of the Eastern Episcopate, a very beacon of orthodoxy, the patriarch and lawgiver of the monastic life, died on the first day of January, 379. But as the Office of the Octave of Christmas falls on that day, the feast of St Basil was deferred until to-day, which is supposed (but not on sure grounds) to be the anniversary of his consecration as Bishop of Cæsarea in Pontus.

It is not within our power to describe in a few words the merits of St Basil; we must therefore leave the task to St Ephrem, who extolled the virtues of this great bishop even during his lifetime.

The holy Deacon of Edessa heard in a vision the voice of the Lord, commanding him to go to Cæsarea to seek Basil: *Ecce in domo mea vas splendidum est ac magnificum, quod tibi supeditabit cibum.*—He sets forth, therefore, from Edessa, in Syria, and goes to Cæsarea, where he find the saint preaching in the Church, and sees the Holy Ghost in the form of a dove resting upon his shoulder.

The following are the words in which Ephrem describes the impression which he carried away: *Vidi in Sanctis Sanctorum Vas Electionis, coram armento ovium praeclare extensum, verbisque maiestate plenis exornatum atque distinctum, omniumque oculos in illud defixos. Vidi templum ab eo spiritu vegetatum, eiusque in viduas ac orphanos potissimum*



*commiserationes. Vidi . . . ipsum Pastorem pennis Spiritus sursum pro nobis preces tollentem, filumque orationis deducentem. Vidi ab ipso ecclesiam ornatam et dilectam aptissime compositam. Prospexi ab ipso manare doctrinam Pauli, legem Evangeliorum, et timorem Mysteriorum.*<sup>1</sup>

The history of the Primacy of the Roman See shows Basil to have been one of its most invincible defenders. At a time when all the Eastern Churches were in a state of confusion owing to the aggressive demeanour of the Arians, the saint declared that the only remedy was to be found in the intervention of the Pope; therefore he wrote thus to the great Athanasius: *Visum est autem mihi consentaneum ut scribatur episcopo Romae, ut quae hic geruntur consideret et sententiam suam exponat. Et quoniam difficile est ut communi ac synodico decreto aliqui illinc mittantur, ipse sua auctoritate in ista causa usus, viros eligat . . . omnia secum habentes necessaria, ad ea rescindenda, quae Arimini per vim et violentiam gesta sunt.*<sup>2</sup>

St Basil wrote also to Damasus in the same strain, describing the miserable state of the East: *Universus quidem prope modum Oriens, Pater colendissime, hoc est quidquid ab Illyrico ad Aegyptum usque protenditur, vehementi tempestate et fluctuum exagitatione percellitur. . . . Horum certe malorum remedium esse unicum arbitramur, miserationis tuae visitationem sollicitudinemque.*<sup>3</sup>

Benedictine monachism, no less than that of the East, looks upon St Basil as its patriarch and lawgiver. St Benedict, in fact, derives very many points in his own Rule from the holy Bishop of Cæsarea, to whose Rule he directed those of his followers who were desirous of still stronger spiritual food. In the early Middle Ages many monasteries in Europe followed simultaneously the Rules both of St Basil and of St Benedict; and in Italy especially, the Greek monasteries governed according to the Basilian Canons continued in great numbers and in a flourishing condition down to the seventeenth century.

Under these influences the liturgical *cultus* of St Basil was relatively widespread, and we find even in the Eternal City an ancient monastery dedicated to him.

St Basil in *scala mortuorum*, near the Forum of Nerva, was at one time one of the principal abbeys in the city; mention is made of it in a document of Agapitus II (946-56).<sup>4</sup>

The monastery church of St Maria Aventina, erected by Alberic in his own house, in the time of St Oddo, was likewise dedicated to St Basil. It was here that Hildebrand, the

<sup>1</sup> *Act. SS. Iun.*, III, 381-2.

<sup>2</sup> *Op. cit.*, 340.

<sup>3</sup> *Op. cit.*, 342-3.

<sup>4</sup> Armellini, *Le Chiese di Roma*, p. 146, 1891.



future Gregory VII, made his profession of the monastic life under the Rule of the Patriarch of Monte Cassino.

There is still existing in Rome a third little church dedicated to St Basil, not far from the *titulus Susannae*, where, in the seventeenth century, a college of Basilian Greco-Italian monks was opened.

The Vatican Basilica, too, has an altar in honour of St Basil, the altar-piece of which shows him in the act of offering the holy Sacrifice with so much majesty and devotion that the Arian Emperor Valens, seeing it when entering the church on the feast of the Epiphany, was on the point of swooning with terror.

The Office of St Basil was inserted in the Roman Calendar in the late Middle Ages.

The Introit is from the Common of Doctors, as on December 7; the Collects are derived from the Mass *Sacerdotes* as on April 11, the feast of St Leo the Great. The Lesson and the Gradual are drawn from the same Common of Doctors, as on January 29, except the alleluatic verse, which comes from the Mass of St Silvester I.

The Gospel is taken from the Common of a martyr and bishop as on January 24, with the addition of verses 34-35, which close the fourteenth chapter of St Luke, and which apply to the Office of a doctor of the Church. This passage, in which our Saviour speaks of the generous renunciation of all worldly goods which his disciples make, is in keeping with a splendid clause in the Rule of St Basil, read in the Breviary to-day at the third nocturn, where the holy doctor explains the detachment and self-denial required of a monk.

"Monk."—that is, "Servant of God";—for this was the title which was formerly given to monks: *servus Dei*—is he, who having given to God *omne quod habet, omne quod facit, omne quod est*, like a disembodied spirit has no longer anything of his own, neither goods, nor his own body, nor his own will; he continues on this earth just as long as God deems it to be for his own glory, but without being any more of the world.

The Offertory is the same as that of yesterday, whilst the Communion is identical with that of January 29.

St Basil's reply to the Arian Prefect Modestus is well known on that occasion when the latter, who was used to the servility of the heretical bishops of the Court, had declared to the saint that no one had ever spoken to him before with such boldness and determination. "That," replied Basil, "is because until now you have never spoken with a bishop."



JUNE 15

SS VITUS, MODESTUS, AND CRESCENTIA, MARTYRS

*Station at the Deaconry of St Vitus "ad lunam."*

The *Acta* of St Vitus have suffered so many additions that it is difficult to disentangle them. St Vitus was a martyr who is spoken of in the Martyrology of St Jerome as being a native of Lucania, or of Sicily, and whose *cultus* was very widely diffused in Italy during the Lombard period. We find his Mass to-day in the Gelasian Sacramentary, doubtless on account of the monastery of St Vitus, near the Arch of Gallienus. From this monastery there came, in 768, the priest Philip as a competitor with Stephen IV for the Papacy, but the following day, having realized the weakness of his cause, he returned to his peaceful studies in the cloister, nor would he take any further part in opposition to the legitimate Pontiff.

Mention is made in the *Liber Pontificalis* of another Oratory dedicated to St Vitus, which was in the monastery *de Corsas* on the Via Appia. This chapel disappeared long ago; but, on the other hand, the Deaconry of St Vitus still exists and the faithful continue to visit it frequently, especially if bitten by mad dogs or poisonous snakes, cures being frequently obtained.

The Mass was originally of St Vitus only, but later there were associated with him the martyrs Modestus and Crescentia; the former, according to the *Acta*, being his teacher, the latter his nurse.

The Introit is derived from Psalm xxxiii, and describes the lot of the just in this world and in the next. In this one they meet with great tribulations, in order that they may fulfil in their own persons the mystery of their crucified Lord; but God succours them by his grace, and not only takes their souls to heaven away from the hatred of their persecutors, but also promises them the resurrection of their bodies, which await the last day, resting under the altars of the Church.

The Collect invokes from our divine Lord the grace of humility, that humility which is so necessary to all Christians and by which so many poor and simple souls, even children, faced martyrdom with God's help. This lowly conception of ourselves, this abasement of the spirit, will extinguish in us the fever of selfishness and make us zealous in the exercise of divine charity.

The first Lesson and the Offertory are also those for January 22.



The Gradual comes from Psalm cxlix, and seems to continue the description of the heaven of the martyrs begun in the preceding Lesson. This is always the true form of the classic responsorial Psalm. It must be in such close connection with the Lesson, as to express the sentiments which it has aroused in the audience.

Gradual: "The saints shall rejoice in glory: they shall be joyful in their beds. *V.* Sing ye to the Lord a new canticle:—that of love, as St Augustine explains—'let his praise be in the church of the saints.'" The saints in heaven are bound together among themselves in such perfect charity that the bliss of one is a motive for all the rest to rejoice and glorify God.

The alleluiatic verse is like the Antiphon for the Introit on April 22.

The Gospel is drawn from St Luke (x, 16-20). Jesus gives his disciples all power over the evil one, so that snakes and other poisonous creatures shall not be able to harm them. This is obviously an allusion to the miraculous cures effected by St Vitus on those suffering from hydrophobia.—Far, however, from trusting in these graces which are granted to them chiefly for the edification of others, Christians should always think much more of acquiring those virtues which will ensure their own eternal salvation. This is the example set us by St Paul, who kept his body in subjection by penance, lest, having preached the Gospel to others, he should himself become a castaway.<sup>1</sup>

The Secret is of a fine classic form: "As the offerings which we make in honour of thy saints, O Lord, are a witness to the glory of thy divine power; so may they win for us the fruit of thy salvation."

The Communion is as that of June 2.

The ideals of the Faith and the judgements of God are very different from those of the world. The martyrs yield up their lives amid torments; their persecutors call this death, but the souls of the just take their flight calmly and serenely to heaven.

The Post-Communion contains an allusion to the solemn and stational character formerly evidenced by all these Masses of the martyrs: "We who have been filled with thy solemn blessing, beseech thee, O Lord, that by the intercession of the holy martyrs Vitus, Modestus, and Crescentia, the healing virtue of this sacrament may benefit both our bodies and souls."

As we have said on other occasions, the holy Eucharist, inasmuch as it contains an antidote to the poison which was transmitted by the serpent in the apple of Eden, can give

<sup>1</sup> 1 Cor. ix, 27.



also health, strength, and a joyous youthfulness to the body. St Gregory Nazianzen says of his sister that she would have no other medicine than the Holy Communion. It is because of this truth that the Church in her Collects often causes us to ask for the health of the body as well as for that of the soul, in order that we may be the better able to serve God and our neighbour.

JUNE 16

SS QUIRICUS AND JULITTA, MARTYRS

*Station at the Title of St Quiricus.*

These two celebrated martyrs were the object of widespread devotion in medieval Rome, as is testified not only by the church dedicated to them from the days of Pope Vigilius, near the Forum of Nerva, but also by the ancient Oratory on the left side of the apse of St Maria Antiqua, on the walls of which is painted the story of their passion.

On the left we see St Julitta before the judge, who orders St Quiricus to be flogged :

VBI · SCS · CVIRICVS · CATOMVLEBATVS · EST

St Quiricus after his tongue has been cut out answering Alexander the judge :

VBI · SCS · CVIRICVS · LINGVA · ISCISSA · LOQVITVR · AT · PRAESIDEM

St Quiricus with his mother beside the boiling caldrons :

SCS · CVIRICVS · CVM · MATRE

On the right are the following scenes : St Quiricus and his mother are thrown into the boiling caldron.

VBI · SCS · CVIRICVS · CVM · MATRE · SVA · IN · SARTAGINE · MISSI · SVNT

St Quiricus with his feet pierced by nails.

VBI · SCS · CVIRICVS · ACVTIBVS · CONFICTVS

Lastly, St Quiricus, seized by the feet and dashed against the seat of the judge, gives up his soul to God.

The *Acta* of St Quiricus are entirely legendary. The Greek "acts" read in the synaxes place his death at Tarsus ; the Martyrology of St Jerome at Antioch. The *cultus* of St Quiricus spread throughout the East and the West in ancient times.



## JUNE 17

The Martyrology of St Jerome commemorates to-day, on the Via Salaria Vecchia, in the Cemetery *ad clivum cucumeris*, a group of martyrs, consisting of: Diogenes, Sixtus, Bonifacius, Longinus, Blastro, and Liberalis, who are also brought to our notice by the Itineraries of the early pilgrims. Abbot John, too, collected on behalf of Queen Theodolinda the oils of the tombs on the Via Salaria Vetus of the following martyrs:

. . . SCS · SYSTVS · SCS · LIBERALIS  
SCS · BLASTRO · ET · MVLT · MILLIA · S . . .  
. . . ALII · CXXII · ET · ALII · SCI · XLV

In the marble tablet recording the relics transferred by Paschal I to St Praxedes, we find mentioned those of the martyrs: *Diogenis Basti et alii lxii*.

Liberalis was a consul. His name does not appear in the records, probably because he was one of the many *consules suffecti*; but the nobility of his ancestry was such as to confer honour on the *fascēs* rather than to receive it from them. This is the fine epigraph which has been copied by collectors of inscriptions from the tomb of the Consul Martyr:

MARTYRIS · HIC · SANCTI · LIBERALIS · MEMBRA · QVIESCVNT  
QVI · QVONDAM · IN · TERRIS · CONSVL · HONORE · FVIT  
SED · CREVIT · TITVLVS · FACTVS · DE · CONSVLE · MARTYR  
CVI · VIVIT · SEMPER · MORTE · CREATVS · HONOR  
PLVS · FVIT · IRATO · QVAM · GRATO · PRINCIPE · FELIX  
QVEM · PERIMENS · RABIDVS · MISIT · AD · ASTRA · FVROR  
GRATIA · CVI · DEDIT · TRABEAS · DEDIT · IRA · CORONAM  
DVM · CHRISTO · PROCERV · MENS · INIMICA · FVIT  
OBTVLIT · HAEC · DOMINO · COMPONENTS · ATRIA · FLORVS  
VT · SANCTOS · VENERANS · PRAEMIA · IVSTA · FERAT

Here rest the remains of the holy Martyr Liberalis  
Who formerly attained on earth to the dignity of Consul;  
But his merits increased when from being a Consul he became  
a martyr,  
And thus could never lose the honour conferred by death.  
The anger of the Prince benefited him more than his favour,  
Since it was his cruel rage that sent him to heaven.  
While the Imperial grace had given him only the consular  
robe, the Emperor's anger bestowed on him the crown,



At a time when the thoughts of the rulers were hostile to the Christian Faith.

Florus restored these buildings and dedicated them to the Lord,

So that the veneration of the saints may merit for him a worthy reward.

It appears that this holy tomb was violated during the Gothic war. The last two lines of the following inscription, also by the same Florus, allude to this :

QVAMQVAM · PATRICIO · CLARVS · DE · GERMINE · CONSVL  
INLVSTRES · TRABEAS · NOBILITATE · TVAS  
PLVS · TAMEN · AD · MERITVM · CRESCIT · QVOD · MORTE · BEATA  
MARTYRIS · EFFVSO · SANGVINE · NOMEN · HABES  
ADIVNCTVSQVE · DEO · TOTA · QVEM · MENTE · PETISTI  
ADSERTOR · CHRISTI · SYDERA · IVRE · COLIS  
SIT · PRECOR · ADCEPTVM · QVOD · POST · DISPENDIA · BELLI  
IN · MELIVS · FAMVLVS · RESTITVERE · FLORVS

Although thou, O famous consul of patrician race,  
Mayest add lustre even to the fasces by thy noble birth,  
Yet was thy merit greater, in that thou, dying gloriously,  
Didst shed thy blood and gain the martyr's title.

Now art thou united to the God whom thou didst desire with  
all thy heart,

And, become a confessor of Christ, dost meritoriously reign  
in heaven.

May it be pleasing to thee that after the ruin of war,  
Florus, thy devoted servant, has restored this thy sepulchre.

A Consul who becomes a martyr, and is dragged from the hall of the Senate and from the Capitol to the place of execution for professing Christianity ! There are pages like this in the early history of the Church which, alas ! are forgotten now, but which ought to be held in high honour among all the faithful.

We also possess the inscription commemorating the martyr Diogenes, copied from his tomb by early collectors of epigraphs. The sepulchre was restored after the siege of Rome by the Goths, like that of St Liberalis.

HIC · FVROR · HOSTILIS · TEMPLVM · VIOLAVIT · INIQVVS  
CVM · PREMIERET · VALLO · MOENIA · SEPTA · GETAE  
NVLLIVS · HOC · POTVIT · TEMERARIA · DEXTERA · GENTIS  
HAEC · MODO · PERMISSA · EST · QVOD · PERITVRA · FVIT  
NIL · GRAVAT · HOC · TVMVLO · SANCTORVM · PESSIMVS · HOSTIS  
MATERIAM · POTIVS · REPPERIT · ALMA · FIDES



IN · MELIVS · SIQVIDEM · REPARATO · FVLGET · HONORE  
 CVM · SCELERE · HOSTILI · CREVIT · AMOR · TVMVLIS  
 SVSCIPE · NVNC · GRATVS · DEVOTAE · MVNERA · MENTIS  
 DIOGENIS · MARTYR · CVI · DEDIT · ISTA · VOLENS

The wicked rage of the enemy profaned this temple,  
 When the Goths laid siege to Rome, surrounded by walls and  
 protected by trenches.

No other nation before them had been so bold,  
 But the Goths were permitted to do so, being a people about  
 to perish.

The cruel foe could not really harm the sepulchres of the  
 Saints,

Since the faith of the devout found here a motive,  
 For restoring the tombs and making them still more beauti-  
 ful.

Because of this sacrilegious attack by the enemy, devotion  
 towards these holy shrines increased in the hearts of the  
 faithful.

Accept now, O martyr Diogenes, the homage of a heart  
 avowed unto thee,

Which gladly offers thee these works of restoration.

## JUNE 18

SS MARK AND MARCELLIANUS, MARTYRS

*Station at the Cemetery of Callixtus.*

The tomb of these two martyrs, who are spoken of in the *Acta* of St Sebastian, was in the Cemetery of Callixtus. It is constantly referred to in the Itineraries of the pilgrims as being near that of Pope Marcus, and at no great distance from the martyrs Nereus and Achilleus: *et ibi in altera ecclesia invenies duos diaconos et martyres Marcum et Marcellianum fratres germanos, cuius corpus quiescit sursum sub magno altare. Deinde descendis per gradus ad sanctos martyres Nereum et Achilleum.* Archæologists are not in agreement as to the identification of this tomb *sub magno altare*, which is most probably the one discovered a few years ago in the Basilica *sub divo*, and which De Rossi considered to be that of St Soter.

As stated in the Itineraries, the messenger of Queen Theodolinda also collected the oils of the tombs of our martyrs in that portion of the cemetery of Callixtus which looks, not on the Via Appia, but on the Ardeatina, and that in the following order :



✠ SCA · PETRONILLA · SCS · NEREVS · SCS · ACHILLEVS  
 SCS · DAMASVS · S · MARCELLINVS  
 SCS · MARCVS ✠

In the ninth century the bodies of Mark and Marcellianus were transported to the Basilica of the Anargyri martyrs on the Sacra Via. It was there that they were found under Gregory XIII within the ancient *heroon* of Romulus Augustus, in a kind of "confession" still to be seen, which is decorated with paintings representing the Blessed Virgin and the two martyrs.

Also in the inscription of Bishop Leo of Ostia, who in 1112 reconsecrated the altar of the titular church of St Lawrence in *Lucina*, are mentioned the relics of SS Mark and Marcellianus as reposing in that holy spot.

The Introit of the Mass is identical with that for the feast of the martyrs of Brescia, Faustinus and Jovita, on February 15.

The Collect, except for the names of the two saints, is similar to that of St Valentine, on the fourteenth of the same month.

The Lesson (Rom. v, 1-5) is that of the vigiliary Mass of Pentecost, which is followed by the same Gradual as on the feast of the martyrs Marius, Martha, Audifax, and Abachum, on January 19.

The alleluiatic verse, following the tradition that the two martyrs whom we honour to-day were in close relationship to one another, is this: "Alleluia, alleluia. *Y*. Theirs is the true brotherhood, which the shock of battle might not break: who by shedding their blood followed the Lord. Alleluia."

The Holy Ghost makes all Christians brothers of Jesus Christ and of one another; but how much more tender and glorious is this brotherhood when grace strengthens the ties of blood in such a manner that this twofold fraternity is consecrated by the same love for Christ, by the same manner of life, and by the same death, *sanguine, mente, fide*.

The Gospel in the Würzburg List is the same as that of the vigiliary Mass of the Apostles (John xv, 12-16), but in the present Missal it is taken from Luke (xi, 47-51). Jesus addresses the Jews—who were the builders of splendid tombs in honour of their prophets, but who also were of the same race as those promise-breakers who had put them to death, and who were themselves preparing to commit the awful crime of deicide—and reproaches them with consenting to the doings of their fathers, for these latter had indeed slain



the messengers of God, but they, their children, built their sepulchres.

By these words the Saviour meant to say that all exterior show of piety is unavailing, when the heart is corrupt and turned to evil. It is not the outward act alone, but the spirit that inspires it, which makes it acceptable or the contrary in the sight of him who reads the depths of the heart.

The Antiphon for the Offering of the Oblations is that of the feast of Marius and the other martyrs on January 19. The persecutor had spread a snare for the faithful soul, Christ has broken it, and the soul of the martyr, like a little bird set free, has spread its wings and flown away to heaven.

The Secret is as follows: "Hallow these offerings which are dedicated to thee, O Lord; and through the intercession of thy holy martyrs Mark and Marcellianus, for their sake be appeased and mercifully look upon us."

The idea is somewhat delicate in expression, but it is clear. The fruits of the eucharistic Sacrifice, which is always strength-giving and efficacious in itself, are seen in a greater or lesser degree according to the subjective dispositions of him who partakes thereof. We therefore beg the intercession of the martyrs, in order that by means of the divine grace our preparation for Communion may be such that it may purify us from every stain.

In the ancient Sacramentaries the following prayer is given instead: *Suscipe, Domine, munera tuorum populorum votiva; et sanctorum Marci et Marcelliani tibi precibus esse grata concede, pro quorum solemnitatibus offeruntur.*

The Communion is like that of May 12, but in earlier times, in accordance with the usual rule, it was derived from the Gospel Lesson of St John previously read: *Ego vos elegi de mundo, ut eatis et fructum afferatis et fructus vester maneat.*

Psalm: *Nisi quia Dominus*, etc.

The following is the Post-Communion: "We who have been filled with the gift of thy salvation, humbly beseech thee, O Lord, that by the intercession of thy holy martyrs Mark and Marcellianus, we may be renewed by the fruit of that which we delight to taste."

In the Sacramentaries we find this Prayer: *Ad complendum. Intercessione beatorum martyrum tuorum Marci et Marcelliani, quaesumus, Domine, ut mysticis nos dapibus foveas ac reformes.*

According to the *Acta* of St Sebastian, which do not, however, date from primitive times, Mark and Marcellianus, after having fearlessly confessed the Christian Faith in the midst of torments, were on the point of denying it, being overcome by the tears of their parents who came to visit them in prison. Thus we see how great a danger to the souls of the religious



is to be found in unrestrained family affection, as St Philip Neri well observes in reference especially to these two martyrs.

We may recall, too, how much harm was done to the Church through the excessive affection shown to their relatives by many Popes of the Renaissance, and by many ecclesiastics and religious. Indeed, this unregulated attachment to relations is a more dangerous rock than is often supposed, and is one on which souls that otherwise are devout and prudent, sometimes make shipwreck. Such an attachment is not according to the teaching of Jesus Christ, who has particularly said of those consecrated to him: *si quis . . . non odit patrem suum et matrem . . . non potest meus esse discipulus*.<sup>1</sup>

## JUNE 18

### ST EPHREM, DEACON, CONFESSOR, AND DOCTOR OF THE CHURCH\*

This feast was introduced recently into the Missal by Benedict XV after he had, in an eloquent Encyclical, honoured St Ephrem with the title of Doctor. Indeed, this illustrious champion of orthodoxy in Syria in opposition to the insidious wiles of the Arians had from early times been famed as a teacher of the universal Church, but more especially in the East; and not only the Syrians, but the Byzantines, the Slavs, the Armenians, and the Copts had incorporated in their liturgical books the melodious compositions of the celebrated Deacon of Edessa, who was called in consequence by the Eastern Church the "Lyre of the Holy Spirit."

Yet the final crown which papal Rome alone can give was wanting to the glory of St Ephrem. At length it came, and when it came, it was a most glorious one. Benedict XV, proclaiming the merits of St Ephrem to the whole world in 1918, the same year in which the centenary of St Jerome was being kept, compared these two heroic figures, and pointed out that both were monks, and that both lived in Syria. Jerome came a little after Ephrem, whose merits and glory he described. Both saints made the Holy Scriptures the object of their constant study, absorbing them into their very being. The priest of Bethlehem and the deacon of Edessa thus became by their wisdom like two great beacons destined to illumine, the one the Western, the other the Eastern world.

Christian Rome had, as the papal Encyclical recalls, dedicated in the seventeenth century an oratory—now destroyed

<sup>1</sup> Luke xiv, 26.



—to St Ephrem on the Esquiline. The extension of the feast of the famous Syrian deacon to the universal Church, whilst intended to show the Eastern Christians, especially the separated churches, with what veneration the Roman See cherishes the glories and the catholic records of those most ancient churches, also completes the series of the Doctors of the Church, which thus comprises every rank in the sacred hierarchy—that is to say, bishops, priests, and deacons. Benedict XV, by conferring the title of Doctor on St Ephrem, has settled the controversy as to whether, or not, deacons can attain to that supreme degree of authority and rule in the Church of God.

The Mass is of the Common of Doctors throughout, as on January 29; only the Collect being proper. “O God, who hast deigned to enlighten thy Church by the learning and merits of blessed Ephrem thy Confessor and Doctor: we beseech thee through his intercession to protect it by thy divine power against every assault of wickedness and error.”

In truth, the “Lyre of the Holy Spirit” holds so important a place in the field of sacred Liturgy that it is almost to be wished that his merits had been in evidence also in the compilation of the Mass for his feast, as, for instance, by the introduction of some liturgical composition in keeping with the inclination and taste of the Western Church. St Ephrem wrote some beautiful hymns on the Immaculate Conception and the Purity of Mary, on the Papal Primacy, on the Martyrs, on the Efficacy of the divine Sacrifice, on Prayers for the Dead, etc. These hymns, set to music and sung by the consecrated virgins, filled with enthusiasm the people of Edessa during the lifetime of the saint, and encouraged them to defend the Nicene Faith against the heathen Persians and the Arians.

St Jerome in his *De viris illustribus*, affirms that by his works Ephrem *ad tantam claritatem venisse, ut post lectionem Scripturarum, publice in quibusdam ecclesiis eius scripta recitarentur.*<sup>1</sup>

## JUNE 19

SS GERVASE AND PROTASE, MARTYRS

*Station at the Title of Vestina.*

These two martyrs of Milan were included at a very early date in the Feriale of the Roman Church, because of the extraordinary circumstances and the miracles which accom-

<sup>1</sup> Cap. 115.



panied the discovery of their bodies by St Ambrose. During the Pontificate of Innocent I a Roman matron called Vestina caused a *titulus* to be erected in their honour within the city, in the *vicus longus* of the fourth *Regio*, a title which, called at first after its foundress and later after the martyrs Gervase and Protase, is better known nowadays by the name of St Vitalis.

The Mass is as follows :

The Introit derives its Antiphon from Psalm lxxxiv, and seems like an echo of the joyful songs of Ambrose and the good Milanese, when God deigned to console them for the arduous siege which they were enduring within the church at the hands of the Arians and of the Empress Justina, by revealing to the bishop the place where the holy relics lay. St Augustine, who was present at the occurrence, describes the event admirably in the ninth book of his Confessions.

"It was in that year, O Lord, or somewhat later, when the Empress Justina, Mother of the Emperor Valentinian, who was still a boy, led astray by the Arians, and full of zeal in her heresy, began to persecute thy servant Ambrose. The faithful were watching during the night in the church, ready to suffer death together with their bishop. There, O Lord, thy handmaiden, my Mother, was foremost, both in conducting the vigiliary prayers and in sharing the anxieties of Ambrose. Prayer was her very being. To the end that the people should not grow faint through weariness, there was then instituted for the first time the singing of hymns and psalms, as is customary in Eastern countries. . . .

"At that time didst thou show to the bishop in a vision the spot where lay the bodies of thy martyrs Gervase and Protase, which thou hadst preserved incorrupt for so many years in thy secret treasure-house, that thou mightest bring them forth at a convenient moment in order to check the fury of one who was indeed a woman, but an Empress withal.

"The place having been found and cleared of ruins, whilst the sacred bodies were being transported with fitting honour and in great triumph to the Ambrosian Basilica, those possessed of evil spirits were made whole, the very demons confessing through their mouths who they were. One man, well-known to all his fellow-citizens as having been blind for many years, when he learned the reason of all those unaccustomed joyous cries of the populace, jumped up and begged the person who was leading him to take him up to the bier. When he had come to it he obtained permission to touch with his handkerchief the bodies of those whose holy death was precious, O Lord, in thy sight,<sup>1</sup> and applying the

<sup>1</sup> Psalm cxv, 15.



handkerchief to his eyes, they immediately regained their vision."<sup>1</sup>

Introit: "The Lord will speak peace unto his people, and unto his saints: and unto them that are converted to the heart. Lord, thou hast blessed thy land; thou hast turned away the captivity of Jacob." The allusion to the persecution of Justina is obvious, and Ambrose is here represented as being sure that the discovery of the bodies of the martyrs, and the numerous miracles worked by them as a testimony to the Catholic Faith, will finally put an end to the continual persecution which is keeping him almost a prisoner in his own church.

The three Collects are those of February 15.

The Lesson comes from the First Epistle of St Peter (iv, 13-19). At the time when this was written the Neronian persecution had already broken out with its horrible burning torches of the Vatican Gardens, and that inhuman Emperor had already issued his famous *Institutum* against the Christians on the strength of which the Roman State for more than two hundred years punished the followers of the Nazarene, not indeed for crimes foreseen by the laws, crimes duly proved and judged, but for the bare confession of the Christian name. St Peter therefore says: "Let none of you suffer as a criminal under the law; but if as a Christian, let him not be ashamed, but let him glorify God in this name," since Jesus also was condemned to death for no other reason than that he had solemnly declared himself to be the Christ.

This peculiar position of the Roman Law with regard to the Christians, as it was confuted by the Apologists of the second century, so it did not escape the notice of the Imperial magistrates themselves. Thus Pliny, in a letter which has become celebrated, asked Trajan about it so that he might learn from him the real intention of the law—that is, whether he would have to punish *ipsum nomen, aut crimina cohaerentia nomini*. It was on this occasion that the Emperor, pressed by the honest Proconsul of Bithynia, gave the absurd reply which recalled too nearly that of Pilate not to be made the most of by the sarcastic Tertullian: "*Inquirendi non sunt, si deferantur . . . puniendi.*"

The Gradual is like that of January 22, whilst the alleluiatic verse is drawn from the Mass of the martyrs Nereus, Achilleus, etc., on May 12.

In the Würzburg List the Gospel for to-day is taken from St Mark (xiii, 1-13), containing the prophecy of the persecution of the Christians, which is to take place in the latter times preceding the final *parousia*, whereas according to the present Missal it is the same as that on March 10, in which

<sup>1</sup> St Augustine, *Confessions*, Book IX, chap. vii.



occurs the announcement of the Beatitudes. During this present life these Beatitudes are only *in spe*, for the grace of Jesus Christ gives us only a pledge of them in the midst of the tribulations which always accompany the profession of the devout life. *Spes autem non confundit*, says St Paul, because hope becomes a reality, and grace increases and attains its fulness only in glory.

The Offertory is similar to that of the festival of the martyrs Marcellinus, Peter, and Erasmus on June 2, the Communion being taken from the Mass of the other two Milanese saints, Nabor and Nazarius, on the twelfth of this month.

Impious men have, it is true, been given power to torture and kill the bodies of the martyrs; but God possesses their souls; indeed, by the merits of the fathers the divine protection is extended through many generations, even to their remote descendants, who, in the Psalm to-day, term themselves with pride "the children of those who were slain." This confidence in the merits of the martyrs caused St Ambrose to choose the place for his own tomb in his basilica beside that of SS Gervase and Protase, saying: *Tales ambio defensores*.

## JUNE 19

### ST JULIANA FALCONIERI, VIRGIN\*

The beautiful Mass of the famous Milanese martyrs yields place to-day to that of St Juliana of the noble Florentine family of the Falconieri, which was first made part of the Breviary by her compatriot Pope Clement XII (Lorenzo Corsini), and later was raised to the rank of double by Clement XIII.

St Juliana may be regarded almost as a second foundress of the Order of the Servites of the Blessed Virgin Mary. The incidents attending her last Communion, when, on account of constant sickness, it was not possible for her to receive the Blessed Sacrament, and the sacred Host miraculously penetrated her breast, have surrounded this seraphic virgin of Florence with such a halo of purity and sanctity as to make her one of the most attractive figures in the history of the saints of the Eucharist.

The Mass is like that of February 10, except the Collect, which is as follows: "O God, who, when blessed Juliana thy virgin was in the agony of death, didst vouchsafe miraculously to refresh her with the precious body of thy Son; grant, we beseech thee, that, through her merits, which



plead for us, we, too, may be strengthened and refreshed by it in our mortal agony, and may be borne in safety to our heavenly country."

As, in olden times, the pagans were in the habit of placing in the mouth of the dead a piece of money as payment to the boatman Charon, so in the fourth century it was already an ancient tradition of the Roman Church, confirmed by a number of texts of the Fathers, to comfort the last moments of the faithful by the administration of the Eucharist: the Viaticum, which was sometimes also placed on the breast of the dead person.

The Church afterwards modified this practice, decreeing that the Communion received by the dying after Confession and Extreme Unction should suffice as Viaticum, and that there was no need of another Communion at the actual moment of emitting the last breath. The ancient Roman custom, however, testified to the robust faith of that early patristic age, when, in opposition to the materialistic views of the pagans, the faithful desired to profess solemnly the doctrine of the immortality of the soul and the final resurrection of the body, of which the Holy Eucharist is, in fact, the pledge.

## JUNE 20

## ST SILVERIUS, POPE AND MARTYR

This kindly champion of the Faith, who fell a victim to the brutal tyranny of Belisarius, was the son of Pope Hormisdas (514-23), whose epitaph he composed. It was transcribed by collectors in bygone times in the Vatican Basilica. We give it here :

QVAMVIS • DIGNA • TVIS • NON • SINT • PATER • ISTA • SEPVLCHRIS  
 NEC • TITVLIS • EGEAT • CLARIFICATA • FIDES  
 SVME • TAMEN • LAVDES • QVAS • PETRI • CAPTVS • AMORE  
 EXTREMO • VENIENS • HOSPES • AB • ORBE • LEGAT  
 SANASTI • PATRIAE • LACERATVM • SCHISMATE • CORPVS  
 RESTITVENS • PROPRIIS • MEMBRA • REVVLTA • LOCIS  
 IMPERIO • DEVICTA • PIO • TIBI • GRAECIA • CESSIT  
 AMISSAM • GAVDENS • SE • REPARARE • FIDEM  
 AFRICA • LAETATVR • MVLTOS • CAPTIVA • PER • ANNOS  
 PONTIFICES • PRECIBVS • PROMERVISSE • TVIS  
 HAEC • EGO • SILVERIVS • QVAMVIS • MIHI • DVRA • NOTAVI  
 VT • POSSENT • TVMVLIS • FIXA • MANERE • DIV

Although this monument is far inferior to thy merits, and thy faith which is now glorified in heaven needs no memorial,



yet, do thou, O Father, accept these thy praises which will be read by the pilgrim, who, led by devotion to St Peter, will come hither from the uttermost end of the earth.

Thou hast healed the wounds of thy country, torn by schisms, restoring each member to its place.

Greece received thy pious commands and returned full of joy to her early faith.

Africa, too, rejoiced, because, through thy prayers, she was enabled to have her own bishops once more after long years of servitude.

I, Silverius, have recorded these things to my own confusion, in order that their record may remain on this tomb for ever.

In the month of March, 537, Belisarius, who resided at that time on the *collis ortorum in Pincis*, sent for Pope Silverius to come to him. When the saint arrived, he was calumniously accused of favouring the Goths to the detriment of the Byzantines, and was stripped of the papal insignia and handed over to some sub-deacons, who clothed him in the monastic habit. To the populace, who, terrified on account of the Pontiff, waited anxiously outside the hall to know his fate, it was briefly announced that Silverius had become a monk.

The Pope was first exiled to Lycia, but when he reached Patara, the bishop of that city was so appalled at the sacrilege which had been committed, that he at once hastened to Justinian at Constantinople in order to remonstrate with him: *iudicium Dei contestatus est de tantae sedis episcopi expulsionem, multos esse dicens in hoc mundo reges, et non esse unum sicut ille papa est, super Ecclesiam mundi totius.*<sup>1</sup>

The Emperor was moved, and sent Silverius back to Italy; but through the machinations of the deacon Vigilius, his competitor for the Papacy, the saint was despatched by Belisarius to the Island of Palmaria, one of the Ponza group, where, in the year 538, he succumbed to hardships and want. His body was buried on the island itself, the Romans not being able to bring it back to Rome, but God glorified him by many miracles, for, as the biographer of Silverius attests in the *Liber Pontificalis*: *Confessor factus est. Qui et sepultus in eodem loco XII Kal. iul. ibique occurrit multitudo male habentes, et salvantur.*<sup>2</sup>

The Mass is the same as on January 24, the feast of St Timothy, with the exception of the Lesson, which is drawn from the Epistle of St Jude (17-21).

Jude or Thaddeus, first cousin of the Saviour, exhorts the

<sup>1</sup> Cf. *Liberatus*, Breviar. 22; *P.L.* LXVIII.

<sup>2</sup> *Liber Pontificalis*, ed. Duchesne, I, 293.



Christians to stand firm in the Faith which they have received from the apostles, warning them that in the latter days a false *gnosis* would arise, which would seek to turn aside their minds to a sensual theosophy. This is so fatal an error that it causes those who have adopted it to deserve the severe blame of St Jude: *segregant semetipsos*; this is the separatist tendency of heresy—*animales*.—This shows their state of mind and their feeling; *Spiritum non habentes*, such is the consequence to its followers.

## JUNE 21

## ST ALOYSIUS GONZAGA, CONFESSOR\*

This saint was like a white and fragrant lily in his virgin purity, transplanted by God from the luxurious and sensual Court of Madrid to the chosen garden of St Ignatius of Loyola at Rome. The whole life of Aloysius breathes forth sanctity and purity: his baptism, which was administered at the very moment of his birth, his first Communion at the hands of St Carlo Borromeo; his reception into the Society of Jesus by Claudio Acquaviva, the spiritual direction given to him at the Collegio Romano by Blessed Cardinal Bellarmine; his severe penances; and, lastly, his holy death as a victim of charity in the service of the plague-stricken sufferers in the Hospital of the Consolazione at Rome.

St Mary Magdalene de' Pazzi, the seraphic Carmelite of Florence, in a celebrated vision of the glory of St Aloysius in heaven, thus summed up the praises of the angelical young saint, a model for all clergy—St Aloysius had, in fact, been invested with the rank of acolyte. "Aloysius was an unknown martyr. During his mortal life he constantly assailed with his darts the Heart of the Word. Oh, how great is the glory in heaven of Aloysius, son of Ignatius!"

The Mass suffers from all the defects produced by the decadence of liturgical art in the seventeenth century; on the other hand, it is marked by variety and devotion.

The Antiphon for the Introit is taken from Psalm viii, and is followed by the second verse of Psalm cxlviii with the Gloria. Thus we have two irregularities at the very beginning of the Mass.

"Thou hast made him a little less than the angels: thou hast crowned him with glory and honour. Praise ye the Lord, all his angels: praise ye him, all his hosts. Glory be."

The state of virginity raises man to the level of the angels, who are spiritual beings. Indeed, as St John Chrysostom



observes, purity is even more beautiful in man than it is in the angels, because in our frail nature it is the result of a long and arduous struggle.

The Collect is not according to the classical *cursus*, but it is concise and well conceived: "O God, the giver of heavenly gifts, who in the angelical youth Aloysius didst unite wonderful innocence of life with an equal severity of penance; grant, through his merits and prayers, that we who have failed to follow the example of his innocence may imitate his practice of penance."

The Lesson is the same as on February 8, except the last verse, which is here omitted. The original text of this passage from Ecclesiasticus (xxxii, 8-11) would be much better suited to St Aloysius, if instead of the altered version: *Beatus vir qui inventus est sine macula*, the original had been exactly given in the Missal: *Beatus dives qui inventus est sine macula*, etc.

For, in that passage, the Holy Scriptures do not speak in praise of any just man indiscriminately, but of the rich man who, although possessing money, power, and glory, uses these worthily and shares his goods with the poor. The state of poverty is honourable and meritorious, since the Word of God has sanctified it in his human nature, but virtue is also arduous and glorious in the case of the rich man, who, having overcome the temptations of wealth and luxury, remains poor and humble in spirit even in the midst of material riches.

The Gradual is derived, contrary to rule, from two different psalms.

The alleluiatic verse also is from a third psalm, all of which shows that the composer framed this Mass in his study without any thought for the musical character of this part of the eucharistic Liturgy, with no more help than that of a good Concordance.

Gradual (Psalm lxx): "My hope, O Lord, from my youth: by thee have I been confirmed from the womb; from my mother's womb thou art my protector." This verse may well refer to the early baptism of St Aloysius, before even his eyes had opened to the light. *V.* (Psalm xl): "But thou hast upheld me by reason of my innocence, and hast established me in thy sight for ever."

Alleluiatic verse (Psalm lxiv): "Alleluia, alleluia. Blessed is he whom thou hast chosen, and taken to thee: he shall dwell in thy courts. Alleluia." The court is, indeed, not the temple itself, but it leads to it, and it here signifies the holy estate of the religious life, which represents the outer hall of Paradise.

The Gospel comes from St Matthew (xxii, 29-40). Jesus silences the sceptical and materialistic Sadducees, who, in



order to mock at the resurrection of the dead, had brought forward the case of a woman who had been married to seven brothers in succession: "Whose wife will she be," they ask ironically, "in the day of resurrection?" The Saviour replies by explaining the spiritual nature of our future life of glory, in which our body will be subject in heaven to the conditions enjoyed by our glorified soul. It will, therefore, be no longer affected by the need of nourishment, by sickness, by death. Thus in that blessed realm there will be no giving in marriage, no cradles to watch over, no dowries to provide. We shall then all be as are now the angels of God. Here the adaptation of the Liturgy to St Aloysius, the *angelicus iuuenis*, is clearly seen.

The Sadducees being reduced to silence, one of the Pharisees, a doctor of the Law, inquired of the divine Master which was the greatest commandment of the *Torah*. Jesus answered that it was that one, in the holy flame of which man immolates his entire being: Love. Here again we find a reference to St Aloysius, the "unknown martyr" of love.

The words of the Offertory (Psalm xxiii) are well suited to this particular moment in the Liturgy. "Who shall ascend unto the mountain of the Lord? or who shall stand in his holy place? the innocent in hands, and clean of heart." By heart and hands are meant purity of intention and action, which must always be, as it were, the inner ornament of the minister of the sanctuary.

The Secret recalls the tears which, like precious pearls, adorned Aloysius' white robe of innocence as he drew near to receive Holy Communion. He was accustomed to devote several days to his preparation, and as many afterwards to the giving of due thanks to God.

The Communion (Psalm lxxvii) repeats with insistence that the Eucharist is the food of angels and that also on earth it makes angels of men. "He gave them the bread of heaven: man ate the bread of angels."

The Post-Communion is as follows: "Grant, O Lord, that we who have been fed with the food of angels may also live the lives of angels; and by the example of him whom we honour on this day, may always continue to give thee thanks."

We may repeat to-day, in honour of the acolyte Aloysius, the lines which Pope Damasus wrote in the fourth century upon the tomb of another acolyte, the martyr Tarcisius.

*Par meritum quicumque legis cognosce duorum,  
Quis Damasus rector titulum post praemia reddit.*



JUNE 22

## ST PAULINUS, BISHOP AND CONFESSOR

The name of Paulinus, or rather of Pontius Meropius Anicius Paulinus, is found on this day in the Martyrology of St Jerome; but its insertion in the Roman Calendar dates only from the late Middle Ages—that is to say, after Otho III had removed his body from Beneventum, in order to place it in the new basilica which St Adalbert had caused to be erected in *insula Licaonia* in the Tiber, near the Trastevere.

Under Pius X, the bones of this holy Bishop of Nola were brought from their place of exile on the little Roman island, where but few venerated them, and carried back in triumph to his episcopal city. To console the Romans—who had known him as *consul suffectus* in 378, after the death of the Emperor Valens—for the loss of his relics, a new Mass of St Paulinus was incorporated in the Missal, and his feast was raised to a double in the universal Church.

The character of Paulinus has some points in common with that of St Gregory Nazianzen. Of a gentle nature, wholly given to solitude and prayer, a lover of poetry and of the fine arts, Paulinus is one of the most attractive figures of ancient times. He can hardly be called a man of action like Ambrose and Jerome; indeed, he scarcely ever leaves his monastic retreat beside the burial-place of the martyr Felix of Nola, but all the most important persons of the age require to consult the renowned Paulinus, to seek him out, to be honoured by the friendship of so great a man, who has in consequence gained the praises of the greatest doctors of the Church. Paulinus died in 431, and his last words were those of the evening psalm: *Paravi lucernam Christo meo*.<sup>1</sup>

The Introit is the same as for the feast of St Damasus on December 11.

The Collect is of recent date and, as has already been noted by some theologians, it gives a meaning to the Gospel promise which is not that usually attributed to it by the Fathers of the Church. Jesus, indeed, has promised to the poor among the faithful a hundredfold of what they had renounced, not only in the next world, but also in this: *centies tantum, nunc in tempore hoc . . . et in saeculo futuro vitam aeternam*.<sup>2</sup>

“O God, who hast promised a hundredfold hereafter and life everlasting to those who leave all things in this world for thy sake; grant in thy mercy that we may follow in the foot-

<sup>1</sup> Psalm cxxxi, 17.<sup>2</sup> Mark x, 30.



steps of the holy bishop Paulinus and may learn to despise the things of this world and desire only those of heaven : who livest."

The Lesson (2 Cor. viii, 9-15) refers to the collections ordered by St Paul amongst the Corinthians, for the benefit of the necessitous churches of Palestine.

Jesus Christ must always be the example of all alms-givers : he who, being rich, became poor for our sakes, in order to treasure up riches for us from the merits of his poverty. Christian charity, moreover, is that which re-establishes in this world the balance between the rich and the poor, so that the former from his abundance supplies the wants of him who has nothing, and the poor man finds in his wealthy neighbour the minister of the munificence of the divine Providence.

This Lesson alludes to the renunciation made by St Paulinus of all his wealth, which he distributed amongst the poor, even dividing with them his monastic habit. Wherefore St Augustine, filled with admiration, wrote to his friend Licentius : *Vade in Campaniam, disce Paulinum: . . . disce quibus opibus ingenii sacrificia laudis Christo offerat, refundens illi quidquid accepit ex illo, ne amittat omnia, si non in eo reponat a quo haec habet.*

There is, however, no historical foundation for the story told of Paulinus that he sold himself as a captive to the Vandals in Africa in order to free the son of a poor widow of Nola. In the year 410, Nola was occupied, it is true, but by the Goths, not by the Vandals. The Bishop was arrested temporarily by some soldiers, eager for loot, but as St Augustine<sup>1</sup> himself relates, no harm befell him. The prayer which Paulinus addressed to God on that occasion is worthy of note : *Domine, non excruciar propter aurum et argentum; ubi enim sunt omnia mea tu scis.*

The Gradual and the alleluiatic verse are as on December 4 for the feast of St Peter Chrysologus.

The Gospel is that of the Mass of St Peter Nolasco on January 31.

The Antiphons for the Offertory and the Communion are taken from the Mass of a Confessor and Bishop as on February 4.

The two Collects, however, are proper to the feast, and betray a modern origin. They are full of excellent thoughts, but there is wanting to them, together with the *cursus*, that *rotunditas* and *concinntas* which distinguish the Collects of the Roman Sacramentaries.

Secret : " Grant, O Lord, that following the example of the holy bishop Paulinus we may add to the offerings of the

<sup>1</sup> *De Civit. Dei*, Book I, chap. x.



altar the sacrifice of perfect charity, and that by zeal in doing good we may win thy mercy for evermore. Through our Lord."

Post-Communion : " Grant us, O Lord, through these holy mysteries, that loving and lowly spirit which thy holy bishop Paulinus drew from the same divine fountain; and through his intercession pour forth in thy bounty the riches of thy grace on all who pray to thee. Through our Lord."

We would wish to give here the beautiful inscription which St Paulinus caused to be painted under the cross, and which adorned the two sides of the façade of the Basilica of St Felix of Nola :

ARDVA · FLORIFERA · CRVX · CINGITVR · ORBE · CORONAE  
ET · DOMINI · FVSO · TINCTA · CRVORE · RVBET  
QVAEQVE · SVPER · SIGNVM · RESIDENT · CAELESTE COLUMBAE  
SIMPLICIBVS · PRODVNT · REGNA · PATERE · DEI

The lofty cross is surrounded by a garland of flowers,  
It is reddened with the blood shed by the Lord.  
The doves which rest upon the celestial standard  
Show that the kingdom of God is open to all simple souls.

## THE NIGHT OF JUNE 23

THE HOLY VIGIL IN HONOUR OF ST JOHN THE BAPTIST

*Station at the Lateran.*

The Roman populace still keeps unchanged the custom of spending the night hours awake in the neighbourhood of the *campus lateranensis*. At one time the faithful did this in order to take part devoutly in the nocturnal vigils which in the Middle Ages were held in the Basilica of the Saviour. When, however, this practice was given up, the people still kept to the tradition, but finding the doors of the basilica closed they repaired to the wine-shops instead.

The *cultus* of the Baptist at the Lateran dates at least from the Pontificate of Pope Hilary, who, in remembrance of the danger which he had escaped at the time of the famous *Latrocinium Ephesinum*, erected two Oratories at the sides of the Baptistry of Sixtus III, one in honour of St John the Evangelist :

LIBERATORI · SVO · BEATO · IOHANNI · EVANGELISTAE · HILARVS  
EPISCOPVS · FAMVLVS · XPI

and the other in honour of St John the Baptist :

✠ HILARVS · EPISCOPVS ✠ SANCTAE · PLEBI · DEI ✠



These two Oratories became so famous in later times that they gave its present name of John to the Lateran Basilica itself.

The vigiliary Mass of St John the Baptist, with its preceding fast, is entered, not only in the Leonine Sacramentary, but in the Bernese *Laterculus* of the Martyrology of St Jerome. The Lessons indicated in the Würzburg Codex correspond exactly with those of the Roman Missal.

The melody of the Antiphon for the Introit is one of the most exquisite examples of Gregorian art, as the music of nearly all the vigiliary Masses usually is, in preference to that of the Masses of the feast themselves. Such an anomaly may, perhaps, astonish us, but it will cease to cause us any surprise when we consider that the vigiliary Mass which we now celebrate with scanty and penitential rites on the day preceding the feast was celebrated in the time of our fathers as the solemn sacrifice at the end of the night vigil, and was the festive Mass of general Communion. Indeed, in very early days it was the only Mass that was celebrated on great festival days.

Introit (Luke i, 13, 15, 14): "Fear not, Zachary; thy prayer is heard; and thy wife Elizabeth shall bear thee a son, and thou shalt call his name John; and he shall be great before the Lord, and he shall be filled with the Holy Ghost even from his mother's womb; and many shall rejoice at his birth. (Psalm xx) In thy strength, O Lord, the king shall joy: and in thy salvation he shall rejoice exceedingly."

John begins where others would scarcely hope to end. He is still within his mother's womb, and grace already so fills him that before God, who alone is great, and to whom everything is small, that tender little child is the greatest of those born of woman, as the Angel testifies. The Baptist is great before God, because he was always of small account in his own eyes, seeking only the glory of God in his own abasement. *Illum oportet crescere, me autem minui.*

It was to fulfil the office of a precursor and to prepare the way for the Messiah that John was sent; so in the Collect to-day the Church prays God that, by walking in the way of penance and contrition of heart, taught us by the Baptist, we may surely come to the Christ foretold by him.

The Gradual is derived from St John (i, 6-7): "There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. *¶* This man came to bear witness of the light, to prepare unto the Lord a perfect people."

John rendered a threefold testimony to the Light. His own supernatural life was, above all, a light, indeed a permanent miracle. *Ille erat lucerna ardens et lucens.* To the most spot-



less life and the harshest penance he added also the light of his fearless and unwearied preaching; so that for a moment the very Synagogue could glory in it, taking him for the promised Messias.

Under the ægis of this double glory of sanctity and zeal the Baptist made to the world, and especially to the Jews, the solemn and official presentation of the long awaited Christ: *Ecce Agnus Dei, ecce qui tollit peccatum mundi*. This is the third testimony rendered to the Light by John, who thus completed the line of prophets and began that of evangelists.

The Gospel Lesson (Luke i, 5-17) contains the narrative of the appearing of the Archangel Gabriel to Zachary the priest, and of the divine promise that he should have a son in his old age, who should be called John.

There are some masterpieces exclusively divine concerning which God appears to be keenly solicitous lest any human handiwork should have a share in them, for the glory thereof belongs to himself alone. For this reason he delays their completion until Nature shall have exhausted her last resources. When man has lost all hope then the hour of God has come.

The Offertory and the Communion are as those for the vigiliary Mass of St Thomas on December 20.

This is the beautiful prayer which precedes the Anaphora: "Hallow the offerings which we make, O Lord; and through the intercession of blessed John the Baptist cleanse us by means of them from the stain of our sins."

For to-day the Leonine Sacramentary has a special Preface of great length, but well expressed and profound: *Vere dignum, etc. . . . exhibentes solemne ieiunium quo beati Iohannis Baptistae natalitia celebramus: cuius genitor eum Verbi Dei nuntium dubitans nascenturum, vocis est privatus officio, et eodem recepit nascente sermonem; quique, Angelo promittente, dum non credit, obmutuit, magnifici praeconis exortu, et loquens factus est et propheta. Materque pariter sterilis, aevoque, non solum puerperio foecunda, processit; sed etiam quo beatae Mariae fructum sedula benedictione reciperet, Spiritu divinitatis impleta est; ipseque progenitus, utpote viae caelestis assertor, viam Domino monuit praeparari; seraque in suprema parentum aetate concretus et editus, procreandum novissimis temporibus disseruit Redemptorem. . . . Per quem maiestatem tuam."*

The Post-Communion is as follows: "May the glorious prayers of blessed John the Baptist speed us, O Lord; and may they win for us mercy from him whose coming he foretold, our Lord Jesus Christ, thy Son."

The greatness of St John consists entirely in his mission of preparing the way for Jesus Christ. Therefore he did not



live for himself, but for Christ and for his greater glory. This is genuine humility, the foundation of all true greatness before God.

JUNE 24

ST JOHN THE BAPTIST

*Station at the Lateran.*

This was a full liturgical day at Rome, since, of the four Masses in honour of St John the Baptist noted in the Leonine Sacramentary, the third bears the title *Ad fontem*. This shows that the others were celebrated in the great Basilica of the Saviour and in some other sanctuary in the city dedicated to St John—Pope Symmachus had erected one near the Vatican Baptistery—and that only the third Mass was offered up in the Lateran Oratory, built by Pope Hilary *Ad fontem*.

Of this primitive richness of the Roman Liturgy, we find a trace also in the Gregorian Sacramentary. Besides the vigiliary Mass there are the Collects in *prima missa* as well as those for use in a second, which was probably the stational Mass celebrated in the Basilica of the Saviour.

The same order was followed at Vespers. The Office being over in the great Lateran Basilica, the clergy went in procession to say, as on Easter Day, a shorter one *ad fontes*, of which the Gregorian Sacramentary likewise has preserved the final Collect.

This grandeur of early devotion to the Baptist need cause no one to wonder, if we realize the eminent position which St John holds in the history of the divine Incarnation. His seal of canonization is seen in the eulogy addressed to him by the Word of God himself made man, when he pointed him out to the people as the greatest among all the prophets, and among all those born of woman, the new Elias, the burning and shining light.

The Liturgy, therefore, applied itself in a special manner to celebrate the particular glory of John the *maior inter natos mulierum*. Whilst, then, the day of the death of other saints was kept as their feast, in the case of the Baptist it was the day of his birth which was celebrated, as having taken place amidst the outpouring of the gifts of the Paraclete.

A proof of the intense devotion to St John which was felt at Rome, especially in the early days of Christianity, is to be found in the numerous churches dedicated to him. Of these we can count some twenty at least, while quite three and twenty popes took his name, and the Lateran Basilica itself,



in the ordinary manner sanctioned by the Missal, became simply known as San Giovanni in Laterano.

The *cultus* of St John the Baptist found its most fervent adherents among the monks, who regarded the austere life led by the Precursor in the desert as a kind of prelude to the monastic life. The Patriarch St Benedict erected an Oratory in his memory on Monte Cassino, in which he himself desired to be buried. Also at Farfa, the holy Syrian Bishop Lawrence, who founded that famous abbey in the fifth century, consecrated its basilica in honour of the Blessed Virgin and the two SS John the Baptist and the Evangelist. Again at Subiaco amongst the twelve monasteries instituted by St Benedict, one was called after the Precursor of Christ.

The question of the precedence over St Joseph given to St John in the Litany of the Saints was examined into by Pope Benedict XIV (1740-56). The introduction of the invocation to St Joseph into the Litany is comparatively recent, and when it was inserted it was not considered opportune to decide how the passage in the Gospel describing the Baptist as *maior inter natos mulierum* was to be understood. St John had already for many centuries been in peaceable possession of the first place in the long line of saints in the Litany; moreover, he was a martyr. In order not to compromise anything, St Joseph was placed between the Baptist and St Peter.

Now, however, that devotion to the Patriarch Joseph has thrown so much light on his person, it is not so difficult to decide the question in the sense which was already indicated by the Liturgy, when it put St Joseph before the choir of the apostles. From the context of the Gospel passage, it appears that the primacy accorded to St John is to be understood of his prophetic and Messianic mission. He is at the apex of the pyramid of the patriarchs, prophets, and saints who announce and prepare the way for the New Testament. As John surpasses them all in dignity, so he excels them in sanctity, for he was sanctified even in his mother's womb.

St Joseph, on the other hand, belongs to another class and another period. He does not form one of the procession of patriarchs which moves forward to meet the Messiah, he has no prophetic mission to accomplish with regard to Christ, but, on the contrary, he enters into the plan itself of the holy Incarnation as being the very spouse of Mary and the holder of the *patria potestas* over the child Jesus in the name of the Eternal Father. It is Joseph, son of David, who, by his virginal marriage with Mary, introduces and presents Jesus with all honour to the world as the legitimate heir of the Messianic promises made to David and to Abraham.

The transcendent dignity of Mary and Joseph in no way



detracts from the glory of St John, so the sacred Liturgy intones in his praise its triumphal songs as well beside his cradle as in the castle prison of Machaerus.

The very beautiful hymns assigned to this feast in the Breviary are by Paul the Deacon, a monk of Monte Cassino, who composed them for the titular feast of that church. About four centuries later another monk, Guido of Arezzo, derived from the ascending tones of the first hemistichs of the hymn of St John at Vespers, the names of the musical scale.

<i>Ut queant laxis</i>	<i>Resonare fibris</i>
<i>Mira gestorum</i>	<i>Famuli tuorum</i>
<i>Solve polluti</i>	<i>Labii reatum,</i>
<i>Sancte Iohannes.</i>	

The Introit of the Mass is drawn from Isaias (xlix, 1-2) and from Psalm xci: "The Lord hath called me by my name from the womb of my mother, and he hath made my mouth like a sharp sword: in the shadow of his hand he hath protected me, and hath made me as a chosen arrow. . . ." Psalm xci: "It is good to give praise to the Lord, and to sing to thy name, O most High." The imposition of a name, as St John Chrysostom remarks, is an act of domination. Now the Lord in a few rare instances, in order to show that certain persons are in a special manner dedicated to him, confers on them a name which indicates the future mission to which he destines them. The name John signifies "dove," because the testimony of the Precursor concerning the divine nature of Jesus was to prepare the Jews to receive the testimony of that other Dove, which, at the Jordan, descended upon the divine Saviour.

The Collect reminds us that the Nativity of the Baptist has for ever consecrated this memorable day. Mindful of the word of the Lord who promised by the mouth of the Angel that many should rejoice on the birthday of John, the Church implores almighty God that we may receive that promised gift of spiritual joys which we so greatly need in order to be able to walk eagerly along the difficult path which leads to heaven.

The Lesson is taken from Isaias (xlix, 1-3, 5, 6, 7), and describes the prophetic mission of the future messenger of Jehovah. The Lord formed him for himself in his mother's womb that he might be a light to the world and a means of salvation to all. God will accomplish all these wonders, but on one condition. The elect of Jehovah must be amenable to the divine inspiration. The less he acts of his own free will, the more and the better will he act by the Spirit of God. He shall consequently bear a title which expresses at the same



time his own nothingness and his own greatness : it shall be simply : " The servant of Jehovah."

The Gradual is from Jeremias (i, 5, 9), who, according to some of the doctors, was sanctified like St John in the womb of his mother. The text of the Scriptures does not necessarily imply this, since the sanctification of which it here speaks might refer merely to his prophetic vocation. However this may be, it is certain that this passage from Jeremias finds its full accomplishment in St John the Baptist.

Gradual : " Before I formed thee in the bowels of thy mother, I knew thee : and before thou camest forth out of the womb, I sanctified thee. *Ÿ*. The Lord put forth his hand and touched my mouth : and said to me." The Gradual, as we know, is in the form of responsorial psalmody. The first hemistich was repeated after each verse, hence to-day's Gradual requires the repetition of the verse : " Before I formed thee," etc., otherwise the words " and said to me " would be meaningless.

The alleluiatic verse (Luke i, 76) comes from the Canticle of Zachary, which the venerable priest uttered when, after the birth of John, he regained the power of speech. " Alleluia, alleluia. *Ÿ*. Thou, child, shalt be called the prophet of the Highest ; thou shalt go before the Lord to prepare his ways. Alleluia."

The Gospel (Luke i, 57-68) continues the narrative already begun yesterday. On the eighth day after the birth of the Baptist, they came to circumcise the child, and a name had to be chosen for him. Someone suggests that of Zachary, but the father and mother, without previous consultation and being inwardly directed by the Holy Ghost, agree in naming him John. By this act of faith, Zachary, the father, sufficiently expiates his first hesitation and doubt, and not only recovers his speech, but his words become a truly prophetic hymn in which the Lord is exalted and the destiny of the new-born Precursor is announced.

The Offertory is the same as on January 29, the feast of St Francis de Sales.

The Secret again alludes to the ancient custom when the people brought their offerings to the altar : " We heap up gifts upon thine altars, O Lord, to give due honour to the birthday of him who both foretold the coming of the Saviour of the world and proclaimed him when he came, our Lord Jesus Christ, thy Son."

The following is the fine Preface for to-day contained in the Sacramentaries. It is found originally in that of St Leo : . . . *aeterne Deus. Et in die festivitatis hodiernae qua beatus Iohannes exortus est, tuam magnificentiam collaudare ; qui vocem Matris Domini nondum editus sensit, et adhuc clausus*



*utero, adventum salutis humanae prophetica exultatione significavit. Qui et genitricis sterilitatem conceptus abstulit, et patris linguam natus absolvit; solusque omnium Prophetarum, Redemptorem mundi quem praenuntiavit ostendit. Et ut sacrae effectum purificationis aquarum natura conciperet, sanctificandis Iordanis fluentis, ipsum baptismo baptismatis lavit Auctorem. Et ideo, etc.*

The verse for the Communion of the people is similar to the alleluiaic verse.

In the Post-Communion the Church recalls once more the promise of the angel with regard to the birthday of the Precursor: "Let thy Church, O God, be glad at the birth of blessed John the Baptist; for through him she knew the author of her new birth, our Lord Jesus Christ, thy Son."

It would be impossible for the Church to condemn more explicitly those exaggerated forms of devotion which would exclude from the exercise of virtue all sweetness and spiritual consolation. On the contrary, taking into consideration the weakness of our nature, we may freely make use of these graces which God gives us, and which constitute the interior unction of the Paraclete; just as one oils the wheels of a machine or of a cart, that they may turn easily and without noise. Sanctity and progress in virtue do not consist in the enjoyment of spiritual sweetness, but it is a great help to us in acquiring them, wherefore St Paul says: *Gaudete in Domino semper, iterum dico gaudete.*

## JUNE 24

SS JOHN THE PRIEST, FESTUS, LONGINUS, AND  
DIOGENES, MARTYRS

*Synaxis on the Via Salaria Vecchia in the Cemetery  
"ad clivum cucumeris."*

To-day the Martyrology of St Jerome notifies as follows: *Romae in cimiterio ad septem palumbas Via Salaria vetere Sanctorum Fisti, Luciae . . . cum aliis sexaginta duo.* Diogenes, who has already been commemorated on the seventeenth of this month, has slipped in again on a subsequent day; on which the name of the Virgin Lucy also reappears.

This is a group of Roman martyrs, well known to the early compilers of the Itineraries, which always point out their tombs as being in the cemetery *ad septem palumbas*, on the Via Salaria Vecchia. Lucy is never mentioned, unless she is to be identified with the martyr Longinus, of the same



group in the Salzburg Codex. This name, in the epitome *de Locis Sanctis*, changes its sex and becomes *Longina mater Iohannis*, and, finally, in the *Notitia de Olea Sanctorum* sent to Queen Theodolinda, it is changed to *Lucina*.

The following is the entire group according to the *De Locis Sanctorum Martyrum: Ecclesia Sancti Iohannis martyris, ubi caput eius in alio loco sub altare ponitur, in alio loco corpus. Ibi sanctus Diogenes et sanctus Fistus . . . et sancta Longina mater Iohannis sunt sepulti (et alii mille CCXXII martyres)*.

In the titular church of Marcellus there was found this inscription :

HIC · REQVIESCVNT · CORPORA · SANCTORVM · IOHANNIS · PRES-  
BYTERI · BLASTI · DIOGENIS · ET · LONGINI · MARTYRVN

The translation of these bodies must have taken place in the ninth century.

This John the priest is mentioned in several legends of the martyrs as having dedicated himself to the pious office of giving honourable burial to their bloodstained remains. In the Middle Ages the sacred head of the martyr John was placed in a small church near St Silvester in *Campo Martio*, which basilica took from this holy relic the name of St Silvester in *Capite sancti Iohannis*.

It would seem as though the following lines by Pope Damasus bore reference to the other sixty-two martyrs recorded to-day in the Martyrology of St Jerome :

TEMPORE · QVO · GLADIVS · SECVIT · PIA · VISCERA · MATRIS  
SEXAGINTA · DVO · CAPTI · FERITATE · TYRAMNI  
EXTEMPLO · DVCIBVS · MISSIS · TVNC · COLLA · DEDERE  
CONFESSI · CHRISTVM · SVPERATO · PRINCIPE · MVNDI  
AETHEREAM · PETIERE · DOMVM · REGNAQVE · PIORVM

At the time when the sword of persecution pierced the breast  
of our Mother the Church,  
Sixty-two persons arrested by the fierce tyrant  
Were slain by the executioner's sword.  
Confessing Christ, and ignoring the threatenings of the prince  
of this world,  
They ascended to the heavenly mansions in the kingdom of  
the saints.

Prudentius also commemorates this group of martyrs :

*Sexaginta illic defossas mole sub una  
Reliquias memini me didicisse hominum.*<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Peristephanon xi, 13 sq.



In any case this band of decapitated martyrs is to be distinguished from the other, consisting of many victims, who were buried alive by the pagans near the tomb of SS Chrysanthus and Daria in the cemetery of the Giordani, and in honour of whom Damasus composed a separate sepulchral epigraph.

Relics of Diogenes, Festus, and the other sixty-two martyrs of the *Clivus Cucumeris* were also transported by Pope Paschal I to the church of St Praxedes.

## JUNE 25

## ST WILLIAM, ABBOT\*

The feast of the founder of the Solitaries of Monte Vergine<sup>1</sup> was inserted in the Calendar of the Universal Church by Leo XIII. This monastic Congregation was widely diffused at one time in the South of Italy, but having greatly decreased in numbers it was amalgamated in the second half of the nineteenth century with the Benedictines of Subiaco.

St William, who died in 1142, was noted for the austerity of his life and for his great gentleness towards others. His body rests now on the summit of the Parthenius, in the Basilica of our Lady which he built,<sup>2</sup> and where every year many thousands of pilgrims assemble to do honour to the Blessed Virgin.

The Mass is that of the Common of Abbots as on December 5, with the exception of the Collect: "O God, who, to help our weakness, hast given us thy saints to be our example and protection in the way of eternal life; grant that we may so venerate the merits of the blessed abbot William, that we may both gain his prayers and follow in his footsteps. Through our Lord."

Contemporary writers tell of many miracles worked by St William during his life and after his death. His statue now adorns one of the niches in the Vatican Basilica, in the long series of founders of religious Orders and Congregations.

<sup>1</sup> In Campania, near Avellino.—TR.

<sup>2</sup> In 1119 on the site of a ruined temple of Cybele.—TR.



JUNE 25-26

THE VIGIL OF SS JOHN AND PAUL, MARTYRS

*Station at the Title of Bizante.*

This vigil on the Cœlian Hill, at the *Clivus Scauri*, is mentioned in the Gelasian Sacramentary, and is also confirmed by the Calendar of the Church of Naples, where, too, in the eighth century the feast of the martyrs John and Paul was preceded by a vigil.

The Lectionary of the *Comes* of Würzburg also assigns two Lessons to the feast of June 26, and Morin rightly supposes one of them, the first (Rom. viii, 28-39), to be that of the vigiliary Mass.

The Secret from the Gelasian Sacramentary is full of interest: *Sint tibi, quaesumus Domine, nostri munera grata ieiunii; qualiter tunc eadem in Sanctorum tuorum Iohannis et Pauli digna commemoratione deferimus, si actus illorum pariter subsequamur.*

JUNE 26

SS JOHN AND PAUL, MARTYRS

*Station at the Title of Bizante.*

The chronological data of this martyrdom, which is commonly supposed to have taken place under Julian the Apostate, are not altogether reliable, but it is an undisputed fact that SS John and Paul suffered martyrdom in their own house, on the Cœlian Hill, and were buried in a vault beneath the building which was afterwards converted into a titular basilica by Bizante and Pammachius. The two officials of the Imperial Palace must have been put to death secretly, their bodies being consequently hidden in the same spot as that where the execution had taken place, while a report was spread about Rome that John and Paul had been sent into exile.

It seems that other victims had shed their blood in the same place—SS Crispus, Crispinianus, and Benedicta, perhaps because they were found guilty of having discovered the secret of that assassination plotted in the palace, and of having entered the house in order to give burial to the remains of the two martyrs.

Archæological discoveries have fully confirmed the truth of the *Acta* of SS John and Paul, for under the existing Basilica of Pammachius there has been brought to light the dwelling-house of the martyrs, the place of their execution,



the two graves, and the *fenestella confessionis* with the very important paintings which adorn its walls. In these we see three persons, of whom one is a woman, on their knees, with eyes bandaged, awaiting the executioner's stroke. These are SS Crispus, Crispinianus, and Benedicta.

The fact that the martyrs John and Paul, unlike all the others who were buried outside the walls, had their place of burial in the very heart of the Eternal City, was looked upon by the early Christians as a special honour granted to them and to Rome by divine Providence. The Leonine Sacramentary draws attention to this in the Preface.

In the fourth century the *cultus* directed towards these two saints was very marked at Rome. Leo the Great erected a basilica and a monastery in their honour in the Vatican; the site of the latter corresponding to that side of the transept of the actual Basilica of St Peter, where the chapel of the martyrs Processus and Martinian now stands.

The early collectors of epigraphs have preserved the text of a metrical inscription in the style of Damasus, which De Rossi considers to have been taken from this Basilica of SS John and Paul built by St Leo at the Vatican. Other archæologists, on the contrary, attribute the lines to the sanctuary of Bizante on the Cœlian. We give them here :

HANC · ARAM · DOMINI · SERVANT · PAVLVSQVE · IOHANNES  
MARTYRIVM · CHRISTI · PARITER · PRO · NOMINE · PASSI  
SANGVINE · PVRPVREO · MERCANTES · PRAEMIA · VITAE

Paul and John watch over this altar of the Lord, who having suffered martyrdom together for the name of Christ, have purchased eternal life at the price of their noble blood.

Damasus composed a second and far longer metrical inscription regarding the two saints, but of this epigraph only a few fragments have been recovered on the Cœlian Hill :

Inlustri Paul)VS · GENER(e · ortus itemque Iohannes  
. . . An)IMAM · CASTO · SEMPER (pietatis amore  
Caelest)IS · REGNI · REGI · AE(terno famulatu  
Quos terri)s · TENVIT · FRATRES · DO(mus una fidesque  
Nunc caelu)m · ACCIPIET · IVNGIT(que in saecula coronis  
Comp)OSVIT · LAV(des Damasus cognoscite Fratrum  
Ut pleb)s · SANCTA · (novos discat celebrare patronos)

Paul and John, born of illustrious lineage, lay down their lives together bound by the pure tie of devotion. They served the eternal King of the heavenly realm.

The two brothers when on earth possessed one home and one Faith.



They are now united in heaven by the same immortal crown.

Be it known that Damasus sang the praises of the two brothers, so that the Christian people might learn to glorify their new patron saints.

We are also acquainted with the text of another metrical inscription which Leo I is said to have placed on the façade of the *titulus* of Bizante :

ANTISTES · DOMINI · LEO · SACRARIA · CHRISTI  
 VESTIBVLVM · DECORAT · GRATIA · PVLCHRA · LOCI  
 QVAE · QVIA · COMPTA · NITET · PRIMAQVE · IN · FRONTE · RENIDET  
 OSTENDIT · QVANTVM · NVMINIS · INTVS · INEST  
 QVIS · TANTAS · CHRISTO · VENERANDAS · CONDIDIT · AEDES  
 SI · QVAERIS · CVLTOR · PAMMACHIVS · FIDEI

The Pontiff of God adorns the lofty façade and the porch  
 Of this sanctuary of Christ with pleasing taste worthy of its  
 surroundings.

All is now finished, and the façade by its beauty

Shows how great is the holy effect of the interior.

If thou wouldst seek to know who has raised these venerable  
 walls to Christ,

Learn that it is Pammachius, the upholder of the Faith.

The Leonine Sacramentary contains at least eight Masses for the feast of the martyrs John and Paul. Of these some are merely alternative Masses for the *natalis* of many martyrs; but even so there remains a sufficient number to justify us in recognizing among those prayers the formulary of the two festival synaxes which were celebrated on this day both in the Vatican and on the Cœlian.

The Introit is taken from Psalm xxxiii: "Many are the afflictions of the just, and out of all these the Lord hath delivered them: the Lord keepeth all their bones; not one of them shall be broken."

The Lord allows his servants to be exposed to arduous trials in order that he may crown them with a greater wealth of merits. When, therefore, the saints are subjected to tests, it is not because God has abandoned them, even momentarily. On the contrary, he is at their side in the struggle and holds, so to speak, in his hand, one end of the chain which restrains their adversaries, who are unable to move except in so far as the Lord permits.

How significant must this Antiphon have been when it was sung at the double grave in which the hypocritical



Imperial policy had tried to hide the criminal murder of the martyrs John and Paul! But the Lord was making use of the duplicity of the persecutors in order to ensure to Christian Rome the possession of the holy relics of the martyrs within the very enclosure of the Aurelian walls.

The Collect gives us a glimpse of the importance which this feast at one time enjoyed: "Grant, we beseech thee, almighty God, that we may receive twofold joy on this day's festival of the triumph of blessed John and Paul, whom the same faith and the same martyrdom made to be truly brethren. Through our Lord."

In the Lectionary of the *Comes* of Würzburg to-day, as on all great festivals, two scriptural lessons are appointed to be read. The first is from the Epistle to the Romans (viii, 28-39) and corresponds in the latter portion (35-39) to the Lesson for the first of February, the feast of St Ignatius of Antioch. The other is drawn from Ecclesiasticus (xliv, 10-15) and has been already given on February 12. We should note, with Morin, the antiquity of this second Lesson, which is derived from a very early version, the origin of which has not been traced.

The choice of this passage has been guided by the fact that, as Holy Writ asserts in general concerning the bodies of the ancient Patriarchs, the relics of John and Paul also rested in peace amidst their later descendants, who gloried in the compassion of their patron saints in heaven.

It is said of the saints that their hearts are merciful because, having already attained to grace, and subsequently to glory, which are the result of God's greatest mercy, the radiance of the beatific vision confirms and perfects their charity and compassion towards their unhappy brethren, who still mourn in exile.

The Gradual comes from Psalm cxxxii, which is one of the "Hymns of the Ascension." "Behold how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity. *Y*. It is like the precious ointment on the head, that ran down upon the beard, the beard of Aaron."

This chrism of holiness and glory was poured upon the head of Christ by the Paraclete on the day of his resurrection. From the head, the *Christi bonus odor* spreads also upon the members of his mystical body, and upon the garments of the Church.

The alleluiatic verse is the same as on June 9. Grace does not destroy but completes and perfects nature. When, therefore, the ties of blood are strengthened by the supernatural bond of a true affection in Christ, then nothing more is wanting, and love is perfect.

The Gospel (Luke xii, 1-8) has one verse more than when



it is read on April 14 for the feast of St Justin, and this verse is especially adapted to the synaxis of the *natalis* of John and Paul, who were secretly slain in the cellar of their own house. It is this: "Beware ye of the leaven of the pharisees, which is hypocrisy."

Hypocrisy is the word which best expresses the policy of Julian the Apostate towards the Church. He made a great show of purity of life, and even cherished the illusion that he could restore paganism, which was tottering to its fall, by reforming it on the model of the Catholic Church. Whilst frantically assuming a like puritanism, Julian showed nothing but contempt for Christianity, and although he did not actually promulgate regular edicts ordering religious persecution, yet he harassed the Christians, especially in the East, by deceitful means and by treachery, allowing many to fall victims to the pagan reaction which he had provoked. "Can it cause surprise," he wrote, "if a Galilean (for so he called the Christians) is overcome by the strength of a Greek?"

The Offertory is taken from Psalm v, (12-13): "All they that love thy name shall glory in thee, for thou, O Lord, wilt bless the just: O Lord, thou hast crowned us as with a shield of thy goodwill."

The Lord imparts his grace to us according to the measure of our confidence in him. This is why only those who love the name of the Lord, or, as the Masoretic text has it, those who trust in God, have reason to rejoice in the benefits they receive from him.

The Secret is as follows: "Graciously receive, O Lord, the victims dedicated to thee through the merits of thy holy martyrs John and Paul; and grant that they may prove a perpetual support to us. Through our Lord."

Among the Prefaces given for to-day in the Leonine Sacramentary this is one of the finest: . . . *Vere dignum . . . Quamvis enim tuorum merita pretiosa iustorum, quocumque fideliter invocentur, in tua sint virtute praesentia; potenter tamen nobis clementi providentia contulisti, ut non solum passionibus Martyrum gloriosis Urbis istius ambitum coronares*—these are the extra-mural catacombs which surrounded Rome like a golden necklace—*sed etiam in ipsis visceribus civitatis*—the house of the martyrs on the *Clivus Scauri*—*sancti Iohannis et Pauli victricia membra reconderes; ut interius externisque cernentibus, et exemplum piae confessionis occurreret, et magnificae benedictionis non deesset auxilium, per Christum . . . Et ideo, etc. . . .*

In the early days of the Church none of the martyrs, not even the two Princes of the Apostles, rested within the walls of Rome. This was a privilege which belonged exclusively to the martyrs John and Paul.



The Antiphon for the Communion is identical with that of January 22. The judgements of God and the judgements of man differ widely. The human view, or rather, as the Scripture says *oculi insipientium*, sees only the ignominious death of the martyrs, but faith perceives more than that, for they already enjoy the peace which will lead them to the vision of God.

This is the Prayer of Thanksgiving: "We who are keeping the festival of thy holy martyrs John and Paul, have received thy heavenly sacraments, O Lord; grant, we beseech thee, that what we practise during our temporal life may bring us to everlasting bliss. Through our Lord."

The holy Eucharist is the *sacramentum unitatis* which links the Church and our souls indissolubly with Christ. This union is brought about now by means of grace, but since in our present life it is always possible to lose it, let us then long for that more intimate, complete, and eternal union which the Lord will grant us when he in heaven *erit omnia omnibus*.

Holiness in the Church is not merely an historical memory of illustrious ancestors; it is, on the contrary, an ever-flowing stream which continues to water her members in every age. We find a fresh proof of this in the house itself of the martyrs John and Paul on the Coelian Hill. Their martyrdom opens out on that spot a splendid tradition of sanctity. First come the saints Crispus, Crispinian, and Benedicta, together with their executioner, who, in his turn, becomes a martyr. They are followed by Byzante, by Pammachius, and later, in less distant times, by St Paul of the Cross, by the Blessed Vincenzo Strambi, formerly Bishop of Macerata, by Padre Germano, spiritual director of Gemma Galgani, and by others.

Before concluding we are desirous of recording the twelfth-century inscription which still adorns the outer porch of the Title of Byzante:

✠ PRESBYTER · ECCLESIAE · ROMANAE · RITE · IOHANNES  
HAEC · ANIMI · VOTO · DONA · VOVENDO · DEDIT  
MARTYRIBVS · CHRISTI · PAVLO · PARITERQVE · IOHANNI  
PASSIO · QVOS · EADEM · CONTVLIT · ESSE · PARES

John, a priest of the Roman Church, in fulfilment of a vow, dedicated these restorations to the martyrs of Christ, John and Paul, who were made equal in merit by a common martyrdom.



JUNE 27

## THE PROTOMARTYRS OF THE HOLY ROMAN CHURCH

In the revision of the Roman Martyrology, taken in hand under the auspices of Gregory XIII, there was introduced on June 24 the commemoration of that *multitudo ingens* who, according to Tacitus, were massacred by Nero through hatred of the Christian Faith. As the band of the Holy Innocents preceded Jesus, so, too, it was thought fitting that this white-robed company of every age, sex, and condition should precede, as far as possible, the festival of the two Princes of the Apostles, Peter and Paul. The pagan historian, describing the horrible torments endured by this multitude in the Vatican Circus, tends to cast upon Nero himself the shame of the crime of which the Christians were accused, saying: *non tam urbis incendio quam odio generis humani convicti sunt.*

The thought of those human torches which illuminated the nocturnal orgies of the son of Agrippina at the Vatican deeply impressed the mind of St Peter, who, speaking of the persecution in his First Epistle (iv, 12), describes it literally as the "trial by fire" τῇ ἐν ὑμῖν πυρώσει πρὸς πειρασμὸν. St Clement, also, in his Epistle to the Corinthians (I, c. 1) alluded with horror to the foul tortures inflicted on the victims, especially the women: *propter zelum persecutionis passae mulieres Danaidae et Dircae . . . gravia et nefanda supplicia sustinuerunt.*

The memory of those first martyrs of the Roman Church—indeed the persecution spread throughout the Empire, for Tacitus speaks of a *multitudo ingens*—remained ever alive in the hearts and in the faith of the people of Rome, especially in the district of the Vatican, where the awful immolation had taken place. In the Middle Ages almost the whole extent of the Circus was occupied, partly by the left side of the Basilica of St Peter, and partly by a series of chapels, of which some, such as that of St Andrew near the *spina* of the Circus, remained standing until the time of Sixtus V.

When in 1626 under Urban VIII excavations were made for the foundations of the bronze baldacchino which is now erected over the altar of the *Confessio* in St Peter's, a large number of graves were found, many of which contained charred bones, mixed with ashes and charcoal. The thoughts of all turned immediately to the martyrs burnt by Nero in the Vatican Circus; so the Pope ordered that the relics should be left in the place where they had been found, though many bones mixed with earth were collected in a special casket which was buried close to the sepulchre of St Peter.



Not far from the *spina* of the Circus of Nero, Charlemagne founded in the eighth century a hospice (Schola) for the Frankish pilgrims, which, after many transformations and vicissitudes, still exists under the name of "Santa Maria della Pietà in Campo Santo." The soil of the cemetery where the dead sleep the sleep of peace<sup>1</sup> is the very same in which were planted the crosses and the stakes whereon Nero's "human torches" were bound.

In order, therefore, to consecrate the memory of that first massacre of Christians the Holy See, which had already granted to the local clergy of that church the permission to celebrate a special liturgical feast in honour of the Roman Protomartyrs, not long ago extended the observance of this festival to the entire Eternal City, giving it at the same time the rank of a double of the second class.

From June 24 the feast was transferred to the day preceding the vigil of the two Princes of the Apostles, as though to connect again the events and to bring the massacre of the disciples nearer to the martyrdom of the teachers. Rome now celebrates every year with magnificent ritual the glorious memory of her Protomartyrs. After sunset a procession of prelates, of the clergy and of the faithful, bearing lighted candles in their hands, comes from out the *Schola Saxorum* and moves to the chanting of psalms along the extent of the ancient Circus of Nero. The evening hour, the lighted torches, the influence of the place and season, bring the memory of those first Christian victims of the persecution vividly before the mind. All the time the great bell of St Peter's tolls in solemn triumph and the reddish glow from the torches of the chanting priests is reflected on the obelisk of Caligula which once stood at the *spina* of the Circus, thus enabling one to read the inscription engraved by Sixtus V on the base of the monolith: *Christus vincit, Christus regnat, Christus imperat.*

The passages for the sung portions of the Mass have not been chosen according to the classical rules of the Gregorian Antiphonary, but show complete independence of judgement. Thus the Antiphon for the Introit is derived from the Epistle of St Paul to the Romans, which in its turn is inspired by Psalm xliii. Psalm xlv follows it.

Introit (Rom. viii, 36, 37): "For thy sake, O Lord, we are put to death all the day long. We are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. But in all these things we overcome because of him that hath loved us."

<sup>1</sup> The author of this work is personally interested in recalling these sacred memories of the Circus of Nero, for in that cemetery there await the day of resurrection the bones of his own beloved parents.



Psalm xlv, i: "Our God is our refuge and strength: a helper in troubles, which have found us exceedingly."

The Collect is the following: "O Lord, who hast been pleased to consecrate the firstfruits of the Roman Faith by the blood of an immense host of martyrs; grant that the fortitude which they displayed in that fierce conflict may so strengthen our courage that we may worthily rejoice together in their triumph."

The Lesson (Heb. xi, 33 *sqq.*) is the same as for January 20, only that verses 39 and 40 are added with a delicate allusion to the coming martyrdom of the Holy Apostles which we shall celebrate in two days' time: "And all these being approved by the testimony of faith, received not the promise, God providing some better thing for us, that they should not be perfected without us."

The Protomartyrs of Rome, whom thou, O Paul, together with Peter, regenerated to Christ, shall not receive their full reward without you. They shall go before you and shall await you at the threshold of heaven in order to enter with you, two days hence, on the day of your triumph. Moreover, while their mortal remains shall sleep the sleep of death beside your own, their glorious souls shall form your brightest crown in heaven.

The Gradual, the alleluiatic verse, and the Gospel are like those for February 15.

For the Antiphon of the Offertory, on the other hand, the modern composer has chosen that one which is used *ad Communionem* on June 12 in the Mass of the martyrs Basilides and his companions. It would have been better to respect the Gregorian tradition and, if it was desired to take this Antiphon for to-day's solemnity, the chant should have been inserted in the place originally destined to it. The Gregorian melody of a *Communio* can never be adapted to an Offertory.

*Posside filios morte punitorum.* God takes possession of the children of the martyrs when his love rules over them fully and entirely, in such wise that that which the flames of the pyre accomplished when they consumed the bodies of their fathers as a burnt-offering to the Lord, the flame of divine charity may also accomplish in their sons and their descendants.

The Secret is ancient: "Receive, O Lord, the holy oblation which we offer to thee this day in memory of the torments endured by thy martyrs; and as it gave to them fortitude in the midst of the flames of persecution, so may it bestow on us constancy in enduring the adversities of life."

The remedy is the same against an identical innate disease. The divine Eucharist, which fashioned the martyrs of the first



three centuries of the Church, will also make valiant Christians, worthy of their name, even in the twentieth century.

The Antiphon for the Communion is taken from to-day's Gospel (Matt. xxiv, 9, 13): "Then shall they deliver you up to be afflicted, and shall put you to death: and you shall be hated by all nations for my name's sake. But he that shall persevere to the end, he shall be saved."

For what reason does Jesus foretell these trials to his followers? He does so not only with the intention of training our minds to sustain them better, since a battle prepared for is already half won, but also in order to show us that all the plots and the hatreds of the persecutors cannot evade the sphere of his divine knowledge, nor can they avoid that of his Providence. The wicked have only so much power over the good as the Lord allows them, merely sufficient to refine the virtue of the saints just as gold is purified in the crucible.

These are the words of the Post-Communion: "Grant, O Lord, to those who have eaten of the heavenly bread, that spirit of intrepid fortitude by which thy glorious martyrs, torn by the fangs of wild beasts, became as spotless bread offered in sacrifice to Christ." This thought comes from the martyr Ignatius of Antioch, who compared himself to the wheat of the Lord which was to be ground by the teeth of the lions.

In honour of the Protomartyrs of the Circus of Nero, we will quote the fine epigraph of Pope Damasus commemorating the extensive draining operations carried out by order of that Pontiff in the area of the Vatican Cemetery.

CINGEBANT · LATICES · MONTES · TENEROQVE · MEATV  
CORPORA · MVLTORVM · CINERES · ATQVE · OSSA · RIGABANT  
NON · TVLIT · HOC · DAMASVS · COMMVNI · LEGE · SEPVLTO  
POST · REQVIEM · TRISTES · ITERVM · PERSOLVERE · POENAS  
PROTINVS · AGGRESSVS · MAGNV · SVPERARE · LABOREM  
AGGERIS · IMMENSI · DEIECIT · CVLMINA · MONTIS  
INTIMA · SOLLICITE · SCRVTATVS · VISCERA · TERRAE  
SICCAVIT · TOTVM · QVIDQVID · MADEFECERAT · HVMOR  
INVENIT · FONTEM · PRAEBET · QVI · DONA · SALVTIS  
HAEC · CVRAVIT · MERCVRIVS · LEVITA · FIDELIS

The waters flowed down the hillside and soaking through the ground washed the bodies, the ashes, the bones of the dead. Damasus would not, however, any longer permit that those who in accordance with the common law lay in the sepulchre should again be exposed to outrage in their last rest. Therefore he undertook an immense work, that of leveling the lofty hill. In carrying out this enterprise he achieved two objects. By examining the innermost parts of the hill,



he drained away all the moisture of that district, and found besides a spring of water which, brought to the baptistery, endows us with the grace of eternal salvation. The faithful Levite Mercurius superintended these improvements.

## JUNE 28

ST LEO I, POPE (FOR THE SECOND TIME)

*Station at St Peter's.*

To-day occurs the anniversary of the translation of the body of St Leo the Great from the portico of the Vatican Basilica to the interior of the church, by order of Sergius I (687-701). So great was the renown of the famous Pontiff that the Romans celebrated another solemn feast to his memory to-day—*Sancti Leonis secundo*—as the Gregorian Sacramentary notifies, in agreement with many other liturgical documents of the same period.

In times nearer our own, the ancient devotion of the Eternal City towards him whom had saved her from Attila and from Genseric having somewhat lessened, *Sancti Leonis secundo* became without more ado St Leo II, whose pontificate, as a matter of fact, was of short duration and without any event of importance.

On the other hand, St Leo the Great was the object of very marked devotion in the early Middle Ages, and to-day's feast, instituted by the Romans on the very day on which they celebrated the vigil of SS Peter and Paul, bears witness to this.

The inscription which Sergius I placed upon the new tomb of St Leo draws attention to the miracles and graces obtained thereat by the faithful; and the *Ordo Romanus* of Benedict the Canon, in its turn, describes how, in the twelfth century, the Pope on the most solemn festivals before commencing the night vigil at the altar of St Peter was wont to go with a smoking censer to incense the tomb of St Leo the Great.

The Mass *Sacerdotes tui* is the same as on May 28 for the feast of St Augustine with the exception of the Collects and the Lessons.

The first Collect is thus worded: "O God, who didst raise up blessed Pope Leo to rank with thy saints in glory; grant, in thy mercy, that we who keep his festival may also follow the example of his life."

The first Lesson is identical with that of the feast of St Damasus I on December 11. It compares the priesthood of Jesus with the symbolical priesthood of the Jews, in order to



increase our confidence in the sublime merits and in the mediation of so great a Pontiff, who cannot fail to be acceptable to the divine Father. Besides this, the priestly qualities of Jesus described by St Paul in this magnificent passage of the Epistle to the Hebrews are as an example and a rule for the life of every priest.

The Gospel is that assigned to the feast of St Nicholas on December 6. The five talents entrusted to the most industrious of all the servants represent those saintly bishops who, placed at the head of the Catholic hierarchy, render to their Lord the most abundant and most profitable fruit of their apostolate through the Sacraments and the teaching of the Faith.

This is the beautiful prayer preceding the Anaphora: "Grant, O Lord, we beseech thee, that by the intercession of blessed Leo we may profit by this offering; for it is the sacrifice by which thou wouldst loosen the sins of the whole world."

In the Eucharistic prayer after Holy Communion we ask as follows: "O God, who hast granted to the soul of thy servant Leo the reward of everlasting bliss; grant, in thy mercy, that we who are weighed down by the burden of our sins may be relieved by his intercession with thee."

All these three Collects of to-day are used likewise on the feast of St Gregory the Great, who, at Rome, had, in common with St Leo, received merits as well as honour and veneration.

Several churches and chapels arose within the city in honour of Leo the Great. Martinelli records one, not far from the title of St Lawrence in *Damaso*; another on the Cœlian Hill is named in a bull of Gregory VII, in favour of the Abbey of St Paul; a third memorial of St Leo stood near the church of St Vibiana, where there was a monastery dedicated to the martyrs Simplicius, Faustinus, and Viatrix.

Outside the Eternal City, also, there were ancient sanctuaries in honour of this celebrated Pontiff, among which we may mention the church of St Leo at Leprignano, which dates back to the ninth century at least, and is now a national monument. It is small in size, but, with its marble *transenna*, its apse, and its stone *pergula* in front of the altar, it forms a most interesting example of what from the artistic and liturgical point of view even the smallest country parish churches must have been in the early Middle Ages.



JUNE 28

ST IRENÆUS, BISHOP AND MARTYR

Liturgists humbly submit to the competent authority their petition that the more important liturgical periods, such as this time of preparation for the solemn feast of the Princes of the Apostles, should not in any way be changed by alterations in the rubrics and by new Offices. Rather let St Irenæus be commemorated on some other day, and let June 28 be once more dedicated to St Leo the Great, whose translation was purposely made by Sergius I to coincide with the vigil of the Holy Apostles in order to draw greater attention to the bond which connects the two festivals. To move the feast of St Leo to July 3, as in the present Missal, means depriving that commemoration of its peculiar historical significance in defiance of a liturgical tradition dating back at least eleven centuries.

The Office of St Irenæus of Lyons has only been placed in the universal Calendar within the last few years. Irenæus, however, well deserved this honour, not only as being the disciple of St Polycarp, who was himself the disciple of St John the Evangelist, but also because of his authority as a Doctor of the early Church, of his martyrdom, and of his relationship with the Roman Church, as well as for the special place which he occupies in the ecclesiastical history of the second century.

Irenæus came on one occasion to the Eternal City about the year 177-178 as bearer of a letter to Pope Eleutherius from the clergy of Lyons and Vienne, who, for the greater part, were in prison for the Faith. From that time the disciple of St Polycarp receives from those valiant confessors the laudatory testimony that he was "zealous for the inheritance of Christ."

Having returned to Lyons, Irenæus succeeded the martyr Photinus in the episcopate, and employed all his doctrinal activities in combating the false *gnosis*; so much so that when, under Victor I, the contention concerning the date of Easter became very acute, and the Pope desired to excommunicate all the Eastern Christians who departed in this matter from the Roman usage, Irenæus, with all the authority of his fame, acted as peacemaker (*εἰρηνηποιός*) between the two contending sides, thus doing honour to his name *Εἰρηναῖος*. A tradition, the first mention of which we find in St Jerome's writings, asserts that Irenæus suffered martyrdom under Septimius Severus.

This Mass has all the merits and all the defects of modern



liturgical compositions. The composer plays upon the meaning of the name Irenæus and cannot keep off the theme of his having acted as peacemaker in the time of Pope Victor.

The Introit is drawn from Malachias (ii, 6): "The law of truth was in his mouth, and iniquity was not found in his lips; he walked with me in peace and equity and turned many away from iniquity." Then follows this verse from Psalm lxxvii: "Attend, O my people, to my law: incline your ears to the words of my mouth." In order to hear the voice of God we must bend low our ear and listen, for the Lord usually speaks to us through the medium of other men, our superiors, whom we can only recognize as messengers of the will of God, by our humble faith.

Collect: "O God, who gavest blessed Irenæus, thy martyr and bishop, grace to overcome heresies by the truth of his teaching and happily to establish peace in the Church; give to thy people, we beseech thee, steadfastness in holy religion; and grant thy peace in this our age. Through our Lord."

In the Lesson (2 Tim. iii, 14-17; iv, 1-5), of which a part is also read on the feasts of Doctors, St Paul reminds Timothy of the advantage which the preacher of the Gospel derives from a profound knowledge of the Holy Scriptures. These are to be constantly explained to the faithful, for they contain the divine bread which proceeds from the lips of the Lord for the nourishment of our souls. The apostles foresaw that heresies would assuredly endeavour to defile this source of divine revelation. It sufficed, however, to have put the pastors of the Church on their guard, for as the fan winnows the grain, so the struggle separates the genuinely faithful from those who are only followers in name.

The Gradual consists of two verses from Psalms cxxi and xxxvi, which are applied to St Irenæus as mediator with Pope Victor, that the latter should not excommunicate the churches of Asia because of the differences between them in regard to the observance of Easter. (Psalm cxxi, 8): "For the sake of my brethren and my neighbours I spoke peace of thee. V. (Psalm xxxvi, 37) Keep innocence and behold justice, for there are remnants for the peaceable man."

The holy Gospel, too, promises to the meek and humble of heart, to those, that is, who by their humility will have the power of penetrating other hearts and winning them, the heritage of these same hearts.

The alleluiatic verse is from Ecclesiasticus (vi, 35), and alludes to the special character of St Irenæus, who, having been trained in the school of Polycarp and Photinus, echoed the tradition of those early clergy who were trained directly by the apostles, "Stand in the multitude of ancients that are



wise, and join thyself from thy heart to their wisdom, that thou mayest hear every discourse of God."

The Gospel is derived from St Matthew (x, 28-33), and is already to be found in the Missal in great part for the feast of St Saturninus on November 29. In order to free us from apprehension in the presence of those who would persecute us because of our faith, the Lord employs a twofold argument. Firstly, that of confidence in him without whose permission no hair of our head can be harmed; in the second place, that of a salutary fear: he who shall deny Christ before men shall be denied in his turn by the Lord before the angels in heaven.

The Offertory is taken from Ecclesiasticus (xxiv, 44): "I make doctrine to shine forth to all as the morning light, and I will declare it afar off."

The knowledge of God in the Catholic Church is subject to the same law of growth which we see in all living organisms—an intrinsic development, not an extrinsic evolution. Now the period of patristic theology may be compared to the light of a splendid dawn heralding a radiant day. The Catholic dogmas are already all confirmed as an inheritance bequeathed by the apostles to the Church, but time has not sufficed for the Doctors to compare these truths among themselves and to derive from them all possible deductions, co-ordinating them in a coherent system with its own well-defined terminology accepted by all. This will prove to be the laborious task entrusted to the intellect of Catholicism to carry out during the twenty centuries which have wellnigh elapsed since her history began.

The two Collects which follow are taken from the ancient Mass *pro pace*.

Secret: "O God who sufferest not the nations who believe in thee to be overwhelmed by any peril; vouchsafe to receive the prayers and offerings of thy servants, that in thy mercy thou wouldst grant peace to Christendom and make them secure against all their enemies. Through our Lord."

In the Middle Ages, when this prayer was composed, the word "Christendom" signified all those civilized states on which one and the same Catholic Faith and Catholic legislation under the supreme Pastor at Rome conferred the characteristic note of unity, notwithstanding the multiplicity of their ruling dynasties. Europe, then, although divided into so many states, constituted a single whole which bore a most significant name: Christendom. Nowadays the name remains only in history, but the thing itself is disappearing, as may be seen by the fact that now for more than ten years Europe has been in a condition of civil war, nor have all the conferences of her diplomats yet succeeded in bringing about a



peace to take the place of that peace which Christ alone can give.

The Communion comes from Ecclesiasticus (xxiv, 47): "See ye that I have not laboured for myself only, but for all that seek out the truth." Such is the value of Christian virtue and wisdom. They are not merely an individual possession, but a social treasure, which by its merit, its example, and its teaching redounds to the common advantage of the faithful.

Post-Communion: "O God, the author and lover of peace, to know whom is to live, to serve whom is to reign; shield thy suppliants from all assaults, so that we who trust in thy protection may fear no foe. Through our Lord."

The words of Irenæus are memorable in which he appeals simply to the Catholic tradition, preserved unaltered in the Church of Rome, in order to convince those of error who depart from the teaching of the Church: "She is the greatest and most ancient Church, and, as is known to all, was founded and established at Rome by the most glorious Apostles Peter and Paul."

Then he adds: "It is necessary that the whole Church—that is to say, all the faithful scattered throughout the world—be in agreement with this Church by reason of her primacy—*potiorem principalitatem*—for the Apostolic tradition was ever preserved in her."

## JUNE 28

### THE HOLY VIGIL AT THE TOMB OF THE APOSTLES PETER AND PAUL

Although the present Missal assigns only one Mass to the Vigil of SS Peter and Paul, yet we know from the Lectionary of Würzburg and from the writings of Alcuin that in the eighth century two distinct synaxes were held on this night in Rome—one at the Vatican Basilica, and the other on the Via Ostiensis.

The following is the passage in the Lectionary which relates to St Paul: *In vigiliis sancti Pauli. Lectio Epistolæ beati Pauli apost. ad Galatas: (i, 11-20) Fratres, notum autem facio Evangelium . . . usque . . . quia non mentior.*

*In Natali sancti Pauli. Lect. libr. Actuum Apostolor. (ix, 1-22). In diebus illis Saul autem adhuc spirans minas et caedes in discipulos . . . usque . . . quod hic est Christus.*

When, however, about the time of Adrian I, the work of simplifying the ancient Liturgy was undertaken at Rome, the vigiliary Mass of St Paul was naturally entrusted to the monks, who recited the divine Offices in the splendid basilica dedicated to that saint; the Codices referring only to the



Mass celebrated at St Peter's at which practically all the people attended. Such, indeed, is the state of things as shown by the Gelasian and the Gregorian Sacramentaries and by the Würzburg *Comes*, from which our Missal of to-day depends, as by a chain of many links.

The sung portions of the Mass have reference chiefly to St Peter, but the Collects are common to both the apostles, for the Romans were firm in never separating their commemorations from the moment that even in the East Peter and Paul were likened to two eyes shining in the countenance of the Virgin Church.

The Introit is taken from the Gospel of St John (xxi, 18-19). Grace wisely adapts itself to nature and chooses its own time. Peter, as a young man, was his own master, but when he shall have assumed the pastoral charge and shall belong only to God and his flock, then shall he no longer be free to do as he will with his own life. Another shall gird him and lead him whither nature indeed dreads to go, but where the Holy Spirit will sacrifice him as a victim to the glory of God. Jesus, who can die only once, is desirous of immolating himself incessantly to the divine Father for the salvation of mankind. Therefore he chooses Peter to take his place, appearing to him on the Appian Way according to the old legend, and to the apostle who asked him *Domine quo vadis?* replying with the words: *Eo Romam iterum crucifigi.*

The following is the Collect: "We beseech thee, almighty God, that thou suffer no disturbance to shake us, whom thou hast founded as on a rock on the confession of thine apostle."

The Lesson (Acts iii, 1-10) describes the miracle worked by Peter at the gate of the Temple, called Beautiful.

How powerful is the grace of the Holy Ghost by which Peter has been transformed! Hardly three months have passed since the words of a simple maid-servant terrified him into denying Jesus; and now, without money and without influence, he fearlessly casts in the face of the Sanhedrim the accusation of their being deicides, furnishing the most overwhelming proof of the truth of his words by working a miracle in the name of him whom they condemned to death as a blasphemer.

The Gradual is similar to that for June 11.

The Gospel (John xxi, 15-19) follows, with St Peter's triple protestation of love for Jesus and the prophecy of his crucifixion. These two scenes have an evident connection. If Peter loves the Master "more than the others," as he is to be placed over the others in the pastoral office, so must he copy even more faithfully than the rest the passion and death of Jesus.



The Offertory is the same as on November 30.

This is the Secret: "Hallow the offerings of thy people, O Lord, we beseech thee, by the intercession of thy apostles; and cleanse us from the stain of our sins."

The Communion (John xxi, 15, 17) is drawn from to-day's Gospel. "Simon, son of John, lovest thou me more than these? Lord, thou knowest that I love thee."

An ordinary degree of virtue is by no means sufficient for those who are placed in the highest ranks of the hierarchy and charged with the pastoral office. The duty of a bishop is so arduous that it requires a constant immolation of self; wherefore St Paul says: *Quotidie morior*. In order, then, that he may worthily fill an Office of so much importance and responsibility Christ demands of Peter a supreme love: *plus his*. St Bernard, therefore, rightly says that it is monstrous for a man to be set over others as regards rank and position if he do not also excel in virtue.

The Post-Communion is as follows: "Thou hast filled us, O Lord, with food from heaven; by the intercession of thine apostles keep us from all harm."

According to the *Ordo* of Benedict the Canon, the Pope and all his Court used to go in the afternoon of this day to St Peter's, where Vespers were said. The usual *computatio* followed, and the Pope offered with his own hands a cup of wine to all the higher clergy who had taken part in the ceremony. Supper was prepared in the so-called *domus aguliae*, whither the Pope and the cardinals retired to rest themselves.

At midnight the signal was given for the vigiliary Office. The procession of bishops and clergy passed along the *atrium* or *paradisus* of the church to the light of a few torches. The Pontiff, who was preceded by four men-servants with lighted tapers, stopped to incense first the tomb of Leo the Great, then that of the famous Gregory and also the altars of St Sebastian, St Tiburtius of the Veronica, and of St Pastor, which were held in great veneration at that time.

From there the procession descended to the sepulchre of the apostle in the crypt, which was likewise incensed, and the Office of the Vigil finally began.

It is well known that in Rome two Offices of Matins were said on feast-days. At St Peter's the first Office was sung below in the crypt of the Apostle, and the second above at the altar in the basilica. After the first three Psalms, nine Lessons followed, with their responsories, of which the first three, taken from the Acts of the Apostles, were sung by the Canons, the fourth and fifth *de sermonibus apostolorum Petri et Pauli* by the *judices*, the sixth by a bishop, the seventh by one of the cardinals, the eighth by the *prior basilicarius*,



and, lastly, the ninth, with the homily on the Gospel, by the Pope himself.

When, according to custom, the Pope before beginning the Lesson sang : *Jube domne, benedicere*, none of those present ventured to reply : *Nullus benedicit eum*, remarks Benedict the Canon, *nisi Spiritus Sanctus*. Therefore all replied *Amen*.

For their attendance in choir on that night, the cardinals, as well as the Pope, received the customary *presbiterium* from the proceeds of the alms deposited by the people on the altar of St Peter's. Thus the Pope received twenty *denarii papienses*, the cardinals, deacons, and cantors, five; but to the archdeacon, as he was responsible for paying the soloists who sang the responsories, were given eighteen *denarii*, only a little less than to the Pope himself. This ancient Roman tradition has been in part preserved, for even now, every time that the Pope celebrates High Mass in St Peter's, the Archpriest of the basilica offers him a purse containing a few "giuli," corresponding to about twenty lire of the present money : *pro missa bene cantata*.

After the Lessons the leader of the cantors intoned the *Te Deum*, which was followed by the Collect and the Pontifical blessing, and thus ended the first vigiliary Office.

The choir having returned to the upper part of the basilica, the altar of the *Confessio* was incensed, and the Pope intoned the words : *Domine, labia mea aperies*, followed by the *Invitatorium*, and the usual psalms for festival matins. Lauds were sung at break of day and immediately afterwards Mass was celebrated, at which, after the first Lesson, took place the traditional acclamations or *laudes* in honour of the Pope : *Exaudi Christe. Summo et egregio et ter beatissimo papae N. vita.—Salvator mundi. R. Tu illum adiuva.—Sancta Maria. R. Tu illum adiuva*, etc. The holy Sacrifice being ended, the Pope was crowned with the tiara as a mark of joy and triumph : *debet . . . coronari in tanta festivitate, cuius vicarius est*.

## JUNE 29

### THE HOLY APOSTLES PETER AND PAUL

#### *Station at the Vatican Basilica and at St Paul's.*

Our forefathers regarded Easter as the greatest feast in the whole liturgical year; but, for the Romans, there was another great feast in the month of June, which, if it did not surpass that of Easter in splendour, most certainly equalled it. This was the *natalis* of the two Princes of the Apostles, Peter and Paul, or, to be more exact, it was the festival of the papal primacy as represented by the two chief apostles,



the feast of the Pope, the *natalis urbis*—that is, of Christian Rome—the triumph of the Cross over Jove and his thunderbolts, over his representatives, the *pontifices maximi*, residing in the *Regia* of the Forum.

As in the case of Christmas, this feast also had a threefold Liturgy. St Ambrose, agreeing with the Philocalian Calendar, attests in a celebrated hymn in honour of the Princes of the Apostles that to-day :

*Trinis celebratur viis  
Festa Sanctorum Martyrum,*

whereas, on the other hand, the Martyrology of St Jerome, which in this matter depends from the Laterculus of Philocalus, gives us further information by adding that besides the festal stations at the two sepulchres of Peter and Paul, victims of the cruelty of Nero, a third was celebrated in *Catacumbis* from the time of the consulship of Tuscus and Bassus. This, then, takes us back to the year 258, when under Valerian, on account of the confiscation of the cemeteries, the bodies of the two apostles were removed from their place of burial and hidden in the property known as *ad Catacumbas*. The excavations made there during the last ten years or so have in fact amply confirmed this ancient Roman tradition.

The bodies of the two Princes of the Apostles remained at the second milestone on the Appian Way for nearly two years. We do not know the motives which decided the Christians to choose that refuge, nor how the owners of the property managed to evade the law of confiscation.

Some writers have supposed that the two apostles, or at least St Peter, had already during their lifetime honoured by their presence that country estate situated at no great distance from the Porta Capena, and therefore within the radius of Jewish influence. Others, again, like St Gregory the Great, have thought that the first concealment of the two holy bodies in that spot took place immediately after their martyrdom, the more so because the *Liber Pontificalis* seems to suggest that the two tombs on the Via Triumphalis and the Via Ostiensis were only constructed under Pope Anacletus.

It is unlikely that these secondary questions will ever be entirely cleared up; that which remains fully proved is that on June 29 in the year 258, *Tusco et Basso consulibus*, the relics of the Princes of the Apostles were hidden in *Catacumbis*, where, even after they had been replaced in their original sepulchres, an intense and popular *cultus* developed on the part of the faithful, of which the *Basilica Apostolorum*, which still stands at the foot of the hill crowned by the



majestic Mausoleum of Cæcilia Metella, is the solemn and monumental expression.

The danger of profanation on the part of the pagans which threatened the two holy tombs if the sacred relics were not quickly removed by the Christians, aroused a sort of reaction amongst them. The hiding-place on the Appian Way became the true cathedral of Rome and of the world, and the date of the new *depositio* easily caused forgetfulness of that of the first, which had taken place immediately after the martyrdom. The fact is that the Eastern and Frankish Churches at first knew nothing at all of the date of June 29, and celebrated the feast of Peter and Paul—who were never separated—some on December 27 or 28, others after the Epiphany on January 18 or 25, or on February 22. Rome, on the other hand, always clung firmly to the date of June 29, which, owing to papal influence, ended by prevailing not only in the West, but also in the East.

Towards the beginning of the third century we find solemn testimony to the fame of the two apostolic sepulchres throughout Christendom. Eusebius has preserved for us some fragments of the work of the presbyter Gaius against the Montanist Proclus, in which the author, resuming the ancient argument of Irenæus against the novelty of the heresy, says, amongst other things: "I can show thee the tombs of the apostles, since, whether thou goest to the Vatican, or whether thou goest on the Ostian Way, thou wilt find the 'trophies' (*τρόπαια*) of the Founders of this Church."

From this testimony and from the meaning itself of the word *τρόπαια* used by Gaius to show that the tombs of the two apostles on the very site of their last combat represented their trophy of victory, one can well understand how it came to pass that when the cemeteries were confiscated during the persecution of Valerian, the sepulchres of the Princes of the Apostles would certainly have been desecrated by the pagans if their relics had not been removed in good time.

Nevertheless, two years later, when Gallienus restored to the Church the confiscated properties, the fame of the *τρόπαια* built by Pope Anacletus was so great that it seemed out of order not to bring back the venerable remains, so they were consequently replaced once more in their tombs on the Via Triumphalis and the Via Ostiensis. The *Liber Pontificalis* attributes the initiative of this action to Pope Cornelius (251-2), but the translation can hardly have been carried out until the time of Pope Dionysius or Pope Felix I, who effectually concerned themselves with the liturgical *cultus* of the martyrs in the Roman cemeteries.

Constantine and Helen built two famous basilicas over the tombs of SS Peter and Paul, which they endowed with rich



revenues and valuable fittings. Constantine caused this distich to be inscribed on the triumphal arch of the Vatican Basilica :

QVOD · DVCE · TE · MVNDVS · SVRREXIT · IN · ASTRA · TRIVMPANS  
HANC · CONSTANTINVS · VICTOR · TIBI · CONDIDIT · AVLAM

The basilica erected by Constantine over the tomb of the Doctor of the Gentiles already in the year 386 appeared to be insufficient to contain the stream of the faithful and of the pilgrims who crowded thither. Valentinian II, therefore, began to construct a church of far greater proportions, and this work, continued by Theodosius and Honorius, was finally completed by Galla Placidia and St Leo the Great. This is proved by the inscription still to be seen around the mosaic of the triumphal arch in the basilica of St Paul :

THEODOSIVS · COEPIT · PERFECIT · HONORIVS · AVLAM  
DOCTORIS · MVNDI · SACRATAM · CORPORE · PAVLI  
PLACIDIAE · PIA · MENS · OPERIS · DECVS · OMNE · PATERNI  
GAVDET · PONTIFICIS · STUDIO · SPLENDERE · LEONIS

In order the better to insure the safety of the actual cases in which were contained the bodies of the two apostles, Constantine had them first enclosed in a massive covering of bronze—*quod est immobile*—as the *Liber Pontificalis* notes, and then placed within two sepulchral vaults, which he adorned with regal splendour. On the sarcophagus of St Peter was a cross of gold with this inscription :

CONSTANTINVS · AVG · ET · HELENA · AVG · HANC · DOMVM · RE-  
GALEM . . .  
SIMILI · FVLGORE · CORVSCANS · AVLA · CIRCVDAT

The Emperor also placed a golden cross of great size on the tomb of the Doctor of the Gentiles.

Leo the Great entrusted the custody of the two apostolic tombs to a special *collegium* of ecclesiastics to whom he gave the title of *Cubiculares*, which was borne by those who attended on the *sacrum cubiculum* of the emperors. Pope Simplicius afterwards appointed a body of clergy who served in turn and who were charged with the administration of the sacraments of baptism and penance which many preferred to receive at the tombs of the apostles.

Other priests who were attached to the neighbouring titular churches were honoured by acting also as *hebdomadari* at the Vatican and Ostian Basilicas. They took their turn in celebrating the *Missa Maior* at the altars of the two apostolic "Confessions," a rule that remained in force for several



centuries, even when the office of these presbyters had grown to much greater importance and the famous *cardinales* of the eleventh century arose, who were the only electors of the Pope.

Near the Vatican Basilica Leo the Great built a monastery dedicated to the martyrs John and Paul. Then three others in succession were founded in the neighbourhood, so that the trained choirs of four Benedictine monasteries began to fill the Basilica of St Peter with their psalmody by day and by night. The monks of the monastery of San Martino for a time held a kind of primacy over the other three. Its Abbot also held the dignity of *archicantor*, and it would seem that he was at the head of the *schola cantorum* which Gregory the Great had re-established at St Peter's.

We find also two monasteries existing near the basilica on the Via Ostiensis, long before the eighth century. Gregory II restored them, and gave over to them definitely the service of the church and the administration of its vast patrimony. But so great was the throng of the faithful who crowded to the sepulchre of St Paul that the single Mass which it was the custom to celebrate in those days did not suffice. Gregory III, therefore, ordered that five Masses should be said each day, but not more than one at the same altar.

The four Vatican monasteries from which had come a Pope—St Leo IV—ceased to exist about the tenth century, and the monks ended by becoming canons. Those at St Paul's were more firm in their arduous vocation, and have, therefore, been able to carry on the Benedictine tradition in that sanctuary through the centuries to the present day.

Everything in those ancient surroundings, whose history extends back for more than nineteen centuries, is inspiring, and appeals to the soul. From the abbatial chair of St Paul's Gregory VII and Paschal II were raised to the apostolic throne. Pope St Paul I was living at St Paul's when death came upon him. Pope John XVIII, after a pontificate of five years, renounced the tiara, preferring to be a monk at St Paul's, where he ended his days in peace.

A great number of saints, among whom we find SS Odo, Majolus, Odilo, Peter Cavensis, and Blessed John Rainucci, have prayed and sojourned there, and in some instances have lived for many years amid those peaceful surroundings, sanctified by liturgical prayer and quiet work, where, at the end of the eighteenth century, another Benedictine, Pius VII, whilst teaching sacred theology to the novices of that abbey, was preparing himself for the long martyrdom of his pontificate.

Prudentius has painted in glowing colours a picture of what the feast of the two Princes of the Apostles was to the



Romans in the fourth century. It would spoil the poem if we were not to quote it in its entirety.

Plus solito coeunt ad gaudia; dic, amice, quid sit:  
Romam per omnem cursitant ovariantque.  
Festus Apostolici nobis rediit hic dies triumphi,  
Pauli atque Petri nobilis cruore.

In unusual numbers the people crowd the streets; why, my friend, do they hasten thus throughout the city and fill all Rome with shouts of joy? Once more is here the triumphal feast of the holy Apostles, sanctified by the venerable blood of Peter and of Paul.

Unus utrumque dies, pleno tamen innovatus anno  
Vidit superba morte laureatum.  
Scit Tiberina palus quae flumine lambitur propinquo,  
Binis dicatum cespitem trophaeis.

The same day, but with the space of a year between, sees them crowned with laurel through their glorious death. Thus the marshy shore of the Tiber, washed by the river flowing close by, was doubly consecrated by two trophies.

Et crucis et gladii testis: quibus irrigans easdem  
Bis fluxit imber sanguinis per herbas.  
Prima Petrum rapuit sententia, legibus Neronis  
Pendere iussum praeeminente ligno.

For it had been a witness to the twofold victory of a cross and of a sword. Its turf was twice watered as by a sprinkling of blood. The sentence fell first upon Peter, condemned by the laws of Nero to hang upon a cross.

Ille tamen veritus celsae decus emulando mortis,  
Ambire tanti gloriam Magistri,  
Exigit ut pedibus mersum caput imprimant supinis,  
Quo spectet imum stipitem cerebro.

But lest by dying the same death he should seem to emulate his Master's glory, he desires to be crucified with his feet raised upwards and his head hanging down at the foot of the cross.

Figitur ergo manus subter sola, versus in cacumen;  
Hoc mente maior, quo minor figura.  
Noverat ex humili caelum citius solere adiri:  
Deiecit ora spiritum daturus.

So his hands were nailed low down and his body uplifted; thus the more humble his posture, the more noble his soul. For he knew that it is easier to reach heaven from a lowly position, and in giving up his spirit Peter wished his head to be abased.

Ut teres orbis iter flexi rota percucurrit anni,  
Diemque eundem sol reduxit ortus.  
Evomit in iugulum Pauli Nero fervidum furorem,  
Iubet feriri Gentium Magistrum.

When the shining chariot which marks the annual course of the sun had returned to its starting point, and the orb rose once more on the same day as the previous year, the madman Nero cast his eyes upon Paul and commanded that the blow should fall on the neck of the Doctor of the Gentiles.



*Ipse prius sibimet finem cito dixerat futurum :  
Ad Christum eundum est, iam resolver, inquit.  
Nec mora; protrahitur, poenae datur, immolatur ense.  
Nec hora vatem, nec dies fefellit.*

The Apostle had already foretold that his end was near: "I must go to Christ," he said; "I am already loosed from earthly bonds." There is no delay, he is arrested, condemned and slain by the sword. The prophecy is fulfilled both in the year and in the day.

*Dividit ossa duum Tiberis sacer, ex utraque ripa  
Inter sacrata dum fuit sepulchra.  
Dextra Petrum regio tectis tenet aureis receptum  
Canens oliva, murmurans fluento.*

The bodies of the two Apostles are separated by the Tiber, whose waters flow between the banks consecrated by their sepulchres. Peter is on the right bank in his glorious basilica, amidst the olive trees and the gentle murmuring of a fountain.

*Namque supercilio saxi liquor ortus excitavit  
Frondem perennem chrismatis feracem;  
Nunc pretiosa ruit per marmora lubricatque clivum  
Donec virenti fluctu et colymbo.*

The water rises at the summit of the hill, refreshes the olives with their evergreen leaves, from whose fruit the chrism is made. Now the spring which flows through a channel of marble moistens the hillside, until it is presently caught in a basin.

*Inferior tumuli pars est, ubi lapsibus sonoris  
Stagnum nivali volvitur profundo.  
Omnicolor vitreas pictura superne tingit undas,  
Musci relucent et virescit aurum.*

In the lower part of the sepulchral basilica the water falls with an echoing sound into a deep and icy cold pool. From on high the paintings of the baptistery repeat their many colours in the glasslike surface of the waters. The moss of the basin seems to radiate, and on the gold of the vault is reflected the green of the grass.

*Cyaneusque latex umbram trahit imminentis ostri;  
Credas moveri fluctibus lacunar  
Pastor oves alit, ipse illic gelidi rigare fontis  
Videt sitire quas fluenta Christi.*

The clear water borrows the golden tint of the room and thou canst see the ripple of the waves mirrored on the vaulting. Here the Pastor himself shall water at the cool source the flock thirsting for the fountains of Christ.

*Parte alia titulum Pauli via servat ostiensis,  
Qua stringit amnis cespitem sinistrum.  
Regia pompa loci est: princeps bonus has sacravit arces  
Lusitque magnis ambitum talentis.*

At the opposite side, on the Ostian Way, stands the sepulchre of Paul, near the left bank of the Tiber. The grandeur of the building is truly royal; our pious Emperor dedicated this shrine, and poured out abundant treasure within its walls.



Bracteolas trabibus sublevit, ut omnis aurulenta  
Lux esset intus, ceu iubar sub ortu.  
Subdidit et parias fulvis laquearibus columnas,  
Distinguit illic quas quaternus ordo.

He covered the beams with sheets of fine gold, so that the light within the church is golden, like unto the rising sun. The ceiling is upheld by four rows of columns made of Parian marble.

Tum camuros hyalo insigni varie cucurrit arcus;  
Sic prata vernis floribus renident.  
Ecce duas Fidei summo Patre conferente dotes,  
Urbi colendas quas dedit togatae.

The arches are decorated with mosaic work, so that the whole resembles a field brilliant with spring flowers. Behold the holy Father presents to the veneration of the City of Rome this double treasure of our Faith.

Aspice per bifidas plebs Romula funditur plateas,  
Lux in duobus fervet una festis.  
Nos ad utrumque tamen gressu properemus incitato  
Et his et illis perfruamur hymnis.

See in the streets how the crowds of the people of Rome move this way and that; the feasts indeed are two, but the joy is one. And we, hastening with rapid steps, shall visit both the sanctuaries and take our part in the celebrations of each.

Ibimus ulterius qua fert via pontis Hadriani,  
Laevam deinde fluminis petemus.  
Transtiberina prius solvit sacra pervigil sacerdos,  
Mox huc recurrit duplicatque vota.

So we will proceed over Hadrian's bridge, and afterwards seek the left bank of the river. The Pontiff after the night vigil celebrates the first Mass in the sanctuary beyond the Tiber, then he hastens to the Ostian Way to renew there the rite.

Haec didicisse sat est Romae tibi : tu domum reversus,  
Diem bifestum sic colas memento.

If thou dwellest in Rome let this suffice to thee, but when thou shalt have returned to thy country once more, forget not to celebrate this twice festive day.

Prudentius does not mention the feast of the two apostles celebrated *ad Catacumbas*, of which St Ambrose speaks. The reason for this omission may be that the papal Mass was not said there on this day.

There were also other sanctuaries which commemorated the sojourn of Peter and Paul in Rome, and on this day they must have attracted multitudes of pilgrims. Between the Via Salaria and the Via Nomentana was the Baptistery *ad Nymphas*, together with the deeply revered *sedes sancti Petri*



which confirmed the tradition of the pastoral ministry exercised in that place by the son of Jona.<sup>1</sup> On the Viminal the title of the Pastor, and that of Prisca on the Aventine, both claimed the honour of having shown hospitality to the two apostles. On the Appian Way the *titulus de fasciola* recalled to the Romans of the fourth century one of the most touching episodes in the life of St Peter, whilst another group of the faithful hastened to the Esquiline on this feast day to kiss devoutly the iron chain which had once bound the first Vicar of Christ.

The labyrinthine passages of the Cemetery of Priscilla and Domitilla may possibly still lead to the tombs of the first disciples of St Paul, and may have echoed the words of his preaching. It is, however, uncertain whether the apostle, during the period of his double detention at Rome, lived in the *Castra peregrina* on the Cœlian Hill, or in the barracks of the Pretorian Guards near the Via Nomentana, as might be thought from an expression in the Epistle of St Paul to the Philippians in which he himself describes the favourable impression he had made: *ἐν ὅλῳ τῷ πραιτωρίῳ*.<sup>2</sup>

It is certain that St Paul's first friends and followers not only jealously preserved the chains that he wore for Christ's sake—*Ego Paulus, vinctus Christi*—of which St Gregory the Great speaks, and which are still venerated at the Ostian Basilica—but they also faithfully kept the tradition of the apostle, having sojourned on the Appian Way, on the Aventine, on the Viminal, and in the Trastevere.

An ancient legend asserts that St Paul was not beheaded precisely at the second milestone on the Via Ostiensis, but two miles farther on, in a byway of the Via Laurentina called *ad Aquas Salvias*. In the time of Narses this statement from the apocryphal writers was fully credited by the Romans, so the Byzantine commander erected on that spot a monastery for Eastern ascetics, natives of Cilicia and consequently compatriots of St Paul.

Later, St Gregory the Great, on January 25, 604, having judged it to be unseemly that the Massa Salvia, consecrated by the blood of the apostle, should not add to the glory of his sepulchre, handed it over to the Ostian Basilica "in order," the Pope declared, "that more numerous lamps should shine around the tomb of him who had enlightened the whole world by the brilliance of his preaching."

This idea was again beautifully expressed in an ancient distich which was to be seen on the tomb of the Doctor of the Gentiles:

<sup>1</sup> Matt. xvi, 17.

<sup>2</sup> Philip. i, 13.



HIC · POSITVS · CAELI · TRANSCENDIT · CVLMINA · PAVLVS  
CVI · DEBET · TOTVS · QVOD · CHRISTO · CREDIDIT ORBIS

Here lies that Paul who was raised above the heavens  
And to whom the whole world owes its faith in Christ.

Unfortunately the more ancient *Ordines Romani* tell us very little about the feasts of the saints at Rome, and are, therefore, silent also about the solemnity of the two Princes of the Apostles. The Leonine Sacramentary, however, preserves at least twenty-eight Masses for June 29, but several of them merely represent an alternative use. In them we find frequent allusions to the sack of Rome by Genseric, which at the prayer of St Leo was stopped on the *natalis* of the apostles, in order that the Romans might keep the festival in perfect safety.

There are two stations, the one at St Peter's, the other at St Paul's, but in both Masses the Collects are common to the two apostles indissolubly united in a single *cultus*. It is just because of this ancient feeling which is common not only to the Romans, but to all the Fathers, that the two Founders of the Roman Church can never be divided. These are the words spoken by Leo the Great in a homily delivered at St Peter's on this very feast: *De quorum meritis atque virtutibus* (that is, of Peter and Paul), *quae omnem loquendi superant facultatem, nihil diversum, nihil debemus sentire discretum: quia illos et electio pares, et labor similes, et finis fecit aequales.*<sup>1</sup>

In the so-called Gelasian Sacramentary, besides a vigiliary Mass and a festival Mass, common to both the apostles, we find two more Masses for to-day, the one *in Natal. sancti Petri proprie*, and the other *in Natal. sancti Pauli proprie*.

As an exception the feast has also an evening Office containing a number of Collects.

The Gregorian Sacramentary is almost identical in this respect, save that the station at St Paul's, according to the Würzburg List of Gospels, is deferred to the following day, June 30, whilst in the *Comes* of the Epistles, which is of an earlier date, the two stations of the Vatican and the Ostian Basilicas are celebrated on the same day, June 29, as Prudentius and St Ambrose assert.

<sup>1</sup> *Serm. I in Nat. Apostol., P.L. LIV, col. 427-28.*



## THE FIRST MASS AT DAWN

*Station at St Peter's.*

*Transtiberina prius solvit sacra pervigil sacerdos*, sings Prudentius. After the solemn vigils at St Peter's the Mass of the Aurora begins.

The Antiphon for the Introit is derived from the Acts of the Apostles (xii, 11), and describes the astonishment of Peter when he comes to himself from the state of ecstasy in which he remained whilst the Angel led him out of prison. His words are a cry of wonder and humble thanksgiving to the Lord, who takes care of his servants that trust in him: "Now I know in very deed that the Lord hath sent his angel; and hath delivered me out of the hand of Herod, and from all the expectation of the people of the Jews."

The Collect refers especially to the Roman Church, and is as follows: "O God, who hast made this day holy by the martyrdom of thy apostles Peter and Paul; grant unto thy Church, that as from them she first received the faith, so she may in all things follow their holy precepts."

The Lesson (Acts xii, 1-11) tells of the imprisonment of Peter and his miraculous liberation by the Angel. The details of this event as described by St Luke are most impressive. Peter is in prison and the whole Church is praying without ceasing for him, whilst God, in the meantime, delays the working of a miracle in his favour until the last moment, when his execution is now imminent. This is always God's hour, in which help can no longer be expected from man; it is the fatal hour, the hour of faith and of wonders.

Meanwhile Peter's confidence and submission have attained an heroic pitch. The next morning he is to be put to death, yet in the midst of a band of soldiers he lies down calmly to sleep in the prison. Indeed, so as to be quite at his ease, he unfastens his sandals, loosens his belt, and lays aside his outer garment. So the apostle slept, but his sleep was in itself an act of faith in the divine Providence, which never abandons those who trust therein.

This scene from the Acts of the Apostles, which we often find reproduced on Roman sarcophagi, has acquired a special significance in the Eternal City. St Peter, having been delivered from prison at Jerusalem, went *in alium locum*, as St Luke writes with prudent reserve: he went indeed to found the Church of Rome. Thus the Lesson which is read at Mass to-day is, as it were, the birth-certificate of the Church, the Mother and Mistress of all others.

The Gradual is the same as that for the feast of Peter's brother, Andrew, on November 30.



The alleluiatic verse and the Gospel are those of January 18.

As in the Sacraments the material element is the outward sign of invisible grace, so Jesus has willed that the dignity of his Vicar on earth shall be dependent on an historical circumstance, ascertainable by all, in order that no one shall make a mistake in a matter of such supreme importance. The true Church is that founded on the authority of Peter and his successors. But who are these inheritors of Peter's primacy? Those who succeed him in his Office as Bishop of Rome.

This belief is the touchstone of Catholic orthodoxy; wherefore all the Fathers and Doctors of the Church from Clement and Ignatius and Irenæus down to St Francis de Sales and St Alphonsus confess in unison the same doctrine concerning the primacy of the Pope over the whole Catholic world.

The verse for the Offertory is identical with that for February 24.

The Secret is thus worded: "May the prayers of thy apostles, O Lord, speed the victims which are to be consecrated to thy name; and grant that by them also we may be cleansed and defended."

The Gregorian Sacramentary assigns to this feast as its proper Preface that one which in our present Missal has become Common to all the Apostles. Originally, however, it applied only to Christian Rome, which implored of the Lord that the apostles Peter and Paul, who at one time had been his representatives in preaching the Gospel to her, might still continue their pastoral Office from heaven.

Among the other fine Prefaces in the Leonine Sacramentary for the feast of SS Peter and Paul, we will give the following as an example: *Vere dignum, etc., Cuius providentia donisque concessum est, ut festivitatem nobis annuam beatorum Petri et Pauli triumpho præstet insignem, par mundo venerabile, Apostolatus ordine primus et minimus, sed gratia et passione particeps.*

*His princeps Fidei confitendæ, ille intelligendæ clarus assertor; Hic Christum Filium Dei vivi pronuntiavit divinitus inspiratus; Ille, hunc eundem, Verbum, Sapientiam Dei, atque Virtutem, vas factus electionis adstruxit. His Israeliticæ deliberationis instituens Ecclesiam primitivam; Ille Magister et Doctor gentium vocandarum. Sic dispensatione diversa, unam Christi familiam congregantes, tempore licet discreto, recurrens una dies in æternum et una corona sociavit. Per Christum, etc.*

The last words refer to the ancient, widely diffused tradition held by many of the Fathers, that St Paul actually died on the same day, but not in the same year, as St Peter.



Recent researches in early Christian chronology greatly strengthen the probability of this tradition.

The Antiphon for the Communion is like that on January 18.

The Prayer of Thanksgiving follows: "Thou hast filled us, O Lord, with food from heaven; by the intercession of thine apostles keep us from all harm." We can do nothing of ourselves, but united to Christ all things are possible to us, as it was with Elias who *ambulavit in fortitudine cibi illius . . . usque ad montem Dei Horeb*.<sup>1</sup>

### THE SECOND MASS

#### *Station at St Paul's.*

*Quando Apostolicus duas missas celebrat una die, in eas non lavat os, nisi post officium: sed, absque intervallo, finita priore, incipitur altera*, so says the Gregorian Sacramentary to-day. This rubric has already been explained to us by Prudentius, when, after having described the Mass at break of day at St Peter's, he relates that the Pope went off in great haste to the Basilica of St Paul in order to repeat there the same rite:

*Mox huc recurrit duplicatque vota.*

*A resplendent hymnal that is truly Roman Catholic: [CCWATERSHED.ORG/HYMN](http://CCWATERSHED.ORG/HYMN)*

This second station of June 29, testified to from the most ancient Roman liturgical resources, must have continued to be observed until about the time of Adrian I. It was only in the eighth century that another practical and fitting judgement superseded the classical conception of papal Rome, which saw in the preaching of the holy apostles Peter and Paul a single beginning of the Roman Church, a single foundation of her spiritual edifice, two eyes in one body, two keys of salvation, that of the hierarchical authority entrusted to Peter and that of Doctor of the Gentiles granted to Paul. By transferring the station at the Ostian Basilica to the day following, it becomes less exhausting but more solemn.

This postponement, however, tended to alter in some degree the original spirit of the feast, the *dies bifestus* and polyliturgical of Prudentius, so in describing the order of the present Missal we shall also take into consideration the place once held by those ceremonies in the early Sacramentaries.

The Mass of June 29, at the tomb of St Paul, is almost the same as that which we have already described on January 25. We shall note the few variations.

The Collect is the same except that, instead of the con-

<sup>1</sup> 3 Kings xix, 8.



version of St Paul, it is his *natalis* which is spoken of : *cuius natalitia colimus*. This prayer proper to St Paul, which we find to-day for the first time in the Gelasian Sacramentary, takes the place of an older Collect common to both the apostles, found in the Leonine Sacramentary. It is as follows :

*Item ad sanctum Paulum*

*Apostolico, Domine, quaesumus, beatorum Petri et Pauli patrocinio nos tuere, et eosdem quorum tribuisti solemnia celebrare, securos fac nostros semper esse custodes.*

In our present Missal the Lesson is that which the *Comes* of Würzburg assigns, as we have said, to the vigiliary Mass (Gal. i, 11-20). Paul, in order to prove to the Galatians the authenticity of his apostleship, narrates his own history and shows that, although he had not been taught by any of the apostles, but had received the revelation of the Gospel directly from God himself, he is an apostle equally with the Twelve, having been elected by him who had chosen the Twelve.

It is not admissible, therefore, to imagine any difference or rivalry between Paul and the apostles, as the Judaizers among the Galatians claimed to exist. There is but one mission and one spirit. Indeed, some years before this, Paul had gone to Jerusalem ἱστορῆσαι Κηφᾶν and stayed with him for fifteen days or more, as though to submit his doctrine publicly to the approval of the visible head of the Church.

One phrase should be noted : *Cum autem placuit . . . ut revelaret Filium suum in me, ut evangelizarem illum in gentibus*. Grace, before moving Paul to preach Christ, transforms his very being in Christ, reveals Christ, that is, to the world, first by the life and then by the words of the apostle.

According to the above-mentioned *Comes*, *In Nat. S. Pauli*, the Lesson was the same as that which is read on January 25, containing the history of the conversion of the Doctor of the Gentiles on the road to Damascus.

The Gradual is similar to that for January 25, but the alleluiatic verse is as follows : "Alleluia, alleluia. Holy apostle Paul, preacher of truth, and Doctor of the Gentiles, intercede for us. Alleluia."

Why is it that Paul, although he was not one of the Twelve, has through his merits been placed above them ; nay, more, has been called, like St Peter, a Prince of the Apostles ? St Leo the Great answers that such a privilege is due to divine election. The Lord has willed that Paul should be the chief trophy of his mercy ; the persecutor was to become the apostle *par excellence*, and he who had done most harm to the Church in its early days, was to labour more strenuously than any of the other apostles in spreading abroad the holy Gospel : *Abundantius illis laboravi*.



Because of this God has permitted that, whilst we possess very little information concerning the deeds of the other apostles, the Acts and the Epistles tell us enough about the life of Paul to make it in itself the rule and model of what a truly pastoral and apostolic life should be. Nor is this the only privilege by which God has honoured his great "labourer." As Peter still lives and governs through his successors, so does Paul continue to preach the Gospel every day throughout the world by means of his writings which the Church reads almost invariably at holy Mass.

After his death Paul enjoyed further privileges. The service of his magnificent sepulchral basilica has been entrusted for more than fourteen hundred years to the disciples of the Patriarch of Monte Cassino, who cause it by day and by night to resound with the chanting of the divine Office, carried out with all that splendour and devotion of which the Benedictine Order has kept the tradition.

Of the sixty and more abbeys which once upon a time served the Roman basilicas, almost all have disappeared; that one on the Via Ostiensis which the Popes, out of respect for Paul, describe in their bulls as *sacratissimum monasterium in quo tuum venerabile corpus celebri memoria requiescit*, still survives and flourishes. In that holy spot the monks, following the path traced by the Rule of St Benedict, continue in evangelical poverty, in obedience, and in chastity that religious life which, because it had first been practised by the apostles, was called in the early Middle Ages *apostolica*.

It was indeed fitting that the divine Providence should raise up in the shadow of the basilica of St Paul a *dominici schola servitii* (as St Benedict calls his monastery) in order that to the custody of the sepulchre of the Doctor of the Gentiles—the *cubiculares* of St Leo—should be appointed, not another religious Order with its own ascetic traditions, its saints, its doctrinal systems and special objectives, however venerable and holy, but the Benedictine Order.

This Order, as St Bernard says, having existed before all the others and having arisen in the age of the early Fathers, lives simply and genuinely the Catholic life of the Church, and without emphasizing particular points of doctrine, preaches and teaches in unison with her through the holy Doctors Gregory the Great, the Venerable Bede, St Peter Damian, St Anselm, St Bernard, and many others, renewing its devotion at the very sources of all ecclesiastical devotion by means of the sacred Liturgy.

The Gospel is the same as for June 11, the feast of St Barnabas, St Paul's first companion in the Apostolate. The Würzburg Lectionary, however, gives to this second station



at the Ostian Basilica the same passage for the Gospel as on January 25.

The whole of the remainder of the Mass in our present Missal is common to the feast of the Conversion of St Paul; whereas in the Leonine Sacramentary the Secret is as follows :

*Munera supplices, Domine, tuis altaribus adhibemus, quantum de nostro merito formidantes, tantum beati Petri et Pauli, pro quorum solemnibus offeruntur, intercessionibus confisi.* The two apostles are still together even at the station of the *natalis* of St Paul in the Ostian Basilica.

The Preface is the one which has been given above.

There is no special prayer of Thanksgiving in the Leonine Sacramentary, but in the Gregorian we find the following, which is important because, in conformity with the ancient tradition, it also refers not to Paul alone, as in our present Missal, but to both the apostles :

*Perceptis, Domine, sacramentis, beatis Apostolis intervenientibus deprecamur, ut quae pro illorum celebrata sunt gloria, nobis proficiant ad medelam.*

We take from the Leonine Sacramentary another prayer which shows traces of the style and of the mode of thought of the famous Leo :

*Omnipotens, sempiterna Deus, qui ineffabili sacramento ius Apostolici principatus in Romani nominis arce posuisti, unde se Evangelica veritas per tota mundi regna diffunderet; praesta ut quod in orbem terrarum eorum praedicatione manavit, Christianae devotionis sequatur universitas.*

The Sacramentaries no longer contain any Mass for the third sanctuary on the Appian Way, which is recorded on this day in the celebrated hymn of St Ambrose :

*Trinis celebratur viis  
Festa Sanctorum Martyrum.*

Nevertheless, the recent excavations have restored to the *Basilica Apostolorum* of the Via Appia all its importance; so that not even the two sanctuaries of the Vatican and of the Ostian Way can boast of such ancient monuments and such numerous *graffiti*. The writings are those of the faithful of the third and fourth centuries who invoke Peter and Paul and hand down to their descendants the record of having celebrated in their honour, beside their cenotaph, the liturgical *refrigerium*: *Paule, Petre, pro Erate rogate.—Petrus et Paulus in mente abeatis Antonius e in mente abeatis Gelasius.—Petro et Paulo Tomius Coelius refrigerium feci.—Dalmatius botum is promisit refrigerium.*

Pope Damasus enriched that sanctuary with one of his customary epigraphs. It is as follows :



HIC · HABITASSE · PRIVS · SANCTOS · COGNOSCERE · DEBES  
 NOMINA · QVISQVE · PETRI · PARITER · PAVLIQVE · REQVIRIS  
 DISCIPVLOS · ORIENS · MISIT · QVOD · SPONTE · FATEMVR  
 SANGVINIS · OB · MERITVM · CHRISTVM · PER · ASTRA · SECVTI  
 AETHERIOS · PETIERE · SINVS · REGNAQVE · PIORVM  
 ROMA · SVOS · POTIVS · MERVIT · DEFENDERE · CIVES  
 HAEC · DAMASVS · VESTRAS · REFERAT · NOVA · SYDERA · LAVDES

Know that once there were saints in this place,  
 If thou desirest to know their names, they are Peter and Paul.

We willingly acknowledge that the East sent us its disciples  
 Who by the merit of their martyrdom followed Christ to heaven,

And went to their reward in the kingdom of the Blessed.

Rome, however, maintained their right to her citizenship.

O newly risen stars, thus Damasus ever sings your praises.

The inscription is somewhat obscure. It alludes to the tradition related by St Gregory the Great, according to which, shortly after the martyrdom of the two apostles, the Eastern Christians were on the point of stealing away their bodies and bringing them back to their own country. With this object in view, they had already carried them off to the hiding-place *ad Catacumbas*, when the Romans discovered their plans in time to assert and enforce their rights.

*Roma suos potius meruit defendere cives.*

#### THE EVENING SYNAXIS

##### *Station at St Paul's.*

The ancient Roman rite knew nothing—properly speaking—of our modern Vespers, for, apart from the daily psalmodic *cursus* of the monastic choirs, the festival evening Office in its original conception was only the anticipation or extension of the vigiliary synaxis—an Office, that is, in preparation for the feast.

In Rome, Easter week and the solemnity of the two Princes of the Apostles formed exceptions to this. For the latter feast the so-called Gelasian Sacramentary contains at least eight alternative Collects.

According to the *Ordo Romanus XI* of Benedict the Canon, the Pope, with all his court, proceeded on the afternoon of June 29 to St Paul's, and after Vespers sat down there to

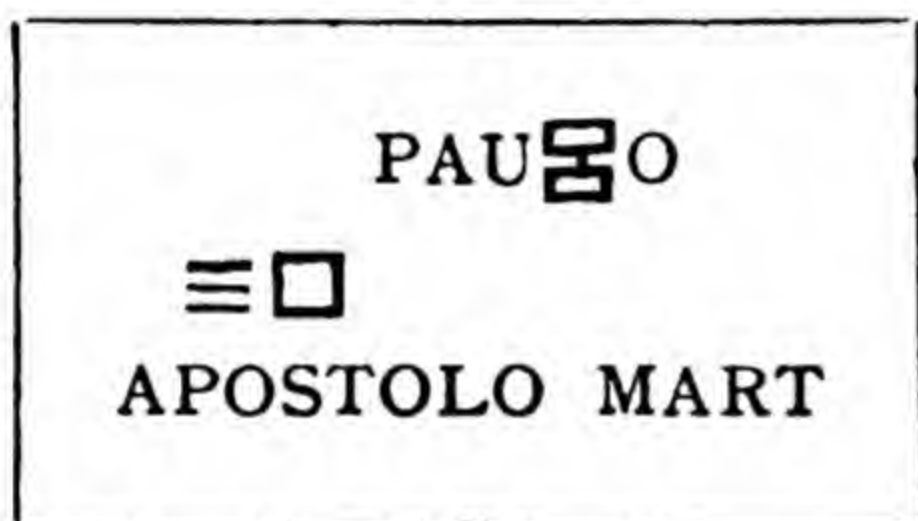


supper with his attendant clergy. As at St Peter's, so also at St Paul's, the vigiliary rite was twofold.

The first Office began immediately after supper. Three psalms having been sung, the monks of the abbey read the first three Lessons from the Acts of the Apostles, which tell of the Conversion of Saul. Between each Lesson the soloists sang a responsorial chant whilst the Pope, assisted by the cardinals, incensed the tomb of the apostle. The fourth and fifth Lessons were read by two bishops, the sixth and seventh by the cardinals, the eighth by a subdeacon, and the ninth by the Pope himself.

During the singing of the fourth responsory the Pope, instead of incensing only the altar, opened the *fenestella confessionis* with a golden key and went into the empty space, which can still be seen between the tomb of the apostle and the altar.

On the sepulchral slab dating from the time of Constantine the following may be read :



The two square openings which divide the word Paulo were called *cateracte* by the early Christians, and through these it was customary to insert veils and other objects of devotion which it was desired to bring into contact with the apostolic tomb. One of these two openings is deeper than the other, for it was a favour granted only to persons of distinction to introduce their objects of piety (*sanctuaria*) *usque ad secundam cateractam*.

The central aperture, on the other hand, served for the performance of a touching ceremony. Every year on St Paul's day, while the soloist on the ambo sang the melodies of the fourth vigiliary responsory, the Pope, entering, as we have said, into the *camera confessionis*, withdrew the censer which had been let down through the hole on to the tomb of the apostle at this same Office in the preceding year, and introduced another also full of burning incense. Benedict the Canon adds that the archdeacon distributed amongst the people the remains of the incense and of the charcoal which had stood for the space of twelve months in such close proximity to the bones of the apostle—*hac ratione, ut*



*quicumque febricitans devote in fide Apostoli ex his biberit, sanetur.*<sup>1</sup>

The second vigiliary Office began towards daybreak and ended with the solemn Mass which the Pope was to celebrate with all the splendour of the Roman rite, *celeberrime*, says Benedict the Canon, further adding that the oblations placed by the faithful on the altar of St Paul served to recompense the clergy who had been present at the ceremony. The arch-deacon received the customary eighteen *denarii*, out of which, however, he had to pay the soloists who sang the responsories; each of the other singers received a coin of the value of four *denarii pro beneficio solemnitatis*.

Until 1870 a last survival of this great solemnity existed in the *cappella papale*, which the Pope held each year on June 30 in the Basilica of the Doctor of the Gentiles. The Pontiff first celebrated the holy Sacrifice at the altar of the *Confessio*, then, when he had taken his seat on the throne, surrounded by his noble court, by the patriarchs and the bishops assisting at the pontifical throne, and by the monks in the choir, the solemn pontifical Mass began, accompanied by the classical music of the Sistine Chapel.

The ceremony being over, the usual frugal *refrigerium* of Rome followed in the neighbouring monastery—a last memorial of the *agape* of love—and at this the Pope, the cardinals, the prelates of the court, and the monastic community all took part happily together, much as we have seen it described in the *Ordines Romani* by Benedict the Canon.

We will reproduce here in honour of the two Princes of the Apostles the simple and touching inscription which the early collectors of epigraphs copied from the gate which in the sixth century was known merely as the gate of St Peter.

IANITOR • ANTE • FORES • FIXIT • SACRARIA • PETRVS  
QVIS • NEGET • HAS • ARCES • INSTAR • ESSE • POLI  
PARTE • ALIA • PAVLI • CIRCVM DANT • ATRIA • MVROS  
HOS • INTER • ROMA • EST • HIC • SEDET • ERGO • DEVS

Peter, the doorkeeper, has erected his own sanctuary outside this gate:

Who can now deny that our city with its towers is like heaven itself?

On the opposite side the sanctuary of St Paul encloses the walls,

Between the two is Rome. Here, then, is God's own seat.

<sup>1</sup> P.L., LXXVIII, col. 1051.



## JUNE 30

## COMMEMORATION OF ST PAUL THE APOSTLE

*Station at the Basilica of St Paul.*

The Roman Missal assigns to this day the Mass of St Paul, which, according to ancient Roman tradition, was that of the second station of yesterday. Thus we have, instead of the *bifestus dies* of Prudentius, a *bidui festus*, for the faithful flock again in great numbers to the Ostian Basilica in order to be present at the papal "Cappella," which, in the absence of the Pontiff, is celebrated by the patriarchs and the bishops assisting at the papal throne. They have the privilege of offering the holy Sacrifice at the papal altar itself, under which lie the venerable bones of the apostle. This privilege they obtained from Benedict XIV, who granted it in consideration of the fact that the abbot of St Paul's has already enjoyed the like honour for many centuries, on January 25, the feast of the Conversion of St Paul.

## FEASTS IN JULY

## JULY 1

## FEAST OF THE MOST PRECIOUS BLOOD

The Missal gives to-day as the Octave of St John the Baptist, which, however, only appears in the Roman Calendar during the late Middle Ages. In the liturgical reform of Pius X this day was chosen for the feast of the Most Precious Blood, which had already been fixed under Pius IX for the first Sunday in July.

The meaning of this festival is closely akin to that of the Sacred Heart. The precious Blood is the price of universal redemption, which love would not have to be anything less than itself. There is a very close connection between the Heart and the Blood not only because, according to St John, after the death of Jesus, blood and water flowed from his wounded Heart, but because the first chalice in which that divine Blood was consecrated and vivified was, precisely the Heart of the incarnate Word.

The apostle in Rome of this special devotion to the most precious Blood of Jesus was the Blessed Gaspare del Bufalo, founder of a congregation of missionaries of that name. His body rests in the ancient deaconry of Sta Maria in Trivio,



and there are still old persons living in the Eternal City who can remember the fervent missionary.

The Mass is of quite recent composition. In the ancient Roman rite the Mass of Passion Sunday was especially intended to recall to the remembrance of the faithful the infinite value of the Blood of Jesus Christ.

The Introit draws its Antiphon from the Canticle of the Blessed in the Apocalypse: "Thou hast redeemed us, O Lord, in thy blood, out of every tribe, and tongue, and people, and nation, and hast made us to our God a kingdom."

Redemption is universal because God is essentially Love, which has neither measure nor limit. Therefore the most heroic sanctity is possible in every class and in all conditions of life, as we may see from the records of the Church.

Then comes Psalm lxxxviii. Whilst in the heavenly kingdom, that kingdom of which St John has just been speaking, the angels in their perfect purity chant the Trisagion to the Holy One; those who have been redeemed by the Blood of the Lamb sing another hymn much more suited to their lowly condition: "The mercies of the Lord I will sing for ever: I will show forth thy truth with my mouth to generation and generation."

In the Collect we pray thus: "Almighty, everlasting God, who didst appoint thine only-begotten Son to be the redeemer of the world, and didst vouchsafe to be appeased by the shedding of his blood, grant, we beseech thee, that by our solemn service we may so honour what he paid as the price of our redemption, and by its virtue may be so defended while on earth from the evils of this present life, that we may enjoy its fruit for evermore in heaven."

The Lesson is common to the Mass of Passion Sunday, of which this recently established feast forms almost a duplicate. It is impossible to despair of one's own salvation after the sacrifice of Calvary. If the blood of the lawful victims of the Jewish Temple possessed such efficacy, of how much greater power will not be his Blood, who, inflamed with the fervour of the Paraclete, offered himself wholly to the sanctity and justice of the Father for the redemption of the world? Each time, then, that we raise our eyes to the image of our crucified Saviour and look upon those wounds and that Blood, let us say to him with loving confidence: *Vulnera tua, merita mea*. "My merits, O Lord, consist only in those wounds which thou hast suffered for me."

The Gradual is taken from the First Epistle of St John (v, 6-8): "This is he that came by water and blood, Jesus Christ: not by water only, as the false *gnosis* maintained, but by water and blood—that is, by the reality of his human



nature hypostatically united to his divine nature, and truly acknowledged by the Blessed Trinity in the waters of the Jordan. *Ÿ*. "There are three who give testimony in heaven: the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost; and these three are one. There are three who attest the divine nature of Christ on the occasion of his baptism in the Jordan: the Holy Ghost, the water—that is, the baptism—and the blood—that is, his true human nature—and these three witnesses are one."

The alleluiatic verse is the continuation of the preceding passage: "Alleluia, alleluia. *Ÿ*. If we receive the testimony of men, the testimony of God is greater. Alleluia."

Truly, the composer who chose these passages for the feast of the Most Precious Blood has stopped too abruptly at the mention of the blood without considering the context of St John's Epistle. The apostle wishes here to prove to the gnostics the divinity of Christ, by maintaining that he was God from the moment of his conception, by virtue of the hypostatic union, and not merely that at the time of his baptism the divine nature was bestowed upon him because of his merits, as the heretics asserted. "No," says St John, "Jesus was born the Son of God, and did not become so afterwards." *Non in aqua solum sed in aqua et sanguine.*

The Gospel is the same as for the feast of the Sacred Heart of Jesus. Our Saviour shed his Blood profusely in his passion, therefore we ask ourselves why St John alludes in such solemn terms to the last effusion of his blood mixed with water when the heart of Jesus had already ceased to beat. The Fathers reply that it is because of its symbolic meaning. The false *gnosis* asserted that the divine nature of Jesus had abandoned him at the moment when he exclaimed upon the cross: *Deus meus, Deus meus, ut quid dereliquisti me?* St John, on the other hand, who had previously declared that the testimony borne by the Holy Ghost to the divine nature of Jesus at the river Jordan was identical with that shown by the symbolism of the water and the blood which flowed from his Heart after his death, here purposely relates the symbolic miracle guaranteeing its authenticity by his own authority as an apostle of the Word.

The Antiphon for the Offertory is derived from the First Epistle of St Paul to the Corinthians (x, 16), and contains what is probably an allusion to the cup which at the paschal banquet was called the "chalice of benediction." Jesus gave reality to the symbol, and the "chalice of benediction" became the Eucharist.

"The chalice of benediction which we bless, is it not the communion of the Blood of Christ? And the bread which we break, is it not the partaking of the Body of the Lord?"

The Secret receives its inspiration from the Epistle to the



Hebrews: "Through these divine mysteries may we draw nigh to Jesus, who is the mediator of the new covenant; and on thine altars, O Lord of hosts, may we renew the shedding of blood, which shall plead for us more than that of Abel."

The Antiphon for the Communion also comes from the Epistle to the Hebrews (ix, 28), and dwells upon the diverse character of the two-fold *parousia* of Christ: "Christ was offered once to exhaust the sins of many: the second time he shall appear without sin to them that expect him unto salvation."

The Post-Communion is inspired by the well-known passages from Isaias (xii, 3), and from St John (iv, 14); but the compiler of the Mass does not seem to have shown great literary skill in joining them together: "We who have been suffered to approach thy holy table, O Lord, have joyfully drawn waters from the fountains of the Saviour: let his blood be for us, we beseech thee, a fountain of living water unto life everlasting."

In the Scriptures grace is fitly likened to water which is "precious and pure," as St Francis sang. Indeed, as water is clear and refreshing, as it cleanses and fertilizes, so, too, the action of the divine Paraclete restores to the soul its original purity, allays its passions, expiates its sins, and gives it strength to aspire to God and to act in accordance with this new supernatural state of sonship of the Most High.

## JULY 2

### SS PROCESSUS AND MARTINIAN, MARTYRS

*Station at their Sepulchral Basilica on the Via Aurelia.*

Rome is keeping holiday because we are still within the Octave of the Apostles. On this day, then, we celebrate the feasts of two saints who, in a manner, represent the firstfruits of the martyrdom of SS Peter and Paul. To-day's station on the Via Aurelia was kept, as we know, in the time of Gregory the Great, who on the *natalis* of SS Processus and Martinian delivered his thirty-second Homily on the Gospels, in which he says: *Ad sanctorum Martyrum corpora consistimus, fratres mei.*

The *Acta* of the two martyrs are of late origin and are unreliable. According to these, Processus and Martinian were the gaolers of Peter and of Paul, and were converted and baptized by them in prison. After the beheading of the



two soldiers on the Via Aurelia, the matron, Lucina, as on other occasions, is said to have embalmed and buried their bodies *iuxta formam aquaeductis*—that is, the aqueduct of Trajan, which is still to be seen close to the classical Villa Pamphili. It is, in fact, below those shady avenues that the galleries of their cemetery run, but they are now for the most part filled in with earth and unknown. At the time of the great removals of the bodies, the relics of the two martyrs were brought by Paschal I to St Peter's, where they are still venerated.

The biographer of the Pontiff describes the magnificent oratory erected by him in honour of the martyrs, with its columns and mosaics. It stood near the bronze door, in the vicinity therefore of the circular chapel of St Petronilla. When the Vatican Basilica was rebuilt, the tomb of the two saints was placed in the left apse of the transept, and at the time of the Vatican Council it was a striking sight to see Pope Pius IX seated on the papal throne which stood then at the tomb of Processus and Martinian, the one-time gaolers of the two Princes of the Apostles.

The Introit in the Missal is the same as on June 9, but in the Antiphonary it is given as follows (Wis. iii, 8): "The just shall judge nations, and rule over people, and their Lord shall reign for ever."

This Antiphon reminds us of a passage in the *Acta* of the martyrdom of SS Perpetua and Felicitas. On the eve of their passion, while the pagans crowded around the victims who were celebrating their last *agape*, one of the prisoners said to the inquisitive spectators: "Look at us well, that you may know us again in the day of judgement."

This is the Collect: "O God, who dost guard and protect us by the glorious confessions of thy holy martyrs Processus and Martinian, grant that we may profit by their example and rejoice in their intercession." The theological foundation for this consoling participation by all the members of the mystical body of Jesus Christ in the superabundant merits of the just, is the dogma resulting from the Communion of Saints, and from our own union with our divine Saviour.

The Lesson and the Communion are similar to those for the *natalis* of the martyrs Marius and his companions on January 19, but the Gradual is like that of the Holy Innocents (Psalm cxxiii, 7-8), since also these two soldier martyrs represent, according to tradition, the firstfruits of the apostolic teaching at Rome.

Gradual: "Our soul hath been delivered as a sparrow out of the snare of the fowlers. *Ÿ*. The snare is broken, and we



are delivered: our help is in the name of the Lord, who hath made heaven and earth." The snare is broken, that is to say, the body on which Providence has permitted the executioner to exert his cruelty, has succumbed to the suffering and has remained in the hands of the persecutor, but the soul is delivered and has flown up to heaven.

The Missal assigns the same Gospel to this feast as to the feast of St Canute, on January 19. This is the Gospel which was explained by St Gregory the Great at to-day's synaxis. The Würzburg Lectionary, on the contrary, gives this other Gospel: *Sedente Jesu*, as for the feast of the martyrs Marius and the others. This divergence, upon which we have already remarked in other instances, shows that throughout the early Middle Ages the list of the liturgical Lessons at Mass and in the Office had not as yet attained an absolutely permanent character. There were alternative Lessons from which to choose, in order to make the liturgy richer and more varied.

The Offertory is identical with that for the feast of St Basilides and others on June 12.

The Secret is as follows: "Receive, O Lord, our prayers and offerings, and that they may be worthy of thy regard, may we be helped by the prayers of thy saints."

The Post-Communion is the following: "We who have fed at the sacrifice of thy holy Body and precious Blood, beseech thee, O Lord our God, that what we do with godly devotion may bring us sure redemption."

We should take note of the word *libamine*, which is here used in the Missal. *Libamen*, *libamentum*, or *libum* signify the pouring out of some liquid, especially wine, as a sacrifice to the deity. Further, *libare* or *praelibare* meant also tasting beforehand, or partaking in the sacrifice by drinking a small quantity. The use of the word in liturgical language indicates that the Communion of the faithful represents the sacrificial banquet and their ritual participation in the eucharistic Sacrifice.

## JULY 2

### THE VISITATION OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY

The early Roman Liturgy celebrated this mystery on Ember Friday in Advent, when the Gospel recounting it is read in the Mass. But as the liturgical sense diminished among the people, the rich and solemn simplicity of the Roman rite ceased to be so well appreciated; hence other



occasional feasts were instituted forming actual duplicates of the older ones, which were no longer in popular esteem.

This was the case with the feast of the visit of the Blessed Virgin to Elizabeth. For many centuries the Byzantines had commemorated on July 2 the deposition in the year 469 of the robe of the Blessed Virgin in the Basilica of Blachernæ. We do not know how this feast came to be observed also by the Latins, but they, influenced by the Octave of St John the Baptist, changed its significance and turned it into a commemoration of the visit of Mary to the home of Zachary and Elizabeth, when the Precursor was sanctified in his mother's womb.

This feast was kept by the Franciscans as early as 1263; Urban VI, Boniface IX, and lastly the Council of Basel (1431) made it a holiday of obligation and so binding on the whole Latin Church.

St Francis de Sales had great devotion to this mystery in honour of which he instituted his Order of the Nuns of the Visitation. The original design of this kindly saint was that the nuns should imitate the Blessed Virgin in her charitable assistance in the house of her cousin who, though well advanced in years, was miraculously about to become a mother. Providence, however, thought fit to alter the plan while still in the hands of the designer, so that the latter was accustomed jestingly to say that he had made something which he had never intended to make, whereas he could not make that which he would in reality have wished to make.

From this stem of the "Visitation" planted by the Bishop of Geneva have blossomed two beautiful flowers which the Church has placed in her garland: Ste Jeanne Françoise Fremiot de Chantal and Ste Marguerite Marie Alacoque.

The Introit is taken from Sedulius, a contemporary of St Jerome, some of whose hymns the Church has incorporated in her Office.

*Salve, sancta Parens, enixa puerpera Regem  
Qui caelum terramque tenet per saecula.<sup>1</sup>*

Hail, holy Mother, who didst bring forth the King, who ruleth heaven and earth for ever.

The antithesis between the two titles here given to our Lady by the priest Sedulius and so well expressed also by Dante when he addresses her as *Vergine Madre, Figlia del tuo Figlio*,<sup>2</sup> is charmingly illustrated by these two medieval verses which are sometimes to be seen under a representation

<sup>1</sup> *Carm. Paschal.* II, 43, 64. *P.L.* XIX, 599.

<sup>2</sup> *Paradiso*, XXXIII, 1.—Tr.



of the Madonna holding the divine infant. Underneath the figure of the child is written : *Es mihi nate, Pater* ; and below that of the Blessed Virgin : *Sum tamen Filia, Mater*.

The Collects are drawn from the feast of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin according to the Sacramentary of Adrian. " Vouchsafe, O Lord, we beseech thee, to us thy servants the gift of thy heavenly grace, that as in the childbirth of the Blessed Virgin our salvation began, so from the solemn festival of her Visitation we may obtain increase of peace. Through our Lord."

This increase of peace is the effect of love and of grace, which restores due order to our souls and reconciles us to God, to ourselves, and to our neighbour. This peace which the apostle never ceases to invoke upon his disciples is the greatest good that can be desired here below, since it is tranquillity in order—that is, it includes the undisputed dominion of God over all the lower inclinations. This is the gift which caused the martyrs to be firm and even joyful in the midst of torments ; wherefore the Scripture says of them : *Visi sunt oculis insipientium mori . . . illi autem sunt in pace.*<sup>1</sup>

The Lesson comes from the Canticle of Canticles (ii, 8-14). The bridegroom with light and rapid steps hastens to the bride over hills and rocks, and wherever he places his foot the flowers of the field open, and the fragrance of the blossoms fills the air. Mary, who, about to become the mother of the Incarnate Word, goes quickly into the mountainous country of Judea to sanctify John the Baptist still in his mother's womb, is a figure of the infinite number of processions of the Blessed Sacrament, in which the divine Spouse, enthroned in the arms of his priest, passes in triumph through the streets of this wretched world scattering abroad the fragrance of his graces.

The Gradual and the alleluiatic verse are apparently derived from the Greek, as are so many other parts of the Office of our Lady.

" Thou art blessed and venerable, O Virgin Mary, who without intercourse with man didst become the mother of our Saviour."

" *Ÿ*. O Virgin Mother of God, he whom the whole world cannot hold, became man, and was enclosed within thy womb. *Ÿ*. Alleluia. Happy art thou, O holy Virgin Mary, for out of thee arose the son of righteousness, Christ our God. Alleluia, alleluia."

Here we see how the Liturgy, contrary to the calumnies of the Protestants, repeats all the greatness and the dignity of the most holy Virgin as coming from her intimate union

<sup>1</sup> Wisdom iii, 2-3.



with God and from her office of Mother of Jesus Christ, the fount of all sanctity and the cause of our salvation.

It is of interest to note that the strict Roman rule in early days excluded from the Mass those hymns which are not derived from the Scriptures. For this reason in the Gregorian Antiphonary we find the Introit *Vultum tuum* appointed for the feasts of our Lady, and also the other chants which we have already noticed on the feast of the Annunciation and in the various Masses of the Common of Virgins.

The Gospel is similar to that of Ember Friday in Advent. Mary, as soon as Jesus was conceived in her womb, hastens to convey the firstfruits of her benediction to him who was to be the greatest among those born of woman. St Paul remarks that he who blesses is greater than he who is blessed. Mary—and through her St Joseph also—belong to a special and higher rank, which because of the hypostatic union of the fruit of their virginal espousals far surpasses the sanctity of the Precursor himself.

The following is the verse for the Offertory: "Blessed art thou, O Virgin Mary, who didst bear the Creator of all things: thou didst bring forth him who made thee, and thou remainest for ever a virgin." God abases himself in order to raise up his creatures, therefore the deeper the humiliation of the divine Word in becoming man, the greater is the glory of her from whom he took his mortal body and the life which was to be the price of universal redemption.

This is the Secret: "May the manhood of thine only-begotten Son help us, O Lord; that Jesus Christ our Lord, who, when born of a virgin, did not take away but made holy his Mother's inviolate purity, may, on this festival of her Visitation, deliver us from our sins and make our offering acceptable to thee: who livest."

The word *humanitas*, which may be translated by the expression "love towards man," has its equivalent in the Greek *φιλανθρωπία*. This sacred term has been much abused, and has been made to signify a form of lay charity, as it were, in opposition to Christian charity. Vain endeavour! "Philanthropy" is a special and delicate conception of charity, and St Paul made use of the word when he wished to describe the ineffable love of God made man for love of mankind. Ἡ χρηστότης καὶ ἡ φιλανθρωπία ἐπέφάνη τοῦ σωτῆρος ἡμῶν Θεοῦ.<sup>1</sup>

The Antiphon for the Communion of the people is inspired in some degree by the enthusiastic blessing which, as the Gospel relates, a certain woman in the crowd invoked upon her who had given birth to Jesus and had nourished him at her breast when a little child:<sup>2</sup> "Blessed is the womb of the

<sup>1</sup> Titus iii, 4.

<sup>2</sup> Luke xi, 27.



Virgin Mary, which bore the Son of the Eternal Father." We, too, have a part in this glory and blessedness at Holy Communion, for, as Jesus hid himself for nine months in his mother's womb, so now he comes and dwells in the hearts of the faithful under the eucharistic veil.

Then follows this beautiful prayer of Thanksgiving, sober and solemn in its classical Roman elegance: "We have received, O Lord, the votive sacraments of this yearly celebration; grant, we beseech thee, that they may bestow upon us remedies both for our present life and for life everlasting. Through our Lord."

There is a close connection between the Blessed Virgin and Holy Communion, not only because the Victim of the eucharistic Sacrifice derived his flesh, his blood, and his life from Mary, but also because in the law of grace, she takes the place of Eve. Whilst our first mother disobeyed God and offered to Adam the fatal apple, the Blessed Virgin obeyed him and gave her beloved Son to be the price of universal redemption, the bread of salvation, and the antidote against the poison absorbed by the human race through the forbidden fruit.

### JULY 3

#### THE FIFTH DAY WITHIN THE OCTAVE OF THE APOSTLES

To-day the Missal commemorates St Leo, whose translation we have already referred to on June 28, the traditional date.

Meanwhile, at Rome, the Octave of the Apostles is still being kept, a custom which was already in force during the lifetime of St Leo the Great, who pronounced one of his discourses to the people: *In octavis sanctorum Apostolorum*.<sup>1</sup>

Indeed, if we could rely upon the *Acta* of St Sebastian, at least, in a liturgical detail, we should have to place the origin of the Octave of SS Peter and Paul some thirty or forty years before the beginning of the fourth century. This rite must have already been observed during the persecution under Diocletian, when the priest Tranquillinus was surprised by the pagans on the Octave of the feast of the holy Apostles, whilst he was praying at the tomb of St Paul, and was consequently martyred.

The Mass *infra octavam Apostolorum* is missing in the ancient Sacramentaries, and has somewhat the appearance of a skilfully constructed rhapsody.

<sup>1</sup> *Serm.* LXXXIV, al. LXXXI.



The Introit is that of November 30, St Andrew's day; but all the Collects, on the other hand, are taken from the feast of the two Apostles on June 29.

The Lesson is derived from the Acts of the Apostles, and is the same as on Ember Wednesday in Whitsun Week, whilst the Gospel comes from the feast of January 25.

The Gradual is identical with that assigned to St Andrew, but the alleluiaic verse (Luke xxii, 32) is special: "Alleluia, alleluia. *Ÿ*. I have prayed for thee, Peter, that thy faith fail not: and thou being once converted, confirm thy brethren. Alleluia."

This is the scriptural foundation of the dogma of Papal Infallibility. Jesus desired to guarantee to his Church the inalienable possession of revealed truth, which, therefore, was not to be compromised by the ignorance or the fallibility of the human intellect. What, then, does he do? He prays to his Father and obtains for his Vicar on earth the privilege of the assistance of the Holy Ghost, so that his Catholic faith shall never fail nor suffer alteration.

This grace is limited to the profession of Faith—that is, to the teaching of the Pope with regard to faith and morals, not to his actions. That, in fact, is the pole star which is to be a guide to Peter and to everyone on their voyage to heaven; whereas these—that is to say, the actions of the Pope—have a private and personal character, and may easily be corrected and rectified in accordance with the precepts of the Faith.

The Offertory is like that on December 21; whilst the Communion is from the Mass of St Matthias on February 24.

We may appropriately quote here, in honour of the Prince of the Apostles, the following ancient inscription, which formerly existed in the Vatican Basilica, under a painting representing Christ giving the keys to Peter:

TERRVIT • ANGELICAS • ACIES • CONCESSA • POTESTAS  
TANTA • PETRO • RESERARE • POLOS • ET • PASCERE • CAVLAM  
EREPTAM • DE • FAVCE • LVPI • (NOS • PROTEGAT • ILLE  
ATQVE • AVLAM • HANC • SERVET • SANCTAM) • SIBIMETQVE  
DICATAM

"The angelic hosts were amazed at the power granted to Peter of opening the gates of heaven and of feeding the flock saved from the jaws of the wolf. May he protect us and guard this holy temple dedicated to himself."

In honour of the Doctor of the Gentiles we give also this distich of Alcuin, which was probably composed for the Abbey of St Paul.



SERVA · PAVLE · TVI · VENERANDA · SACRARIA · TEMPLI  
NE · LATRO · DEPOPVLANS · VASTET · OVILE · TVVM

“Protect, O Paul, thy venerable sanctuary, that the robber of old may not break in and ravage thy sheepfold.”

These verses may still be seen in the inner cloister of the venerable monastery of St Paul.

## JULY 4

### THE SIXTH DAY WITHIN THE OCTAVE OF THE APOSTLES

Although during the Middle Ages, in a great number of churches, the anniversary of the ordination of St Martin of Tours and of the dedication of his famous basilica was kept on this date, yet Christian Rome continued to celebrate the Octave of her great Apostles Peter and Paul.

We will quote in their honour the following Preface from the Leonine Sacramentary . . . *Aeterne Deus. Qui praevidens quantis nostra civitas laboratura esset incommodis*—the memory of the sack of the city of Rome by Genseric and of its cessation for the feast of the holy Apostles Peter and Paul was still vivid—*Apostolicis roboris in eadem praecipua membra posuisti. Sed, o felix, si tuos Praesules Roma cognosceres, et tantos digne studeres celebrare Rectores! Nulli te hostes impeterent, nulla prorsus arma terrerent, si eorum famulata doctrinis, veraciter atque fideliter eos proposito Christianae sinceritatis ambires; quum tibi sufficienter appareat quae bene meritis dona conferrent, qui tuentur etiam peccatores. Per, etc.*

The Romans, having been delivered from the barbarians through the intercession of the two Princes of the Apostles, used to keep each year its commemoration.

The Leonine Sacramentary, indeed, contains the Collects and the Prefaces of this Mass under the heading: *Post infirmitatem.*

## JULY 5

### ST ANTONY MARY ZACCARIA, CONFESSOR\*

The Roman Martyrology celebrates to-day the feast of the martyr Zoe, who was arrested by the pagans because she went to pray at the Vatican Basilica on the *natalis* of the holy



Apostles. Her body was placed in the Basilica of St Praxedes by Paschal I.

It seems as though the Liturgy had purposely gathered about the solemnity of SS Peter and Paul those festivals which were in closest relation to it. For the Calendar commemorates on this day another great disciple and follower of St Paul: St Antony Mary Zaccaria. He was canonized by Leo XIII, who extended his *cultus* to the universal Church.

This famous Lombard preacher was one of that band of saints whom the Lord, in the sixteenth century, sent to carry out in Italy that ecclesiastical reform which had indeed been long desired, but which the canons of the Council of Trent alone could not effect. It was necessary that they should be put into practice with heroic zeal, and this could be done only by a saint.

Antony died at the age of thirty-six, on July 5, 1539, but in this short period of time he erected a spiritual edifice which defies the course of the years. The religious Congregation founded by him under the patronage of the Apostle of the Gentiles has the merit of having effectively assisted St Carlo Borromeo in his work of reform, and is still bearing valuable fruit at the present day.

The entire Mass—whose style at once betrays a modern compiler—is designed to show us St Antony Mary Zaccaria as a fervent disciple and imitator of the Apostle Paul.

The Antiphon for the Introit (1 Cor. ii, 4) describes the special character and the force of the apostle's preaching. "My speech and my preaching was not in the persuasive words of human wisdom, but in the showing of the spirit and power." It is followed by Psalm cx, containing an allusion to the Congregation of St Paul, founded by St Antony Zaccaria. "I will praise thee, O Lord, with my whole heart, in the council of the just, and in the congregation."

In the Collect the compiler has attempted to introduce a sort of summary of the life of the saint, and this has made it appear overloaded and devoid of all *cursus*.

"Grant, O Lord God, that in the spirit of Paul the Apostle we may learn the knowledge of Jesus Christ, which surpasseth all understanding; wherein blessed Antony Mary was marvellously learned, who gathered together in thy Church new households of clerks and of virgins. Through our Lord."

The whole secret of the surprising activity of the saint is made apparent to us in these words: "He had learnt in the school of St Paul to know Jesus Christ." All supernatural



wisdom is comprehended in this, since Jesus is indeed *Dei virtus et Dei sapientia*.

The Lesson is drawn from one of the pastoral Epistles (1 Tim. iv, 8-16), in which the apostle exhorts Timothy, who, like Antony Mary, was still in his first youth, to win the respect of all, if not by the white hairs of old age, then at least by his proficiency in virtue. St Paul here says that in order to fulfil worthily the sacred ministry, an interior life of holiness is necessary, together with the study of the Scriptures, and a great regard for the grace of the priesthood itself. By having these things, an apostle sanctifies himself and saves others.

The Gradual is taken from the Epistle to the Philippians (i, 8-10): "God is my witness, how I long for you all in the bowels of Jesus Christ. And this I pray that your charity may more and more abound in knowledge in all understanding. *¶* That you may approve the better things; that you may be sincere and without offence unto the day of Christ." Such is the manner in which an apostle must love—with the heart of Jesus Christ—that is, with a supernatural love, penetrating directly to the souls of men and not staying himself at the external qualities of their bodies. He must so love them that they may love again, but he is not to intercept this love for himself, for it must ascend to God who alone is worthy of such sacred love.

The Gospel from St Mark (x, 15-21), whilst evidently referring to the youth of the holy founder of the Congregation of St Paul the Apostle, relates the calling to the religious life of the young man who had asked Jesus what he should do to save his own soul.

It would not be possible to dwell too much upon this page of the holy Gospels, which, since the days of the apostles, has filled the world with so many monasteries and convents. To those who live in the world, even though they lead a virtuous life, there is always something wanting—*Unum tibi deest*.—This is the certainty of being able to persevere in the avoidance of sin, exposed as they are to a thousand dangers and occasions of evil, with the independent use of their own will. Those, therefore, to whom God gives the grace of realizing the advantages of religious life, are his preferred ones—*Jesus intuitus eum dilexit eum*—for they have in their hands the most efficacious means of saving themselves and others.

These words are worthy of note which St Gregory the Great once wrote to the Emperor Maurice, when the latter wished to hinder his soldiers from becoming monks: "There are many who can save their souls even whilst remaining



in the world; there are, however, others who can only be saved by entering a monastery."

All Christians, but more especially priests and confessors, must, as the Popes did of old, encourage religious vocations.

The Antiphon for the Offertory is derived from Psalm cxxxvii, and has reference to the vision of the holy angels which was granted to St Antony Mary Zaccaria while he was celebrating his first Mass.

"In the sight of the angels will I sing psalms to thee; I will adore at thy holy temple, and will praise thy name."

Why does the Psalmist speak here of the respect which we must show the angels at the very moment when we are adoring God who is their Lord? The Fathers reply that it is because the angels have been appointed by God to be the ministers of his justice and of his mercy in the government of the world. They could not tolerate the least offence to the divine Majesty, nor any disturbance of the Order instituted by him.

It is because of this that St Paul directs that women shall cover their heads in church, as a sign of their subjection to man, *propter Angelos*—that is to say, so that they shall not by any unseemliness offend the angels appointed to safeguard the established order.

These are the words of the Secret: "Grant, O Lord, that we may bring to thy heavenly banquet purity both of mind and body, such as marvellously shone forth from blessed Antony Mary when he offered the most holy sacrifice. Through our Lord." In order to celebrate worthily the divine Mysteries we must go up to the holy altar with the same sentiments of adoration and love with which Jesus celebrated them for the first time in the Supper-room and with which he renewed them when suffering upon the cross. *Hoc enim sentite in vobis quod et in Christo Jesu.*<sup>1</sup>

The Antiphon for the Communion (Philip. iii, 17) represents as it were the conclusion and resolution at the end of the meditation on the life of Paul, which the composer of to-day's Mass has helped us to make. "Be followers of me, brethren, and observe them who walk so as you have our model." How arduous is the Office of a pastor of souls, and how sublime and difficult is that of the religious superior to whom the whole flock looks continually for guidance and who must be ready at any moment to say to them with St Paul: "Imitate me, as I imitate Christ!"

Lastly comes the Post-Communion, which contains an allusion to the work accomplished by St Antony Mary Zaccaria in instituting and propagating the pious devotion

<sup>1</sup> Philip. ii, 5.



of the *Quarant' Ore*. "May the heavenly banquet at which we have fed, O Lord Jesus Christ, enkindle our hearts with the fire of charity, even as that which filled blessed Antony Mary when he carried the saving host as a standard of victory over the enemies of the Church. Who livest."

The Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament for forty hours consecutively began at Milan in 1547, through the activity of a Confraternity, but St Antony Mary became its most zealous apostle.

Peter and Paul are two highly exalted figures whose fame fills the Church throughout all ages. All the power of the hierarchy which rules the flock of Christ to the very ends of the world is derived from St Peter, who is its fountain head. The greater part of the dogmatic revelation of the New Testament comes from St Paul (the Doctor of the Gentiles), to whom all the later Fathers and teachers look up as to their head.

Thus, whilst Peter rules and governs the sheepfold of Christ, Paul teaches, and what a marvellous school is this of his! What apostolic men it has produced! Men who answer to the grand names of Timothy, Titus, Ignatius, Polycarp, John Chrysostom, and so on, through a long, unbroken series of apostles and heroes of Christianity, down to Antony Mary Zaccaria and Paul of the Cross.

## JULY 6

### OCTAVE OF THE HOLY APOSTLES PETER AND PAUL

#### *Station at the Vatican and Ostian Basilicas.*

In all probability the Mass No. XXVIII of the Leonine Sacramentary: *Solemnitatis apostolicae multiplicatione gaudentes*, refers to the feast of to-day, as well as St Leo's sermon which we have already mentioned. The homily of the great Pontiff, who saved Rome from Attila, was certainly preached in St Peter's; whilst for the second synaxis at the sepulchre of the Apostle Paul on the Via Ostiensis we may quote the *Acta* of the martyr Sebastian in which we find the account of how the priest Tranquillinus, on the Octave of the *natalis* of SS Peter and Paul, was surprised by the pagans at the tomb of the Apostles of the Gentiles, and was there put to death.

The Introit of the Mass is the same as on the second day of this present month. The Church extols the wisdom of the



two Princes of the Apostles on whose teaching rests the whole edifice of our dogmatic theology.

This is the beautiful Collect: "O God, whose hand upheld blessed Peter as he walked upon the waters, lest he should sink, and delivered his fellow-apostle Paul, when shipwrecked for the third time, from the depth of the sea, graciously hear us, and grant that through the merits of both we may obtain the glory of everlasting life."

The Lesson is that of June 26. The two apostles are called *viri misericordiae*, because having received from Jesus Christ a greater measure of mercy than anyone else, they know from their own experience how necessary this mercy is to us, and therefore their heart is more disposed than any other to have compassion on us.

The Gradual which follows is like that for the martyrs Marius, Martha, and the others on January 19; the alleluiatic verse is different and is derived from the Gospel narrative of the Last Supper according to St Luke.

"Alleluia, alleluia. You are they who have continued with me in my temptations, and I dispose to you a kingdom, that you may sit upon thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. Alleluia." The Church sings in honour of St Paul: *Qui et meruit thronum duodecimum possidere*; thus we may ask why this throne is allotted to St Paul when the place left vacant by Judas was given to St Matthias?

The Fathers of the Church answer this question by observing in the first place that the tradition of the Church, far from putting St Paul instead of St Matthias last in the list of the apostles, rather invokes the Doctor of the Gentiles, together with Peter, as Prince of the Apostolic College. This shows that the number twelve as applied to the thrones is not to be literally understood in the mathematical sense, the more so as the tribes of Israel were not twelve but thirteen. Moreover, besides the children of Abraham, the whole of humanity outside the boundaries of Palestine is to be judged.

St Augustine understands the number twelve to be a symbol, inasmuch as it expresses completion and universality. The twelve thrones are, therefore, simply the sees of the apostles and their followers, just as the twelve tribes of Israel signify the whole human race prefigured by the twelve sons of Jacob.

The Gospel (Matt. xiv, 23-33) relating how Peter in a moment of enthusiastic faith comes out of the boat at the call of his divine Master, and walks fearlessly on the waters of the lake of Tiberias in order to go to Jesus, must have been represented in painting or mosaic in the Vatican Basilica, thus rendering the scene very familiar to the



Romans who came to pray in the sacred building. To-day's Collect alludes to it, and we find it again mentioned in an inscription which formerly existed in the Oratory of the Holy Cross at the Vatican.

SALVA · NOS · CHRISTE · SALVATOR · PER · VIRTUTEM · CRVCIS  
QVI · SALVASTI · PETRVM · IN · MARI

The Offertory is similar to that of the feast of St Basilides on June 12. The saints in their glory exult and give honour to God, from whom they have received and to whom, therefore, they refer all their blessedness.

The Secret is the following: "We offer up to thee, O Lord, prayers and gifts, and that they may be worthy of thy regard, may we be helped by the prayers of thine apostles Peter and Paul."

This is the Office of Christ and of the saints in heaven. There above they all adore the Blessed Trinity and pray without ceasing for us. Peter promised this definitely on the eve of his martyrdom: *Dabo autem operam et frequenter habere vos post obitum meum, ut horum memoriam faciatis.*<sup>1</sup>

Paul, too, assures us that even during his lifetime he prayed incessantly for the whole Christian flock: *Non cesso . . . memoriam vestri faciens in orationibus meis.*<sup>2</sup>

The Preface is that which is now common to all the apostles, but which originally was used exclusively for the two great beings who *operis (Dei) Vicarios eidem (a Roma) contulisti praeesse Pastores.*

We will add another fine Preface from the Leonine Sacramentary in honour of the holy apostles: *Vere dignum etc. Qui ut hanc sedem regimen Ecclesiae totius efficeret, et quod haec predicasset, ostenderet ubique servandum, simul in ea et apostolicae Principem dignitatis, et Magistrum gentium collocasti. Per etc.* How truly Roman in the highest Christian sense are these venerable formulas of the Leonine Sacramentary!

The Communion is that of the Mass of June 2, the feast of the martyrs SS Marcellinus, Peter, and Erasmus.

"The souls of the just are in the hands of God," so that neither shall Herod be able to harm Peter when and how he will, nor the Jews to keep Paul in chains and kill him as they had planned to do in the Sanhedrim. Divine Providence directs their ways and thwarts the counsels of the wicked, so that in spite of themselves, and quite unconsciously, they contribute to the accomplishment of his wondrous plan of salvation. Peter and Paul will at last fall victims to the wickedness of man, but on the day, at the hour, and in the

<sup>1</sup> 2 Peter i, 15.

<sup>2</sup> Eph. i, 16.



circumstances which God has preordained, in order that their martyrdom may become a magnificent triumph.

*Per Crucem alter, alter ense triumphans,  
Vitae senatum laureati possident.*

The Post-Communion is as follows: "Protect thy people, O Lord, and evermore keep and defend them who trust in the intercession of thine apostles Peter and Paul."

A proof of this special devotion at Rome to the two great Princes of the Apostles may be found in the beautiful prayer included in the Breviary under Urban VIII, in which the Lord, indicating Rome, says to SS Peter and Paul:

"Set a girdle of walls round about this new Sion and surround her with fortifications: guard her, protect her, and strengthen her by your prayers, in order that when at any time I shall be angry with the world and shall shake it, yet looking upon your inviolable sepulchre and those wounds which you were willing to endure for me, my mercy may overcome my anger and cause me gladly to listen to your intercession.

"For when I shall see the priesthood and the people prostrate in affliction before me, being moved with compassion I will incline myself to pity, remembering this my promise: I will protect this city, having regard to David my servant and to Aaron who was consecrated to me. Amen."

Protestants have tried to set Paul above Peter, by attributing to the former, rather even than to Christ himself, the foundation of the Church. Catholic theology and the Catholic Catechism suffice to protect the faithful from falling into such heresies as these. Christ founded the Church on Peter, but he disposed that among the apostles Paul should be the chief propagator of the Gospel, and the most important interpreter of divine revelation.

Their place in the hierarchy is quite distinct, but as they together founded the Church of Rome, and left her heir to their blood and their bones, to the universal primacy of Peter and the universal teaching of Paul, so the Liturgy has always united them in a single *cultus*, inspired by admiration and gratitude, nor has it ever separated them. *De quorum meritis atque virtutibus . . . nihil diversum, nihil debemus sentire discretum*, says St Leo the Great.

At Rome this idea of the inseparability of the two apostles—whose authority the Pope still invokes in his most important acts—is traditional. The representations of Peter and Paul are found even in the early Middle Ages on the leaden seals of the Pontiffs, in which Paul, indeed, is portrayed on



the right hand and Peter on the left. Peter Damian wrote a small work in the eleventh century in order to explain the reason of this.

In the time of St Gregory the Great the law which obliged the bishops of Italy to visit at stated periods the tombs of the Princes of the Apostles was already a very ancient one. After the seventh century that law was gradually extended to all the bishops of the Latin rite.

At the end of the thirteenth century the traditional idea of the Jubilee—that is to say, the plenary indulgence which could be gained by the faithful who visited the tombs of the apostles in the first year of the new century—spread with great insistence. Boniface VIII authorized this devotion, and in the year 1300 he threw open the gates of the two Basilicas of St Peter and St Paul, granting full pardon and indulgence to those who should pray before those holy relics.

It was only afterwards that the Lateran and the Liberian Basilicas were included among the churches to be visited in order to gain the indulgence. At first, on the other hand, the Jubilee was granted exclusively in connection with the sepulchres of the two Princes of the Apostles.

It is also very significant that, whilst on the altar at St Peter's on the most solemn feasts and when the Pope celebrates the divine Sacrifice at it, there stands on either side of the Crucifix a gilded metal statue, the one representing St Peter and the other St Paul, so, too, on the papal altar of the Ostian Basilica, enriched with the precious jewelled candelabra recently presented by Benedict XV, other two finely executed marble statuettes of the holy Apostles Peter and Paul adorn the tabernacle in Cosmati mosaic work of the "Confession."

This Roman conception of the oneness which informs the *cultus* of the two Apostles is also given prominence by Sixtus III in the dedicatory inscription of the Title of Eudoxia.

HAEC · PETRI · PAVLIQVE · SIMVL · NVNC · NOMINE · SIGNO  
XYSTVS · APOSTOLICAE · SEDIS · HONORE · FRVENS  
VNVM · QVAESO · PARES · VNVM · DVO · SVMITE · MVNVS  
VNVS · HONOR · CELEBRET · QVOS · HABET · VNA · FIDES

I, Sixtus, raised to the dignity of the Apostolic See, dedicate this temple to both Peter and Paul. Together you are invoked, receive then a single gift. Let one honour be paid to those who were given to us by one faith.

To-day Christian Rome brings the Octave of her great apostles to an end. The importance, however, of these grand figures was such that, in the Middle Ages, their *natalis*



formed as it were the centre of a special liturgical cycle recorded in the preceding volumes.

In the Würzburg List of Gospels two Second Sundays *post Pentecosten* . . . are given; one *ante natale Apostolorum*, the other *post natale Apostolorum*.

The Book of Homilies of Charlemagne, on the other hand, reckons seven Sundays *post natale Apostolorum*, whilst the Calendar of Fronteau has six, and the *Comes* of Albin five.

Amidst so much diversity of calculations we have the authoritative voice of the Leonine Sacramentary declaring in a Preface for June 29 that at Rome the feast of the holy Apostles Peter and Paul does not last merely a day, a week, or a month, but continues uninterruptedly throughout the year.

*Vere dignum etc. Apud quem, quum beatorum Apostolorum Petri et Pauli continuata festivitas, aeterna celebritas, et triumphus caelestis perpetuus sit natalis; nos tamen beatae confessionis initia recolentes, frequenti tribuis devotione venerari, ut crebrior honor impensus sacratissimae passioni, maiorem nobis prosit ad gratiam. Per etc.*

We will conclude by quoting in honour of the two apostles the distichs which may still be read under their figures in mosaic in the Basilica of St Paul, and were repeated on the immense triumphal arch erected by St Leo the Great.

VOCE · DEI · FIS · PETRE · DEI · PETRA · CVLMEN · HONORIS  
AVLAE · CAELESTIS · SPLENDOR · ET · OMNE · DECUS

In obedience to the voice of God, thou, O Peter, art become the divinely appointed foundation and the head of the hierarchy, the splendour and the ornament of the heavenly kingdom.

PERSEQVITVR · DVM · VASA · DEI · FIT · PAVLVS · HONORIS  
VAS · SE · DELECTVM · GENTIBVS · ESSE · PROBAT

Whilst Paul persecutes the vessels of God, he himself becomes a vessel of election, and proves himself truly destined to the work of teaching the Gentiles.

## JULY 7

### SS CYRIL AND METHODIUS, BISHOPS AND CONFESSORS\*

These are two celebrated apostles of the East, who, however, belong by more than one tie to the history of papal Rome. The Slav nations, in truth, are indebted to Cyril and



Methodius for their civilization, for their faith, and, still more, for their original communion with the See of Peter, a communion which has left numerous and indelible traces in their history. To this day the Slav pilgrim who visits Rome and kneels at the sepulchre of the Prince of the Apostles sees upon that tomb a painting representing the Saviour between St Peter and St Paul. That venerated ikon, on which is traced an inscription in the Slavonic tongue, is said to have been placed there by SS Cyril and Methodius as a mark of their homage and devotion to the Apostolic See.

The story of the two brothers is well known. At the time of Adrian II (867-72) Rome saw them enter her gates in triumph, followed by a chosen band of the faithful, bearing a precious burden: the relics of the martyr Clement, which they had found in the Chersonesus.

Cyril and Methodius obtained the approval of the Roman Council on their undertaking, and both were consecrated bishops at the hands of the Pope. But their adversaries put no slight obstacles in their path, until at length Cyril, whose name originally was Constantine, being worn out, preferred to leave the care of the Slav mission to his brother, and to remain at Rome in the shadow of San Clemente, where he prepared a tomb for himself. His death occurred not long afterwards, on February 14, 869, when he was only forty-two years of age.

An interesting painting is still extant of his original burial-place in the *narthex* of the *titulus Clementis*. The soul of the deceased apostle is being presented by his patron saints to the Supreme Judge. Michael and Gabriel, with Andrew the Apostle and St Clement, surround the throne, whilst his brother Methodius elevates the eucharistic chalice in suffrage for the soul of St Cyril.

Another painting in the *titulus Clementis* likewise refers to Cyril and Methodius. It, too, is to be found in the *narthex*, on the left-hand side of the door. It represents the translation of the body of the martyr Clement within the same basilica. Behind the bier, which is borne by the deacons, walks Pope Nicholas I in the front rank, with the two brothers Cyril and Methodius on either hand. The Pope is wearing the *penula* with the *pallium* over it, and has on his head the *regnum*, whereas the apostles of the Slavs have a simple *penula*, from underneath which the bands of the stole hang down over the tunic. Two clerics support the episcopal *ferulas* of the two brothers. The Pope has none.

It is worthy of note that the round *nimbus* is seen only about the heads of Nicholas and Cyril, but the absence of this symbol of liturgical veneration in the case of Methodius is easily explained. The Roman painter of the eleventh cen-



ture knew only of the esteem in which the memory of Nicholas I and of Cyril was held in Rome, whilst he was completely ignorant of the fate of the other apostle of the Slavs, who died in 885 in Moravia.

A third most important monument existed formerly in Rome, connected with the Slav apostolate of the two holy bishops and with the zealous missionary labours which Pope Formosus had also carried on among the Bulgars, before being raised to the Apostolic See. This was the Oratory of St Lawrence *supra sanctum Clementem*, constructed among the buildings on the Cœlian Hill which once sustained the great temple of Claudius.

In 1689 Ciampini first discovered there a painted apse, on which was to be seen the figure of the Saviour between the two Princes of the Apostles, Peter and Paul, with Lawrence and Hippolytus. Our Lord was represented as giving to Peter the volume of the Law with the inscription :

DÑVS (le)GEM (dat);

whilst Pope Formosus and Michael King of the Bulgars were prostrate before him in an attitude of adoration.

This Michael is the person otherwise known as Boris or Bogoris, the first Christian king of the Bulgars, who, having been converted to the Faith by St Methodius, brought almost the whole of his nation to Christ. In order not to hold communication with the usurper Photius of Constantinople, Boris sent envoys to Pope Nicholas I, from whom in 867 he received the well-known letter in reply to his inquiries. Later on Boris exchanged the regal crown for the monastic cowl, and died a holy death in a monastery on May 2, 907. He is venerated as a saint amongst the Bulgars.

We must also record the names of five other persons who were all disciples and coadjutors of SS Cyril and Methodius in the evangelization of Bulgaria.

St Nahum, before joining Bishop Clement in converting the Bulgars, helped SS Cyril and Methodius in their mission. He shared with them the work of translating the liturgical books into the Slavonic language, and went with them to Rome in order to see Pope Adrian II.

St Clement, too, had his part at first in the trials and persecutions endured by the two brother apostles of Moravia, being eventually turned also out of Pannonia, he went to Bulgaria, where he died in 916, as Bishop of Tiberiopolis.

St Gorasduš, in 885, succeeded Methodius as Metropolitan of Moravia and Pannonia. The following year, having been driven into exile, he carried on his missionary activities amongst the Bulgars, in which undertaking he had as fol-



lowers Sabbas and Angelarius, of whom nothing is known beyond their liturgical *cultus*.

The feast of SS Cyril and Methodius was only introduced into the Roman Missal by Leo XIII. The Mass *Sacerdotes tui* is the same as for the translation of St Leo the Great on June 28, with the following exceptions.

This is the Collect: "Almighty, everlasting God, who didst grant that the Slav peoples should come to know thy name by means of thy blessed confessors and bishops, Cyril and Methodius; grant that we who glory in their festival may be joined with them in fellowship."

The Gospel is as on April 25, the feast of St Mark. The living force of the apostolate is one of the graces which always distinguishes the true Church of Jesus Christ, whose mission is precisely that of carrying on the evangelical ministry of the Word of God made man. The Catholic Church alone possesses this right and this mission, since to her only was it said in the person of the apostles: "*Euntes, docete omnes gentes.*"

The Offertory is like that for January 22.

The Secret is as follows: "Look, Lord, we beseech thee, upon our prayers and upon the offerings of thy faithful; that they may be acceptable to thee on this festival day of thy saints, and win us thy mercy and help."

The Communion is similar to that of February 15.

The apostles carry out exactly that which their divine Master commanded them, and the Gospel learnt by them within the narrow confines of the banks of the Lake of Tiberias, in Galilee and in Judea, is announced fearlessly by them to all the nations of the world.

The following is the Post-Communion: "We beseech thee, almighty God, that thou who vouchsafest to bestow upon us the gifts of heaven, wouldst also by the intercession of Cyril and Methodius thy saints, give us grace to despise earthly things."

The holy Eucharist is not only an antidote against the sins which we have committed, but is also a powerful magnet which draws the soul heavenwards. It may be compared to that fountain of water of which the Gospel speaks, which springs irresistibly upwards. Thus St Ignatius of Antioch confessed of himself: I feel within myself something which raises me up, whilst a voice sounds in my ears saying: "Come to the Father."



## JULY 8

## ST ELIZABETH, QUEEN OF PORTUGAL, WIDOW\*

It was Pope Urban VIII who, in 1625, inscribed the name of this charming queen, a very "angel of peace," who died on July 4, 1336, on the list of saints, and placed her feast in the Roman Calendar.

The Mass is that for St Frances of Rome on March 9, but the Collect is proper to the day and refers to the special grace attributed to the saint, that of making peace between the peoples and their princes, who were then at war with each other. We know in fact that the joy caused at the Aragonese Court by the birth of Elizabeth brought about the reconciliation of her father and her grandfather, and historians tell us that death surprised the good queen whilst on a journey which she had undertaken for the purpose of procuring peace between her son and her son-in-law.

Collect: "Most merciful God, who, amongst other excellent gifts, didst endow the blessed Queen Elizabeth with special grace to calm the tempest of war; grant to our humble petitions, through her intercession, that, after a peaceful passage through this mortal life, we may win everlasting joys, through our Lord."

Peace means harmony in order; therefore, there can be no peace except in the due subjection of man to God, of the flesh to the spirit, of that which is temporal, to that which is eternal. This harmony in order is the grace itself of Jesus Christ, which, having destroyed sin, reunites us to God *ut sint unum*, as he and the Father are one and the same essence.

## JULY 9

## SS ZENO AND HIS COMPANIONS, MARTYRS

The Martyrology of St Jerome is strangely confused to-day. It assigns, "*Romae ad guttam iugiter manantem*," that is, to the Aquae Salviae near the Via Laurentina, a group of martyrs: *Natale Virginum Florianae, Faustinae, Anatoliae, Felicitatis*, etc., of whom the last two certainly belong to other places. The true reading, on the other hand, is given to us by Ado and the Martyrologies which emanate from him: "*Romae ad guttam iugiter manantem, sancti Zenonis et aliorum (decem millium ducentorum trium)*."

In explanation of this note, Baronius cites an appendix of



the *Gesta Marcelli*, in which due mention is made of the massacre of this band of martyrs, the remnant of those who had been condemned by Diocletian to hard labour at his new baths. According to this document, the martyrdom of Zeno and his companions took place at the *Aquae Salviae*: *septimo idus iulii, quo celebri memoria annuatim eorundem triumpho dies natalis recolitur.*<sup>1</sup>

The memory of St Zeno continued to be constantly held in honour at that spot, and this fact is attested by the church which still stands over his sepulchre adorned by a beautiful apsidal mosaic in which is represented the Blessed Virgin between St Zeno and St Bernard of Clairvaux.

The cemetery *ad guttam iugiter manantem* up to the present has remained wholly unknown. The Martyrology of St Jerome indeed mentions under October 5 another martyr as buried in that place: *Romae ad guttas, sancti Stactei*. De Rossi discovered in the registers of the reliquary of the Vicariate of Rome that formerly a small glass vase attached to a tomb was found in that place.<sup>2</sup> However, the hill, under which the cemetery extended, has not yet been explored.

## JULY 9

### SS PATERMUTIUS AND COPRETES

There existed in Rome up to the time of Paul IV (1555-59) a parish church near the Jewish Ghetto, dedicated to these two Eastern saints and containing some of their relics. The origin of this church is connected with the great influx of Eastern devotions which occurred at Rome in the early Middle Ages, and it is for this reason that we have mentioned these saints, who have been forgotten for many centuries by the descendants of Romulus and Remus.

The Bollandists have related the *Acta* of Paternutius and Copretes, in which, however, it is very difficult to separate the facts from the legends under which they lie hidden.

Eusebius mentions a Paternutius who fearlessly endured martyrdom by fire at the same time as the bishops Peleus and Nilus. Rufinus, on the other hand, makes a holy monk, Copres by name, tell the story of the conversion and wonderful life of a second Paternutius, who was said to have lived in Egypt under Valentinian and Valens. It appears that in the Menology of the Emperor Basil, the Paternutius of Eusebius has been identified as the hero so highly praised by

<sup>1</sup> *Act. SS Iul.*, vol. II, die ix, pp. 687-89.

<sup>2</sup> *Bullet. d'Arch. Christ.*, ser. II, ann. II, p. 72.



the monk Copres, whence arose the existing confusion<sup>1</sup> between the two saints of the same name, a confusion which has found its way into the Martyrology.

## THE NIGHT OF JULY 9

### VIGIL OF THE SEVEN HOLY BROTHERS

This Roman vigil with the preceding fast is confirmed by the Leonine Sacramentary, which also preserves the various formulas of the Mass. The following is an example of these : *Accipe, quaesumus Domine, munera populi tui pro Martyrum festivitate sanctorum, et sincero nos corde fac eorum natalitiis interesse.*

We give the fine Preface : *Vere dignum . . . Quia, licet in omnium Sanctorum tu sis, Domine, provectione mirabilis, in his tamen speciale tuum munus agnoscimus, quos et fratres sorte nascendi, et magnifica praestitisti passione germanos ; ut simul esset veneranda et gloria Genitricis, et florentissima proles Ecclesiae. Per etc.*

## JULY 10. *Dies Martyrorum.*

### THE SEVEN HOLY BROTHERS AND ST FELICITAS

An inscription in the cemetery of SS Processus and Martinianus gives to this day the significant title of *Dies Martyrorum*, so expressive of its importance. At Rome, indeed, so great was the veneration shown to St Felicitas and her sons in olden times that the Sacramentaries appoint for to-day at least four stational Masses which were celebrated in the four different cemeteries where their relics reposed.

From the life-time of Gregory the Great critics had busied themselves about this group of seven saints, the original *Acta* of whose martyrdom we no longer possess. This lack is, however, fully made up for by the liturgical records and inscriptions which we find in the Roman cemeteries, all of which give ample confirmation to the matter of the existing recension of the *Passio*, which is itself of some antiquity.

Felicitas and her seven sons were put to death for the Faith, about the year 162, under Marcus Aurelius. The sons preceded their mother to heaven ; she followed them four months afterwards. In order to strike terror into the hearts of the Christians the death sentences were not all carried

<sup>1</sup> *Act. SS Jul.*, II, die ix, pp. 698 *sqq.*



out in the same place, for Januarius was beaten to death with leaden scourges and was buried in the Cemetery of Pretextatus, Felix and Philip died under the whip and received burial in that of Priscilla, Silanus was thrown from a precipice and was interred with his mother in the Cemetery of Maximus, Alexander, Vitalis, and Martial were beheaded and were given the honour of sepulture in the Cemetery of the Giordani.

In accordance with the *Passio* the Philocalian Laterculus gives to July 10: *VI id., Felicis et Philippi in Priscillae, et in Iordanorum: Martialis, Vitalis, Alexandri; et in Maximi: Silani. Hunc Silanum martyrem Novati furati sunt; et in Praetextati: Ianuari.*

The body of Silanus, however, had been stolen in the third century by the Novatians, for they also eagerly desired the glory of possessing the relics of a martyr. The sacred relics were afterwards restored to their first resting-place, whence Leo III transferred them at the end of the eighth century, together with those of St Felicitas, to the *titulus* of St Susanna, at no great distance, and there they remain to this day.

From the Philocalian Calendar to-day's group of martyrs passed into the Martyrology of St Jerome, but the text of the *codices* is extremely confused and corrupt.

Felicitas and her sons appear in it on July 9 and 10. On July 9 they are ascribed *ad guttam iugiter manantem*, after the martyr Anatolia of Tora in the Sabina, and the sons appear as seven presbyters: *Anatoliae, Felicitatis cum presbyteris VII.*

On July 10, on the other hand, the martyrs are distributed amongst the various cemeteries of Rome, but here, too, irregularly:

*Romae, in cimiterio Priscillae via Salaria: natale sanctorum VII germanorum, idest Felicis, Filippi, in cimiterio Vitalis, Marcialis, Maximi, sancti Silani, Praetextati via Appia, sancti Ianuarii, via Cornelia, miliario VIIII, Rufine, Secundae Filiorum eius, Felicitatis, etc.*

The Leonine Sacramentary restores the proper order to the Martyrology of St Jerome: *VI id. Juliarum. Natale sanctorum martyrum Felicis, Philippi, in coemeterio Priscillae; Vitalis et Martialis et Alexandri, in coemeterio Iordanorum; et Silani in coemeterio Maximi via Salaria; et Ianuarii in coemeterio Praetextati via Appia.*

In the same codex the feast is preceded by a fast and a vigiliary Mass, while the stationary solemnity of the following day is enriched by various alternative formulas. The Mass of St Felicitas occurs also on November 23, when she is again associated with the memory of her seven sons.



The Gelasian Sacramentary, on the contrary, omits this group of martyrs, which, however, is reinstated in its proper place in the Sacramentary of Adrian, where we find the Mass as given in the present Missal of the Tridentine reform.

The Würzburg List of Gospels represents a somewhat older period of the Liturgy. Of the four Masses of the Leonine Sacramentary it preserves at least three, while of the fourth hardly a trace remains: *Die X mensis iuli, natale VII Fratrum Appia, Salaria. . . .*

*Prima Missa ad aquilonem, secunda ad sanctum Alexandrum, etc.*

*Ad Sanctam Felicitatem, etc.*

We, too, will follow the traditional order of the Roman Sacramentaries.

### THE FIRST MASS

*Station at the Tombs of the Martyrs Felix and Philip  
in the Cemetery of Priscilla.*

*In prima missa ad aquilonem, Via Salaria. In coemeterio  
Priscillae, Felicis et Philippi.*

These two martyrs were buried in the cemetery of Priscilla under the altar of the basilica named after Pope Silvester, in which, besides this Pope, were interred Marcellinus, Marcellus, Liberius, Siricius, Celestine, and Vigilius; thus forming a complete papal necropolis which grew up in the fourth century around the tombs of the two martyr brothers.

Damasus placed the following epigraph on the sepulchre of the two sons of St Felicitas:

CULTORES · DOMINI · FELIX · PARITERQVE · PHILIPPVS  
HINC · VIRTUTE · PARES · CONTEMPTO · PRINCIPE · MVNDI  
AETERNAM · PETIERE · DOMVM · REGNAQVE · PIORVM  
SANGVINE · QVOD · PROPRIO · CHRISTI · MERVERE · CORONAS  
HIS · DAMASVS · SVPPLEX · VOLVIT · SVA · REDDERE · VOTA

Felix and Philip, servants of God, having overcome with equal fortitude the earthly tyrant, have reached the eternal mansion, the kingdom of the blessed. Since, by their blood, they have gained the crowns of victory, Damasus desires to pay his vows to them, as a suppliant.

The Mass must have been one of those described in the Leonine Sacramentary. In the Würzburg List the first Gospel Lesson is taken from St Matthew (v, 1-12), giving the text of the Beatitudes.



## THE SECOND MASS

*Station at the Tomb of the Martyrs Vitalis, Martialis,  
and Alexander in the Cemetery of the Giordani.*

*In secunda missa, in coemeterio Iordanorum, Via Salaria,  
Sanctorum Vitalis, Martialis et Alexandri.*

The cemetery of the Giordani is on the Via Salaria Nova, and in it were buried also the martyrs Daria, Chrysanthus, a group of seventy soldiers, another group of sixty-two martyrs and the child Maurus, himself also a martyr; in fact, a great assemblage of martyrs.

During the excavations there was found a fragment of an inscription of the Vigilian period which probably refers to the martyr Alexander:

(Alexandr)O SEPTEM · DE (fratribus uni)  
NS · HVNC  
(la)PIS · IACT(ura . . . .)

The Würzburg Index assigns to this Mass—*secunda ad sanctum Alexandrum*—the passage from St Luke (xi, 33-36), in which our Saviour speaks of the inner light of the spirit, which is a right intention. The Missal now assigns it to November 11, the feast of St Martin.

Pope Gregory IV, in the ninth century, gave the body of the martyr Alexander to Abbot Sicardus of Farfa, who placed it in the Oratory of the Saviour which he had caused to be built beside his abbatial basilica. The seven martyr brothers are still venerated with traditional honours at Farfa.

## THE THIRD MASS

*Station at the Tomb of the Martyr Silanus in the  
Cemetery of Maximus.*

*In tertia missa, in coemeterio Maximi, ad Sanctam Felicitatem  
Silani Martyris.*

Silanus, or Silvanus, lay beside his mother in the cemetery of Maximus. When the body of St Felicitas was taken by order of Boniface I to the basilica above, in which the Pope also wished his tomb to be constructed, Silanus was left for some time longer in the obscurity of the subterranean cemetery, as the Salzburg Itinerary attests. It was not long, however, before the mother once more had her son beside her, for the Malmesbury Itinerary asserts that at the time



when it was compiled the relics of the martyr had already been placed beside those of St Felicitas.

Pope Damasus composed the following inscription for the tomb of the courageous mother.

DISCITE · QUID · MERITI · PRAESTET · PRO · REGE · FERIRI  
FEMINA · NON · TIMUIT · MORTEM · CVM · NATIS · OBIVIT  
CONFESSA · CHRISTVM · MERUIT · PER · SAECVLA · NOMEN

Ponder well the great merit of her who willingly gave her life for her King; she, but a weak woman, did not fear death, but faced it boldly together with her children. She confessed Christ and thus obtained eternal glory.

Boniface I, being opposed by the schismatic party of Eulalius, lived at first at the cemetery of Felicitas. Later when his legitimate election to the See of Peter was universally recognized, and the schism ended, he attributed this favour to the intercession of the martyr, in whose honour he therefore erected a new and larger basilica over her tomb. The medieval collectors copied the votive inscription of the Pope, which must doubtless have been placed under the representation of Felicitas and her sons that adorned the apse of the new sanctuary.

INTONVIT · METVENDA · DIES · SVRREXIT · IN · HOSTEM  
IMPIA · TELA · MALI · VINCERE · CVM · PROPERAT  
CARNIFICIS · SVPERARE · VIAS · TVNC · MILLE · NOCENDI  
SOLA · FIDES · POTVIT · QVAM · REGIT · OMNIPOTENS  
CORPOREIS · RESOLVTA · MALIS · DVCE · PRAEDITA · CHRISTO  
AETHERIS · ALMA · PARENS · ATRIA · CELSA · PETIT  
INSONTES · PVEROS · SEQVITVR · PER · AMOENA · VIRETA  
TEMPORA · VICTRICIS · FLOREA · SERTA · LIGANT  
PVRPVREAM · QVOQVE · RAPIVNT · ANIMAM · CAELESTIA · REGNA  
SANGVINE · LOTA · SVA · MEMBRA · TENET · TVMVLVS  
SI · TVMVLVM · QVAERIS · MERITVM · DE · NOMINE · SIGNAT  
NE · OPPRIMERER · (BELLO) · DVX · FVIT · ISTA · MIHI

The fatal day at length arrived, and she hastened forth to join battle with her adversary, ready to overcome his evil weapons. The innumerable resources in which abounded the cruelty of the tyrant, Faith alone, leaning on the Almighty, was able to subdue. Freed at length from all the bodily evils of this life, the unvanquished mother, having Christ as her guide, enters at length the glorious halls of heaven. There she follows her innocent children through the happy pastures, whilst a garland of flowers encircles the brow of the heroine. Though the heavens possess her soul, clad in



the purple robe of martyrdom, this tomb holds her body washed by her blood. If thou wouldst know the name of her who lies in this sepulchre, it speaks of itself the praise of the martyr. Felicitas, she who was my protector lest I should succumb to the onset of my foes.

The Mass at this third station is indicated thus in the Würzburg Codex: *Ad Sanctam Felicitatem, lect. Sancti Evang. sec. Matt. k. cxix. Loquente Jesu ad turbas.* The Gospel, therefore, is the same as that appointed in our present Missal, and must be regarded as common to the martyred mother and her sons alike. This eucharistic synaxis being the most important of all the stations mentioned to-day in the Sacramentaries, it is not surprising that it should be the only one which has been preserved in the Missal.

The Introit is taken from Psalm cxii. "Praise the Lord, ye children, praise ye the name of the Lord; who maketh the barren woman to dwell in a house, the joyful mother of children."

St Peter Chrysologus has left us an annotation on this Antiphon in a discourse which he delivered on the feast of St Felicitas: *Discurrebat laetior inter confossa cadavera, quam inter cunabula cara filiorum; quia internis oculis tot cernebat bravia, quot vulnera; quot tormenta, tot praemia, quot victimas, tot coronas.*<sup>1</sup>

The Collects and the Antiphon for the Communion of the people are the same as those for the feast of the Forty Martyrs of Sebaste on March 10. Those martyrs, after having served together in the army, were also united in brotherhood by reason of the martyrdom which they heroically endured together, but these seven sons of St Felicitas, already brothers according to the flesh, sealed with their blood their bond of consanguinity and became brothers a second time in heaven in a far higher sense, both through the shedding of their blood and through their Faith.

The Lesson is that of March 9, the feast of St Frances of Rome. The Holy Ghost, in proclaiming the praises of the valiant woman, presents her to us, not so much in the crowd, the office, or the university chair, but rather in her home, with spindle and distaff in her hand, busy with domestic affairs and with the wise upbringing of her children. Each one of us must be holy in the state in which God has placed us, nor should we strive after the perfections of a state to which God does not call us, and which he does not

<sup>1</sup> *Serm.*, 134; *P.L.* LII, col. 565.



require of us. Domestic peace, order in the house, the love of her husband and the joys of healthy and virtuous children, these are the true glories of a Christian mother. Her seven martyred sons, these are the triumph of St Felicitas, whom, like another Roman mother, she, too, could call "her jewels."

The Gradual is identical with that of the feast of the martyrs Processus and Martinianus on July 2. The world is sad and full of deception. The sons of St Felicitas during their short lives on earth were like sparrows caught in the net of the fowler. What is the signification of this? That God, so that the world should not take possession of them and spoil the flower of their innocence, broke the meshes of the net and the birds, being freed, flew joyously up to heaven. How beautiful is the poetry of the Christian Liturgy!

The alleluiatic verse utters the praises of Christian brotherhood which consecrates a like shedding of blood for Christ's sake and a like sublime love. It has previously been noticed on May 12.

The Gospel drawn from St Matthew (xii, 46-50) forms part of the Lesson already assigned to Ember Wednesday in Lent. Whilst the divine Saviour is yet preaching to the multitudes, word is brought to him that his Mother and his brethren stand without seeking him, but Jesus, desirous of implanting in worldly people higher ideas of devotion and piety, declares those to be his true kindred who have within them the same spirit rather than the same blood as himself.

St Gregory the Great commentated on this day on this Gospel at the tomb of St Felicitas in this manner: *Adest beata Felicitas, cuius hodie natalitia celebramus, quae credendo extitit ancilla Christi, et predicando facta est mater Christi. Septem quidem filios habuit . . . sic post se timuit vivos in carne relinquere, sicut carnales parentes solent metuere ne mortuos praemittant.*<sup>1</sup>

The Antiphon for the offering of the Oblations is the same as for the feast of the martyrs Marius, Martha, and the others on January 19, and again introduces the symbol of the bird escaping from the snare of the fowler. To whom is the glory due? *Laqueus contritus est et nos liberati sumus.* God has broken the meshes of the net and the sparrow has found its freedom.

<sup>1</sup> *Hom. in Evang.*, Lib. I, hom. III; *P.L.* LXXVI, col. 1087.



## THE FOURTH MASS

*Station at the Tomb of St Januarius in the Cemetery of  
Pretextatus.*

*Ad quartam missam, Via Appia Sancti Ianuari.*

This station on the Via Appia, mentioned in the Martyrologies, the Leonine Sacramentary, and the Codex of Würzburg, was at the cemetery of Pretextatus where the martyr Januarius was buried. De Rossi discovered his historical crypt by means of fragments of the inscription of Pope Damasus :

BEATISSIMO ■ MARTYRI  
IANVARIO  
DAMASVS ■ EPISCOP ■  
FECIT

There is an interesting "graffito" in the same crypt in which the intercession of Januarius and the other local martyrs is invoked in favour of a deceased person.

REFRIGERI • IANVARIVS • AGATOPVS • FELICISSIM • MARTYRES

We give here a beautiful Preface from the Leonine Sacramentary in honour of Felicitas and her sons :

*Vere dignum, etc. Quoniam magna sunt opera tua, Domine, et immensa magnalia, per quae nobis laetitia hodiernae felicitatis accessit. Vere enim Felicitatis filii, et vera est suorum Felicitas Filiorum; quos et casto foetu sancti coniugii Mater foecunda progenuit, et rursus, confessionis sacrosanctae visceribus Martyr beata conceptos, per fidem denuo felicius peperit Martyres ad coronam. Per etc.*

There was another sanctuary in Rome dedicated to St Felicitas and her sons, not far from the *titulus Clementis*. It may, perhaps, have been the very house of the martyrs turned into an Oratory according to the ancient Roman usage. The paintings which have survived represent Felicitas, with the inscription FELICITAS • CVLTRIX • ROMANARVM, and her sons between two gaolers.

We wish to end for to-day our remarks on this band of martyrs with a "graffito" still to be read in this Oratory :

SANCTA • MARTYR • MVLTVM • PRAESTAS • OB • VOTI • . . .  
FELICITATES • SPERARE • INNOCENTES • NON • DESPERARE • (reos)



## JULY 10

SS RUFINA AND SECUNDA, VIRGINS AND MARTYRS

*Station at the IX Milestone on the Via Cornelia.*

To-day, the Martyrology of St Jerome notes another liturgical station: *Via Aurelia, milliario VIII, Rufinae et Secundae.*

The sepulchre of these martyrs was actually in the Via Cornelia, close to the Via Aurelia, and the wood of *Buxetum* near which they were put to death is celebrated in the annals of the martyrs, for there were also slain SS Peter and Marcellinus.

In honour of the martyrs the name of the wood was changed from *silva nigra* to *silva candida*, and Pope Julius I erected in memory of SS Rufina and Secunda a sepulchral basilica, which was completed by Pope Damasus. The Christian village which grew up around this church developed to such an extent that it became an episcopal See named after St Rufina, a See which was afterwards joined to that of Porto.

The Itineraries of the pilgrims of former years generally mention the sepulchral basilica over the tombs of the two martyrs, which were, therefore, visited at least down to the twelfth century.

Pope Anastasius IV (1153-54) transferred their bodies to the portico at the Lateran which connects the baptistery of Sixtus III with the Oratory of St Venantius.

The Mass is common to that of the foregoing group of the Seven Martyred Brothers.

## JULY 11

ST PIUS I, POPE AND MARTYR

The name of this Pontiff (158-67) is connected with the foundation of the *titulus de Pudentiana* or *de Pastore*, which the Pudenti, who had already shown themselves generous hosts of St Peter on that spot, finally dedicated to Christian worship at the instance of Pius and of his brother. Unfortunately the documents referring to this foundation are doubtful; there remains, however, the tradition connected with the building which attributes the erection of the *titulus* to the first half of the second century.

We find a confirmation of the tradition in that which is known as the "Muratorian fragment," which has an allusion



to the author of the little work on Penance, the title of which is: Ποιμήν, *Pastor: Pastorem vero nuperrime temporibus nostris in urbe Roma Hermas conscripsit, sedente in cathedra urbis Romae Ecclesiae, Pio episcopo fratre eius*. The author, then, of the apocalyptic teaching which someone has truly described as a vast examination of conscience of the Roman Church at the end of the first half of the second century, is no other than Hermas or the *Pastor*, brother of Pope Pius I, who gave his name to the new *titulus de Pudentiana*.

St Pius was buried in the Vatican, beside his predecessors.

The Mass is that of February 18, as for St Simeon, Bishop and Martyr.

## JULY 12

### SS NABOR AND FELIX, MARTYRS

The *cultus* of these martyrs was already famous at Milan in the fourth century. Paulinus mentions it in his life of St Ambrose—*Sancti Martyres Nabor et Felix celeberrime frequentabantur*<sup>1</sup>—and at times it is spoken of also by the holy Doctor himself, who found the bodies of the martyrs Gervase and Protase which lay hidden and unknown under the pavement of the sepulchral basilica of SS Nabor and Felix: *Granum sinapis Martyres nostri sunt: Felix, Nabor, et Victor. Habebant odorem Fidei, sed latebat. Venit persecutio, arma posuerunt, colla flexerunt, contusi gladio, per totius terminos mundi gratiam sui sparsere martyrii*.<sup>2</sup> Thus from that time the devotion towards these martyrs of Milan became celebrated throughout the Church, and it was in this way that their Office became incorporated in the Middle Ages in the Roman Calendar.

The Mass is the same as that for the martyrs Faustinus and Jovita of Brescia on February 15, but the Collects are proper, and are probably derived from the Leonine Sacramentary. This is the one which, according to the original idea of the Liturgy, comes to-day at the close of the litany-like prayer of the greater Doxology. "Grant, we beseech thee, O Lord, that we, who should always hold in honour the birth of thy martyrs, Nabor and Felix, may ever enjoy their intercession for us." The explicit mention of Nabor and Felix seems to be an afterthought, changing to some extent the meaning.

Secret: "May the offerings of thy people, we beseech

<sup>1</sup> Paulinus, *Vit. S. Ambrosii*, c. 14; *P.L.* XIV, col. 34.

<sup>2</sup> *S. Ambrosii Exposit.* in Luc., lib. VII, 178; *P.L.* XV, col. 1836.



thee, O Lord, be made pleasing to thee by the intercession of thy holy martyrs Nabor and Felix; and may they be made perfect by the merits of those in honour of whose triumphs they are offered up to thy name."

Post-Communion: This Collect is to be found in the Leonine Sacramentary at the end of the month of April, n. XLIII: "We beseech thee, O Lord, on the festival of thy saints, that we, who have been fed with thy sacramental gift, may enjoy for evermore the good things with which by thy grace we are now refreshed."

The wording is somewhat obscure, but we can easily divine the meaning of the prayer. The Leonine Sacramentary here asks that the feast of the saints and the gift of the Eucharist, which during our earthly life represent the pledge of the future bliss promised to us, may obtain in the life to come the full accomplishment of the divine promise.

## JULY 12

## ST JOHN GUALBERT, ABBOT\*

We have here one of those saints who took part in the vigorous movement of ecclesiastical reform in the eleventh century, and who, having been trained in the school of St Benedict, raised up the Papacy and the hierarchy which lay humiliated before the throne of the Cæsars to such a height of sanctity that they finally brought the German Emperor himself, barefooted and uncrowned, as a penitent, to the feet of Hildebrand at Canossa.

The mission of John Gualbert was directed especially against simony in Tuscany, and one of the most characteristic scenes in his life was when, in order to prove that Bishop Peter of Florence had bought that See, he ordered his own disciple, also named Peter, to endure the trial by fire. The challenge to the judgement of God was accepted. Peter put on the sacred vestments and celebrated Mass; then, having obtained the blessing of his Abbot, he boldly entered the long and narrow passage formed by two blazing piles of wood.

He had already almost reached the end when he perceived that he had dropped the *mappula* which, according to the ancient custom he was holding in his hand and not wearing fastened to his arm, as is the modern usage. With perfect composure, Peter re-entered the furnace, and, picking up the maniple from the ground, emerged unscathed at the opposite end of the pyre, being saluted by the admiring populace with the name "Igneus."



This scene is described by Desiderius, Abbot of Monte Cassino (Victor III), in his third Book of Miracles, whilst Peter was still alive, and, indeed, occupying the episcopal See of Albano.

St John Gualbert died in 1073, and was canonized by Celestine III in 1193. A noble Oratory was dedicated to him by Christian Rome in the *titulus Praxedis*, which for many centuries has been under the care of the monks of Vallombrosa.

The Mass is like that of St Sabbas on December 5.

The Gospel (Matt. v, 43-48) alone is proper to the feast, bearing reference to the touching incident which occurred in the Basilica of San Miniato at Florence, and which decided the conversion of St John Gualbert.

At that time of fierce civil warfare a near relative of his had been slain, and one day John, who was accompanied by a strong escort of his companions in arms, met by chance the murderer. The latter, giving himself up for lost, fell on his knees before John Gualbert, and, stretching out his arms in the form of a cross, besought his pardon in the name of our Redeemer. Thereupon John, moved by compassion, spared his life and embraced him. On going afterwards into the Church of San Miniato, he saw the figure of the crucified Lord bow its head three times towards him as a sign of approbation.

That striking sight completed the action which grace had begun in his heart from the moment when he forgave his enemy. John would not leave that harbour of compassion and peace—so, ungirding his knightly sword, he cut off his hair with his own hands and took the monastic cowl.

The following verses were written by a poet in praise of Vallombrosa, the monastery founded by John Gualbert, whence came so many saints :

*Mutavit Vallis veteres Umbrosa colores:  
Felix si mores et caeli servat amores!*

## JULY 13

### ST ANACLETUS, POPE AND MARTYR

According to the list of Popes furnished us by St Irenæus Anencletus—'Ανέγκλητος—or Anacletus, is probably the same person as Cletus, the successor of Linus and the predecessor of Clement on the papal throne. The *Liber Pontificalis*



attributes to him the completion of St Peter's tomb at the Vatican near which he was himself interred.

The introduction of his feast into the Calendar happened very late, whereas the name of Cletus seems to have been included in the diptychs of the Mass from very early days.

The Mass is as on February 3, except the Gospel, which is the one appointed on January 24 for the feast of St Timothy.

We must cultivate a special veneration for all these early Popes and bishops, who were the disciples and immediate successors of the apostles, and who cemented the foundations of the Church by their labours and their blood.

## JULY 14

### ST BONAVENTURE, BISHOP, CONFESSOR, AND DOCTOR OF THE CHURCH\*

This humble son of St Francis is like a brilliant star of the first magnitude in the firmament of the Doctors of the Church. Indeed, the whole fabric of scholastic theology reaches its apex in the two saints, St Thomas and St Bonaventure, for since their death the *Schola* has done little more than follow their lead and explain and defend their theses. After their strenuous conquest of the most inaccessible peaks of Christian metaphysics and revealed theology, the disciples of both the Angelic and the Seraphic Doctors devote a large part of their energies to preserving the sacred deposit entrusted to them.

Their own contemporaries united Thomas and Bonaventure in the same feeling of lively admiration. After their death the veneration for the two saints advanced with equal fervour, and Dante in his *Paradiso*<sup>1</sup> places some of his most beautiful lines both on the lips of Aquinas and on those of Giovanni Fidanza of Bagnoregio,<sup>2</sup> who was afterwards known as *Bona Ventura*.

Yet these two most eminent Doctors who have so many points in common differed widely in many others. St Thomas remained all through his life a professor of the School of Theology, a man of calm speculation, whereas Bonaventure displayed a more vigorous character, and therefore became a successful man of action and a ruler of the people.

Giovanni Fidanza was still young when he was raised to the office of Minister General of his Order, which at that time

<sup>1</sup> Cantos XI and XII.

<sup>2</sup> Bagnorea, the ancient Balneum Regis, in the province of Viterbo.  
—TR.



was being rent by the internal discord aroused by the *Spirituales*. The saint, however, guided by that wise and prudent spirit which enables a man to discern promptly the right path to follow, avoiding either extreme, was able to win the respect both of those who were too rigorous and of those who were more lax, and so saved the Franciscan Order from a schism which would have brought upon it irreparable disaster.

St Bonaventure, who was created Cardinal and Bishop of Albano in 1273 by Gregory X, died on July 15 in the following year at Lyons whilst the Ecumenical Council was being held in that city.

His funeral had the aspect of a triumph, the Pope and the entire assembly taking part in it. Cardinal Pietro, of Tarantaise, afterwards Innocent V, delivered the funeral oration, which he began with the words of David: "*Doleo super te, frater mi, Ionatha.*"<sup>1</sup>

The Mass is from the Common of Doctors, as on January 29, except the following parts: the alleluia verse is that of the feast of St Ambrose on December 7, the Offertory is as on April 5, while the rest is identical with the Mass of St Leo the Great on June 28.

St Bonaventure is a true example of the ascetic Franciscan school, which has spread among the people a fervent devotion to the most sacred human nature of the Redeemer. When he writes on the Passion of our Lord or speaks in praise of the Blessed Virgin, his language grows eloquent and a seraphic ardour glows in his words.

Sixtus IV, when he canonized St Bonaventure in 1482, ordered that the celebration of his feast in the Basilica of the Holy Apostles should be considered as a solemnity of the sacred Apostolic Palace. In later years a church and a monastery were dedicated to this saint on the Palatine.

## JULY 15

### ST HENRY II, EMPEROR AND CONFESSOR\*

That an emperor of the Holy Roman-Germanic Empire should attain to the height of Christian perfection and sanctity is not an everyday occurrence, hence this feast of St Henry, which we celebrate to-day, attracts our especial attention by its glorious records.

It appears, indeed, as though the carrying out of virtue

<sup>1</sup> 2 Kings i, 26.



—that of the Beatitudes proclaimed in the Sermon on the Mount, for instance—becomes more difficult, when, instead of being practised by one in a humble and troubled condition, it has to be exercised on an august throne in the midst of the pomp of riches, triumphs, and authority. Holy Scripture itself declares it to be a wonderful thing if “the rich man hath not gone after gold,”<sup>1</sup> and the Liturgy, on the rare occasions when it has to sing the praises of a saintly king, never fails to point out how much more arduous and glorious his victory is, because he has had to overcome the attractions and vanities of worldly power.

Henry II, in the eleventh century, seems to resemble Constantine. He came down repeatedly into Italy in order to defend the rightful Pontiff against factious opponents. Out of devotion to the Roman Church he took up arms against the Greeks who had occupied Southern Italy. He spent a great part of his treasure in founding episcopal sees, in enriching churches and endowing monasteries; indeed, on one occasion he sent his Imperial Insignia to the Abbey of Cluny in order that they should be offered up to the Redeemer.

St Henry died on July 13, 1024, and was canonized by Blessed Eugenius III in 1145. The following is the original epitaph inscribed on his tomb:

HENRIC • AVGVSTVS • VIRTVTVM • GERMINE • IVSTVS  
HAEC • SERVAT • CVIVS • VISCERA • PVTRIS • HVMVS  
SPLENDOR • ERAT • LEGVM • SPECVLVM • LVX • GEMMAQVE •  
REGVM  
AD • CAELOS • ABIIT • NON • MORIENS • ORBIIT  
IDIBVS • IN • TERRIS • VEXANTEM • PONDERA • CARNIS  
IVLIVS • AETHEREO • SVMPSERAT • IMPERIO

This sepulchre contains the mortal remains of the Emperor Henry, a just man and a doer of good deeds. He was the splendour of the upright, the mirror, the light, and the jewel of monarchs. He has gone away to heaven and has died to die no more. He went to the heavenly kingdom on the Ides of July, leaving here his earthly body.

The Mass is the same as on February 8, the Collect being as follows: “O God, who on this day didst remove blessed Henry thy confessor from the government of an earthly empire and raise him to the kingdom of heaven, we humbly beseech thee that, even as by the fulness of thy preventing grace thou didst give him strength to overcome the enticements of this life, so thou wouldst enable us, through his

<sup>1</sup> Ecclesiasticus xxxi, 8.



example, to shun the blandishments of this world, and come to thee with clean hearts."

## JULY 15

## SS EUTROPIUS, ZOSIMUS, AND BONOSA, MARTYRS

To-day the Martyrology of St Jerome has: *In portu Romano hoc est in insula, natale sanctorum Eutropii, Zosimi et Bonosae*. This group of martyrs may be almost considered as belonging to Rome, for Bonosa's house was in the Trastevere, and Porto was regarded as forming part of the city of Rome.

The following inscription, found among the excavations at Porto, belongs to the sepulchral basilica of these martyrs:

SANCTIS · MARTYRIBVS · ET · BEATISSIMIS  
EVTROPIO · BONOSAE · ET · ZOSIMAE  
DONATVS · EPISC · TVMVLVM · ADORNAVIT  
SED · ET · BASILICAM · CONIVNCTAM · TVMVLO  
A · FVNDAMENTIS · SANCTAE · PLEBI · DEI · CONSTRVXIT

Another inscription, unfortunately mutilated, has been restored *ex ingenio* by De Rossi; it is in honour of the martyr Zosima:

ACCIPE · ME · DIXIT · DOMINE (in tua limina Christe)  
EXAVDITA · CITO · FRVITV(r modo lumine caeli)  
ZOSIME · SANCTA · SOROR · M(agno defuncta periclo)  
IAM · VIDET · ET · SOCIOS · SANC(ti certaminis omnes)  
LAETATVRQVE · VIDENS · MIRA(ntes sistere circum)  
MIRANTVRQVE · PATRES · TAN(ta virtute puellam)  
QVAM · SVO · DE · NVMERO · CVPIE(ntes esse vicissim)  
CERTATIMQVE · TENENT · ATQV(e amplectuntur ovantes)  
IAM · VIDET · ET · SENTIT · MAGNI (spectacula regni)  
ET · BENE · PRO · MERITIS · GAVDET · SIBI · PRAEMIA · REDDI  
TECVM · PAVLE · TENENS · CALCATA · MORTE · CORONAM  
NAM · FIDE · SERVATA · CVRSVM · CVM · PACE · PEREGIT

She said: "Receive me, O Lord Christ, into thy kingdom." Her prayer is immediately answered and she is admitted to the light of heavenly kingdom where our holy sister Zosima, having fought the good fight, finds all her companions in martyrdom and rejoices to see them around her. The saints are astonished at such fortitude in a child, and desirous of having her among them, they applaud and embrace her and



detain her. She already contemplates and takes pleasure in the wondrous glory of heaven, and enjoys the well-deserved reward. Having crushed the head of death, she will wear her crown like you, O Paul, for she has ended her earthly career with honour, and has kept the faith intact.

One of the most ancient churches in the Trastevere, near the *excubitorium* of the VII cohort of the Vigiles, was dedicated to St Bonosa. It would appear that her house was situated on this spot, for this epigraph of the fifth century was found there :

EGO · DEVSDEDIT · AMATOR · LOCI · SANCTI · BOTVM · FECIT ·  
FELICITER

In recent years another Oratory on the Via Salaria, not far from the cemetery of Maximus, has been dedicated to the memory of SS Bonosa and Felicitas.

## JULY 15

### SS QUIRICUS AND JULITTA, MARTYRS

A number of liturgical books mark this day, like the Greeks, as the feast of these two celebrated martyrs.

In general, however, their feast is kept in the Western Church on June 13 or 16.

## JULY 16

### THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY OF MOUNT CARMEL\*

To-day the whole Latin Church joins with the Friars of the Blessed Virgin of Mount Carmel in celebrating the munificence of the Mother of God towards this Order which is dedicated to her.

The origin of this illustrious brotherhood which has given so many saints to the Church, amongst others St Andrew Corsini, St Albert, St Mary Magdalene de' Pazzi, St Teresa, etc., is well known. A little while before the year 1185, a priest of Calabria having had—so he said—a revelation of the prophet Elias, ascended Mount Carmel and began to restore one of the four ancient monasteries which he found there, and of which only the foundations remained. *Ante aliquot annos*—Giovanni the priest of Patmos wrote in 1185—*quidam monachus, dignitate sacerdos, capillitio albus, e*



*Calabria oriundus, ex Prophetæ revelatione, in montem appellans, ea loca, monasterii nempe reliquias, vallo perparvo cinxit et turri aedificata, temploque non ingenti extructo, fratribus ferme decem collectis, etiam nunc sanctum illum ambitum colit.*<sup>1</sup>

The new institution prospered, and although the latest comer, it was able to graft itself successfully upon the great tradition, already centuries old, of the monastic life which Oriental cenobites and Benedictine monks had led on Mount Carmel. Albert, Patriarch of Jerusalem, gave certain rules of conduct to those hermits who were living at that time under their superior Brocardo, rules which subsequently were approved, together with the new foundation, by Honorius III and Gregory IX.

The feast of our Lady of Mount Carmel was inserted with the rank of a greater double in the Calendar very much later under Benedict XIII.

The Introit is derived from the feast of St Agatha, and seems to have been translated from a Greek text. It is also found in the Ambrosian Missal, but with certain variations. "Let us all rejoice in the Lord, keeping festival in honour of the Blessed Virgin Mary, on whose solemnity the angels rejoice, and give praise to the Son of God." The first verse of Psalm xliv follows: "My heart hath uttered a good word: I speak my works to the King."

Mary is called in the Liturgy *causa nostrae laetitiae*, because by her most holy motherhood she has repaired the losses and the sorrows brought about by sin. In heaven the angels rejoice because they possess their beautiful Queen, who, as the Mother of all Christians, will fill the places left vacant in the heavenly choirs by the apostasy of the rebel angels. On earth the entire Church militant rejoices, because through Mary it has Jesus, the blessed fruit of her virgin womb, which counteracts the poison absorbed in that other fruit given by Eve to Adam.

The Collect is the following: "O God, who hast honoured the Order of Carmel with the special title of thy most blessed Mother Mary, ever a virgin, mercifully grant that we who keep her memory this day by a solemn office, may be shielded by her protection and become worthy to win everlasting bliss: who livest."

The Lesson is like that in the vigiliary Mass of the Immaculate Conception, on December 7.

The Gradual is the same as that of July 2, the feast of the Visitation; whilst the alleluiatic verse is special to the feast: "Alleluia, alleluia. By thee, O Mother of God, the

<sup>1</sup> *Act. SS. Apr., 1, 775.*



life which we had lost was given to us; for thou didst conceive a child from heaven and didst bring forth a Saviour to the world. Alleluia."

The Gospel comes from St Luke (xi, 27-28) and is part of that assigned to the Third Sunday in Lent when the station is held at the Basilica of the Blessed Virgin Mary in the Agro Verano. A woman, admiring the eloquence and the power of Jesus, blesses the Mother who gave him birth and nourished him at her breast. Our Saviour, however, desiring to render this enthusiastic admiration more spiritual, reveals the hidden source of all the greatness and sublimity of the Blessed Virgin by saying: "Yea, rather, blessed are they who hear the Word of God and keep it."

The Offertory has been adapted from a passage of Jeremias (xviii, 20): "Be mindful, O Virgin Mother, to speak good things before God's face in our behalf, so that he may turn away his anger from us." The Blessed Virgin has already once been our advocate before God when she stood at the foot of the cross during the agony of her Son. Now Mary stands in heaven before the throne of God, and together with Jesus *semper vivens interpellat pro nobis*, and pleads our cause.

The Secret is thus worded: "Hallow, we beseech thee, O Lord, the offerings which we make; and by the most salutary intercession of blessed Mary, Mother of God, grant that they may avail us for salvation. Through our Lord." It is not so much the oblations in themselves which must be hallowed, as the inward dispositions of the minister, so that the eucharistic sacrifice may be fruitful to all who participate in it with sincere faith.

This is the Communion: "Most noble Queen of the world, Mary ever virgin, plead that we may have peace and safety, for thou broughtest forth Christ the Lord and Saviour of us all." Mary is the Queen of the world because she is the co-redemptress of the human race with Jesus and through Jesus, to whom after his resurrection the Father gave *omnis potestas in caelo et in terra*.

The Post-Communion follows: "May the holy intercession of thy glorious Mother Mary, ever a virgin, help us, O Lord, we beseech thee; and may those on whom she has bestowed signal blessings unto eternal life be delivered from all danger and become united by her loving kindness. Through our Lord."

Brotherly concord is one of the chief benefits that a community can enjoy, and is, therefore, a special favour granted by God. To obtain it and preserve it, much virtue is required, together with great self-denial and many sacrifices.



JULY 17

ST ALEXIUS, CONFESSOR\*

The *cultus* of this saint was brought to Rome from the East, where the "Man of God," or Mar-Risà—for so the Syrians call him—was the object of widespread veneration. His *Acta* are of very doubtful authenticity, and that which they relate of the sojourn of St Alexius in Rome appears to be the result of a local adaptation of the legend which had been brought from Syria to the banks of the Tiber, and afterwards localized on the Aventine by Sergius Metropolitan of Damascus, who established himself there with the permission of Benedict VII, and founded on that spot a Greco-Latin monastery.

The spectacle of a hidden and penitent life spent in exile and embraced spontaneously for the love of Christ is not a new occurrence, nor even a rare one, in the records of the Church's history. In the last century St Benedict Joseph Labre lived over again in Rome the same heroic life which is described in the *Acta* of St John Calybita and of St Alexius—if, indeed, these are two distinct persons.

The "Man of God," according to the original Syrian narrative, which seems to have been written only fifty years after the events described, lived at Edessa under Bishop Rabula (412-435). His sanctity was only recognized after his death, but his *cultus* spread immediately among the Greco-Orientals, who for some reason unknown gave to the anonymous pilgrim the name of Alexius.

His story was sung in the ninth century by Joseph the hymn-writer, and having been brought to the Aventine at Rome, it found an enthusiastic panegyrist in Adalbert, Bishop of Prague, who was a monk of the monastery of St Boniface on the Aventine.

The Greeks keep the feast of St Alexius on March 17 :

Ἀλεξίου τοῦ ἀνθρώπου τοῦ Θεοῦ.

The Mass is as that on February 8, with the exception of the two Lessons. The Gospel Lesson is taken from the Common of Abbots on December 5. The title "Man of God" in use among the Syrians probably refers to the monastic profession of the mendicant saint. The other Lesson is derived from the First Epistle to Timothy (vi, 6-12). St Paul speaks therein of the dangers consequent on the possession of riches. Like a dropsical man, tormented by thirst, the more we possess, the more we desire to have. We are never satisfied, and in order to accumulate still more, we sometimes



sacrifice probity, friendship, bodily health, and even religion and the salvation of our soul. The Apostle, therefore, concludes by declaring that "covetousness is the root of all evils."

Here we see the supernatural motives on which is founded the vow of evangelical poverty, professed by the religious. According to the Angelic Doctor, they effectively avoid by this renouncement all those things which might become obstacles to the development of charity and the grace of God in their souls.

The Greek *Menaëa* contains the following lines in honour of the "Man of God":

Ἀνθρωπος ἐν γῇ τοῦ Θεοῦ κληθεὶς μόνος  
Ἐξεῖς τι καινὸν καὶ πόλῳ μόνος  
Ἐβδομάτῃ δεκάτῃ Ἀλέξει πότμον ἀνέθλης.

Thou alone didst bear upon earth the name of the "Man of God." In heaven, too, O Father, thou alone hast received a new name. The seventeenth day brings to thee the hour of thy death, O Alexius!

## JULY 18

### ST SYMPHOROSA AND HER SEVEN SONS, MARTYRS

The Octave of St Felicitas is consecrated by the feast of a second group of seven martyrs of Tivoli, who greatly resemble the seven Roman brothers. Their *Acta* are not the original ones, but among a certain amount of dross there is a great deal of gold, so that, taking it as a whole, the narrative is considered authentic.

Symphorosa and her sons were martyred under Hadrian in the year 120. The mother was drowned on this day in the River Anio, whilst her sons had already won the crown of martyrdom on June 27; Crescens had been stabbed in the throat, Julian in the breast, Nemesius in the heart, Primitivus in the stomach; Justin had received his death-wound in the back, Stacteus in the side, and Eugenius had been actually cleft in two. The place of martyrdom was called by the Greek name *ad Septem Biothanatos*, and over their sepulchres was erected a double basilica similar to that of St Lawrence, the apses of which exist to this day. The bodies of the Tiburtine martyrs were translated to Rome by Stephen III, and were placed in the deaconry church of St Michael *in foro piscium*, where they are still venerated.



The Mass is similar to that of the Martyrs of Sebaste on March 10, except in the following particulars :

The Collect is thus worded : " O God, by whose grace we keep the festival of thy holy martyrs Symphorosa and her Sons; grant that we may enjoy their fellowship in everlasting bliss."

This is the bond of charity which binds together the three Churches : the militant, the purificative, and the triumphant. Their members are united even now by a reciprocal tie of help and reverence, but the true end of this charity is the establishing of one glorious fold under one Shepherd, as the poet sings :

*Nel quale è Cristo abate del collegio.*<sup>1</sup>

The Gradual is taken from Psalm cxxxii. It occurs also on the Twenty-second Sunday after Pentecost : " Behold how good and how pleasing it is for brethren to dwell together in unity. *Y*. It is like the precious ointment on the head that ran down upon the beard—the beard of Aaron." The Psalmist here alludes to the day of the sacerdotal consecration of the brother of Moses, and likens the grace of charity and brotherly concord to that of which the priestly unction received by Aaron was a symbol.

Jesus Christ is our elder brother. It is to him, above all, that we must always cleave, sacrificing all material advantages and the empty joys of this world to our union with him, as was done by the martyrs.

The alleluiatic verse is like that of May 12.

The Gospel is common to the feast of the martyrs John and Paul. Sometimes the persecution of Christians is not carried out openly, but in a secret and hypocritical manner. Virtue is so attractive that not even a tyrant dares to condemn it as such. What, then, does he do? He reverses the parts, and disguising himself under a cloak of hypocrisy and puritanical zeal, tries to throw mud upon the true religion, calumniating it so as to be able to condemn it in the name of righteousness, "*Mentientes, propter me.*"

These tactics are as old as the Gospel. They were employed by the Sanhedrin against Christ, and are the usual arms of the persecutor, especially in countries which have attained a high degree of civilization. They deceive no one, however, for the life of the Church is such as to make it impossible for the darkness to swallow up her light. The very sight of the Church renders false reports of no account, dispels calumnies, and is her most effectual *apologia*. " We are Christians," replied the martyrs of Lyons in the second century to the

<sup>1</sup> *Purgatorio*, XXVI, 129.



judge who was endeavouring to force them by means of torments to confess to the commission of horrible crimes. "We are Christians, and no evil deeds are committed among us."

The Secret is the same as for the martyrs Processus and Martinian on July 2.

This is the beautiful Prayer of Thanksgiving after the Communion: "Grant, O Lord, we beseech thee, through the intercession of thy holy martyrs Symphorosa and her Sons that what we take into our mouths we may receive with a clean heart."

The Eucharist is the visible sign of the oneness and Communion of Saints. Yet it is not a mere sign, for it produces that which it signifies, because it incorporates us with Christ and vivifies all Christians with the same divine spirit.

## JULY 18

### ST CAMILLUS DE LELLIS, CONFESSOR\*

The special glory and historical importance of St Camillus de Lellis consists in the fact that he was one of that chosen group of apostolic men endued with a sublime and heroic charity who, in the sixteenth century, when a general reform of the Church was everywhere felt to be necessary and was sometimes discussed from a point of view which was scarcely Catholic, brought it about in the very bosom of the Church herself, and in her name, being subject to her in due humility.

St Camillus de Lellis died at Rome on July 14, 1614, after a strenuous life spent in ministering to the sick in the hospitals of St Giacomo degli Incurabili, and of the Santo Spirito. Moreover, as St Philip Neri, who was at one time his confessor, had seen in a vision that the angels themselves inspired the religious instituted by him with the words which were best suited to comfort the dying, so Leo XIII appointed St Camillus to be the celestial patron of those who are at the point of death.

The following Mass is permeated by the thought of the sublime merit of Christian charity, which attains its highest and most heroic point when, according to the command laid by the saint upon the Congregation founded by him, it causes a man to hold his own life as naught in order to assist his neighbour who is in peril.

The Introit is drawn from the Gospel of St John (xv, 13): "Greater love than this no man hath, that a man lay down his life for his friends."



Here St Bernard ingeniously observes : " Yes, Lord, but it is possible to imagine an even greater love, and that is thine own, who hast given thy life for thine enemies."

Then follows the first verse of Psalm xl : " Blessed is he that understandeth concerning the needy and the poor : the Lord will deliver him in the evil day." Almsgiving is evidence of the compassion which we show to the poor—the Vulgate really speaks here of the " understanding " of poverty—it is like a capital sum given to God for which we receive interest at the rate of a hundredfold.

These are the words of the Collect : " O God, who didst endow holy Camillus with a special grace of charity for the relief of souls in their last agony ; we beseech thee by his merits so to pour into our hearts the spirit of thy love, that at the hour of our departure we may overcome the enemy, and deserve to win a heavenly crown."

The Lesson is taken from the First Epistle of St John (iii, 13-18), and is the same as for the Second Sunday after Pentecost. Charity is a flame which dies if it does not consume and devour. Hence it lives on sacrifice.

The Gradual and the alleluiatic verse are derived from the Mass *Os justi* as on February 8.

The Gospel, on the other hand, is identical with that on December 20, the Vigil of St Thomas the Apostle.

Charity is the chief precept of Christ, so that the Catholic Faith and the virtue of hope would be of no value to us if they did not bear fruit through love. *Praeceptum Domini est*—the aged Apostle John used to repeat at Ephesus when in the last years of the first century his disciples used to carry him in their arms to take part in the liturgical synaxes—*et si hoc solum fiat, sufficit*.

The Offertory is the same as on January 31.

The Secret is the following : " May the spotless victim, by which we renew the work of the boundless love of our Lord Jesus Christ, be to us, through the intercession of St Camillus, a wholesome remedy against all infirmities of body and soul, and in our last agony comfort and protection."

The Christian mind has given a very expressive name to the Holy Eucharist when it is received by those who are at the point of death : it is then called the *Viaticum*—that is to say, the food which is to sustain the soul on its journey from time to eternity.

There is a mysterious relationship between the Eucharist and our passage to another life. For, as the Paschal lamb and the Azymes were eaten for the first time by the Israelites upon their departure from Egypt, and as Jesus instituted the Holy Sacrament on the eve of his death and was himself the first to partake of it, so did he desire that the Eucharist should be



also for us the Sacrament which consecrates our supreme sacrifice and crowns our life as Christians.

The Communion is from St Matthew (xxv, 36, 40): "I was sick, and you visited me: Amen, amen I say to you, as long as you did it to one of these my least brethren, you did it to me." The sick man bears in himself the image of Jesus in a special manner, for our Saviour in his charity *languores nostros ipse tulit et dolores nostros ipse portavit*, as says the Prophet Isaias (liii, 4).

The Post-Communion has the same characteristics as the preceding Collects. It is wanting in rhythm nor does it follow the rules of the *cursus*, and the number of thoughts expressed in it causes it to be diffuse. It is only the devout sentiment that makes up for this lack of style.

"By this heavenly food which we have taken with loving devotion while keeping the festival of holy Camillus, thy confessor; grant, we beseech thee, O Lord, that at the hour of death we may be refreshed with the sacraments and cleansed from all our sins, and may be found worthy to be received rejoicing into the bosom of thy mercy." This is the supreme consolation of the Christian soul: the sweet hope in the ineffable mercy of God, for, as the Apostle says, *Spes autem non confundit*; he who puts this sweet hope into our hearts is the same who will himself cause it to be realized in heaven.

## JULY 19

### ST VINCENT DE PAUL, CONFESSOR\*

It suffices to say in praise of this saint, who was one of those who in these later centuries most nearly expressed in their own lives the virtues of Christ, that, when France was scourged by pest, famine, and war, it seemed as though Providence had chosen Vincent to act in its stead. Enormous sums of money and help of every kind passed through the hands of this humble "Monsieur Vincent," as he was called, and were distributed to the famished multitudes.

The authority exercised by St Vincent was immense, and was undisputed throughout the kingdom. He was a member of the king's Privy Council, and thus had control over the appointments to the episcopal Sees and to the richest benefices of the Church of France. Yet Vincent, meek and humble of heart, ascended the magnificent stairs of the palace and took part in the royal councils with the same evangelical simplicity, and clothed in the same poor and shabby garments in which he traversed the streets of Paris rescuing abandoned waifs and strays and succouring the helpless sick and suffering.



St Vincent de Paul founded the Congregation of the Priests of the Mission<sup>1</sup> and the Society of the Sisters of Charity, and died at an advanced age on September 27, 1660.

The Mass is the same as for St Peter Nolasco on January 31, except in these two instances :

The Collect brings out clearly the two principal fields of the activity of St Vincent: the material and spiritual care of the poor and the introducing of a higher tone among ecclesiastics. "O God, who for the preaching of the Gospel to the poor and for advancing the honour of the ecclesiastical order didst endow blessed Vincent with apostolic power; grant, we beseech thee, that we who pay honour to his godly life may also be taught by the example of his virtues."

As this is the feast of the founder of the Congregation of the Mission, the Gospel Lesson to-day can be no other than that one which relates the calling of the seventy-two disciples to the apostolate, as on April 25, the feast of St Mark.

There is one virtue in St Vincent de Paul which we may select above all and endeavour to imitate. We read that nothing was pleasing to this dear saint apart from Jesus Christ, in whom he lived and in accordance with whose spirit he always acted. Therefore, if he found himself in any doubt, he would stop and consider: What would Jesus have done in this case? and then he would proceed as the Holy Spirit inwardly inspired him.

## JULY 20

### ST MARGARET, VIRGIN AND MARTYR

The festival of this celebrated *Μαρίνης μεγαλομάρτυρος* of Antioch in Pisidia, which the Greeks keep on July 12, has been transferred by the Latins to July 20, and the name of the saint changed from Marina to Margarita. Her feast was placed in the Roman Calendar in the late Middle Ages when the *cultus* of St Margaret became very popular. Many churches and chapels were dedicated to her at Rome, so that the martyr came to be regarded as Roman, at least, by adoption.

An ancient church called Sta Marina stood between the titulus of Eudoxia and that of Clement. Another small chapel in honour of the saint, known as St Margaret's prison, existed in one of the towers of the city walls near the Porta Asinara. A third church dedicated to the same martyr

<sup>1</sup> Known as the Lazarists.—TR.



still stands near Sta Maria in Trastevere, and appears to have been built in 1288, under Nicholas IV.

The Mass is like that for the feast of St Emerentiana on January 23.

JULY 20

ST JEROME ÆMILIANI, CONFESSOR\*

In the sixteenth century, when Italy threatened to relapse into paganism under the influence of the false Renaissance, and when Christians seemed less easily moved by the influence of hope and of faith, it pleased God to speak to them and to draw them by the attraction and charm of charity. Thus, there arose a number of saints, of whom some founded hospitals, as St Camillus and St Cajetan; some opened schools for the poor, as St Joseph Calasanz; others like St Ignatius established refuges for fallen women and for those in danger of falling; and others again, like the saint whose feast we are keeping to-day, instituted homes for orphan children.

St Jerome Æmiliani died on February 8, 1537, and it is related that St Charles Borromeo, when going several years afterwards to make a pastoral visitation at Somasca,<sup>1</sup> became aware of the presence of the relics of a saint through the sweet perfume which emanated from his tomb. Asking for a thurible, St Charles offered incense on the sepulchre, being thus the first to render public veneration to the saint.

The Mass has the merits and the defects of modern liturgical compositions. The composer has borne in mind, above all, the special place occupied by Æmiliani in the history of Christian charitable works, and, therefore, with the assistance of the Concordance he has not found it difficult to put together a number of Scripture texts relating to the exercise of charity towards widows and orphans.

The Antiphon for the Introit comes from the Lamentations of Jeremias (ii, 11): "My liver is poured out upon the earth, for destruction of the daughter of my people, when the child and the suckling fainted away in the streets of the city." The first verse of Psalm cxii follows, in which these same little ones, who have been rescued from death, nay, from the death of the soul as well as from that of the body by the watchful charity of St Jerome, are called upon to give thanks therefor to God. "Praise the Lord, ye children: praise ye the name of the Lord."

<sup>1</sup> In North Italy, where St Jerome Æmiliani founded the pious Congregation of the "Somaschi."—T.R.



The Collect is inspired by the words of St John in his first Epistle (iii, 1): "O God, the Father of mercies, who wast pleased to make blessed Jerome a father and helper of orphans; grant, we beseech thee, that by virtue of his merits and intercession, we may always faithfully keep the spirit of adoption, whereby we are both in deed and in name thy children. Through our Lord."

The character here alluded to is given to us, in the first place, by means of the two Sacraments of Christian initiation—Baptism and Confirmation. Baptism regenerates us to the life of grace as sons of God; Confirmation gives us the pledge of this divine sonship, the Holy Ghost, who as St Paul says: *ipse enim Spiritus testimonium reddit spiritui nostro, quod sumus filii Dei*.<sup>1</sup>

The Lesson is derived from Isaias (lviii, 7-11) and has already found a place in the Missal, being divided between the Friday and Saturday of Quinquagesima. Sin contracts a moral debt which the sinner incurs with the offended sanctity of God. But the Lord has made the poor and needy his representatives here on earth, so that it is not difficult for the contrite sinner to pay off the accumulated debt which he has contracted with the divine tribunal by almsgiving and other works of mercy.

Almsgiving is at once a penance and a prayer, against whose appeal God will not hold out.

The Gradual is made up of two quite separate passages (Prov. v, 16): "Let thy fountains be conveyed abroad; and in the streets divide thy waters." (Psalm cxi, 5-6) "Acceptable is the man that showeth mercy and lendeth, he ordereth his words with judgement; because he shall not be moved for ever."

The alleluiatic verse is from the same Psalm: "Alleluia, alleluia. He had distributed, he hath given to the poor; his justice remaineth for ever and ever. Alleluia."

We may ask: Why is mention here made of justice, that is of sanctity, since almsgiving is put before us precisely in expiation for sin? The Doctors of the Church reply in the words of the apostle: *charitas operit multitudinem peccatorum*.<sup>2</sup>

The Gospel is taken from St Matthew (xix, 13-21) and relates how our Lord lays his hands upon the little children as upon the privileged ones of the kingdom of heaven; and how in answering the young man who asked him what he should do to obtain eternal life, Jesus puts before him the counsels of perfection and the call to the religious life.

Spiritual writers have noted that Jesus does not say to the young man on calling him to a religious life, "If thou wilt

<sup>1</sup> Rom. viii, 16.

<sup>2</sup> 1 Pet. iv, 8.



become perfect," but "if thou wilt be perfect" at once without further delay, because the three evangelical counsels, sealed by an irrevocable vow, remove so effectively all the obstacles which may impede the full development of charity in a soul that it enters at once into a state of perfection from which it can only fall by neglect of grace. It is in this sense that Benedict XIV is supposed to have said: "Show me a religious who lives faithfully according to his Rule, and I will canonize him on the spot."

The Antiphon for the Offertory is taken from Tobias (xii, 12): "When thou didst pray with tears, and didst bury the dead, and didst leave thy dinner, and hide the dead by day in thy house, and bury them by night, I offered thy prayer to the Lord." In these words of the Archangel Raphael to Tobias we should note that he attributes the efficacy of prayer also to the other corporal works of mercy performed by the holy man, for all our actions are prayers if they are done with a right intention, and if they are referred in everything to the greater glory of God.

The Secret follows: "O most merciful God, who didst vouchsafe to destroy the old man in blessed Jerome and renew him after thine own image; grant that through his merits we too may be renewed in like manner, and may offer up this peace offering as a sweet savour unto thee."

The "old man" who must be destroyed is our human nature which fell with Adam, the new man who is to live again is Jesus Christ. For this reason the Eucharist is a mystery at once of death and of life, so that in Jesus crucified we may die to our first father, Adam, who sinned, and may live again in Christ, who died once, but who rose again and now lives in God. *Quod autem vivit, vivit Deo.*

The Antiphon for the Communion is derived not, indeed, from the Psalter nor from the Gospel of the Mass, as is the rule, but from the Epistle of St James (i, 27): "Religion clean and undefiled before God and the Father is this: to visit the fatherless and widows in their tribulation, and to keep oneself unspotted from this world."

Our faith is shown by our works; otherwise it becomes a mere lifeless, abstract speculation; and, as St John shrewdly observes: "He that loveth not his brother, whom he seeth, how can he love God, whom he seeth not?"<sup>1</sup>

The Post-Communion is as follows, being too much interlarded with parentheses to be elegant and harmonious: "We who have been refreshed with the bread of angels, suppliantly beseech thee, O Lord, that even as we rejoice in keeping the yearly festival of blessed Jerome, thy confessor,

<sup>1</sup> 1 John iv, 20.



so we may follow the example of his life and be able to win a rich reward in thy kingdom."

St Jerome often began his sermons to the peasants with these words from the Psalmist: *Hodie si vocem eius audieritis nolite obdurare corda vestra*;<sup>1</sup> meaning that he who does not correspond with grace incurs grave responsibility. Thus, the Bride in the Canticle of Canticles, because she had delayed somewhat in opening to the Bridegroom who knocked at the door, found, when she opened it, that he had already passed by.

## JULY 21

### ST PRAXEDES, VIRGIN

#### *Station at the Title of Praxedes.*

A painful incident in the life of Gelasius II is connected with to-day's station; for in the year 1118, the Pope having gone thither to celebrate the festival Mass of the titular saint, the schismatic faction of the Frangipani arrived upon the scene and dispersed the Catholics by armed force, staining the altars and the basilica with innocent blood. Fortunately, in the confusion of the fight, the Pontiff was able to make good his escape, and was found towards evening by his followers wounded and in great distress in a field near the Basilica of St Paul.

The ancient itineraries certainly indicate the sepulchre of St Praxedes in the cemetery of Priscilla, near the church of Pudentiana; but Paschal I, when he transferred the bodies of the saints *en masse* from the catacombs, placed their relics in the ancient *titulus Praxedis*, which dates at least from the third century.

A copy still exists of the inscription made by Paschal I with the names of all the martyrs whose bodies he had removed from the extra-mural cemeteries and placed in the Basilica of St Praxedes. First on the list are the Popes of the papal crypt of Callixtus and of the cemetery of Priscilla. Next come the martyrs of the Cornelian, Tiburtine, Appian, and Latin ways, who seem as if they had arranged to meet together in that corner of the Esquiline Hill where the houses of the Christian Pudenti once stood.

The stone records no less than 2,300 bodies of saints, the greater part of which still repose in the crypt under the apse of the church, which on this account has become one of the most venerated sanctuaries of Christian Rome.

St Charles Borromeo was its titular priest, and the ancient

<sup>1</sup> Psalm xciv, 8.



church still recalls the days when he took part in the Office recited by the monks of the Vallombrosian Order, who, then as now, served this ancient title.

The feast of St Praxedes is wanting in many of the Sacramentaries, both Gelasian and Gregorian. It is not in its rightful place in the Codex of Würzburg, whence Morin concludes that it is not of great antiquity.

The Introit is the same as on January 30, for the feast of St Martina; but the Collect is common to the Mass of St Lucy on December 13. The Lesson is drawn from the First Epistle of St Paul to the Corinthians (vii, 25-34), in which he lays down the rules for the holy state of Christian virginity.

It is, before all things, a counsel of perfection to which not everyone is called, therefore it is not a precept imposed upon the great mass of the faithful. This holy state, then, of virginity, instead of embittering life, frees the faithful from many a danger and struggle, for it must not be supposed that it is lawful for married persons to attach themselves to the possessions and material pleasures of this world. The time is short for everyone of us, and that of which we may legitimately make use must be employed as a means of saving the soul, and not to an end which is merely the satisfaction of the senses.

In the married state the affections are dispersed, the spirit being divided between God, the soul, and the family; the religious state, on the other hand, produces oneness of energy, in such a manner that he who enters it devotes himself without any hindrance to the things of God, so that he may become holy both in body and in spirit.

The Gradual and the alleluiatic verse are as on the *natalis* of the martyrs Perpetua and Felicitas.

The Gospel (Matt. xiii, 44-52) coincides with that given in the Würzburg List and has already appeared in the Missal on December 2, the feast of St Bibiana. The kingdom of heaven is like unto a treasure which during this present life lies hidden in the field of Christ. He who desires to become the possessor of it must first buy the field, and in order to do this must give all that he has. He who has little, gives little; he who has much, gives much, but each man must give all that he possesses in order to acquire it.

The Offertory is identical with that for the feast of St Bibiana; the two Collects (the Secret and the Post-Communion) we have already seen in the Missal on the feast of St Scholastica, February 10; while the Communion is that of St Petronilla, on May 31, in accordance with to-day's Gospel.



In the Middle Ages the Antiphonary of St Gregory was held to be inspired and therefore not to be altered by anyone; for this reason the Masses which were added to the Sacramentaries before the ninth century were composed of already existing parts borrowed from other feasts instead of being formed of new musical and liturgical compositions.

## JULY 22

## ST MARY MAGDALEN, PENITENT\*

The Latin writers, beginning with Tertullian, have generally and with great probability identified Mary of Magdala as the sister of Lazarus, and as the sinner who anointed the feet of Jesus (Luke vii, 37 *sqq.*). The Greeks, on the other hand, distinguished three Maries.

In the Coptic, Syriac, and Greek Calendars the feast of Mary of Magdala τῆς ἁγίας μυροφόρου καὶ ἰσαποστόλου Μαρίας τῆς Μαγδαληνῆς occurs on July 22, whence it passed at a much later date into the Latin Liturgies.

According to the Eastern tradition Lazarus died in the Island of Cyprus, whence the Emperor Leo VI had his relics brought to Constantinople in 899, and laid in the Lazarion. The body of Mary, his sister, who, according to a tradition dating from the sixth century, had been buried at Ephesus, was soon brought and laid beside him in the new sepulchral basilica of Byzantium.

It is probable that in the ninth century some relics of the two saints found their way to the monastery of Andlau in Alsace, whence, by degrees, the *cultus* of St Mary Magdalen and St Lazarus spread throughout France.

The Introit of the Mass is the same as on December 2. The Lesson is taken from the Canticle of Canticles (iii, 2-5; viii, 6-7): The soul chosen and called to the heavenly nuptials goes forth anxiously seeking the Bridegroom who, because of her delay in opening to him, has passed by. At last, after long searching she finds him and leads him into the house.—To-day is the feast of the hostess of Jesus Christ.—After a long day of sorrow and weariness the Bride at last falls asleep. This is the mystical sleep of the complete abandonment of the soul to God. She sleeps, indeed, but her heart watches; love will not suffer it to sleep, for its frame burns like fire. But though this flame destroys and purifies, the soul knows that love is so great a grace that even if it had to be purchased by the sacrifice of self, and of all things besides, it would outweigh them all.



This is the Collect: "May we be helped by the intercession of blessed Mary Magdalen, we beseech thee, O Lord, who in answer to her prayers didst raise her brother Lazarus to life after he had been dead four days." The intercession of Mary, "the ointment-bearer and the equal of the apostles," as the Greeks call her, has great power over the heart of Jesus, because after the family life of the Saviour in his own quiet home at Nazareth, nowhere else did he find so much happiness as in that of Bethany. For, as St John tells us (xi, 5): *Diligebat autem Jesus Martham et sororem eius Mariam et Lazarum.*

It was under that hospitable roof that Jesus, during his last week on earth, when he was already rejected by the Jews, retired to spend the night. He slept there, too, on Wednesday the twelfth of Nisan—or rather the thirteenth, for the Jewish day began at sunset—and this was the last rest that he allowed himself on earth before his Passion.

The Gradual and the alleluiatic verse are similar to those for December 13, the feast of St Lucy.

To-day's Gospel Lesson (Luke vii, 36-50) occurs in two other places in the Missal: on Thursday in Passion Week, and on Ember Friday in September. In this second instance it was commentated upon with special eloquence by St Gregory before the people assembled in the Basilica of St Clement.

As the holy Pontiff remarks, when we consider the tenderness of Jesus towards this poor sinner we are moved to tears rather than to speech. The scene of St Mary Magdalen's conversion is perhaps one of the incidents in the Gospel which best reveal the gentleness of the heart of the Redeemer. To Mary much is forgiven, because she loved much; this is the remedy for sinners; this is the spirit which sustains the Church Militant, wherein we may indeed see many sins caused by human frailty, but in which there may be found also a great love ready to pardon all.

O wonderful work of the divine power! The Holy Spirit, as says St Chrysostom, takes the sinner, purifies her, inflames her, and to such a degree exalts her, that she becomes the equal of the pure and chaste virgins themselves. *Vides hanc mulierem!* The Lord puts her forward before all the faithful as a model to whom they are to turn their eyes in order to imitate her. He wills, indeed, that the conversion of the Magdalen and the love which she afterwards bore to him shall in a certain manner form part of the Holy Gospel, so that the memory thereof may remain for all generations: *Ubi cumque predicatum fuerit hoc Evangelium in toto mundo, dicetur et quod haec fecit, IN MEMORIAM EIUS.*<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Matt. xxvi, 13; Mark xiv, 9.



The Offertory is identical with that for St Scholastica, on February 10.

The Secret is the following: "We beseech thee, O Lord, that the glorious merits of blessed Mary Magdalen may render our offerings pleasing to thee, the homage of whose service, when offered to him, thy only-begotten Son mercifully accepted." The offering of precious spikenard which Mary poured upon the head and the feet of the Saviour symbolizes our devotion to the Holy Eucharist, where through the clear veil of the mystery of faith it is given to us also to draw nigh and kiss the divine human form which the Word assumed for our salvation.

The Communion is as for St Bibiana on December 2.

Then follows the Eucharistic prayer of Thanksgiving: "We who have received thy precious Body and Blood, the one wholesome remedy for our souls, beseech thee, O Lord, that by the intercession of blessed Mary Magdalen, we may be delivered from all harm."

The Greeks give to Mary of Magdala the glorious title of *ἰσαπόστολος*, because she was the first to announce to the world, indeed to the apostles themselves, the resurrection of the Lord. For this reason the Creed is recited in the Mass to-day.

What a sublime reward granted to Christian penitence and love!

## JULY 23

### ST APOLLINARIS, BISHOP AND MARTYR

The medieval *cultus* of St Apollinaris is a sign of the importance given to the See of Ravenna in the sixth century, when it became the residence of the emperors and the exarchs. The ecclesiastical courts, the bishops, and, to a certain extent, the Pope himself, in their dealings with the Byzantine authorities in Italy, could not dispense with the assistance of the Archbishop of Ravenna, who had almost become that which the "Cappellano Maggiore" was at Naples in much later times—the real Minister of Public Worship in Italy.

As long as this authority was vested in men whose intellect and sanctity were on the level of those of St Peter Chrysologus, it merely gave wider scope to their eminent holiness and their teaching, but, unfortunately, in this world besides greater minds there are also many weaker ones. Therefore, when it happened that ambitious and intriguing men were raised to the See of Ravenna, a struggle began



with Rome, and the history of the Ecumenical Patriarch of Constantinople had its counterpart in the capital of Emilia.

Originally Ravenna was a suffragan See of Rome. At the time of St Peter Chrysologus it was at last accorded metropolitan honours. Some of its Archbishops, however, went further; they even attempted to throw off their obedience to the Pope, and in order to impress the clergy still further with their own power and importance, they burdened them with imposts and claimed that their own suffragan bishops, abandoning their Sees, should act as hebdomadaries in the Basilica of St Apollinaris, just as the bishops of the suburbicarian Sees did at the Lateran.

The following Mass was compiled at Rome when the impression made by these excesses was still vivid. The so-called Pope at Ravenna was disputing which of the two was the greater, himself or the successor of Cephas.

Rome replies in the two Lessons of this Mass, reminding the chief persons of Ravenna in the first place that their great Apollinaris was himself, according to popular tradition, a disciple of Peter. She will, therefore, let Peter himself speak, who, in his first Epistle (v, 1-11), recommends the pastors of the Church to avoid the spirit of domination over the clergy and of aggressive pride—a spirit which often distinguishes the secular power—for God resists the proud who rob him of his glory, and instead gives his grace to the humble who refer all things to him.

This lesson of humility coming from the lips of the Master of St Apollinaris, and addressed to his arrogant successor, is continued in the Gospel (Luke xxii, 24-30), which is the Gospel given also in the Codex of Würzburg. The apostles at the Last Supper are disputing amongst themselves which of them is the greatest, and Jesus replies that this ambition and thirst for power over others is the prerogative of the civil authority alone, since in the Christian hierarchy it is the contrary which must obtain. He who holds the chief office must hold it for the general good; he is, therefore, the servant of all, just as the Son of Man came to serve and to give his own life for the salvation of many.

The remainder of the Mass is as that for the feast of St Polycarp, with the exception of the following:

The Collect is thus worded: "O God, the rewarder of all faithful souls, who hast made this day holy by the martyrdom of thy priest, the blessed Apollinaris; grant to us thy servants, we beseech thee, that we who are keeping his holy festival, may obtain pardon through his prayers."

The mission of reconciliation and peace which God has entrusted to the pastors of souls for the benefit of their flock does not end at their death. They continue it in heaven by



their prayers, so that while at Rome, Damasus was able to write on the sepulchre of the Pontiff Sixtus II :

OSTENDIT · CHRISTVS · REDDIT · QVI · PRAEMIA · VITAE  
PASTORIS · MERITVM · NVMERVM · GREGIS · IPSE · TVETVR

At Ravenna in the mosaic apse of the splendid Basilica of Classis, where Apollinaris was buried, his people represented him in pontifical vestments amid the flowers of the celestial garden of Paradise, surrounded by the lambs of his beloved flock.

The Gradual and the Offertory are the same as for St Timothy on January 24, but the alleluiatic verse is taken from the Mass of St Ambrose on December 7.

The Secret is as follows : " Look down in mercy, O Lord, upon these gifts, which we bring in memory of thy blessed priest and martyr Apollinaris, and which we offer up for our offences."

The sepulchre of St Apollinaris was, in early days, the goal of many pilgrimages. Thus, when, in July, 599, Maximus, usurper of the episcopal See of Solona, desired to obtain pardon from St Gregory the Great, the Pope commanded him to go to Ravenna, and to clear himself of the misdeeds of which he had been accused by taking an oath at the tomb of St Apollinaris that he was innocent.

Maximus consequently set out on his journey and disembarked at Classis, where he was honourably received by some of the nobles. Proceeding to the forum he there prostrated himself to the ground and cried aloud, with supplication for the space of three hours : " I have sinned against God and the most blessed Pope Gregory." Having been raised up he was led to the Basilica of St Apollinaris, where he took the required oath at his sepulchre and was restored to Communion with the See of Rome.

The Communion is like that on December 4, the feast of St Peter Chrysologus.

This is the Post-Communion : " We who receive thy holy mysteries, beseech thee, O Lord, that the continued protection of blessed Apollinaris may comfort us; for thou never ceaseest mercifully to regard those to whom thou grantest such great help."

The authorities at Ravenna, who, in the early Middle Ages, acquired so much power in Rome that Gregory the Great resolved to assign a special place at the papal stations to the *diaconus apocrisarius* of the Bishop of Ravenna, spread in the city the *cultus* of St Apollinaris, to whom several churches were dedicated.

There was one at the Vatican, founded by Pope Honorius I,



which was known as St Apollinaris *ad palmata*; another at the Lateran was said to have been built by Adrian I; a third still exists—St Apollinaris in *Archipresbyteratu*—which has the honour of being chosen for the stationary synaxis of Thursday in Passion Week.

JULY 23

ST LIBORIUS, BISHOP AND CONFESSOR\*

The feast of this holy Bishop of Mans, who was renowned for the miracles which he wrought on behalf of those suffering from stone, was added—he died about the year 397—to the Calendar by Pope Clement XI, who was himself afflicted by this dangerous malady and was cured by the intercession of the saint.

The Mass is like that of February 4, but the Collect is similar to that for St Silvester on December 31.

JULY 24

ST CHRISTINA, VIRGIN AND MARTYR

We must distinguish between two different saints of this name, who have, however, been confused and made into one by Ado in his Martyrology.

The one is of Tyre, and is held in very great veneration also by the Eastern Christians, who give her the title of *Χριστίνης μεγαλομάρτυρος*; the other is of Bolsena, where her relics are preserved.

To-day's feast is in honour of the great martyr of Tyre, and is common to all the Calendars, Greek, Maronite, Armenian, and Coptic. Joseph the Hymn-writer, in the ninth century, composed some magnificent lines in her honour, containing this acrostic :

Χριστοῦ σε μέλπα τὴν ἐπώνυμον χόρην, ΙΩΣΗΦ  
*Christi te puellam te cano cognomine, Joseph.*

At Constantinople, in the Middle Ages, her feast was celebrated in three separate places : ἐν τῷ μαρτυρείῳ αὐτῆς, τῷ ὄντι ἐν τῷ νεῷ παλατίῳ, καὶ ἐν νύμφαις ταῖς μεγάλαις, καὶ ἐν τῷ μαρτυρείῳ τοῦ ἁγίου Τρύφωνος.<sup>1</sup>

From the same Byzantine liturgical books we take these lines in honour of St Christina :

<sup>1</sup> *Act. SS. Jul.*, V, 504.



Τὴν Χριστίαναν ἤνωσε Χριστῷ νυμφίῳ  
 Νύμφην ἄμωμον αἷμα τοῦ μαρτυρίου  
 Πέλτοισ Χριστίνα εἵκαδι ἡδὲ τεταρτῇ βλήθη.

"The blood which she shed for thee, O Christ, united to thee as a stainless bride Christina, who is already wounded by the arrows."

The other martyr Christina, from the Lake of Bolsena, was originally buried in the cemetery which extends under her basilica. In 1880 her tomb was discovered, still containing a portion of her holy remains. De Rossi published this discovery in the *Bollettino di Archeologia Cristiana*, in which, however, he upheld the theory that the Greeks had derived their *cultus* of St Christina from the Latins. Nowadays this theory is abandoned.

It has been found, on examination of the bones of the Saint of Bolsena, that she was very young, scarcely more than fourteen years of age.

The Mass is like that of St Emerentiana on January 23.

## THE NIGHT OF JULY 24

### THE VIGIL OF ST JAMES THE APOSTLE

This nocturnal synaxis is duly recorded in the Martyrology of St Jerome. The Mass is the same as on December 20, the festival of St Thomas the Apostle.

## JULY 25

### ST JAMES THE GREAT, APOSTLE

The elder of the two "Sons of Thunder," as our Lord called the brothers James and John, was also the protomartyr of the Apostolic College, for he was beheaded by Herod Agrippa about the year 43.

The feast of the Pasch was near, and for this reason the Copts kept the anniversary of the martyrdom on April 12, and the Syrian Lectionary of Antioch on the thirtieth of the same month.

It is not impossible that the feast of May 1 may originally have been dedicated to St James, the son of Zebedee, also amongst the Latins, and that of July 25 to the brother of Jude and cousin of the Saviour. Morin has found traces of this even in the Cassinese Calendars of the Middle Ages.



In the sixth century the tomb of the two apostles of the name of James was still being venerated at Jerusalem. But in the ninth century we find that the relics of St James the Great were already the object of great devotion at Santiago de Compostela, whither they must have been carried after the Arabs had taken possession of the Holy City. Throughout the Middle Ages, the pilgrimage to Galicia to the tomb of St James was one of the most popular of all, and wholly worthy of the special place which St James occupied beside our Blessed Lord.

The Introit of the Mass is identical with that on St Thomas' day, December 21; the Collect being as follows: "Sanctify thy people, O Lord, and keep them; so that, strengthened by the help of James, thine apostle, they may become well pleasing to thee in the conduct of their lives and may serve thee without fear. Through our Lord."

Christ is called the sanctifier and ruler of the Christian people, because he is the mystical Head of the Church, from whom the whole body receives supernatural life and that marvellous order which leads it to its supreme end—namely, eternal glory.

The Lesson is drawn from the First Epistle of St Paul to the Corinthians (iv, 9-15). The influence of the Apostle had been very much weakened in that frivolous city, where the eloquence of Apollo and the splendour of the new preachers met with greater appreciation. St Paul here castigates with his irony the arrogance of the conceited Corinthians, and willingly allows that he is crushed, as it were, under the labours and sufferings which he has to endure in the preaching of the Gospel, and which he does not hesitate to describe in vivid colours.

But, if the Corinthians, weak and effeminate as they are, now disdain to acknowledge this humble and care-worn man as an apostle, they must, at any rate, remember that Paul is their father, for he was the first to give them a new life in Christ.

The Gradual is that of June 29; but the alleluiatic verse comes from John (xv, 16): Alleluia, alleluia. *Ÿ*. "I have chosen you out of the world, that you should go, and should bring forth fruit, and your fruit should remain. Alleluia."

Spiritual writers have remarked that the religious may be likened to salt, which, although it is produced from water, becomes dissolved if replaced in water. So, too, the monk, although he has been taken from the midst of the world, yet loses the religious spirit if he lives according to the world.

The Gospel is also that of May 6, since, as the Saviour had promised to both the sons of Zebedee the honour of drinking



the chalice of his Passion, so, in fact, history records their double martyrdom. James was the first to drink that chalice entirely, whereas John continued to sip it, as it were, until extreme old age. Thus the two Sons of Thunder are those of the apostolic college, who begin and end the series of the bitter martyrdoms of those *qui plantaverunt Ecclesiam sanguine suo*.

The Offertory, too, is the same as for December 21, the feast of St Thomas. The Psalmist had foretold that the voice of the apostles would be heard at the uttermost ends of the earth, and we see the pilgrims of the Middle Ages making their wills and setting forth with staff and cockleshell for Galicia, the most distant land in the world, as it was then considered to be, in order to worship at the tomb of the Apostle James and to obtain his blessing.

In the Secret we pray thus: "Let the holy martyrdom of blessed James the Apostle, O Lord, we beseech thee, win thy favour for the offerings of thy people; so that, whereas they have no worth from any merit of ours, they may be made well-pleasing to thee by his prayers. Through our Lord."

How consistently the Church dwells upon the consoling doctrine of the Communion of Saints, on which is founded the veneration that we pay them: *Ut ipsi pro nobis intercedere dignentur in caelis, quorum memoriam agimus in terris*.

The Preface is the one common to all the apostles, but in the ancient Sacramentaries this form is prescribed . . . *Vere dignum, etc. . . . quia licet nobis semper salutem operetur divini celebratio Sacramenti, propensius tamen nobis confidimus profuturam, si beati Apostoli tui Jacobi intercessionibus adiuvemur. Per, etc.*

The Communion is the same as for St Matthias on February 24.

The following is the Post-Communion: "Help us, O Lord, we beseech thee, by the intercession of thy blessed Apostle James, in honour of whose festival we have received thy holy gifts with joy. Through our Lord."

*Percepimus tua Sancta laetantes*. This is the spirit of Christian devotion, and in those times, when people nourished it at the well-springs of the Church by taking an active part in the sacred Liturgy, in the Sacraments, the festivals, and the divine Office, they did not feel the need for such amusements as cinemas and theatrical shows, which in our days are the cause of so much harm both to soul and body.

In the medieval Sacramentaries there is also enjoined for to-day the blessing of the people, or *oratio super populum*, which, however, is taken from the Leonine Sacramentary, where it is appointed for the Octave of SS Peter and Paul.

*Super populum*: "*Solemnitatis Apostolicae multiplicatione*



*gaudentes, clementiam tuam deprecamur, omnipotens Deus; ut tribuas iugiter nos eorum et confessione benedici, et patrociniiis confoveri."*

In early days this was the final benediction which was pronounced over the people before dismissing them with the words that are still in use: *Ite missa est*.

The present form *Benedicat vos*, etc., was only used by the Pope when the clergy, the monks and the faithful drawn up in line, asked for his blessing as he passed through the Church on his return to the *secretarium*.

## JULY 25

## ST CHRISTOPHER, MARTYR

St Christopher, ὁ κυνοκέφαλος, as the Byzantines call him, is greatly venerated in the East.

The Byzantines and the Syrians keep his feast on May 9, whilst the Armenians commemorate him on the Thursday in the fourth week after the Transfiguration.

The most ancient record, the date of which is known to us, and which can witness to the *cultus* of St Christopher, is an inscription of September 22, 452, recording the dedication of a church to the martyr at Chalcedon, in Bithynia, by Bishop Eulalius. The Martyrology of St Jerome shows St Christopher to have been a martyr at Lycia: *In Licia, civitate Samo, natale Christophori*. He suffered under Decius, but his *Acta* are not regarded as genuine. A small church dedicated to St Christopher once stood in the Trastevere, near the Basilica of St Maria. This slight connection with the City of Rome was enough to give the *megalomartyr* the honour of a commemoration also in the Roman Missal.

The Mass is the same as for St Valentine's day on February 14, but the Secret and the Post-Communion are taken from the Mass of St Hermenegild, on April 13.

De Rossi thought that St Christopher must have been venerated in ancient times at the title of St Anastasia, because he is mentioned in the sepulchral epigraph of Blatta, who died in 688, the mother of Pope John VII. This might be regarded as one of the most ancient monuments which bear testimony to the veneration paid to the saint in the Eternal City:

ET · QVIA · MARTYRIBVS · CHRISTI · STVDIOSA · COHAESIT  
CHRISTIGERI · MERVIT · MARTYRIS · ESSE · COMES

Doubtless Blatta, who, together with her husband Plato, restored the Imperial Palace on the Palatine, must have



included the court church of St Anastasia in which the husband and wife probably erected an Oratory or an altar dedicated to St Christopher.

## JULY 26

### ST ANNE, MOTHER OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY\*

It was impossible that the privileges and graces with which God had surrounded the Immaculate Conception of his Blessed Mother Mary should not have been reflected upon her happy parents, to whom the apocryphal *Protevangelium Iacobi* gives the names of Joachim and Anne. We find, therefore, that in the sixth century Justinian built a church at Constantinople in honour of St Anne, to whom, together with St Joachim, the *Menologium* dedicates September 9 as their feast-day.

Devotion to the grandparents of the divine Redeemer spread almost everywhere in the East. The Syrians venerate St Anne under the name of *Dina* on July 25, but the other Eastern churches tend, as a rule, to place the feast of the parents of the Mother of God near the festival of her birth or of her assumption into heaven. In the Byzantine Calendar St Joachim and St Anne are honoured with the titles: *Τῶν ἁγίων καὶ δικαίων θεοπατόρων Ἰωακείμ καὶ Ἀννης*.

In the Latin world one of the first signs of the *cultus* paid to the parents of the Blessed Virgin is to be found in the biography of Leo III, who caused pictures of them to be placed in the Church of St Mary Major.

Another representation of St Anne is commonly acknowledged as such in a niche in the Basilica of St Maria Antiqua in the Roman Forum, where three mothers are depicted, each with a child in her arms: St Anne with the Virgin Mary, St Elizabeth with the Baptist, and, lastly, our Blessed Lady with the Child Jesus. The painting dates from the eighth century, and has been attributed by some to Pope Constantine (708-715).

Among the Latins the liturgical feast of St Anne begins to make its appearance here and there in the late Middle Ages; it was not, however, definitely inserted in the Roman Missal until the time of Gregory XIII in 1584.

Rome has built at least ten churches or chapels in honour of the holy Mother of the Blessed Virgin. In the patriarchal Basilica of St Paul the precious relic of the arm of St Anne was venerated even in the days of St Bridget of Sweden, who obtained a very small portion of it as a gift. St Anne then appeared to her and showed her how to venerate and



take care of her sacred relics. During these last few years Leo XIII and Benedict XV have given several fragments of this arm of St Anne to celebrated sanctuaries dedicated to her in Canada and in Normandy, where God has been pleased to honour them by performing various miracles.

The Mass has the same Introit as that of July 16, changing, of course, the name of the daughter for that of the Mother.

Collect: "O God, who didst vouchsafe to endow blessed Anne with grace so that she might be worthy to become the mother of her who brought forth thine only-begotten Son; grant in thy mercy that we who keep her festival may also be helped by her intercession."

The Church, therefore, calls the privilege granted to St Anne of giving birth to the Mother of God a grace rather than an honour. And this with good reason, for considering the intimate relationship of mother and grandmother which St Anne held towards the Blessed Virgin and her Son, the spouse of St Joachim could not be otherwise than richly endowed with all the graces of her state, fitting to the position and office assigned to her. It would have resulted in but little respect on the part both of Jesus and his Mother if they had been constrained to have intercourse with, to obey, to show respect for a grandmother and a mother so far below them in holiness.

The Lesson with the praises of the valiant woman who sanctifies her soul in the bosom of her own family already occurs in the Missal on March 9. The Gradual, the alleluia verse, and the Gospel are as for St Praxedes on the twenty-first of this month.

The field in which the hidden treasure was found may be taken as a pleasing symbol of the family of Anne and Joachim, the root of Jesse, whence our Lord Jesus Christ was born. The same may be said of the net cast into the sea which catches the divine *IXΘΥC*, the food that nourishes man to immortality.

The Offertory is similar to that on February 10. The nuptial procession following the divine bridegroom and his bride is formed by the daughters of kings, because Mary, as the Church sings:

*Regali ex progenie exorta refulget.*

Secret: "Be appeased by these sacrifices, and consider them, O Lord, we beseech thee, that by the intercession of blessed Anne, who was mother of her that brought forth thy Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, they may advance both our piety and our health."

There is a close connection between St Anne and the



sacrifice of the cross; because that human nature and that blood which Jesus offered up on the cross and which he received from the most pure womb of Mary was, in her turn, derived from her own holy mother St Anne, in whose womb she was conceived without original sin.

The Communion comes from Psalm xliv : " Grace is poured abroad in thy lips : therefore hath God blessed thee for ever, and for ages and ages."

The grace which St Anne brought into the world is the blessed Virgin Mary. Grace is also poured abroad in her lips because, as mother and grandmother, she must have imprinted so many kisses upon the face of Mary and the infant Jesus. It is in order to bring forward this specially intimate relationship of St Joachim and St Anne with the Saviour that the Greeks give them the glorious title of *θεοπατόρων*, "grand-parents of God."

Post-Communion : " We who have been fed with heavenly sacraments, beseech thee, O Lord, our God, that through the intercession of blessed Anne, whom thou wouldst have for the mother of her who brought forth thy Son, we may become worthy to win eternal salvation."

We should note the insistence with which the Church makes supplication for the salvation of souls. What is the reason of this? Because salvation is a gratuitous work of God with which we must co-operate without presumption, but with all humility and with full confidence in the merits of Jesus Christ. During this life *nescit homo utrum odio an amore dignus sit*; therefore, according to St Peter, we must always endeavour, by means of good works, to ensure our eternal predestination.

Among the customs observed in Christian Rome before the political changes of the last century, we read of the following :

The confraternity of the pontifical grooms who, in 1505, caused to be built for themselves a church dedicated to St Anne at the very gates of the Vatican palace, used to carry out, on July 26, a magnificent procession bearing a statue of St Anne as far as the house of the Cardinal Protector. At the moment when the statue of St Anne reached the Bridge of St Angelo, the cannon on the *Moles Hadriani* fired repeated salvos as a token of honour.

Although since 1870 the Pope no longer goes out of the Vatican, yet a few years ago Benedict XV, by a side-entrance communicating with the papal palace, paid a visit to this ancient sanctuary of St Anne, where he had ordered some repairs to be executed.



## JULY 27

## ST PANTALEON, MARTYR

This holy martyr, who from the fourth century onwards was held in very great veneration in the East, belonged in all probability to Nicomedia.

Several churches were built in his honour also at Rome during the Middle Ages: St Pantaleon *ad fines*, St Pantaleon *de Parione*, St Pantaleon *in tribus foris*, St Pantaleon *de preta Karoli*, etc. It is easy, therefore, to understand how the feast of this holy wonder-working physician found a place in the Missal.

At Ravello, near Amalfi, a phial is preserved containing the blood and serum of the martyr, which liquefy on his feast-day and remain in this state until after the second vespers of the following day. Sometimes the miracle takes place under other unusual circumstances; as, for instance, it occurred in the presence of Cardinal Domenico Bartolini, Prefect of the Sacred Congregation of Rites under Leo XIII. The learned prelate had gone to Ravello in a slightly sceptical frame of mind, and was inclined to consider the reported miracle as a case of auto-suggestion on the part of the people of the place. But the martyr, being desirous of strengthening the weak faith of the Cardinal, performed the miracle again under his very eyes.

Ancient Greek sources often speak of the blood and serum of St Pantaleon. One calls to mind also the following lines from the *Menaea*:

Γαλατόμικτον, Μάρτυς αἷμα σῆς κάρας  
Δι' ἣν ὑδατόμικτον ὁ Χρίστος χέει  
Φάσγανον ἐβδομάτῃ ἡίλαχ εἰκάδι Παντελεήμων.

“ Blood flows, and also milk, from the neck of the martyr, for whom Christ once poured forth both blood and water. The twenty-seventh day marks the death of Pantaleon.”

The Mass *Laetabitur* is as on November 29, for St Saturninus.

Collect: “ Grant, we beseech thee, almighty God, that by the intercession of blessed Pantaleon, thy martyr, our bodies may be delivered from all harm and our hearts cleansed from wicked thoughts.”

It is very fitting that the Church should ask of this holy physician, himself one of the Anargyri, the gift of bodily health, because it is often the most favourable condition for working zealously for the glory of God. With this right in-



tention in view, we may freely desire health and a long life, using such precautions as we may think necessary for the preservation of our strength.

*Nos qui vivimus, benedicimus Domino.*

Secret: "May our sacrifice be acceptable in thy sight, O Lord; may it be made wholesome for us by the prayers of him in whose honour it is offered up."

We should notice the concise style of to-day's Secret, in which the word *devotio* simply means the eucharistic sacrifice. The Latin word *devotio* signifies far more than our word *devotion*, since by it is implied a complete and irrevocable consecration to God. It is, therefore, equivalent to *sacrificium*.

Post-Communion: "We who are refreshed by thy holy gift, beseech thee, O Lord our God, that by the intercession of blessed Pantaleon, thy martyr, we may enjoy the fruit of that worship which we pay thereto."

Pantaleon is also known among the Greeks as *Pantaleemon*, a name which, according to his *Acta*, was given to him by Christ with the promise that by his means many would obtain mercy.

## JULY 28

### SS NAZARIUS AND CELSUS, MARTYRS

The bodies of the martyrs Nazarius and Celsus, when they were found by St Ambrose in 395, were buried in a garden outside the city of Milan. The body of St Nazarius was found first, perfectly preserved, the head detached from the trunk and the blood as fresh and red as though it had only just been shed.

Having placed the holy relics on a bier, St Ambrose went to pray in another part of the garden, in which excavations were at once begun. The body of the boy Celsus was discovered, whom the *Acta* afterwards connected with Nazarius, calling him, indeed, one of his disciples.

The body of St Nazarius was transferred by St Ambrose to the new Basilica of the Apostles—that is to say, to the Roman one, where it pleased God to honour the martyr immediately by healing a man possessed by an evil spirit.

St Ambrose composed a celebrated metrical inscription in honour of the holy martyr, which was copied by the early collectors, and which we have already quoted on June 12, the day on which the Church commemorates the finding of his sacred relics.

It would appear that the body of St Celsus was left by



St Ambrose in the place where it was found; at any rate, it was certainly not conveyed to the *Basilica Romana*. However, a basilica in his honour was built later *in campo*, beside which Archbishop Landolfo founded a monastery in the eleventh century.

From Milan the *cultus* of the two martyrs soon spread throughout the Roman world of the Byzantine empire. As far back, perhaps, as the time of Honorius and Arcadius, Constantinople erected a church dedicated to St Nazarius, in order to preserve conveniently a small portion of their relics.

St Paulinus of Nola, as he himself sings in Poem XXIV, placed the relics of St Nazarius in the Basilica of St Felix.

*Hic et Nazarius Martyr, quem munere fido  
Nobilis Ambrosii, substrata mente recepi,  
Culmina Felicis dignatur et ipse cohospes  
Fraternisque domos privatis sedibus addit.*

St Gaudentius did the same at Brescia; Galla Placidia built an Oratory to SS Nazarius and Celsus at Ravenna; and, finally, Pope Symmachus sent a part of the relics of Nazarius also to the exiled African Bishops in Sardinia.

We derive from the Greek Canon in honour of St Nazarius these verses, quoted by the Bollandists:<sup>1</sup>

*Antiqua Roma tua predicat certamina, o multarum palmarum victor,  
Nazari; at nova Roma (Cpolis) canit tua prodigia per sacras Reliquias  
tuas quas possidet, inter fideles perpetrata.*

*Ritu fontis, unguenta gratiae profundens, divinus ille Nazarius  
invitat omnes qui ad eum religiose confugiunt, et hauriant ex se lucem  
atque munditiam mentis.*

## JULY 28

### ST VICTOR I, POPE AND MARTYR\*

Pope Victor, the thirteenth in order from St Peter, is famous in the history of the Church of the first three centuries for his encyclicals addressed to all the churches, in which he appointed synods with a view to coming to an agreement concerning the date of the celebration of Easter. Even the bishops of the most remote dioceses of Asia Minor obeyed the Pope's order and sent their votes to Rome, but as these were not in accordance with the Roman view, it very nearly caused a schism.

Being desirous of bringing the whole world into liturgical unity with Rome regarding the day on which Easter was to be kept, Pope Victor wished the Eastern Christians to give

<sup>1</sup> *Act. SS Iulii*, Tom. VI, 512.



up their custom, which they traced back to St John the Evangelist, and when they hesitated to obey he threatened to excommunicate them. Happily, St Irenæus of Lyons intervened as peacemaker, and for the time being the dispute had no further consequences.

In this episode of the life of Pope Victor historians recognize an effectual exercise of the papal primacy, which all the Eastern churches regarded at that time as of indisputable right.

St Victor (189-98-99) was born in Africa, which fact explains his ardent temperament. St Jerome attributes to him *mediocria de religione volumina*, and therefore gives him the merit of being the earliest Latin ecclesiastical writer.

Victor was buried at the Vatican near St Peter, and his name is recorded in the Martyrology of Ado, who, however, attributes to him the glory of martyrdom, on which point the *Liber Pontificalis* is silent.

## JULY 28

### ST INNOCENT I, POPE AND CONFESSOR\*

St Innocent I (402-17), who took such a vigorous part in defence of St John Chrysostom, also upheld the Roman Pontificate in those very troublous times, when Alaric besieged and sacked the Eternal City, which had once subdued to itself the whole world. In order, therefore, to save his people of Rome, who were wearied out by the long siege, the Pope consented to go as ambassador to Ravenna, where the Emperor Honorius was then residing.

By calling the holy Pontiff away from Rome at this moment, the Lord must certainly have intended to spare him the horrors of that massacre, for it was whilst Innocent was at Ravenna as envoy of the Roman Senate, seeking to induce the Emperor Honorius to come to terms with the King of the Goths, that the capital of the world was taken and sacked by the barbarians. Orosius likens Innocent to Lot the just man, whom God caused to leave Sodom before the city was destroyed in a cloud of fire.

In the history of the Liturgy a letter of Innocent I to Decentius, Bishop of Gubbio, has become famous. The bishop had questioned him about various matters concerning the diptychs, the kiss of peace, and the *sacrum fermentum* which the bishops of that time caused to be distributed among the parishes of their episcopal city. We have already treated of this custom in the preceding volumes.



St Innocent died on March 12, 417, and was buried near his predecessor Anastasius in the cemetery of Pontianus *ad ursum pileatum*. The Itineraries all record his name in that place, whence Sergius II (844-47) transferred his relics to the title of Equitius.

The following inscription making mention of Innocent I is preserved in the Lateran Museum :

TEMPORIBVS · SANCTI  
INNOCENTI · EPISCOPI  
PROCLINVS · ET · VRSVS · PRAESBB  
TITVLI · BYZANTI  
SANCTO · MARTYRI  
SEBASTIANO · EX · VOTO · FECERVNT

The graceful verses by the nun Roswitha on the occasion when Lentulf Duke of Saxony begged of Sergius II the bodies of Popes Anastasius and Innocent are also worthy of being recorded.

The Pope replies thus :

*Hic duo rectores fuerant aliquando potentes.  
Praesul Anastasius sedis sanctissimus huius,  
Et coepostolicus sacer Innocentius eius,  
Qui post pastorem Petrum Paulumque magistrum  
Ecclesiae, meritis celebres fulsere supremis.  
Quorum tam magna servantur corpora cura,  
Hactenus a cunctis huius rectoribus urbis,  
Ut nec particulam quisquam subtraxerit unquam,  
Pleno membrorum numero remanente sacrorum.*

The five saints mentioned above are all commemorated to-day by the same Mass. It does not appear in any of the ancient Sacramentaries, and, as far as concerns the martyr Nazarius of Milan in particular, to-day's feast is merely a repetition of that of June 12.

The Mass is as on January 22, except the Collects and the Lesson.

Collect: "May the blessed martyrdom of thy saints Nazarius, Celsus, Victor, and Innocent be our defence, and graciously win for us support in our weakness."

During our present life we all have to confess our faith amidst a thousand crosses, contradictions, and griefs which form the web of our earthly existence. This confession, which, though it may not entail the shedding of our blood, yet is none the less painful, is in due time glorified by God in heaven.

The Lesson is derived from the Book of Wisdom (x, 17-20). God made the Israelites as well as the Egyptians pass through



the Red Sea—that is to say, the good as well as the wicked. For the good the trial is an occasion for obtaining merit and glory; for the wicked, on the other hand, because of their rejection of divine grace, the trial usually results in their becoming more obstinate in their hatred of God and of his providence.

Secret: "Grant, almighty God, that we who bring thee these gifts in honour of thy saints Nazarius, Celsus, Victor, and Innocent may be made well-pleasing to thee by what we offer up, and may be quickened by what we shall receive."

How many good intentions, how great a treasure of spiritual riches, do we find in the one sacrifice of the New Law! Whilst rendering to God all the honour and thanksgiving which is his due, it also celebrates the glories and the merits of the saints, consoles the suffering Church in her afflictions, expiates the sins of the living, and, uniting the members of the Church in exile to their mystical head who is already in the eternal home, it impresses upon them the seal of the Godhead.

Post-Communion: "Be appeased, O Lord, we beseech thee, by the intercession of thy saints Nazarius, Celsus, Victor, and Innocent, and grant that what we celebrate in this temporal life may win us eternal salvation."

The Eucharist is the pledge of our future resurrection in glory, because the union of the soul with Christ by grace is a figure of that other definite and final union when to the saints *Deus cum eis erit eorum Deus*, as St John says.

## JULY 29

### ST FELIX II, POPE AND MARTYR

*Station on the Via Aurelia "in basilica domni Felicis."*

There were two stations at Rome to-day, with two different Masses, one for St Felix and the other for the group of martyrs buried *ad sextum Philippi*. As regards St Felix, his cemetery and his sepulchral basilica, situated between the Via Aurelia and the Via Portuensis, have not yet been discovered. Bosio, indeed, copied the following epigraph from the pavement of the title of St Cecilia in Trastevere:

GAVDIOSA · DE  
POSITA · IN · BAS  
ILICA · DOMNI  
FILICIS



but we do not know where the inscription was originally placed.

We have already alluded, on May 30, to the mystery which still surrounds the story of the two saints bearing the name of Felix, who were venerated by the early pilgrims on the Via Aurelia. *Pervenies eadem via ad sanctos pontifices et martyres duos Felices*, as the Salzburg Itinerary says.

Neither of these saints can be identified with Pope Felix I, for he was buried in the papal crypt of St Callixtus; but we cannot absolutely exclude the hypothesis which is held by some that the other Felix is Felix II, who was, indeed, buried on the Via Aurelia *ad latus formae Traianae*—that is to say, the aqueduct of Trajan, to which we alluded on the feast of the martyrs Processus and Martinian.

However this may be, it is certain that the St Felix whom we commemorate to-day was the cause of widely extended devotion on the part of the people of Rome. On this day St Gregory the Great pronounced his thirteenth homily at the tomb of the saint. Further, the formulas in the Gregorian Sacramentary for July 20 concern only this St Felix.

The Gregorian Antiphonary contains to-day two distinct Masses: the one for St Felix, the other for the martyrs Simplicius, Faustinus, and Beatrice. We will first give that of St Felix, identified probably with Felix II, who took the place of Pope Liberius during his exile. It is worthy of notice that the liturgical formulas for to-day look upon the holy Pontiff as a confessor, not as a martyr, showing that the tradition of the Sacramentaries is of an earlier origin than the subsequent one, which regarded Felix as a victim of the cruelty of the Arian Emperor Constantius in alliance with Pope Liberius.

The Introit is like that of the feast of St Silvester I: *Sacerdotes tui*, etc.

The Collect is identical with the one for Pope St Melchiades on December 10. The Gradual is *Ecce Sacerdos magnus*, etc., noted for the feast of St Damasus on the following day. The Gospel Lesson commentated on by St Gregory is that for confessors—*Sint lumbi vestri praecincti*—and it is also assigned to St Silvester. The Offertory—*Veritas mea*—is common to confessors and bishops; we have already seen it on June 20.

The Secret is noteworthy, for in it is, perhaps, to be found an allusion to the orthodoxy of the saint in opposing the wiles of the Arians. *Hostias tibi, Domine, pro commemoratione sancti Felicis offerimus, quem a tui corporis unitate nulla tentatio separavit.*



The verse for the Communion is drawn from to-day's Gospel, just as on the feast of St Silvester I.

This is the Post-Communion: *Spiritum nobis, Domine, tuæ charitatis infunde; ut quos uno pane caelesti satiasti, intercedente beato Felice (martyre tuo), tua facias pietate concordare.*

Here, too, we have the idea of Catholic unity reasserted as against the intrigues of schismatics and secessionists.

The body of Felix II is said to have been discovered in the year 1582, under the altar of the Basilica of the Anargyri on the *Sacra Via*; but a certain confusion still exists with regard to his historical personality.

## JULY 29

SS SIMPLICIUS, FAUSTINUS, AND BEATRICE, MARTYRS

*Station at the Cemetery of Generosa "ad sextum Philippi."*

Simplicius and Faustinus were drowned in the Tiber, probably in 303, when the great persecution under Diocletian was at its height.

Beatrice, their sister, with the aid of the priest Priscus, recovered their bodies in order to give them burial; for which offence she was strangled in prison. As the greater number of the cemeteries had been confiscated at that time, the remains of the three martyrs were secretly buried in a small plot of land which had been practically overlooked at the sixth milestone of the Via Portuensis, near the deserted wood of the *Fratres Arvales* and the temple of the goddess Dia.

In the fourth century a basilica was built at the side of the sepulchre of the two brothers and their sister, the monuments of which have been described by De Rossi. Of the dedicatory inscription there remain the words:

STINO  VIATRICI,

from which it may be reconstructed as follows:

BEATISSIMIS · MARTYRIBVS · SIMPLICIO · FAVSTINO · VIATRICI  
DAMASVS · EPISC · FECIT

The apse of the basilica communicated with the crypt of the martyrs by means of a *fenestella confessionis* looking on to the bishop's throne, just as in the Basilica of Domitilla on the Via Ardeatina. The chapel is adorned with paintings,



among which is one representing our Lord between the saints Simplicius and Beatrice; on the right Faustinus, and Rufinianus, a martyr of whom nothing is known, being on the left.

In 683 Pope Leo II transferred the relics of the three martyrs to the Church of St Bibiana, whence they were taken to St Mary Major.

In the palace attached to the last-mentioned basilica is still preserved the sarcophagus, in which this Pontiff placed the bones of SS Simplicius and Faustinus. Upon it we read this inscription :

**P**

MARTYRES · SIMPLICIUS · ET · FAUSTINUS  
QVI · PASSI · SVNT · IN · FLVMEN · TIBERE · ET · POSI  
TI · SVNT · IN · CIMITERIVM · GENEROSVS · SVPER  
FILIPPI

The Mass, which now is common also to St Felix, is as follows : All the sung portions are taken from the Mass of the martyrs Processus and Martinian on July 2 ; the Lesson is the same as for June 9, and the Gospel as that for June 19 for SS Gervase and Protase.

The Collects alone are proper to the day.

Collect : " Grant, O Lord, we beseech thee, that the Christian people, who are gladdened in this life by the festival of thy martyrs (Felix), Simplicius, Faustinus, and Beatrice, may also rejoice thereat in life everlasting, and may receive the fruit of the sacrifice which they offer."

This desire cannot remain unrealized, for he who has power to bring it to pass is he who himself puts into our hearts this sweet hope, of which the Apostle writes : *Spes autem non confundit.*

Secret : " We bring thee victims, O Lord, in memory of thy holy martyrs (Felix), Simplicius, Faustinus, and Beatrice, humbly beseeching thee that they may win for us both forgiveness and salvation."

From the earliest times the Church was accustomed to solemnize the *natalis* of the martyrs by celebrating the eucharistic sacrifice at their tomb; and this she did in order to express the beautiful idea that Christ as Victim unites himself to his mystical members and immolates them with himself.

Post-Communion : " Grant, we beseech thee, almighty God, that the festival of thy holy martyrs (Felix), Simplicius, Faustinus, and Beatrice, which we keep by celebrating these heavenly mysteries, may win for us thy merciful forgiveness."

The early Church recognized that the martyrs who were in prison had a right to intercede for those who were under-



going canonical penance on account of their sins; how much more, then, will God confirm this privilege of theirs in heaven, when they have consummated their sacrifice by a glorious death?

JULY 29

ST MARTHA, VIRGIN\*

In the Roman Missal it is easy to perceive what we may call successive stratifications. First there is a Roman foundation of a strictly local character, in which the martyrs of the various extra-mural cemeteries hold the chief place, with constantly varied formulas full of enthusiasm, and rich in art and feeling. Other strata follow, which now almost conceal the primitive foundation and are formed from the feasts introduced after the thirteenth century, in which, even disregarding the literary side of the formulas, we may seek in vain a guiding thought, a system, or an organized plan.

The feasts follow one another without any connecting link between them. Saints are taken from the local calendars of the various churches of the Catholic world, the *cultus* of whom has been widely spread many times and made popular by different religious bodies, whose members exercise their apostolate now in one and to-morrow in another diocese.

Thus the Roman Missal has ended by losing its own special character, but as a compensation, the Lord has permitted that a double advantage should result therefrom. Having once passed beyond the boundary of the city walls, the Sacramentary of the Apostolic Church has become the liturgical codex of the entire world; and in order the better to fulfil this new destiny, the Calendar, instead of presenting exclusively the feasts of the martyrs of the metropolis of Catholicism, has made place for the principal saints of the various dioceses.

In accordance with these principles the feast of St Martha, the hostess of our Lord, takes the place to-day of the double station on the Via Aurelia and the Via Portuensis in honour of the martyrs previously mentioned. Rome herself, where once these saints were the object of so much veneration, has now almost forgotten them; so much so that the gentle sister of Lazarus, who was especially dear to the Saviour—*diligeat Jesus Martham*—receives almost alone all the honours of to-day's festival.

The Martyrology of St Jerome assigns January 19 for the commemoration of the *Sorores Lazari: Ierusolyma Marthae et Mariae sorores Lazari*, on which day at Rome other martyrs of almost similar names were being celebrated: Marius and Martha, the parents of Audifax and Abachum.



The name of Martha, on the other hand, appears in the Martyrology of Usuard on December 27, but it is joined to that of Lazarus, and it is there recorded that a basilica was built in their honour at Bethany. The story which regards France as having been the scene of the Apostolate of the family from Bethany is, therefore, of a much later date than is this primitive tradition.

The Greeks generally number Mary and Martha among the "ointment bringers," and commemorate them conjointly on the second Sunday after Easter.

The Mass of St Martha was introduced at a very late period into the Missal. A church at Rome dedicated to the sister of Lazarus owes its origin to St Ignatius of Loyola, who founded next to it a refuge for fallen women.

In 1538, the household of the pontifical palace formed a confraternity, and with the permission of Paul III they also built a church behind the apse of the Vatican Basilica in honour of St Martha, which has been several times restored by the Popes in later years.

The Mass is that for February 10, except that the Collect is the same as on the feast of St Lucy, December 13; the Gospel is derived from St Luke (x, 38-42), which passage contains the characteristic description of Martha, who is busy preparing a fitting reception of the divine Saviour in her own house. The elder sister of Lazarus is worried and much taken up with her household duties, while Mary, quietly seated at the feet of Jesus, listens eagerly to the divine words that fall from his lips.

The Saviour, indeed, rebukes Martha for her over-anxiety, but does not blame her zeal, which arose from the same fervent character as that of her sister Mary.

The ways by which God leads men's souls are very varied; one way may be more perfect than another, but each soul must sanctify itself in its own fashion. Grace does not do violence to nature, but perfects it; thus, although St John tells us that Jesus loved Martha, Mary, and Lazarus, each of the sisters always retains her own individual character in the Gospel narrative. Mary feels more deeply, and, therefore, though she is habitually more recollected, yet she is also a woman of an eager and pleasing disposition, more courageous in her actions. *Dilexit multum*, and love, having no limits, knows no difficulties.

The virtues of Martha, the elder sister of Lazarus, on the other hand, are more commonplace and less exceptional. She is a good housekeeper, diligent, affectionate, and forbearing in undertaking the additional labour which Mary's different nature puts upon her. In discharging her daily duties she looks at life chiefly from the practical side. The Saviour loves



her much, because, though Mary is eager to receive spiritual food from him, Martha, on the contrary, shows a mother's tender care both for him and for his disciples, who were always received as members of the family in her home at Bethany.

So, notwithstanding the different temperaments of Mary, Martha, and Lazarus, Jesus loved each one of them dearly because—and this is always essential in the Church with the great variety of vocations which exists in her—he was loved by them in return with a sincere love.

JULY 30

SS ABDON AND SENNEN, MARTYRS

*Station at the Cemetery of Pontianus "ad ursum pileatum."*

To-day the *Laterculus* of Philocalus has this note regarding the station : *III Kal. Aug. Abdos et Semnes in Pontiani, quod est ad ursum pileatum.*

The *Acta* of the two martyrs have been interpolated to such an extent with matter of a legendary nature that they inspire in us but little confidence. They are supplemented, however, by the ancient monuments of the cemetery of Pontianus, where, in the sepulchral crypt of Abdon and Sennen, we see the saints represented in their Persian dress, receiving their crowns from the hands of the Saviour.

Their relics were translated from the crypt to the basilica above it in the seventh century. But the sepulchre which was their first place of burial was still a place of great reverence, indeed, a baptistery was excavated there, in which the painting of a jewelled cross emerging from the waters is still to be seen. Later Gregory IV (827-44) transferred the bodies of SS Abdon and Sennen to the *titulus Marci*.

The Introit of the Mass is the same as on January 20.

Collect : " O God, who didst endow thy holy martyrs Abdon and Sennen with abundant gifts of thy grace, and so bring them to their present glory, grant thy servants the forgiveness of their sins ; so that, by the merits of thy saints which plead for them, they may become worthy to be freed from all harm."

In the eyes of the world and of the flesh, trials appear as evils and punishments to which one submits, but which one does not love. Whereas, in the eyes of faith, crosses and even martyrdom itself are precious graces which God reserves for his special friends.



The Lesson (2 Cor. vi, 4-10) forms part of the passage already appointed for the First Sunday in Lent, in which St Paul paints in vivid colours a striking picture of the virtues which he—the missionary of Jesus—deems necessary to a true conception of the faithful minister of Christ: tribulations, necessities, distresses, generosity, gentleness to one's neighbour without expectation of thanks and without even astonishment at one day being praised by the people and the next day abused. To the apostle Christ alone is all sufficient.

The Gradual is as that of January 20, but the alleluiatic verse is from the Book of Wisdom (iii, 1): "Alleluia, alleluia. *Ÿ*. The souls of the just are in the hand of God, and the torment of malice shall not touch them. Alleluia."

This thought is one to give us great peace of mind in the midst of religious persecution. The impious can only do to the Church that which God permits, and even so are merely like an axe in the hands of the heavenly Father with which he prunes the tree in order that it may bring forth more fruit.

The first Gospel Lesson assigned for to-day in the Würzburg Lectionary is from St Matthew (xxiv, 4-13): *Videte ne quis vos seducat*, and is to be found already in the Missal on February 15. The second—*Item alia*—was probably used as an alternative Lesson, and is that usually read at the vigiliary Mass of an apostle.

In place of these two Lessons our present Missal assigns a third (Matt. v, 1-12), which was formerly appointed on July 10, the feast of the seven martyr Brothers, and is also found on November 1. It is taken from the Sermon on the Mount, and contains the Beatitudes; not such as the world considers beatitudes, which deems those to be blessed who are rich, who are in the enjoyment of pleasure and power, but beatitudes in the Christian sense which regards sorrow, toil, persecution for justice' sake, control over anger and the evil passions, as so many means for obtaining eternal life.

The Offertory is the same as that for the feast of the martyrs Vincent and Anastasius on January 22.

Secret: "Let this victim which we offer up in honour of the festival of thy holy martyrs, O Lord, we beseech thee, both loose the bonds of our sinfulness and win for us the gifts of thy mercy."

The Gelasian Sacramentary, however, has the following: *Munera tibi, Domine, pro sanctorum martyrum Abdo et Senis occisione deferimus; qui dum finiuntur in terris, facti sunt caelesti luce perpetui.*

The impious man is overtaken by a just judgement. He breaks the mild yoke of the Lord in order to declare his own independence and liberty, and instead he becomes a slave to the evil one and to his own passions. *Omnis qui facit*



*peccatum, servus est peccati* (John viii, 34). There is no slavery harder or more shameful than slavery to one's own self.

The Gregorian Sacramentary has the following proper Preface for to-day : *Vere dignum. . . . Deus: et te laudare mirabilem Dominum in Sanctis tuis, quos ante constitutionem mundi in aeternam tibi gloriam praeeparasti, ut per eos huic mundo veritatis tuae lumen ostenderes; quos ita Spiritu veritatis armasti, ut formidinem mortis per infirmitatem carnis evincerent. De quorum collegio sunt martyres tui Abdon et Sennes, qui in Ecclesiae tuae prato sicut rosae et lilia floruerunt; quos Unigeniti tui Sanguis in praelio confessionis, roseo colore perfudit, et ob praemium passionis, niveo liliorum splendore vestivit. Per quem maiestatem tuam, etc.*

The Antiphon for the Communion is the same as for St Basilides on June 12.

Post-Communion : "By the grace which thou givest in this mystery, O Lord, may our sins be washed away; and through the intercession of thy holy martyrs Abdon and Sennen may our righteous desires be fulfilled."

The Gelasian Sacramentary has this second Collect : *Populum tuum, Domine, perpetua munitione defende, nec difficulter quod pie, quod iuste postulat consequatur, cui Sanctorum tuorum merita suffragantur.*

We often ask for graces from God, but sometimes the strength of our passions obscures our judgement and our desires are misguided : *Nescitis quid petatis*. Therefore, the Church desires to teach us to-day a wonderful method of prayer. We must first purify our hearts in order to draw near to God, then we may make our petition with full confidence, but always on condition *quae tibi sunt placita postulare*, as we say in one of the Collects, asking also the saints to intercede on our behalf.

As the *Acta* of SS Abdon and Sennen relate that the bodies of these two Persian princes were thrown down *ante simulacrum Solis*, so in the Middle Ages a church was erected in their honour on that same spot, opposite the Flavian amphitheatre and near the base of the colossal statue of Nero. It still existed in the time of St Pius V (1566-72).



JULY 31

## ST IGNATIUS OF LOYOLA, CONFESSOR

It is impossible to tell in a few words all that St Ignatius of Loyola did for the Catholic religion. His very name alone seems to embody the immense work undertaken by the Church in the sixteenth century with the object of opposing the Lutheran outbreak with a true Catholic reformation; so that the Liturgy itself asserts in praise of Ignatius, that Providence sent him purposely into the world to be a champion against Luther.

Even now the name of Loyola and the Society founded by him are synonymous with the highest degree of Catholic life and activity, so that the enemies of the Church, whilst they may show toleration for other religious Orders, keep up an undying hatred for that of St Ignatius, in which they justly recognize the most efficient and invincible army which Providence has placed under the immediate command of the Vicar of Christ. One may say of the Society of Jesus that which the Gospel says of the divine Saviour, persecuted from its birth, suppressed, and then revived, the object of infinite hatred on the one hand, and of unbounded trust on the other: *pertransiit benefaciendo et sanando*. As it was three centuries ago, so it is now, and ever shall be in the future.

The body of St Ignatius is preserved at Rome in the magnificent church<sup>1</sup> attached to the first *Casa Professa* of the Order, near the *titulus Marci*. In the Eternal City there are many other sanctuaries which recall the zeal of the saint, commencing with the Basilica of St Paul, where he and his first companions made their solemn religious profession. His memory is preserved also in the church of St Apollinaris, beside which he founded the German College, in that of St Martha mentioned above, in that of Sta Caterina dei Funari, where he established a school for poor girls; and, lastly, in the Collegio Romano *seminario di tutte le nazioni*, as Gregory XIII called it.

The Antiphon of the Introit on the feast of the founder of the Society of Jesus is naturally that of January 1, in which St Paul proclaims the power of the most Holy Name of the Redeemer.

Then follow—contrary to the classical rules of Roman antiphonal chants—not the first, but verses 12-13 of the fifth Psalm: "All they that love thy name shall glory in thee: for thou wilt bless the just."

In compensation for the ignominy of the Passion the

<sup>1</sup> Built by Cardinal Alessandro Farnese, 1568-77.—TR.



Eternal Father has bestowed on the Redeemer a name which is glorious above all other names. And, further, those who share in the sufferings and obedience of Jesus have a part, too, in the glory of that name, by which they are amply rewarded for temporal losses of property and honour, and even of life, which they may suffer for God's sake.

Collect: "O God, who, to spread the greater glory of thy name, didst, by means of blessed Ignatius, reinforce thy church militant by the addition of a new army; grant that with his help and by his example we may so fight on earth as to become worthy to be crowned with him in heaven."

The maxim of St Ignatius to which reference is here made in the Collect: *ad maiorem Dei gloriam*, is connected in the pious Catholic tradition with that given by the Patriarch of Western Monachism to his spiritual sons: *Ut in omnibus glorificetur Deus*.

We know the connection of St Ignatius with the Benedictines of Montserrat, whither he retired immediately after his conversion, with the monks of Monte Cassino, where he spent some time in solitude, and with those of St Paul at Rome, where he pronounced his vows and where he was regularly elected the first general of the new Society.

It is, however, impossible to prove the positive derivation of the maxim of St Ignatius from that of the Benedictine monks. An identical spirit, that of the saints, has found expression in similar words, as is the case also in the resemblance between the book of the Spiritual Exercises and the *Exercitatorium* of Abbot Garcia de Cisneros, whose acquaintance St Ignatius is said to have made at Montserrat.

The Lesson is the same as that for St Saturninus the martyr on November 29. In it the Apostle speaks of his orthodox teaching, of the numerous persecutions he had endured, and, lastly, of his chains. He is regarded by his opponents *quasi male operans*, and they bound him with fetters. So be it, says St Paul, the body may be bound with chains and fetters, but nothing can imprison the word of God, which, like air and light, is destined to be spread and to triumph throughout the world.

The Gradual, the alleluiatic verse, and the Offertory are those for January 23, the feast of St Raymund. The Gospel for one who was the father of so many apostles and missionaries, to whom St Francis Xavier wrote from Japan only on his knees, can be no other than that which is read on December 3.

Secret: "O Lord God, may the loving intercession of St Ignatius accompany our offerings; so that the most holy mysteries, in which thou hast set the source of all holiness, may sanctify us also in truth."



This prayer seems to have reference to one of the most important aspects of the reformation brought about by St Ignatius. In the sixteenth century the practices of Catholic worship were greatly neglected in many places. It was not only that in Italy the priests were often rough and uneducated and sometimes hardly able to understand the Canon of the Mass, but the people themselves had almost given up frequenting the Sacraments, and thus many churches were left in a state of dirt and desertion.

Thus, Ignatius and his companions began their liturgical reform, more especially by preaching and by teaching the catechism. Whilst they by means of the Spiritual Exercises tried to raise the clergy to a higher realization of their own dignity and mission, they at the same time restored the churches to their former cleanliness, dignity, and magnificence. Drawn by these exterior attractions, the faithful were the more easily induced to frequent the Sacraments and the Offices of the Church.

The Communion comes, indeed, from St Luke (xii, 49) from a different chapter from that of to-day's Gospel: "I am come to cast fire upon the earth, and what will I but that it be kindled?"

Fire cannot exist unless it has something to consume; so, too, charity and zeal for the glory of God expire if they are not nourished by sacrifice.

Post-Communion: "May the victim of praise, O Lord, which we have thankfully offered up in honour of St Ignatius, so guide us that through his intercession we may praise thy majesty for evermore."

The Holy Eucharist is also called *sacrificium laudis*, because Jesus intended it to be a perpetual hymn of praise and thanksgiving to the goodness of his Father. For which reason he instituted it at the Last Supper during the Paschal hymn of thanksgiving—the great Hallel—hence the apostles named it *Eucharistia* or "Song of Thanksgiving."

## FEASTS IN AUGUST

### AUGUST 1

#### DEDICATION OF THE TITLE OF EUDOXIA

##### *Station at St Peter in Vincoli.*

The *Basilica Apostolorum in exquilis* existed long before the fifth century, when Sixtus III restored it from the foundations and dedicated it to the Princes of the Apostles, Peter



and Paul. This restoration is recorded in the following inscription :

CEDE · PRIVS · NOMEN · NOVITATI · CEDE · VETVSTAS  
 REGIA · LAETANTER · VOTA · DICARE · LIBET  
 HAEC · PETRI · PAVLIQVE · SIMVL · NVNC · NOMINE · SIGNO  
 XYSTVS · APOSTOLICAE · SEDIS · HONORE · FRVENS  
 VNVM · QVAESO · PARES · VNVM · DVO · SVMITE · MVNVS  
 VNVS · HONOR · CELEBRET · QVOS · HABET · VNA · FIDES  
 PRESBYTERI · TAMEN · HIC · LABOR · EST · ET · CVRA · PHILIPPI  
 POSTQVAM · EPHESI · CHRISTVS · VICIT · VTRIQVE · POLO  
 PRAEMIA · DISCIPVLVS · MERVIT · VINCENTE · MAGISTRO  
 HANC · PALMAN · FIDEI · RETTVLIT · INDE · SENEX

“Change thy name, O ancient building, give up the old fame for the new, now that thou art re-dedicated amidst rejoicing. I, Sixtus, raised to the honour of the Apostolic See, consecrate thee in the name of the apostles Peter and Paul. O ye whose names are joined as one, ye receive a single gift, since a single Faith renders to you one and the same veneration. The care and the toil of the work are attributed to Philip the Priest. After Christ triumphed at Ephesus over both hemispheres, the disciple also merited to share in the victory of the Master. This fane represents the palm which his faith acquired in his old age.”

In this basilica have been preserved, at least since the fifth century, the chains of the Apostle Peter, and because of this the old name of *Basilica Apostolorum*, which the priest Philip, legate of the Pope, used in signing his name at Ephesus, was changed in ordinary use to that of *ecclesia a vinculis sancti Petri*.

In honour of the holy relic this other fine inscription was placed in the church; it is taken from the well-known poem of the subdeacon Arator, which was recited to the people in the very same Basilica of St Peter in Vincoli.

HIS · SOLIDATA · FIDES · HIS · EST · TIBI · ROMA · CATENIS  
 PERPETVATA · SALVS · HARVM · CIRCVMDATA · NEXV  
 LIBERA · SEMPER · ERIS · QVID · ENIM · NON · VINCVLA · PRAESTENT  
 QVAE · TETIGIT · QVI · CVNCTA · POTEST · ABSOLVERE · CVIVS  
 HAEC · INVICTA · MANV · VEL · RELIGIOSA · TRIVMPHO  
 MOENIA · NON · VLLO · PENITVS · QVATIENTVR · AB · HOSTE  
 CLAVDIT · ITER · BELLIS · QVI · PORTAM · PANDIT · IN · ASTRIS

“By these chains, O Rome, is thy faith strengthened. This band which encircles thee ensures thy salvation. Thou shalt always be free, for what shalt thou not obtain through these chains which have bound him who can loose all fetters? His



invincible arm, merciful even in its glory, will never permit these walls to be thrown down by the enemy. He who unlocks the gates of heaven will bar the road to the enemies of Rome."

Just as the chains of Peter are kept here, so, too, are the chains of Paul preserved as a precious treasure near his venerable tomb in the Ostian Basilica. The reverence shown to the chains of the two apostles must have been very widely spread in olden times from the moment when Justinian the First asked the Pope: *De catenis sanctorum Apostolorum, si possibile est*;<sup>1</sup> and Gregory the Great relates that in his day the faithful were eagerly desirous of the favour of possessing at least a small quantity of the filings of St. Paul's chains.<sup>2</sup>

The feast of the dedication of the Basilica *a vinculis* is duly noted in the Martyrology of St Jerome: *Romae statio ad sanctum Petrum ad vincula*; or: *ad vincula Eudoxiae, apostoli Petri osculant populi catenas*. Being, however, a purely local feast, it was not included in the first revision of the Sacramentary of Adrian I; not being inserted therein until later.

In the Antiphonary the Introit is *Salus populi ego sum*, as on the occasion of the double station at the sanctuary of the Anargyri in the Forum; on the Thursday after the Third Sunday in Lent, and on the Sunday nearest to their *natalis* in the month of September.

In the Missal, on the other hand, all the sung portions of the Mass with the exception of the alleluiatic verse, are the same as on June 29.

Collect: "O God, who didst loose the blessed apostle Peter from his bonds and make him go forth unharmed; loose, we beseech thee, the bonds of our sins, and in thy mercy keep us from all evil." The same beautiful idea is expressed in these lines which are inscribed not only at Rome, but also in the basilica erected in the fifth century at Spoleto by Bishop Achilles in honour of St Peter.

SOLVE • IVBENTE • DEO • TERRARVM • PETRE • CATENAS  
QVI • FACIS • VT • PATEANT • CAELESTIA • REGNA • BEATIS  
IPSE • TVA • PETRE • DISRVMPERE • VINCVLA • IVSSIT  
QVI • TE • CONSTITVIT • MVNDANOS • SOLVERE • NEXVS

"At the bidding of God loose the chains of earth, O Peter, who openest to the blessed the kingdom of heaven. He who

<sup>1</sup> Thiele, *Epist. Rom. Pontif.*, I, 874.

<sup>2</sup> *Reg.*, L. IV, ep. 30, *P.L.* LXXVII, col. 704.



willed that thou shouldst be loosed from thy chains entrusted to thee the mission of loosing also the bonds of sin."

Paul is inseparable from Peter, both in the Apostolate, and also in the veneration paid to them by the faithful. Therefore he, too, is commemorated to-day, as on January 18.

The two scriptural Lessons to-day and the Gradual are as on June 29, whereas the alleluiatic verse is taken from the inscription given above: Alleluia, alleluia. *Y*.

*Solve, iubente Deo, terrarum, Petre, catenas  
Qui facis ut pateant caelestia regna beatis. Alleluia.*

Secret: "May the sacrifice which we offer to thee, O Lord, by the intercession of blessed Peter thy apostle ever quicken us and shield us."

In the Leonine Sacramentary there is a Mass with a Preface which is probably connected with the dedication of St Peter in Vinculis. The Secret in it is as follows: *Suscipe quaesumus hostias quas maiestati tuae in honore beati apostoli Petri, cui haec est basilica sacrata, deferimus, et eius precibus nos tuere.*

The beautiful Preface runs thus: *Vere dignum . . . Qui ut in omni loco dominationis tuae beati Petri apostoli magnifices potestatem, non solum ubi venerabiles eius Reliquiae conquiescunt, sed ubicumque pretiosa reverentia fuerit invocata, tribuis esse praesentem; nunc etiam perseverare demonstres quod in omnem terram sonus eius exeat, et toto orbe salutaria verba decurrant. Per Christum.*

The same thought is expressed by Bishop Achilles concerning his basilica at Spoleto:

SED • NON • ET • MERITVM • MONVMENTA • INCLVDERE • POSSVNT  
NEC • QVAE • CORPVS • HABENT • SAXA • TENENT • ANIMAM

"His power cannot be enclosed within monuments, nor can the marble slabs which cover his relics keep his soul imprisoned."

Post-Communion: "We who have fed at the sacrifice of thy holy body and precious blood, beseech thee, O Lord our God, that what we do with godly devotion may bring us sure redemption."

St Paul says that Christ, sprinkled with his own blood, opened to his own the way of eternal redemption. The faithful who follow him must also pass along this road, sanctified by the blood of the New Testament, which is renewed every day upon the altar.



## AUGUST 1

## THE HOLY MACHABEES, BROTHERS AND MARTYRS

When, in 1876, extensive restorations were carried out in the basilica *ad Vincula*, there was discovered under the high altar a sarcophagus decorated with sculptures, the interior of which was divided into seven *loculi* containing ashes and fragments of burnt bones.

A bronze tablet recorded that these were relics of the seven Jewish brothers who were put to death under Antiochus Epiphanes. They were generally known as Machabees from the book which narrates their heroic martyrdom. The city of Antioch boasted in the fourth century of the possession of their sepulchre, although St Jerome expressed some doubts on the subject, having already seen their tombs at Modeim.

The feast of these Machabean martyrs is very ancient, and almost universal. It is appointed for this day in the primitive Syriac Martyrology of the fourth century, in the Calendar of Carthage, and in the Martyrology of St Jerome. A large number of the Fathers have spoken in praise of these saints; indeed, St John Chrysostom pronounced their panegyric standing beside their tombs.

We do not know at what date the holy relics were brought to Rome. An inscription of the eleventh or twelfth century attributes the merit of having done so to Pope Pelagius I (555-560).

PELAGIVS · RVRSVS · SACRAVIT · PAPA · BEATVS  
CORPORA · SANCTORVM · CONDENS · IBI · MACABEORVM

However this may be, August 1 was the day chosen for the consecration of the Basilica *ad Vincula*, because on that day the bones of the martyred Machabees were to be placed beneath the new altar, that being the day on which their *natalis* was celebrated by all the Eastern churches.

The Mass is similar to that for the seven sons of St Symphorosa on July 18, the Offertory and the Communion excepted. These are from the feast of the martyrs Processus and Martinian on July 2. The Collects are as follows.

Collect: "May the brothers' crown of martyrdom gladden us, O Lord; may it bring an increase of virtue to us who believe, and by their repeated prayers may it bring us consolation. Through our Lord."

Faith without good works languishes and dies; the practice of virtuous actions, on the contrary, strengthens our faith just as physical exercises increase the vigour of our bodies.



Secret: "May we celebrate thy mysteries with devout hearts in honour of thy holy martyrs, O Lord, and may they bring us both new help and greater joy. Through our Lord."

Devotion to the Blessed Sacrament is also a source of holy joy and of physical well-being, for it is impossible that contact with Jesus should not be beneficial to both soul and body.

For a corresponding reason it happened at Corinth in the time of St Paul that those who approached the holy table without due reverence were punished with premature death, with sickness and other physical evils. *Ideo inter vos multi infirmi et imbecilles, et dormiunt multi* (1 Cor. xi, 30).

Post-Communion: "Grant, we beseech thee, almighty God, that we may more and more follow the faith of those whose memory we celebrate by partaking of thy sacrament. Through our Lord."

As in ancient times funeral banquets were held beside the tombs as though to enable the survivors still to associate themselves with the dead by means of that sacred feast, so, too, as early as the second century, the Church introduced the custom of celebrating the Eucharist on the tombs of the martyrs so that the faithful might continue to live united in some manner with them. In place of the food of the funeral feast there was substituted the Immaculate Lamb in whom all the members of the Church triumphant, suffering, and militant are united as in one only body under one and the same head.

## AUGUST 2

### ST STEPHEN I, POPE AND MARTYR

#### *Station at the Cemetery of Callixtus.*

Stephen I (254-57) is famous in the history of Catholic theology for the part which he took in deciding the question of the validity of baptism when administered by heretics. He wrote to the bishops of Asia Minor and to Cyprian of Carthage saying that the ancient usage must not be altered: *Si qui ergo a quacumque haeresi venient ad vos, nihil innovetur, nisi quod traditum est, ut manus illis imponatur ad poenitentiam.*<sup>1</sup>

St Cyprian and the African churches held the contrary opinion, which was just then being confirmed by several synods. There was, consequently, a moment when it looked as though the unity of the Church must be broken by the firmness of the Pope and the obstinacy of the African bishops,

<sup>1</sup> Cypriani, *Epist.*, 74. 1.



but the persecution of Valerian broke out just at that time, and this circumstance, together with the death of Stephen, prevented the breach.

Stephen died on August 2, 257, and was buried in the papal crypt of Callixtus, where he was venerated by the early pilgrims. A legend, the origin of which is to be found in the *Liber Pontificalis*, confused him with Sixtus II and attributed to the former Pope the dramatic circumstances of the martyrdom of the latter. This confusion, however, did not in any way adversely affect St Stephen, because instead of being mentioned merely as a simple Pontiff—as he is in the Philocalian Calendar—his feast appears in the Martyrology of St Jerome, in the Leonine Sacramentary, and in all the codices derived therefrom, with the glorious title of martyr.

The body of St Stephen was transported in the ninth century by Paschal I from the papal crypt of Callixtus to the title of St Praxedes, where he is mentioned in the famous epigraph which records that translation *en masse* of the martyrs from the catacombs.

To-day's station is already noted in the Leonine Sacramentary: *Natale sancti Stephani in cimiterio Callisti, via Appia*.

The Mass is as follows. The Antiphon for the Introit comes from Psalm cxxxi, 16: "I will clothe her priests with salvation, and her saints shall rejoice with exceeding great joy." Truly, as is the priest so will the people be. If he is negligent then the flock will sink into vice, but if he is saintly and zealous, a single priest will sanctify a whole parish.

The Collects are all as those of December 16.

The First Lesson is derived from the Acts of the Apostles (xx, 17-21), in which St Paul at Miletus gives his farewell address to the elders of the Church at Ephesus and describes what the life of a bishop has to be. He speaks of the persecutions he has endured at the hands of the Jews, of the tears he has shed, of his zeal in preaching the Gospel to all both in public and in private. Difficulties, prayers, and tears are, in the case of a bishop, as it were, the pains of a spiritual birth by which he regenerates souls for Jesus Christ.

The Gradual and the alleluiatic verse are like those on February 4.

According to the Würzburg Codex to-day—the *natale sancti Stephani pontificis*—the Gospel Lesson, in accordance with the older liturgical tradition of Rome, which classed Stephen among the simple confessors, is drawn from St Luke (xix, 12-26). It relates the parable of the nobleman who before setting out on a long journey entrusts his talents to his ten servants in order that they should trade with them.



In our present Missal, however, the Gospel is taken from the Mass for Martyrs, as for St Marcellus I on January 16.

The Antiphons for the Offertory and for the Communion are common to the feast of St Damasus I on December 11.

We may acquire from St Stephen a love for ecclesiastical tradition. *Quod semper, ab omnibus, ubique* has been held and observed; this is derived from the preaching of the apostles, and represents, therefore, the teaching of the Paraclete, who, according to the promise of Christ, *in omnem deducet veritatem* the Church of God.

St Cyprian was zealous and learned, and was favoured by God with visions and communications; yet there was a moment when, through not being sufficiently steeped in Catholic tradition, he came near to losing all his sanctity, and narrowly escaped falling into schism.

## AUGUST 2

ST ALPHONSUS MARY DE LIGUORI, BISHOP, CONFESSOR,  
AND DOCTOR OF THE CHURCH\*

In order to appreciate fully the greatness of character shown by this Doctor, bishop, and founder of a new religious Order, it is necessary to study him in his own historical surroundings.

Whilst the moralists, the more lax and the Jansenists, with their exaggerations for and against "probabilism," had contributed to the weakening of the moral sense in the cultured and leisured class, the religious Orders of the kingdom of Naples had, as it were, withdrawn into themselves, and were chiefly occupied in guarding their own possessions and defending their immunities and exemptions from the aggressions of the State, the bishops, and the nobles.

The Court, for its part, regarded the Church as a power which had confiscated the rights of the Crown to her own advantage, and so by the action of Tannucci was preparing a system of subversive laws, the aim of which was to put the royal authority in the place of that of the Popes even in the smallest details relating to religion.

In the kingdom of Naples the clergy were numerous, but the ecclesiastical state in many instances was looked upon merely as a profession which ensured to the candidate the certainty of a benefice. It is no wonder then that, in the circumstances, the rural population was left to take care of itself and was sunk in ignorance and vice.

At length St Alphonsus came in his threefold mission as



Doctor, bishop, and founder of a new religious Order to bring a remedy for so many evils.

As Doctor of the Church he laid down the *via media* between the two extremes of the lax and the over-rigorous, and by his ascetic writings he spread amongst the people Catholic piety, devotion to our Lady, to Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament, to the Passion, and defended against the followers of Tannucci the supreme rights of the Church and of the Pope. To effect this he was sometimes obliged to have his works printed secretly and outside the Neapolitan territory.

As apostle and bishop St Alphonsus sought to imitate our divine Redeemer in his evangelizing journeys through the villages of Galilee and Judea. Hence he founded his own society of missionaries whom he destined to labour among the poor peasants and mountaineers rather than the inhabitants of the towns.

As founder of a new Order, the saint has the merit of having adapted the scope of his work to the needs of the time, and of having brought it to completion in spite of innumerable difficulties. Far from desiring the establishment of new Orders of Regulars, the civil power was endeavouring at that time to do away with the old ones, demanding to that end of Clement XIV the suppression of the Society of Jesus.

That the Congregation founded by Alphonsus succeeded in withstanding the storm for so many years, was indeed a miracle. The King of Naples refused to the very end to grant his *exequatur* to the papal decree of approval. This abnormal state of things could not be otherwise than discouraging to the novices of the saint, several of whom deserted him on that account. The houses of the Congregation of the most holy Redeemer which had been opened in the states of the Church ended by causing a schism, thus shutting out of the institution the founder himself and the houses in the kingdom of Naples.

Alphonsus endured calmly all these blows; but he finally succumbed to his mental worries. Full of trust in God, he realized on his death-bed that the sacrifice of himself would put an end to the dispute. After the death of St Alphonsus (August 1, 1787), the whole scene changes; the rejected founder is raised to the altars, and his Congregation extends its boundaries beyond the confines of Italy and of Europe.

The Mass for to-day is a modern composition, and the composer, though skilful, often forgets the rules of the ancient liturgical psalmody and the style of the Gregorian Sacramentary, hence his work has the appearance of a thing apart, an isolated page, without continuity of style and of tone with the ancient Missal.



The Introit (Luke iv, 18) at once shows us the true character of St Alphonsus. To the poor country folk he is a missionary to whom are well adapted the words which the Saviour applied to himself in the synagogue of Nazareth (Isaias lxi, 1). "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, wherefore he hath anointed me, to preach the Gospel to the poor, he hath sent me to heal the contrite of heart."

Collect: "O God, who didst inflame blessed Alphonsus Maria, thy confessor and bishop, with a burning zeal for the salvation of souls, and by his means didst beget new children to thy church; grant, we beseech thee, that we may be taught by his wholesome doctrine and strengthened by his example, and so may be able happily to come unto thee."

St Philip Neri used to say very gracefully that the books which one may read with most advantage are those which have as their initial letter an S—that is to say, those which begin with the name and title of the author, such as: Saint N. This is especially true with the works of the holy Doctors, in which the Church assures us that we may find a second source of our faith in addition to that of the Holy Scriptures themselves—namely, Catholic tradition.

The Lesson is from the Second Epistle of St Paul to Timothy (ii, 1-7). The Apostle exhorts his disciple to train others to succeed him in the preaching of the Gospel—this is one of the aims of the religious Orders—but in order to be able to preach the divine Word with success it is necessary to lead an interior life of holiness, for the husbandman first nourishes himself on the fruits of his fields before selling them to others.

The Gradual is taken partly from Psalm cxviii (52-53) and partly from Psalm xxxix (11). "I remembered, O Lord, thy judgements of old, and I was comforted; a fainting hath taken hold of me because of the wicked that forsake thy law. *Ps.* I have not hid thy justice within my heart: I have declared thy truth and thy salvation."

The saints burn with an ardent zeal, and it is the property of fire to inflame also other bodies; but whilst they are full of indignation against vice, they have a tender compassion for the person of the poor sinner.

The alleluiatic verse is from Ecclesiasticus (xlix, 34). "Alleluia, alleluia. He was directed by God unto the repentance of the nation, and he took away the abominations of wickedness: and he directed his heart towards the Lord; and in the days of sinners he strengthened godliness. Alleluia." This eulogy of King Josias may be applied with much truth also to St Alphonsus, the secret of whose labours for the reformation of his people is contained in the words:



*et gubernavit ad Dominum cor ipsius*—that is to say, his inner life.

The Gospel is the same as that for St Francis Xavier on December 3.

One must not be too easily discouraged in the exercise of the Apostolic ministry, for it can never be entirely sterile. The harvest is always abundant, out of all proportion to the fewness of the labourers, for grace is of such efficacy that it easily overcomes all the difficulties which confront it.

The Offertory is derived from the Book of Proverbs (iii, 9, 27): "Honour the Lord with thy substance, and give him of the first of all thy fruits. Do not withhold him from doing good who is able: if thou art able, do good thyself also." In early times the offerings of the people—the tithes and the firstfruits—were presented at the altar precisely at this moment of the Mass, and served to defray the expenses of divine worship, and also to maintain the clergy and the poorer members of the faithful.

Secret: "Let our hearts burn with the heavenly fire of sacrifice as a most sweet savour, O Lord Jesus Christ; who didst suffer blessed Alphonsus Maria to celebrate these same mysteries, and by their means to offer himself up as a holy victim unto thee." This is exactly what the Church means when she addresses candidates for the priesthood in the words of the Roman Pontificale: *agnoscite quod agitis, imitamini quod tractatis*.

The Communion is drawn from the praises of Simon, the son of Onias, in Ecclesiasticus (I, 1, 9): "A great priest who in his life propped up the house, and in his days fortified the temple as a bright fire, and frankincense burning in the fire." This fire in which the incense of our prayers must burn is the most Sacred Heart of Jesus, which is like a golden thurible whence the clouds of incense rise continuously on our behalf before the throne of God.

Post-Communion: "O God, who didst make blessed Alphonsus Maria, thy confessor and bishop, a faithful dispenser and preacher of the divine mysteries; grant through his merits and prayers that thy faithful may both receive them frequently and by receiving them give thee praise for evermore."

This prayer refers in an especial manner to the eucharistic mission of St Alphonsus and to his inspired little book entitled *Visits to the Blessed Sacrament*. The biographers of the saint relate that by this pious practice he gradually transformed his own diocese of St Agata dei Goti.



## AUGUST 3

THE FINDING OF THE BODY OF ST STEPHEN THE FIRST  
MARTYR

The body of the Protomartyr was found at Caphargamala, near Jerusalem, on December 5, 415. The holy remains were at once carried in triumph to the church on Mount Sion, but many fragments were distributed among the various churches of Palestine and of Africa, where they immediately worked numerous miracles.

Indeed, some relics given by St Augustine to the virgin Demetrias reached Rome, and were the cause of the foundation of the two churches of St Stephen on the Via Latina and St Stephen *Kata Galla Patricia* at the Vatican.

It would seem that the feast of the Protomartyr on August 2 or 3 is very much older than the discovery of his relics, and there are those who connect it, as do some codices of the Martyrology of St Jerome, with the famous sanctuary of St Stephen at Ancona, the anniversary of whose dedication recurs to-day.

In 439 the Empress Eudoxia caused the relics of the Protomartyr to be transferred to Constantinople—not to Rome as a later tradition would have it—where they were placed in the Basilica of St Lawrence.

The Mass is the same as on December 26, changing, of course, the word *natalitia* in the Collect to *inventionem*.

The Leonine Sacramentary, like the Greeks, apparently celebrates the feast of St Stephen on August 2. It contains at least nine Masses in his name, and amongst them is the following Preface, which was probably composed for the dedication of one of the various basilicas at Rome named after the martyr:

*Vere dignum . . . hac festivitate laetantes, qua dicatam nomini tuo basilicam beatus Stephanus martyr suo honore signavit, levita venerandus, castitatis exemplum, fidelis apostolicae dispensator alimoniae, Novi Testamenti inter contradicentes promptus assertor, primus caelestis martyrii dedicator. Per Christum, etc. . . .*



## AUGUST 4

## SS CRESCENTION AND JUSTIN, MARTYRS

*Synaxis at the Agro Verano.*

The Martyrology of St Jerome contains to-day this note : *Romae, via Tiburtina, in cimiterio sancti Laurentii martyris, Criscentionis et Iustini.*

In agreement with this authority all the early Itineraries draw attention to the tombs of the two martyrs as objects of veneration for the pilgrims. For example, we take from the Salzburg Itinerary : *In altero loco sanctus Iustinus, et iuxta eum, sanctus Crescentus martyr.*

Justin is supposed to be the priest who, according to the *Acta*, gave burial to the body of St Lawrence. He is also mentioned in a medieval list of the bodies of saints preserved at the Agro Verano :

IVSTINVSQVE · SACER · DEFVNCTOS · QVI · TVMVLABAT

Crescention was the blind man who was miraculously healed by St Lawrence. According to the *Acta*, he suffered martyrdom on the same day as the holy archdeacon, but probably at the cemetery of Cyriaca the commemoration of Justin and Crescention was somewhat anticipated.

## AUGUST 4

## ST DOMINIC, CONFESSOR\*

After the praises of St Dominic, which Dante puts in the mouth of St Bonaventure in Paradise, one could not indeed say anything more worthy of him. As, in the time of the apostles, the great work of evangelization was divided, St Peter being sent to the Jews, St Paul to the Gentiles, so, too, in the thirteenth century Providence seemed to divide the mission field of the Church between St Dominic and St Francis.

To the *Poverello* of Assisi were entrusted the poor people or *Minores* of the time of the Communes ; for it was necessary to retard through several centuries the outbreak of the socialist conflagration by the example of evangelical poverty and of tender devotion to the mysteries of the human nature of the Redeemer.

To Dominic, on the other hand, the *magister generalis* of an Order of learned preachers, was given the duty of defending Catholic doctrine and of opposing the new heresies.



From the beginning the life of these two patriarchs was prophetic; they each occupied the place which God had providentially designed throughout the centuries that their Orders should fill. The Poor Man of Assisi sustains with his shoulders the falling Lateran, and then goes as a pilgrim to the Holy Land to found the Eastern Missions. Dominic, too, before the Office of the Sacred Inquisition had been entrusted to his followers, himself carries out the duties of Doctor and censor in the selfsame Apostolic Palace.

Rome is rich in memories of St Dominic, which are to be found especially at the titles of St Sixtus and of St Sabina, where he lived and wrought astounding miracles. The saint died August 6, 1221; but as another feast occurs on that date, his *natalis* is anticipated to-day.

Almost all the sung portions of the Mass, as well as the Gospel, are taken from the Common of Confessors as on January 23, the feast of St Raymund.

Collect: "O God, who hast vouchsafed to make thy Church illustrious by the merits and teaching of blessed Dominic thy confessor; grant that, through his intercession, she may not be deprived of temporal help, and may continually advance in spiritual growth." We pray here for two things: *temporalia auxilia* for the body, and *spiritualia incrementa* for the soul. We should note the significant language of the Church. For the *spiritualia incrementa* we need also the *temporalia auxilia*, because all created things are means to an end, but not the end itself. They are intended, therefore, to help the soul to attain to God her final supernatural end.

The First Lesson is that of the Common of Doctors and preachers, as on December 7.

The Gradual and the alleluiatic verse are from the Mass of St Paul the Hermit, on January 15.

Secret: "Hallow, O Lord, these offerings set apart for thee, that by the merits of blessed Dominic, thy confessor, they may avail us for a healing remedy."

What does the sacred Liturgy mean when it asks for the sanctification of the oblations? It means two things. Firstly, the fitting preparation of the matter of the sacrifice, just as before administering the other sacraments, the baptismal water is blessed, the chrism is consecrated, and so on. Secondly, the divine grace for those who are making the offerings, so that the sacrifice, inasmuch as it is their sacrifice, may be pleasing to God and profitable to themselves.

It may be argued by some: but the sacraments act *ex opere operato*, and for that reason the Mass is always pleasing to the Lord. We must make a distinction in our reply: the eucharistic sacrifice, being the sacrifice of Jesus, High-priest



and Victim, is always pleasing and acceptable to the Blessed Trinity. As regards, however, the instrumental ministry of him who offers it, the Mass may be more or less pleasing to God, according to the dispositions of the minister. It is certain that the Mass offered by a priest in a state of mortal sin would offend almighty God, and would lay upon the soul of the celebrant the guilt of a terrible sacrilege.

Post-Communion : " Grant, we beseech thee, almighty God, that we who are weighed down by the burden of our sins, may be relieved by the intercession of blessed Dominic, thy confessor." Remorse and contrition are the beginning of salvation, for as long as a wound smart, a remedy will be sought and its healing attempted. It is a fearful sign when a soul arrives at such a degree of separation from God that it no longer feels any remorse for sin ; as witness the words of the Holy Ghost : " When the fool hath reached the depth of his iniquity, then he becometh a scoffer."

## AUGUST 5

### DEDICATION OF THE BASILICA OF OUR LADY OF THE SNOW

This feast is entered in the Martyrology of St Jerome, but being merely a local festival, it does not appear in the Sacramentaries.

The history of the basilica is well known. Its first name was *Basilica Sicinini*, and perhaps Liberius had only to adapt it to Christian worship, as the *gesta Liberii* seem to show, for they only attribute to him an *absis in urbe Roma, in regione V*.

In the warfare between the antipope Ursicinus and Damasus the Church was besieged by the Catholics on October 20, 366, and when some time afterwards it was restored to them in virtue of an Imperial rescript, it was still called after its first founder : *ubi redditur basilica Sicinini*.

Later on, Sixtus III caused it to be entirely restored :

VIRGO · MARIA · TIBI · XYSTVS · NOVA · TECTA · DICAUI

adorning the apse and the walls with those interesting scenes in mosaic from the life of Christ, of which we have spoken elsewhere.

The Mass is that votive one *de Beata*, which in the Middle Ages was sung every day, in many chapters and abbeys, in honour of the great Mother of God.



The Introit is identical with that of July 2.

Collect: "Grant, we beseech thee, O Lord God, to us thy servants, that we may evermore enjoy health of mind and body and by the glorious intercession of blessed Mary, ever a virgin, may be delivered from present sorrows and enjoy everlasting gladness." As a mother's care watches over all the needs of her child, whether of body or of soul, so let us put ourselves to-day entirely into the loving hands of Mary, asking her not only for a joyful spirit, which is a fruit of the Holy Ghost, but also for bodily health and strength, which are in great measure preserved by purity.

The Lesson is derived from Ecclesiasticus (xxiv, 14-16). The praises of Christ, the Eternal Wisdom, are also applied to her who held him at her breast and was the "seat of wisdom." For this reason Mary shares with Christ his sovereignty over the elect—that is, the Christian people, to whom as their queen, their mother, and their advocate she distributes the treasures of the redemption.

The Gradual and the Gospel are the same as on July 16.

The alleluiatic verse, which the Gregorian composer has clothed with magnificent melody, is the following: "Alleluia, alleluia. *V.* After childbirth, O Virgin, thou didst remain inviolate: O Mother of God, make intercession for us. Alleluia."

Not only did she remain inviolate, but her divine motherhood consecrated the undefiled virginity of Mary, for so great was the joy that poured into her soul at the moment of the Incarnation, and so strong were the bonds of love with which Christ drew unto himself the spirit of his mother, that from that instant the body and soul of Mary remained unalterably consecrated to God alone.

The Offertory is like that for the Fourth Sunday in Advent. For the confusion of future heresies, it pleased God to dictate to us himself the prayer which we are to address to Mary. As she is the Queen of men and of angels, he so ordered it that in the composition of the *Ave* the Archangel Gabriel and St Elizabeth should harmonize. Gabriel represented the heavenly legions who saluted in Mary the victor over the apostate angels; Elizabeth, the mother of the greatest amongst those born of woman, personified the whole human race, which hailed Mary as the new and more perfect Eve, the true "Mother of the Living."

Secret: "By thy gracious mercy, O Lord, and by the intercession of blessed Mary, ever a virgin, may this offering avail us for peace and welfare, both during our present life and for life everlasting."

As Mary at the foot of the cross united herself with the Eternal Priest in offering the sacrifice of redemption in the



name of mankind, so, too, even now, her maternal prayers intermingle at the holy altar with those of the priest and the faithful.

The Antiphon for the Communion of the people is inspired by to-day's Gospel. "Blessed is the womb of the Virgin Mary, which bore the Son of the Eternal Father."

Such was the salutation of the unknown woman in the Gospel; but those are not less blessed who receive Jesus in their hearts in Holy Communion, and who treasure his life-giving words.

Post-Communion: "Grant, O Lord, that we who have received these helps unto salvation, may be everywhere defended by the intercession of blessed Mary, ever a virgin, in whose honour we have offered up these gifts to thy majesty."

Mary looks upon us with increased love and tenderness when we have received Holy Communion, for she sees in us something which belongs to her; she feels that the blood of Jesus, which flows then in our veins, forms, as it were, a sacred bond of relationship and consanguinity also with herself.

We quote here a very beautiful hymn in honour of the Blessed Virgin, which bears in the Codices the following title: *Andreae oratoris de Maria Virgine ad Rusticianam carmen*. Rusticiana was the wife of Severinus Boetius.

Virgo parens hac luce Deum  
virumque creavit,  
Gnara puerperii, nescia coniugii.

A Virgin-Mother gave birth to a  
God made man,  
Fruitful in her motherhood but  
inviolatè in her virginity.

Obtulit haec iussis uterum,  
docuitque futuros  
Sola capax Christi quod queat  
esse fides.

To the Word of God she conse-  
crated her heart so as to teach  
all generations  
That faith alone is capable of  
possessing Christ.

Credidit et tumuit, Verbum pro  
semine sumpsit,  
Sepserunt magnum parvula mem-  
bra Dominum.

She believed, and the Word was  
conceived in her womb,  
And her slender body contained  
the Lord of all.

Fit fabricator opus, servi rex  
induit artus,  
Mortalemque domum vivificator  
habet.

The Creator became a creature,  
the King took the body of a  
servant,  
And the Author of life dwelt in  
a mortal frame.

Ipse sator semenque, sui matrisque  
creator;  
Filius ipse hominis, qui pater est  
hominum.

He is the life-giver and the germ,  
his Mother's creator, and also  
his own;  
The father of men becomes the  
son of man.



Affulsit partus, lucem lux nostra  
petivit,  
Hospitii linquens hostia clausa  
sui.

Virginis et Matris servatur gloria  
consors,  
Mater dans hominem, noscere  
Virgo Deum.

Unius colitur duplex substantia  
Nati:  
Vir Deus, haec duo sunt unus,  
utrumque tamen,

Spiritus huic Genitorque suus  
sine fine cohaerent,  
Triplicitas simplex simplicitasque  
triplex.

Bis genitus, sine Matre opifex,  
sine Patre redemptor,  
Amplus utrisque modis, amplior  
unde minor.

Sic voluit nasci, domuit qui  
crimina mundi,  
Et mortem iussit mortuus ipse  
mori.

Nostras ille suo tueatur numine  
vitas,  
Protegat ille tuum, Rusticana,  
genus.

(Protegat ille tuum, Gregori  
praesulem genus.)

At his birth, light itself came  
down to our light,  
Leaving intact the womb which  
had enclosed him.

Thus is preserved her twofold  
glory, of Virgin and of Mother.  
A Mother who gives birth to a  
man, the Virgin who beholds  
in him God.

We revere the twofold nature of  
her Son, God and Man,  
Yet these two natures constitute  
one only person,

To whom the Holy Ghost and the  
Eternal Father are for ever  
joined,  
A single Trinity and a threefold  
singleness.

Christ was generated twice; once  
as Creator without a mother,  
then as Redeemer without a  
father.

In both generations sublime, but  
greater still in abasement.

Thus was he pleased to be born  
who overcame the sins of the  
world,  
And dying, decreed that death  
itself should die.

May he take our lives under his  
protection,  
And may he protect thy family, O  
Rusticana.

In later days this fine hymn of the fifth century was placed  
under a picture of the Blessed Virgin in the house of St  
Gregory the Great, and it was then that the last line—*invita  
Minerva*—was altered.

## AUGUST 6

### THE HOLY MARTYRS SIXTUS, FELICISSIMUS, AND AGAPITUS, WITH FOUR OTHERS, DEACONS AND MARTYRS

On this day there were two Masses at Rome: *Xysti in  
Callisti et in Praetestati, Agapiti et Felicissimi*. We must  
go back to the year 258, when the persecution under the  
Emperor Valerian is raging. Pope Sixtus, notwithstanding  
the decree forbidding it, is holding a synaxis in an oratory at  
the cemetery of Callixtus. He is surprised by the police, and



is hardly allowed the time necessary to finish the Mass when he is beheaded as he is seated on his throne.

With him are put to death four deacons who stood around the altar, Januarius, Magnus, Vincent, and Stephen; two other deacons Felicissimus and Agapitus are decapitated on the same day, whilst the archdeacon Lawrence is reserved in order to die a more cruel death three days later. The persecution of the Christians receives fresh impetus from this slaughter, so much so that the Roman clergy are obliged to wait several months before they can choose a successor to the martyred Pontiff.

### THE FIRST MASS

#### *Station at the Cemetery of Callixtus.*

Sixtus II was buried in the papal crypt in the place of honour, in a *loculus* excavated in the end wall; the four deacons who were beheaded with him shared with him also the honour of being buried in the papal vault; whilst Felicissimus and Agapitus, for some unknown reason, were laid to rest in the neighbouring cemetery of Pretextatus on the other side of the Appian Way.

The tragic death of the Pontiff and of his seven deacons deeply impressed the minds of the faithful, so much so that the name of Sixtus II was not only inserted in the Canon of the Mass, together with that of St Lawrence, but it may even be said that his memory dominates the subsequent history of the entire necropolis of Callixtus.

In the Itineraries, indeed, we see the devotion with which the pilgrims of the early Middle Ages, before going down into the subterranean labyrinth, visited the *ecclesiam parvam ubi decollatus est sanctus Xystus cum diaconibus suis*—as the Salzburg Itinerary attests.

Damasus composed an epigraph in remembrance of that tragic event, of which, however, only a few fragments remain in a copy made by order of Pope Vigilius.

(dum) . POPVLI . (re)CT(or . r)EGIS . P(rae)CEP(ta . p)ROFANA  
(com)temnens . d)VCI(bus . missis . dat . no)BILE . CORPVS  
MAGN (populi . tu)NC . COLLA . DEDERE

ACCIPE . P . . .

HOSTIS . INIQVE

(m)ONSTRA . HONOREM

B . TA

LIRE . PRIOREM

PASTOR .

ERE . POSSIM

ITVR . PO

CDE . HO(ste . t)ROPAEVM

ITVR . CAE

c)INCTVS . AMICTV

VS

E . DECORAT



The pilgrims descended thence the steps of the vault of the Cecili, and went to the papal *cubiculum* where Sixtus lay in the centre of the Pontiffs of the third century. The entrance wall of that crypt is still covered with ancient *graffiti*, several of them which invoke the intercession of Sixtus II have been deciphered by De Rossi.

*Sancte Suste, in mente habeas in oratione—Sancte Syste in mente habens in orationes Aureliu Repentinu—Sancte Syste . . . Repentinu—Syste Sancte . . . ut aelibera.*

On the tomb of Sixtus II Damasus placed this second inscription :

TEMPORE . QVO . GLADIVS . SECVIT . PIA . VISCERA . MATRIS  
HIC . POSITVS . RECTOR . CAELESTIA . IVSSA . DOCEBAM  
ADVENIVNT . SVBITO . RAPIVNT . QVI . FORTE . SEDENTEM  
MILITIBVS . MISSIS . POPVLI . TVNC . COLLA . DEDERE  
MOX . SIBI . COGNOVIT . SENIOR . QVIS . TOLLERE . VELLE  
PALMAM . SEQVE . SVVMQVE . CAPVT . PRIOR . OBTVLIT . IPSE  
IMPATIENS . FERITAS . POSSET . NE . LAEDERE . QVEMQVAM  
OSTENDIT . CHRISTVS . REDDIT . QVI . PRAEMIA . VITA  
PASTORIS . MERITVM . NVMERVM . GREGIS . IPSE . TVETVR

“At the time when the sword of persecution pierced the breast of our holy mother the Church, I was Pope, and here, where now I am buried, I was teaching the law of God, when suddenly the soldiers entered and seized me as I was seated in my chair. The people would have offered their own necks to the executioners, but when the Pontiff saw that they would have robbed him of his palm, he of himself offered his head to the assassins, lest in their uncontrollable fury they should do some hurt to the others. Christ, who in life everlasting gives the reward of virtue, testified by miracles to the merit of the Pastor. Now he watches from heaven over his numerous flock.”

The Roman Missal now merges in a single Mass the double synaxis which in olden times was held at the tomb of St Sixtus, and at that of the martyrs Felicissimus and Agapitus.

According to the Sacramentaries the chants for the station in honour of St Sixtus were the following. For the Introit: *Sacerdotes tui Domine* as for St Sylvester I.

The Gradual: *Sacerdotes eius induam salutari et sancti eius exultatione exultabunt; illuc producam cornu David, paravi lucernam Christo meo.*

The alleluiatic verse: “Alleluia, alleluia. *Ÿ. Inveni David,*” etc., as for St Sylvester, and also the Offertory and the Communion.



The most ancient *Comes* in Rome, which is contained in the Würzburg Codex, appoints as the First Lesson for to-day that which the present Missal gives for the feast of St Eusebius on December 16.

As on the greater solemnities of the liturgical cycle, there was to-day, before the Gospel, also a Second Lesson drawn from the Old Testament, which corresponds in our Missal to that of the Common of Doctors, where it is assigned to the feast of St Leo I on April 11.

According to the Würzburg List of Gospels the passage for to-day was the same as that which is now given to the second station at the tomb of St Paul on the *natalis* of the two Princes of the Apostles.

The Leonine Sacramentary contains at least seven Masses in honour of St Sixtus II. Here are some extracts from them :

*Deus qui nos ad sancti pontificis et martyris tui Xysti natalitia tribuisti pervenire laetantes; praesta quaesumus, ut sicut securis eadem mentibus, ita dignis celebremus officiis.*

*Vere dignum, etc. . . . Quoniam inter innumeras toto mundo Martyrum palmas, quibus Urbis huius praecipue coronatus est ambitus, etiam hunc nobis venerabilem diem beati Xysti sacerdotis et martyris tui sanguine consecrasti. Per Christum, etc.*

*Vere dignum. . . . Natalem diem sancti martyris et sacerdotis tui Xysti debita festivitate recolentes, qui Apostolici Pontificatus dignus in sua aetate successor, et passionis fortissimus imitator, persecutoris gladium intrepida cervice suscepit, gaudens pro Eo se capite truncari, a quo non posset abscindi. Per, etc.*

The memory of Sixtus II is still kept in Rome by an ancient title on the Via Appia (= *titulus Tigridis?*), where the station is held on the Wednesday after the Third Sunday in Lent. It is possible that, at the time of the great transporting of the bodies of the saints from the extra-mural cemeteries into the city itself, a portion of the relics of the famous Pontiff may have been placed in that church together with those of the other Popes of the cemetery of Callixtus.

At least so a local Gothic inscription informs us; but Paschal I in his famous epigraph at St Praxedes speaks of having also placed there the relics of Sixtus II.

When in the sixteenth century the Dominican nuns, who had succeeded the Benedictines at the *titulus sancti Xysti*, removed to the Quirinal, they carried with them a portion of the bones of the martyred Pope and built to his memory a second church which is still named after St Sixtus.



Pope Damasus, in a hymn composed in honour of all the saints buried in the necropolis of Callixtus, records in the first place :

HIC · COMITES · XYSTI · PORTANT · QVI · EX · HOSTE · TROPAEA

These *Comites*, according to the testimony of St Cyprian, when he communicated to his clergy the news of the tragedy which had taken place in the cemetery at Rome, were four in number : *Xystum in cimiterio animadversum sciatis VIII id. aug. die, et cum eo diacones quatuor.*<sup>1</sup>

The *Liber Pontificalis* has religiously preserved their names for us, whilst their bodies as a mark of special respect were interred near that of the Pope, in the same papal crypt. Some fragments of their sepulchral epigraphs were discovered a few years ago by Wilpert.

At least one of the four deacons who suffered death with Sixtus, named Vincent, was transported afterwards to the title of Eusebius, together with the relics of this holy priest who had also been buried in the papal crypt. All trace of the other three deacons has been lost.

## THE SECOND MASS

### *Station at the Cemetery of Pretextatus.*

Felicissimus and Agapitus were either not made prisoners with Sixtus or else were dragged before the judge previously to being executed, as was also done in the case of Lawrence the archdeacon. It is certain that they perished by the sword on the same day as the Pontiff; but as it was not any longer possible to bury them in the cemetery of Callixtus, the access to which was perhaps guarded after the massacre, they were honourably interred in the neighbouring cemetery of Pretextatus.

Their earliest burial-place has, in fact, been discovered near the *spelunca magna* mentioned in the Itineraries. There, also, Pope Damasus had placed the following metrical inscription :

ASPICE · ET · HIC · TVMVLVS · RETINET · CAELESTIA · MEMBRA  
SANCTORVM · SVBITO · RAPVIT · QVOS · REGIA · CAELI  
HI · CRVCIS · INVICTAE · COMITES · PARITERQVE · MINISTRI  
RECTORIS · SANCTI · MERITVMQVE · FIDEMQVE · SECVTI  
AETERNAS · PETIERE · DOMOS · REGNAQVE · PIORVM  
VNICE · IN · HIS · GAVDET · ROMANAE · GLORIA · PLEBIS  
QVOD · DVCE · TVNC · XYSTO · CHRISTI · MERVERE · TRIVMPHOS  
FELICISSIMO · ET · AGAPITO · DAMASVS

<sup>1</sup> *Ep.*, 80.



"Behold this tomb; it contains the sacred relics of two saints whom heaven suddenly called to itself. Followers and ministers of the invincible cross, they shared the faith as well as the merits of their Pontiff, and thus attained to the eternal mansions and to the kingdom of the blessed. It is especially the people of Rome who rejoice in this, since the two martyrs led by Sixtus have merited from Christ the highest honours.

"Damasus to Felicissimus and Agapitus."

The tomb of the two deacons is full of *graffiti* inscribed by priests who said Mass there in early days, and by devout pilgrims who begged the prayers of the martyrs.

Among these religious salutations (*proscinemi*) this one is interesting :

martyres . sancti) . SVCVRIT(e . . .  
VT . VINCA(m) . IN . DIE . IVD(icii)

The next invokes the intercession of the local martyrs on behalf of a departed soul :

REFRIGERI . IANVARIVS . AGATOPVS . FELICISSIM . MARTYRES

The Introit of the Mass of the two deacons of Sixtus II was *Salus autem*, from the Common of Many Martyrs, as on February 15.

Collect : "O God, by whose grace we keep the festival of thy holy martyrs Felicissimus and Agapitus; grant that we may enjoy their fellowship in everlasting bliss. Through our Lord."

The Gradual *Iustorum* is identical with that which is sung on January 19 for the martyrs Marius, Martha, and the others; the alleluiatic verse is from Psalm cxlix : "*Alleluia, alleluia. Cantate Domino canticum novum, laus eius in Ecclesia Sanctorum. Alleluia.*"

The Offertory is the same as on June 26.

Secret : "We offer up to thee, O Lord, these gifts for our sacrifice; for the sake of thy righteous ones may they be well-pleasing to thee; and out of thy compassion may they become healthful for us. Through our Lord."

In the Leonine Sacramentary the various Masses in honour of St Sixtus, and also that of the martyrs Felicissimus and Agapitus, contain frequent allusions to the recent liberation of Rome from her enemies. To this, too, the following Preface alludes :

*Vere dignum . . . Qui nos sanctorum Felicissimi et Agapiti festa semper optanda fecisti celebrare gaudentes;*



*et qui dedisti fidem inter adversa constantem, reddes beneficia libertatis. Per Christum.*

The Communion is similar to that on June 9.

Post-Communion: "Grant, O Lord, we beseech thee, through the intercession of thy holy martyrs Felicissimus and Agapitus, that what we take into our mouths we may receive with a clean heart. Through our Lord."

In the Leonine Sacramentary, however, the Collect is a prayer of thanksgiving for the evacuation of Rome on the part of the Goths or Visigoths:

*Respice subditam tibi, Domine, familiam: et cuius exaudire preces in moerore dignatus es, actionem gratiarum propensius intueri.*

In the Missal which we use to-day the saints Sixtus II, Felicissimus, and Agapitus have only the one Mass, which is the same as that for the martyrs Processus and Martinian on July 2.

The Collects are those given above, while the First Lesson is that of June 9.

## AUGUST 6

### TRANSFIGURATION OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST\*

A special reference to this great divine manifestation, which the Fathers justly regard as one of the chief miracles wrought by God for a testimony to the Messianic character of his Christ, is to be found in the ancient Roman Liturgy on the solemn vigil of Ember Saturday in Lent. On that solemnity, St Leo the Great delivered several striking homilies on the Gospel story of the Transfiguration; homilies that were all the more effective from being delivered during the nocturnal synaxis which was held at the tomb of Peter, one of the three witnesses of the miracle of the Transfiguration.

When, moreover, the people had ceased to have a clear understanding of the Liturgy, and consequently entered less into the traditional treasures of the Roman Missal, it was felt to be necessary to supply that which was lacking by instituting a new feast in honour of the Transfiguration, with the object of arousing popular devotion to this mystery.

In addition to this, as for many centuries the Greeks had celebrated on August 6 a special festival entitled 'H ἁγία Μεταμόρφωσις τοῦ Κυρίου, on which day the Christian forces won a famous victory over the Turks, so Callixtus III instituted in 1457, on the same day, the feast of the Transfiguration of our Lord as an annual act of thanksgiving to God for the favour received.



The ancient Roman festival of St Sixtus II and his six heroic deacons was in consequence almost obliterated, being reduced to a simple commemoration.

The recently published rubrics are even more drastic in causing Rome to abandon the liturgical tradition of her Sacramentaries. Having assigned the new feast of the Transfiguration to the old Lateran Basilica as its titular feast, it became necessary to transfer that of St Sixtus to another day and to suppress the liturgical commemoration of his deacons, the famous *Comites Xysti portant qui ex hoste trophea*.

The Introit of the Mass derives its Antiphon from Psalm lxxvi: "Thy lightnings enlightened the world: the earth shook and trembled," whilst the psalmodic chant continues with the first verse of Psalm lxxxiii: "How lovely are thy tabernacles, O Lord of hosts! my soul longeth and fainteth for the courts of the Lord."

Here the love of the tabernacles of the Lord is an allusion to the proposal of Peter to erect three tabernacles on the Mount of the Transfiguration. But in this present life it is necessary that we should enjoy these consolations in *spe et non in re*, since Christ also first suffered and then entered into his glory.

The Collect is lengthy but very solemn. It calls special attention to the dogmatic importance of the miracle of the Transfiguration as being a solemn confirmation which the divine nature of Christ receives from the August Trinity, and from the chief characters of the Old Testament.

"O God, who in the glorious transfiguration of thine only-begotten Son didst confirm the mysteries of faith by the testimony of the fathers, and in the voice which came down from a bright cloud didst marvellously foreshow the adoption of sons; vouchsafe in thy mercy to make us co-heirs with the King of glory, and grant that we may share in his glory. Through the same."

The Liturgy rightly recognizes to-day, in those words spoken by the Eternal Father on Mount Tabor: "This is my beloved Son, hear ye him"; the promise of our adoption to the dignity of sons of God. For as the Gospel teaches, those are as gods and sons of the Most High who receive the Word of God in their hearts and live by it.

The First Lesson is taken from the Second Epistle of Peter (1, 16-19) where the apostle, still deeply moved, recalls the scene of which he had been a witness on Mount Tabor. The suddenness of the word of the Father, the shining cloud, the two prophets who talk and then quickly disappear, all teach us that during this present life we must be content to believe without seeing.



The Gradual is like that of the Sunday within the Octave of the Nativity, except in regard to the sentence: *dico ego opera mea Regi*. This is the alleluiatic verse (Wisdom vii, 26): "Alleluia, alleluia. *Ÿ*. He is the brightness of eternal light, the unspotted mirror, and the image of his goodness. Alleluia."

As the Word of God is the true image of the perfections of the Father, so in the Transfiguration of Jesus his glorified body and his face shining brightly as the sun were the reflection of the Godhead which dwelt in him, and which was hypostatically united to him.

The Gospel Lesson is the same as that on Ember Saturday and on the Second Sunday in Lent. The Holy Ghost has a severe reproof for Peter, who was eagerly desirous of setting up his tabernacles on Mount Tabor, asserting that "he knew not what he said."<sup>1</sup> Thus does God judge all those who are inordinately attached to spiritual joys, for the present is not the time to reap but to labour and to sow.

The Antiphon for the Offertory is from Psalm cxi, 3: "Glory and wealth are in his house: and his justice remaineth for ever and ever." Oh, if we only thought more often of the riches and beauties of Paradise, how much less should we love the things of this world!

The Secret is similar to that for the third Mass on Christmas Day, but it has undergone some slight alterations, which have changed its *cursus*: "Hallow the gifts which we offer up, O Lord, we beseech thee, through the transfiguration of thine only-begotten Son, and by the brightness of his glory then revealed cleanse us from the stain of sin. Through the same."

Even in the spiritual order light has great healing powers; for no sooner does the divine light penetrate the conscience than it at once excites contrition, faith, and love of God.

The Antiphon for the Communion is drawn from the Vespers of the Second Sunday in Lent (Matt. xvii, 9): "Tell the vision you have seen to no man, till the Son of man be risen from the dead."

Jesus imposed silence upon his disciples on this occasion for several reasons. Besides teaching us to hide in all humility the favours which are granted to us by the goodness of God, our Saviour wished also to maintain the order established by his Father. Before attaining to his glory, when, after Pentecost, that is, the apostles should proclaim his divine nature to the whole world, he willed to pass through the strait and thorny path of Calvary, nor would he allow that any should place themselves between him and the cross.

<sup>1</sup> Mark ix, 5; Luke ix, 33.



The Post-Communion is as follows: "Grant, we beseech thee, almighty God, that we may apprehend, with minds quickened and made clean, the most holy mystery of the transfiguration of thy Son, which we are now solemnly keeping. Through the same."

Of what mystery does the Church here speak? Of the mystery of our adoption as sons of God, an adoption of which the Eucharist is a pledge: *vere panis filiorum*—causing us to live the life of the divine Son and of his Spirit.

## AUGUST 7

## ST DONATUS, BISHOP AND MARTYR

This celebrated Bishop of Arezzo is enumerated by St Gregory amongst the great Fathers of the Church, and among the miracles which are attributed to him we read of his having caused the chalice which the unbelievers had broken to be miraculously joined together again. The *cultus* of St Donatus was famous in early times. In Italy a number of churches and villages still bear his name, and in the Eternal City itself a small church close to the Abbey of St Blaise, and also a monastery near the *titulus* of Prisca on the Aventine, were dedicated to him. Indeed it was to this last named sanctuary that Leo III made an offering of a small silver coffer weighing two pounds.

It may have been on account of these churches of St Donatus at Rome that his feast found its way into the Gelasian Sacramentary, and thence, finally, also into the Roman Missal.

Unlike the *Acta* of the saint, the Martyrology of St Jerome and the Gelasian Sacramentary regularly give him the title of Bishop and Confessor, not that of martyr.

In the latest edition of the Missal some alterations have been made in the Mass for the feast of this famous saint.

The First Lesson is derived from the Epistle of St James (i, 2-12), which is part of the Common of Martyrs.

Suffering is a grace because nothing enables us to advance so far towards perfection as patience. If anyone has need of light and strength to enable him to bear his cross, let him ask them of God with simplicity and confidence.

The Gradual *Os iusti* is as on January 29, and is followed by the alleluiatic verse: "*Alleluia, alleluia. Iustus non conturbabitur, quia Dominus firmat manum eius. Alleluia.*"

The Gospel Lesson is taken from Mark (xiii, 33-37), and tells us of the prudent servant who watches for his master's



return. This servant, who is placed at the head of the household, is a figure of the bishop to whom the Holy Ghost entrusts the government of his Church.

The Offertory and the Communion are as on February 4.

These are the new alterations in the Roman Missal. Until a few years ago the Mass was like that of July 23 for St Apollinaris.

The Collects have remained unaltered.

Collect: "O God, the glory of thy priests, grant, we beseech thee, that we may experience the help of thy holy martyr and bishop Donatus, whose festival we are keeping."

Jesus is the glory of his priests, because the sacerdotal character imparts on the soul a special conformity to Christ, the eternal Pontiff. This conformity, which in this present life confers upon the sacred minister effective power to act in Christ's name when administering the Sacraments, will also constitute in heaven a most resplendent title of glory.

Secret: "Grant us, we beseech thee, O Lord, that by the intercession of thy holy martyr and bishop Donatus, whom we honour by these offerings devoted to the praise of thy name, the fruit of loving devotion may increase within us."

Post-Communion: "Almighty and merciful God, who makest us to be both ministers and partakers of thy sacraments; grant, we beseech thee, that by the intercession of blessed Donatus thy martyr and bishop, we may profit by fellowship with him in faith and by his holy service of thee."

*Servitium, servus Dei*; these words described originally the priestly state and the liturgical action; for as by the hypostatic union the sacred humanity of the Saviour was entirely taken possession of by the Word and by God: *Christus autem Dei*; so the sacerdotal character consecrates the whole man to the service of Jesus so that he may dispose of him as of an *instrumentum animatum* for his own glory and for the good of men's souls.

## AUGUST 7

### ST CAJETAN, CONFESSOR\*

This beloved saint, who died in 1547, and who was so meek and humble that he obtained of God the favour that after death his body should remain hidden from all, had the merit of being, even before St Ignatius, one of the chief representatives of the ecclesiastical reform carried out in the sixteenth century.

Christian Rome venerates him as one of her most distinguished citizens. The Liberian Basilica in particular



evokes the memory of the Mass which he celebrated with seraphic fervour at the crib of our Lord, when he merited the grace of holding the divine Infant in his arms. The "Confessio" of the Prince of the Apostles, likewise, brings back the thought of that memorable day—September 14, 1524—when Gaetano da Tiene, together with the ardent Gian Pietro Carafa, afterwards Pope Paul IV, instituted the new order of Clerks Regular, who took the austere vow of entrusting themselves entirely to the divine Providence and living solely on any alms which might be voluntarily given to them by the faithful.

The feast of St Cajetan, who took so notable a part in the reform of the Breviary under Clement VII, was placed in the Missal by Clement X, and raised to the rank of a double by Innocent XI.

The Mass is that of simple Confessors, as on January 23, for St Raymund, except the following parts :

Collect : " O God, who gavest blessed Cajetan, thy confessor, grace to live the life of an apostle ; grant, we beseech thee, that by his intercession and example we may always trust in thee, and desire only heavenly things."

The apostolic rule of life is perfect poverty consecrated by vows, like that of the apostles when, abandoning all, they followed the Saviour.

The Gospel Lesson on complete abandonment of one's self to the divine Providence is identical with that of the Fourteenth Sunday after Pentecost.

By this teaching our Lord does not indeed wish to suppress altogether action on our own part, but only an undue anxiety. God wills that we should act, and where we do not succeed, he himself will supply the deficiency. An old popular saying, expressive in its simplicity, runs thus : " Help yourself and God will help you."

The Secret and the Post-Communion are like those on January 31.

## AUGUST 8

SS CYRIACUS, LARGUS, AND SMARAGDUS, MARTYRS

*Station on the Via Ostiensis, at the Seventh Military Post along the Tiber.*

To-day the Philocalian Calendar has the following record : *Ostense, VII ballistaria, Cyriaci, Largi, Crescentiani, Memmiae, Iulianetis et Ixmaracdi.*

It is necessary, however, to distinguish between two



different saints of the name of Cyriacus. The first is the founder of the *titulus Cyriaci* near the *Orti Sallustiani*, and is mentioned in the Martyrology of St Jerome on April 14, *et in titulo iuxta Diocletianas, Cyriaci, conditoris tituli*. The second, on the other hand, is one of the group commemorated to-day on the Ostian Way, but from very early times he has been unaccountably mistaken for the other.

Pope Honorius I erected a basilica over the tomb of the martyrs of the Via Ostiensis, which Popes Leo III and Benedict III (855-58) also honoured by their votive offerings.

According to the inscription of Paschal I at St Praxedes, the bodies of Cyriacus, Largus, and Smaragdus, Crescentianus, Memmia, and Juliana, must have been transferred to that basilica, although a similar epigraph, which still exists in the title of Equitius, asserts that Sergius II brought them to that famous church.

The *titulus Marcelli*, too, boasts of the possession of the bodies of the martyrs Largus and Smaragdus, placed there under John VIII, whilst Cyriacus, Largus, Smaragdus, Memmia, and Juliana, on the other hand, are also included in the ancient catalogue of the relics at San Silvestro *in Capite*. Most probably, at the time of the great transporting of relics, the bodies of the martyrs were divided among the various churches of the city, and this explains why several basilicas have been able to boast of possessing the body of one and the same saint.

St Cyriacus was greatly venerated at Rome. Besides his sepulchral basilica on the Via Ostiensis and the *titulus Cyriaci* near the Baths of Diocletian—which, however, preserved the memory of another St Cyriacus, who was probably not a martyr at all—we find a church of St Cyriacus in *Trastevere*, and, lastly, another in *Camilliano* close to Sta Maria in *Via Lata*.

The Sacramentaries in general show traces of the early distinction between the two SS Cyriacus, the one the founder of the *titulus Urbanus*, and the other the martyr of the Via Ostiensis, who died for the Faith together with his companions. In fact, the Mass of to-day is called simply *natale sancti Cyriaci*, without any reference in the Collects to Largus and Smaragdus, whereas the chants of the Antiphonary are proper to the feasts of Many Martyrs.

The Antiphon for the Introit is from Psalm xxxiii, 10, 11 : "Fear the Lord, all ye his saints; for there is no want to them that fear him: the rich have wanted and have suffered hunger, but they that seek the Lord shall not be deprived of any good."

The holy fear of the Lord, which does not pass away even



in the light of the beatific vision—*timor Domini sanctus, permanens in saeculum saeculi*—is the real spiritual wealth of the soul. He who finds God sufficient will have few needs in this world, and the divine Providence will amply supply these. Further, the blessing of God also bestows material prosperity on those who trust in him, as has been the case for many centuries with the religious Orders to whom Christ has promised a hundredfold in this world and life eternal in the next.

In the Gregorian Sacramentary the Collects mention only St Cyriacus.

Collect: "O God, who dost gladden us by the yearly festival of thy holy martyrs Cyriacus, Largus, and Smaragdus; mercifully grant that we who are mindful of their birthday, may also follow their example in the fortitude with which they suffered."

Great occasions for proving our constancy, great sacrifices to be made for God, are rare. If we wait for these, we may never meet with any in the course of our lives. We must, therefore, exercise our fortitude in the many daily happenings of our family life, in the perfect fulfilment of the duties of our state. *Undique captare proventum*, conquering ourselves and overcoming our inclinations at every moment of the day.

- The Lesson comes from St Paul's First Epistle to the Thessalonians (ii, 13-16). The Apostle praises the faith of that Church, because, having received his preaching as the Word of God, they have, like him, cheerfully endured the persecutions of the Jews, of those, that is, who had slain Christ.

The choice of the two Lessons to-day is in keeping with the vast apostolate exercised by the deacon Cyriacus according to his *Acta*—which are, however, of very doubtful authenticity—at the courts of Diocletian and of Sapor, King of Persia, where he is also said to have worked a number of miracles.

The Gradual repeats the Antiphon of the Introit to another chant. The alleluiatic verse is from Wisdom (iii, 7): "Alleluia, alleluia. The just shall shine, and shall run to and fro like sparks among the reeds for ever."

The light of the just is now hidden under the bushel or in the earthen vase, as were the torches of Gideon's soldiers; but when the moment of triumph is come, the soldiers break the vases of clay and the flame appears in all its brilliance to confound the ranks of the enemies of God.

The Gospel (Mark xvi, 15-18), which contains the promise of our Lord that numerous miracles should follow the first preaching of the Gospel, is common, at least in part, to the feast of the Ascension. The Würzburg List, on the other



hand, gives the passage from Matthew x, 26-32, as on January 20.

There are some persons who ask why it is that miracles do not occur so frequently now as during the first ages of the Church. The reasons for this are manifold; as, for instance, the want of faith, the more limited power of the devil over the human race, and so on. There is also another reason of an apologetical nature. Miracles are the signs by which God demonstrates the divine nature of his Christ and the Messianic character of his mission. Now, the Lord has already given us these signs; they are clear, numerous, duly guaranteed and authenticated in the holy Gospels, whose testimony lasts throughout the ages.

Therefore, in the ordinary way miracles are no longer necessary for the strengthening of our holy religion, so our Lord replies to such questioners as he did to Dives when he asked for a miracle in order that his brethren might be converted: "They have Moses and the prophets—let them hear them."

The Offertory is identical with that for March 10.

The Secret and the Post-Communion are those for St Canute on January 19, using, however, the plural number instead of the singular. In the Sacramentaries we find these two prayers: *Super oblata.*—*Suscipe, Domine, sacrificium placationis et laudis; quod nos, interveniente sancto tuo Cyriaco, et perducatur ad veniam et in perpetua gratiarum constituat actione.*

*Ad complendum.*—*Quaesumus, Domine Deus noster, ut interveniente beato Cyriaco martyre tuo, sacrosancta Mysteria quae sumpsimus, actu subsequamur et sensu.*

To follow the eucharistic Mystery in deed and thought means to live it over again with meditation and continuous mortification.

## AUGUST 9

### ST ROMANUS, MARTYR

#### *Station at the Cemetery of Cyriacus.*

The Martyrologies record to-day a Roman martyr who was interred in the cemetery of Cyriacus near St Lawrence, and whose tomb was always visited by the early pilgrims. The late *Acta* of St Lawrence connect him with the great arch-deacon by whom Romanus is said to have been converted and baptized. The narrative does not inspire great confidence, but what is beyond question is the existence of the tomb and



the ancient *cultus* of the martyr in the Agro Verano. In the thirteenth century his memory was still kept alive, as is shown in the list of relics preserved in that basilica :

*Post hos Ipolithus collis religatus equorum,  
Romanus miles, Triphonia, virgo Cyrilla.*

The Mass is the same as on January 14 for St Felix in *Pincis*. The Collect is as follows : " Grant, we beseech thee, almighty God, that by the intercession of blessed Romanus thy martyr, our bodies may be delivered from all harm and our minds cleansed from evil thoughts."

The Secret is that for St Vitalis on April 28; the Post-Communion is the one assigned to the feast of St Paul the Hermit on January 15.

## THE NIGHT OF AUGUST 9

### VIGIL IN THE BASILICA OF ST LAWRENCE

The observance of this vigil from the fourth century is attested by the Life of St Melania the Younger, in which it is related that while the saint was still a child her parents refused to take her to it on account of her youth. Melania then retired into the family oratory and kept the vigil all by herself in honour of St Lawrence as best she could.

We know the usual form of these Roman vigils, of which a part at least has remained in the Missal in the Offices of Holy Saturday and of the Ember Saturdays. They are a great deal older than the "Nocturns" and their psalmody which were popularized by the monks. They consisted of a fixed number of Scriptural Lessons, alternated with responsorial psalms and episcopal Collects. When day began to break, the Holy Sacrifice was offered and the fast came to an end.

In the Leonine Sacramentary there are to be found various formulas of Masses for this night's vigil, which show the very extensive *cultus* given to St Lawrence in Rome, a *cultus* greater than that paid to any saint except the Princes of the Apostles.

The tradition of the vigiliary Mass is perpetuated by the Gelasian and the Gregorian Sacramentaries, the Würzburg List of Gospels, etc., down to our present Missal. In fact, when in the late Middle Ages the vigils of the greater feasts were anticipated in the afternoon of the preceding day, St Lawrence had a Mass *in vigilia* and then another *prima missa in nocte*.



The Introit (Psalm cxi) proclaims the charity of the holy archdeacon, who regarded the poor as being the true treasures of the Church whom he showed with pride to the judge.

"He hath distributed, he hath given to the poor; his justice remaineth for ever and ever; his horn shall be exalted in glory."

Collect: "Give heed, O Lord, to our prayers, and by the intercession of blessed Lawrence thy martyr, to whose feast we are looking forward, graciously grant us thy mercy for evermore."

Such prayer during the night, to which the Scriptures frequently invite us and which, being hallowed by Christ's example, is practised as a sacred tradition by the Monastic Orders and many other religious Congregations, is highly pleasing to God. The soul that anticipates the daylight in bewailing its sins and in seeking God shows the depth of its contrition and the strength of its faith. Prayer before day-break is like the dew which descends at dawn to refresh and fertilize the land baked by the midday sun.

Among the various Collects of the Leonine Sacramentary we will choose the following: *Perfice nobis, Domine, fructum gratulationis hodiernae, ut precibus beati Laurentii martyris tui, eius natalitia votiva praecurrens, perfectis gaudiis expleatur oblatio.*

For to-night's vigiliary Mass, the most ancient Roman Comes of the Würzburg MS. assigns two Lessons before the Gospel, the one from the New Testament and the other from the Old, thus following the primitive tradition.

The First Lesson appointed for to-day in the Würzburg List is reserved, on the contrary, in the Missal to the Masses for Doctors: *Testificor coram Deo et Iesu Christo*. The second, from Ecclesiasticus (li, 1-8 and 12) is found also to-day in the Roman Missal. It appears again on January 21 for St Agnes, who, like St Lawrence, also underwent the punishment of fire.

The martyr, then, renders thanks to the Lord, because, when all other things failed him in the midst of the torments which he endured, the grace of God was never wanting.

The Gradual is taken from the same psalm as the Introit: "He hath distributed, he hath given to the poor: his justice remaineth for ever and ever. *Ps.* His seed shall be mighty upon earth; the generation of the righteous shall be blessed."

The saints belong rightly to the Catholic Church, hence is their seed the same Church which, through the merits of the just, continues to live, to flourish, and to triumph.

The Gospel (Matt. xvi, 24-27) is common to the feast of St Eusebius of Vercelli on December 16. There is complete antagonism between our corrupt nature and grace. Let him



who desires happiness cling to the cross of Christ, for he who loves his life shall lose it, and he who through sanctity hates himself in order to die to the old man, he indeed shall find his life again in Christ risen from the dead, and shall live by his holiness and his glory.

The Offertory is drawn from the Book of Job (xvi, 20). It is the martyr who is appealing from the unjust judgement of man to a higher tribunal which cannot be deceived nor deal unjustly. "My prayer is pure, and therefore I ask that a place may be given to my voice in heaven : for there is my judge, and he that knoweth my conscience is on high : let my prayer ascend to the Lord."

The testimony of a good conscience and faith in the judgement of God inspired the martyrs with such peace in the midst of the storm of hatred which overwhelmed them that Tertullian in his *Apologia* writes : " Whilst you condemn us to death, God declares us innocent ; wherefore we answer joyfully to the sentence you pronounce upon us : *Deo gratias.*"

Secret : " Mercifully receive the sacrifice which we offer up to thee, O Lord, and by the intercession of blessed Lawrence thy martyr loose the bonds of our sins."

He who has given up all for Christ in bitter martyrdom can also obtain all things from his Sacred Heart. This is why the Church from earliest times has realized that the martyrs have a special privilege of intercession.

The Leonine Sacramentary gives the following Preface for this night. *Vere dignum . . . Praevenientes natalem diem beati Laurentii, qui levita simul martyrque venerandus, et proprio claruit gloriosus officio, et memoranda refulsit passione sublimis. Per Christum. . . .*

The Communion is like that for St Canute on January 19.

Post-Communion : " Grant, we beseech thee, O Lord our God, that we who in this life are gladdened by the festival which we keep in memory of blessed Lawrence thy martyr, may enjoy his presence in life everlasting."

In heaven, besides the realization of the beatific vision, we shall derive special joy from the companionship of the saints. The reason for this is that, as all the blessed are united among themselves by the most perfect bond of love, the happiness of each one will be infinitely multiplied by the happiness of the entire court of heaven.



AUGUST 10

ST LAWRENCE, MARTYR

*Station at St Lawrence.*

After the feast of SS Peter and Paul this is the greatest festival in the ancient Roman Liturgy. The terrible martyrdom endured by the famous archdeacon deeply impressed the generations that came immediately after him, for whom Lawrence became at Rome that which Stephen had been at Jerusalem.

The calcined ashes of the martyr were placed in peace by the priest Justin in the cemetery of Cyriacus in the *ager Veranus*. On that spot the munificent Emperor Constantine erected a noble basilica; but as the sepulchre of St Lawrence was situated in the midst of other *cubicula* and subterranean crypts, the conqueror of Maxentius, in order not to disturb the cemetery, merely built a communicating stairway from the basilica to the vault where the saint's remains were buried. This staircase, which had two divisions, is mentioned not only in the biography of Silvester in the *Liber Pontificalis*, but also in a local epigraph which we have already mentioned elsewhere: *Ad mesa beati martyris Laurentii, descindentibus in cripta, parte dextra.*

Damasus placed this inscription on the tomb of the martyr :

VERBERA • CARNIFICES • FLAMMAS • TORMENTA • CATENAS  
VINCERE • LAVRENTII • SOLA • FIDES • POTVIT  
HAEC • DAMASVS • CVMVLAT • SVPPLEX • ALTARIA • DONIS  
MARTYRIS • EGREGIVM • SVSPICIENS • MERITVM

The faith of Lawrence was able alone to overcome  
The scourgings, tortures, flames, racks, and fetters.  
Damasus as a suppliant lays his offerings on this altar,  
Full of admiration for the merits of the great martyr.

But this building of Constantine's was soon seen to be too small for the great number of the faithful who flocked every day to visit the tomb of the heroic archdeacon. Sixtus III (432-40) then undertook the construction of a new and larger basilica (*basilica maior*), which, however, was orientated in the contrary direction—that is to say, with the entrance on the Via Tiburtina and the apse adjoining that of Constantine. This second edifice is recorded not only in the biography of the Pope who was its founder, but also in some inscriptions of the fifth century.



IN · BASILICA · MAIORE · AD · DOMNVM · LAVRENTIVM<sup>1</sup>

The Martyrology of St Jerome notes its dedication on November 4: *Dedicatio basilicae sanctorum Xysti, Hippolyti et Laurentii.*

In the meantime, the crypt *ad corpus* of the martyr, which was damp and dark, had become insecure because of the pressure against its sides of the earth of the hill. In order to remedy this Pelagius II (578-90) levelled all the surrounding passages of the cemetery, thus isolating the tomb of the martyr and constructing within the area of the ancient Basilica of Constantine a new church, to which was given the title of *nova* or *speciosior*.

The apse of Constantine's edifice was, however, preserved and the ancient columns utilized for the new building. An inscription, which has now been replaced on the summit of the triumphal arch, records the history of these works executed during the stormy times of the Lombard invasion.

DEMOVIT · DOMINVS · TENEBRAS · VT · LVCE · CREATA  
HIS · QVONDAM · LATEBRIS · SIC · MODO · FVLGOR · INEST  
ANGVSTOS · ADITVS · VENERABILE · CORPVS · HABEBAT  
HIC · VBI · NVNC · POPVLVM · LARGIOR · AVLA · CAPIT  
ERVTA · PLANITIES · PATVIT · SVB · MONTE · RECISO  
ESTQVE · REMOTA · GRAVI · MOLE · RVINA · MINAX  
PRAESVLE · PELAGIO · MARTYR · LAVRENTIVS · OLIM  
TEMPLA · SIBI · STATVIT · TAM · PRETIOSA · DARI  
MIRA · FIDES · GLADIOS · HOSTILES · INTER · ET · IRAS  
PONTIFICEM · MERITIS · HAEC · CELEBRASSE · SVIS  
TV · MODO · SANCTORVM · CVI · CRESCERE · CONSTAT · HONORES  
FAC · SVB · PACE · COLI · TECTA · DICATA · TIBI

"The Lord removed the darkness and created the light that it might shine even here where there was once a labyrinth. There was an entrance too narrow to reach the body of the saint, where thou now seest in its place a wide hall large enough to contain a greater concourse of persons. By levelling part of the hillside more space was obtained, and all danger from falling earth was averted. When Pelagius was Pope the martyr Lawrence willed that this magnificent church should be erected in his honour. Wonderful was the faith of the Pontiff who, amidst the assaults and the furies of the enemy, had the merit of bringing the works to a conclusion. Do thou, O God, who art honoured in the *cultus* of thy saints, grant that we may now venerate in peace the sanctuary consecrated to thee."

<sup>1</sup> De Rossi, *Bollettini*, 22, 23. 1876.



Under the triumphal arch are these lines :

MARTYRIVM · FLAMMIS · OLIM · LEVITA · SVBISTI  
IVRE · TVIS · TEMPLIS · LVX · BENERANDA · REDIT

"Thou didst once endure, O Levite, the martyrdom of fire, therefore it is fitting that light should shine upon thy sanctuary."

The various Masses of St Lawrence : *Confessio et pulchritudo*, etc., all allude to this *basilica speciosior* of Pelagius II, whilst the other, the *maior* of Sixtus III, in time came to be usually called after the Blessed Virgin. So it was that Leo IV ordered the station on the Octave of the Assumption to be held at St Lawrence, and that in the other stational Mass at the *Ager Veranus* on the Third Sunday in Lent, the Gospel contains the praises of the Blessed Virgin.

The two sanctuaries of St Lawrence remained in this state until the time of Honorius III (1216-27). Under this Pope, however, the *basilica maior*, which was no doubt in a dilapidated condition, was demolished together with the apse and the transept of the Basilica of Pope Pelagius. The nave and aisles of the *speciosior* then became a kind of choir behind the altar of St Lawrence, in front of which Honorius built a new church with a portico, which now occupy part of the area of the Basilica of Constantine, and part of that of Sixtus III. In the last century Pius IX carried out extensive restorations to the building, and like his early predecessors Zosimus, Sixtus III, and Hilarius, desired to be buried near the holy archdeacon.

The history of the basilica over the tomb of St Lawrence—which, until the last few centuries, was enumerated among the patriarchal basilicas of the city, and which took precedence over St Mary Major—is in itself equivalent to an entire treatise on the importance and celebrity of the *cultus* paid to the martyr in Rome.

We must add, however, that whilst at Constantinople Pulcheria<sup>1</sup> built a sanctuary in honour of the cross-bearer of the Roman Church, the latter, by means especially of the pieces of the iron gridiron of St Lawrence which were distributed somewhat freely, gave occasion for the erection of churches and cathedrals dedicated to the martyr throughout Italy, in Africa, in Gaul, and in Spain.

But the Eternal City was first and foremost in devotion to St Lawrence. Wherever tradition had connected any place with some episode of his martyrdom, there a church immediately sprang up in order that his memory might be pre-

<sup>1</sup> Daughter of Arcadius and Eudoxia, Empress of the East; died 453.—TR.



served. On the Viminal, *Sancti Laurentii in Formoso, ubi assatus est*—as the Itinerary of Einsiedeln of the eighth century tells us; St Lawrence in *Fonte*, where the archdeacon is said to have baptized one of his gaolers; St Lawrence in *Miranda*, perhaps near the place where he was condemned; St Lawrence in *Damaso*, where from early times have been preserved the archives of the Roman Church; St Lawrence in *Lucina*, where it is said that he lived; St Lawrence *super Clementem* near Sta Maria in *Domnica*, where it is supposed that he carried on his ministry of charity; St Lawrence near the *titulus* of Cyriacus, where he is said to have undergone examination.

Besides all these, there arose in the early Middle Ages at the Vatican, at the Lateran, in the various regions of the city a number of churches dedicated to St Lawrence, some forty at least, so that there were not so many in Rome dedicated even to the apostles Peter and Paul themselves.

The gridiron of St Lawrence is still preserved in the old *titulus* of San Lorenzo in *Lucina*, where in 366 Damasus was elected Pope, and where he affixed one of his monumental inscriptions.

The Pontiff of the martyrs composed another graceful epigraph for his new Basilica of San Lorenzo in *Damaso* near the theatre of Pompey, where both he and his father had passed their long and distinguished ecclesiastical career in the papal archives.

NON · MIRVM · EST · FALLAX · NIMIVM · QVOD · FLAMMA · MINATVR  
MARTYRIS · ET · CORPVS · NIL · NOCITVRA · CREMAT  
NAMQVE · DOCET · FIDEI · MAGNAM · SINE · VINDICE · POENA  
AD · CAELVM · MEDIIS · IGNIBVS · ESSE · VIAM  
HVNC · ETENIM · FRVITVR · MARTYR · LAVRENTIVS · IGNEM  
AT · MERITIS · SVMMIS · NE · MORIATVR · AGIT

“Deceptive and vain is the threat of the fire, for though it has burnt the body, it has not been able to harm the soul of the martyr. The flame then teaches us that faith, fearless of pain, can find a broad path to heaven for itself even through the midst of the pyre. The martyr Lawrence endured this torment of fire, but by his merits he lives for ever.”

To-day, as we have already said, there were originally two Masses, the one in the crypt *ad corpus*, the other in the basilica above.

Thus the Sacramentaries distinguish on this day a *prima missa* from another *missa publica* with different Lessons and Collects. Our present Missal retains only the second Mass.



## IN PRIMA MISSA "DE NOCTE"

*Station at the Basilica of Constantine or of Pelagius II.*

The Collects are as follows :

Collect : "Stir up, O Lord, in thy Church the Spirit to which the blessed Levite Lawrence was obedient, so that we also, being filled with the same spirit, may endeavour to love that which was the object of his love, at the same time practising what he taught us."

The First Lesson according to the *Comes* of Würzburg was that used in our Missal on January 19 for the feast of St Canute; the Gospel : *Qui amat patrem aut matrem* occurs also for St Valentine on February 14.

Secret : "May the holy prayers of Lawrence render our sacrifice acceptable to thee, O Lord, and may it be pleasing to thee through the intercession of him in whose honour it is solemnly offered this day."

We take this Preface from the Leonine Sacramentary : *Vere dignum . . . in die solemnitatis hodiernae, qua beati Laurentii hostiam tibi placitam casti corporis glorioso certamine suscepisti. Prunis namque superposita stridebant membra viventia; nec tamen erat poena patientis, sed piae confessionis incensum. Neque terreno liberari cruciatu Martyr optabat, sed coronari deprecabatur in caelis. Per, etc.*

Post-Communion : "Grant, we beseech thee, almighty God, that as many as now have been filled with thy heavenly gifts, may through the intercession of blessed Lawrence thy martyr, enjoy thy continual protection."

## IN MISSA PUBLICA

*Station at the Basilica "maior."*

The Introit *Confessio et pulchritudo* is the same as that for the station at St Lawrence in *Formoso*<sup>1</sup> on the Thursday after the First Sunday in Lent. The Antiphon contains a delicate allusion to the beauty of the *basilica speciosior* where the *Confessio* of St Lawrence was placed.

Collect : "Grant us, we beseech thee, almighty God, to extinguish within us the flames of vice, even as thou gavest blessed Lawrence grace to overcome his fiery torments."

St Leo here remarks, in a beautiful discourse which he delivered on this same feast to the Roman people assembled at the *ager Veranus*, that the fire which burned the body of

<sup>1</sup> St Lawrence in *Panisperna*.



St Lawrence came after that of the divine love which consumed his soul. This latter did not allow of his paying attention to the former; so shall we, too, overcome the assaults of our passions if the love of God and of virtue burns in our hearts.

The Lesson is derived from the Second Epistle of St Paul to the Corinthians (ix, 6-10). The Apostle, who had previously ordered collections to be made for the churches of Judæa, which were suffering severely from famine, now lays down the conditions under which they are to be made.

The offerings must be voluntary, since otherwise they would be regarded as a tax, and God does not exact taxes. Further, they must be prompted by a cheerful heart and one which has confidence in divine Providence, for charity is like seed sown in the field of the heavenly kingdom. God, who causes the stalk to spring from the grain of wheat which has lain decaying in the earth and the ears to sprout, will multiply in this world and in the next the fruit of the alms that have been given to himself in the person of his poor.

This divine institution of Christian charity was organized in the Church from the very beginning, and at once assumed an official character. It was precisely to this sublime ministry of almsgiving that the deacons were appointed, among whom St Lawrence distinguished himself at Rome. The fruit of the charity of the holy archdeacon is clearly shown in the grace of his glorious martyrdom.

The Gradual, derived from Psalm xvi, which speaks of the fire of tribulation trying the soul like gold in the crucible, is applied to-day to St Lawrence, who endured the torture of the red-hot gridiron.

Psalm xvi, 3: "Thou hast proved my heart, O Lord, and visited it by night. *Ÿ*. Thou hast tried me by fire, and iniquity hath not been found in me."

The alleluiatic verse alludes to the miraculous cure of the blind Crescention, wrought by the holy Levite. "Alleluia, alleluia. *Ÿ*. The Levite Lawrence wrought a good work, who gave sight to the blind by the sign of the cross. Alleluia."

The Gospel, which is similar to that of February 1, the feast of St Ignatius, describes the manner in which Christ is to be served by those who would follow him. The Latin word *minister* is equivalent to the Greek *deacon*, and alludes to the office which St Lawrence filled so worthily.

The Antiphon for the Offertory, in praise of the beauty of the sanctuary of the Lord, is identical with that for the Introit. It is evident from this that the *Basilica speciosior* of Pelagius II really aroused enthusiasm amongst the devout Romans, and that it was indeed worthy of its holy martyr.



Secret: "Graciously receive the gifts which we offer up to thee, O Lord, we beseech thee; and by the merits of blessed Lawrence thy martyr, which plead for us, grant that we may be helped in the way of salvation."

All the Sacramentaries contain a proper Preface for to-day.

We will quote here one of the most beautiful of these Prefaces from the Leonine collection: . . . *Vere dignum: Quamvis enim Sanctorum tuorum, propagante te, Domine, toti orbi data sit gloria; de beati tamen solemnitate Laurentii peculiarius prae coeteris Roma laetatur, cuius nascendo civis, sacer Minister, dedicatum Nomini tuo munus est proprium. Qui per tuam gratiam, commissae sibi dispensationis executor egregius, ut ad Martyrium perveniret emeruit pro praemio, et quo coelestis existeret, consecutus est passionem. Per, etc.*

From these words we see that the early Roman tradition was that Lawrence was born in Rome, and not in Spain. The same may also be said of Pope Damasus, the great propagator of the *cultus* of St Lawrence.

The Antiphon for the Communion (John xii, 26) is drawn from to-day's Gospel, with its allusion to the ministry of deacons. In the Missal it occurs also on November 29, for the feast of St Saturninus in the Common *Laetabitur*.

Post-Communion: "We who have taken our fill of thy holy gifts, beseech thee, O Lord, that what we celebrate in fulfilment of the service which we owe to thee, may bring us increase of thy saving grace."

The Eucharist and the Sacrifice of the Mass contain the whole of our religion. Through religion we worship God and give thanks to him. Through it we pay honour to the saints; we pray for the dead; we implore graces for ourselves and for the whole Church; we repair our daily spiritual losses; we become one body with Christ and have our part through him in the glorious resurrection.

Conformably to the *Ordines Romani*, even in the late Middle Ages, the Pope used to go, on this day, with all his court, to San Lorenzo. There, after celebrating Vespers, he passed the night in order to take part in the vigil, as on the festival of the Princes of the Apostles.

The *Ordo Romanus*, attributed to Giacomo Gaetani in the fourteenth century, prescribes that, both at Rome itself and in the neighbourhood, if the Pope should happen to find himself near a church dedicated to St Lawrence no consistory should take place, either on the vigil or on the festival, but that there should be sung the *vesperi papales solemnes* . . . *et detur potus*—that is, that the customary libation of wine should be given—the last relic at Rome of the ancient Christian *agape*.



Also at the Lateran Patriarchate, one of the most celebrated Oratories—the only one now remaining in the ancient papal palace—was that dedicated to St Lawrence, in which Leo III placed many sacred relics. The Pope used to put off his sacred vestments there after Mass and recite the thanksgiving prayers. It is for this reason that to this day these prayers in the Missal include the Collect in honour of St Lawrence, the titular saint of the pontifical chapel.

## AUGUST 11

## ST TIBURTIUS, MARTYR

*Station "ad duas lauros" on the Via Labicana.*

St Tiburtius, according to the *Acta*, was the son of the Prefect Cromartius, and was put to death under Diocletian. His body was buried in the cemetery *ad duas lauros*, not far from what afterwards became the imperial villa of Constantine on the Via Labicana. Damasus placed there the following inscription :

TEMPORE · QVO · GLADIVS · SECVIT · PIA · VISCERA · MATRIS  
EGREGIVS · MARTYR · CONTEMPTO · PRINCIPE · MVNDI  
AETHERIS · ALTA · PETIT · CHRISTO · COMITANTE · BEATVS  
HAEC · TIBI · SANCTVS · HONOR · SEMPER · LAVDESQVE · MANEBVNT  
CARE · DEO · VT · FOVEAS · DAMASVM · PRECOR · ALME · TIBVRTI

"When the sword of persecution pierced the bosom of our Mother the Church, this noble martyr, despising the commands of the temporal prince, blissfully followed Christ to the heavenly kingdom. This has merited for thee the honours of the sacred Liturgy and undying praise. O gracious martyr Tiburtius, beloved of God, I beseech thee to protect Damasus."

Gregory IV translated the sacred body to St Peter's, so in the *Ordo Romanus XI* we find that the Pope before beginning the solemn vigils at the Vatican went first to incense the altar of St Tiburtius.

In the Würzburg List of Gospels, in agreement with the earliest Roman tradition, only the Mass of St Tiburtius is entered for to-day with the Gospel Lesson : *Hoc est praeceptum meum*, as for the Vigil of the Apostles.

The feast of St Susanna came later.

The Mass was as follows. The Introit *Iustus ut palma* is like that for St Paul the Hermit on January 15.



Collect : " O Lord, may we enjoy the continual patronage of thy holy martyr Tiburtius ; for thou never ceasest to regard with mercy those to whom thou vouchsafest to grant such powerful help."

This is another argument to show that devotion to the saints does not in any way detract from the *cultus* which we owe to God. It is the Lord himself who commits the Church and the souls of the faithful to the protection of the saints, so that these, by their prayers, may, like the Guardian Angels, be the ministers of divine Providence in leading those who invoke them to eternal salvation.

The Gradual *Os iusti* is the same as for St Peter Nolasco on January 31, whereas the alleluiatic verse is taken from Psalm viii : "*Alleluia, alleluia. Gloria et honore coronasti eum, Domine. Alleluia.*"

The Offertory also is the same as that for January 31.

Secret : " Give heed, O Lord, to the prayers of thy people ; give heed to their gifts ; so that what they offer up at these holy mysteries may, by the intercession of thy saints, become well-pleasing unto thee."

There was also a proper Preface for to-day : *Vere dignum . . . Qui dum beati Tiburtii merita gloriosa veneramur, auxilium nobis tue protectionis adfore deprecamur ; quoniam credimus nos per eorum intercessionem qui tibi placuerunt, peccatorum nostrorum veniam impetrare. Per, etc.*

The Communion *Posuisti* is similar to that on January 26.

Post-Communion : " We have received, O Lord, the pledge of eternal redemption ; and we beseech thee that it may become, by the intercession of thy holy martyrs, a help to us both for the present and for future life."

## AUGUST 11

### ST SUSANNA, VIRGIN AND MARTYR

*Station " ad duas domus, iuxta Diocletianas."*

To-day the Martyrology of St Jerome indicates the station in honour of the *natalis* of St Susanna, at the ancient *titulus Gaii*, or *titulus Susannae*, near the Baths of Diocletian, which goes back to the beginning of the fourth century. The *Acta* of the saint date from the following century, but are not very trustworthy. According to that document Susanna perished by the sword, in her own house, having fallen a victim to Diocletian's hatred of the Christian faith.

Her body is said to have been buried first on the Via Nomentana, near the crypt of the martyr Alexander, but



later it was venerated in the *titulus* named after her, this sepulchral inscription marking her tomb :

OLIM · PRESBYTERI · GABINI · FILIA · FELIX  
HIC · SVSANNA · IACET · IN · PACE · PATRI · SOCIATA

Devotion to St Susanna increased in Rome when Sergius I, who had been priest of the *titulus Susannae*, caused the church to be restored and endowed it with gifts. Leo III and Charlemagne must also have been its benefactors, for their portraits were to be seen in the mosaic of the apse, and an inscription commemorating these works of restoration attested that the Pope had also brought to that church the body of St Felicitas.

A separate Mass in honour of St Susanna on August 11 appears in several lists of Gospel Lessons, as, for example, in the MSS. of Rheinau and of Speyer, edited by Gerbert, Ranke, and others. The present Missal has merged the two original synaxes of St Tiburtius and of St Susanna—the one on the Via Labicana, and the other on the *alta semita ad duas domus*—in a single Mass : *Salus autem*, as on February 15. The Collects, with, of course, the addition of the name Susanna, are those given above for St Tiburtius, but the First Lesson is identical with that for St Sebastian on January 20.

## AUGUST 12

### ST EUPLUS, DEACON AND MARTYR

*Station on the Via Ostiensis, "ad Sanctum Euplum."*

Euplus was a deacon of Catania, who suffered a notorious martyrdom under Diocletian in the famous *dies traditionis*, when the Christians were ordered under pain of death to deliver up all the *codices* of the Holy Scriptures in order that they might be thrown to the flames. To the sanctuary at Catania, where reposed the relics of the martyrs Euplus and Agatha, belongs a well-known epitaph which says, when speaking of a deceased person, Julia Florentina by name : *cuius corpus pro foribus Martyrorum cum loculo suo per presbyterum humatum est*. Pope Theodore (642-49) built on the Via Ostiensis, not far from the Pyramid of Caius Cestius, a church in memory of the deacon Euplus, who, on the other hand, was also well known in the East.

That is why we find in the seventh century the festival station of the martyr of Catania also in the Calendar of the Roman Church.

In the Würzburg Index of the Gospel Lessons that for



to-day (John xvi, 20-23): *Amen dico vobis, quia plorabitis . . . in nomine meo dabit vobis*, is, with the exception of the last verse, like the Gospel for St Anicetus on April 17.

The *cultus* paid to St Euplus at Rome continued for a long time, especially on account of the great hospital which adjoined his church on the Ostian Way, and which even in the fourteenth century had at least nineteen infirmarians attached to it.

In the *Registrum* of St Gregory the Great mention is made of a Basilica at Messina dedicated to SS Stephen, Pancras, and Euplus;<sup>1</sup> while out of Italy we find the feast of St Euplus marked on August 11 in the Byzantine Calendar, on the same day, that is, as the Syrian Catholics of the Patriarchate of Antioch also venerate him.

## AUGUST 12

### ST CLARE, VIRGIN\*

This is the saint of whom the Sacred Liturgy says that she was the first flower of the female branch of the poor Franciscan family. Poor, indeed, in actual possessions, but splendid in the magnificence of its poverty, which faithfully reflects the regal poverty of Christ at Bethlehem and on the cross.

In order to understand fully the seraphic figure of St Chiara Sciti, we must place ourselves in the times in which she lived. The abuse of riches and of feudal power which obtained in the thirteenth century had imposed upon the clergy and the monasteries temporal cares which often occasioned great loss and harm to their spiritual mission. Heretics took advantage of these circumstances to accuse the Church of having fallen away from apostolic poverty, whilst good Catholics mourned over this sad state of things and longed for a reform.

At last God raised up St Francis, who, in the first article of his Rule, professes humble obedience to Pope Honorius III and his successors. The "Herald of the great King," without privileges or feudal rights, presented himself then before the faithful, in poverty and bare-footed, with the seal of the crucified Christ in his hands, his feet, and his side, and in his name proclaimed in the market-places and in the highways the message of the Gospel and the beatitudes of the Sermon on the Mount.

The powerful Benedictine abbot of Monte Subasio was the

<sup>1</sup> *Registrum*, II, 9. *Ewald-Hartmann*, Vol. I, p. 107.



lord of many lands and hill-towns in the territory of Assisi. From him the "Poverello" begged one of the most insignificant of his possessions, the dilapidated chapel of the Porziuncula, to be the cradle of the new Order which he intended to found, and this place thus became the Bethlehem of the Friars Minor.

Clare followed the example of Francis in all things. That which he accomplished directly in the religious life for men, he brought about through Clare for women. At first St Francis gave her the Rule of St Benedict to follow, as he desired to graft his new foundation of the recluses of San Damiano on to the old Order, so as to give it a canonical basis, one already recognized by Holy Church.

Instead of imitating the various rich convents of Benedictine nuns, which at that time were scattered about Umbria, St Francis determined that Clare and her nuns should go at a bound several centuries back to the early traditions of austere Benedictine life, to the time, that is, when the holy patriarch of Monte Cassino had begun to found his Order in the direst poverty amidst the solitary heights of Monte Subiaco.

Thus it was that Gregory IX (1227-41) was able to write to Clare and her companions before they had received a Rule of their own: "Now you are worthy daughters of the blessed Benedict."

The convent of San Damiano, where Clare lived and died, still represents to us the "palace of the Lady Poverty," but the better to secure this treasure to her Order, the disciple of the "Poverello" of Assisi wished to ask of Innocent IV a Rule of perfect poverty; so that, whilst others solicited from the Roman Pontiff honours, privileges, and lands, Clare only desired for herself and her sisters the honour of imitating the perfect poverty of Christ. St Clare died in 1253, and was canonized two years later by Alexander IV.

To-day the Mass is as on February 10, but the Collect is similar to that for St Lucy on December 13.

St Clare also teaches us to have great devotion to the Holy Eucharist. In the midst of her extreme poverty she caused the Blessed Sacrament to be kept in a silver case placed in an ivory pyx. When, under Frederick II, the Saracens besieged Assisi and attacked the Convent of San Damiano, the saint, who was sick at the time, seeing all human assistance fail, had recourse to the divine. She had herself carried to the door of the convent and there held up the pyx containing the Blessed Sacrament, like a shield between the nuns and the fury of the infidels. At that sight, as though there emanated from the holy vessel an unseen force which drove them back, the enemy turned and fled.



AUGUST 13

SS HIPPOLYTUS AND PONTIANUS, MARTYRS

*Station on the Via Tiburtina and at the Cemetery of Callixtus.*

To-day the Philocalian Calendar announces two stations: *Idus Aug. Ipoliti in Tiburtina et Pontiani in Callisti*. This corresponds with the Leonine Sacramentary, which also announces for August 13 the *natale sanctorum Hippolyti et Pontiani*. Many legends have been woven about Hippolytus, making him out to have been a disciple of Novatus, a martyr of Antioch, a bishop of Portus, and finally a soldier and a gaoler of St Lawrence.

In reality we are concerned with Hippolytus, the disciple of St Irenæus, priest and doctor of the Roman Church, who, on the occasion of the election of Callixtus I to the Papacy, brought about a schism and thus became the first antipope. He was the author of a number of theological works, and under the title of "Bishop of Rome" enjoyed an undisputed authority also in the East. Fortunately, however, the schism was not of long duration, for Hippolytus—having been condemned for the Faith, together with Pontianus, the second successor of Callixtus, to penal servitude in Sardinia—returned to the unity of the Church before leaving Rome, and thus died a Catholic martyr in 236.

Pope Urban was succeeded in 230 by Pontianus. In 235 the Emperor Maximinus sent into exile to Sardinia—in *insula nociva*—both heads of the two Christian communities in Rome; but as, according to Roman law, exile entailed also the loss of all civil rights, Pontianus finding himself consequently in the impossibility of governing the Church, *dis-cinctus est*, as the Liberian List has it, that is to say, he resigned his sacred Office.

If Hippolytus was still at the head of the schismatic faction in the city, he must have done the same; and so by common consent of the whole of the clergy unity was restored by the election of Pope Antherus, whilst the two confessors for the Faith were sailing away towards the *insula nociva*.

There the unhealthy climate and the hardships of exile soon undermined their constitutions, and within the same year Pontianus died, whilst Hippolytus, if, indeed, he had not already preceded him, certainly followed him to the grave very shortly afterwards. Antherus had died after a pontificate of only forty days and Fabian had been elected in his place.

When the news reached Rome that Pontianus and Hippo-



lytus were dead, the new Pope, with a large number of the clergy, set forth for Sardinia in order to fetch their bodies and bring them back to the city.

The day of their deposition in the cemetery is precisely August 13, as noted in the Philocalian Calendar. Pontianus was buried in the papal crypt of Callixtus; Hippolytus, on the other hand, who, at Rome, continued to bear officially the simple title of "presbyter," was laid in a magnificent sepulchre in a private cemetery on the Via Tiburtina, near that of St Lawrence.

It is allowable to believe that the unusual honour attached to the removal of the two bodies from Sardinia was the outcome of the efforts of the ancient party of the adherents of Hippolytus.

The following singular *graffito* appears to refer to the tomb of Pontianus in the papal crypt of Callixtus.

EN ΘΕΩ ΜΕΤΑ ΠΑΝΤΩ(ν) ΤΩΝ ΕΠΙ(σκοπων)  
ΠΟΝΤΙΑΝΕ ΖΗΧΗC.

"Thou, O Pontianus, livest in God together with all the other (bishops)."

In the case of Hippolytus the procedure was quite different. His admirers had complete liberty, and took advantage of it to erect a marble statue to their master—although ancient Christian art avoided sculptured images—representing him as seated in majesty on a throne, on which was engraved a list of the works of the great Doctor.

The tomb of Hippolytus on the Via Tiburtina was one of the most venerated sanctuaries. Prudentius, who in the *Peristephanon* sang the martyrdom of the famous Doctor, describes it minutely and relates that the Pope used to celebrate there every year the festival station, preaching at the same time a discourse. The venerable vault was discovered by De Rossi. Bosio, who was the first to enter it in the seventeenth century, read there this *graffito*:

REFRIGERI · TIBI · DOMINVS · IPOLITVS · SID

Other inscriptions bearing the name of Hippolytus confirmed the discovery of De Rossi:

IPPOLYTE · IN · MENTE · (habeas) · PET(rum · p)EC(cat)OR(em)

"Hippolytus be mindful of Peter, a sinner."

DRACONTIVS · PELAGIVS · ET · IVLIA · ET · ELIA

ANTONINA · PARAVERVNT · SIBI · LOCV **P**

AT · IPPOLITV · SVPER · ARCOSOLIV · PROPTER · VNA · FILIA



"Pope Damasus had adorned the tomb of Hippolytus with a metrical inscription of which the Roman craftsmen of the late Middle Ages made use for the Cosmato mosaic work of the paving of the Lateran Basilica."

HIPPOLYTVS · FERTVR · PREMIERENT · CVM · IVSSA · TYRAMNI  
PRESBYTER · IN · SCHISMA · SEMPER · MANSISSE · NOVATI  
TEMPORE · QVO · GLADIVS · SECVIT · PIA · VISCERA · MATRIS  
DEVOTVS · CHRISTO · PETERET · CVM · REGNA · PIORVM  
QVAESISSET · POPVLVS · VBINAM · PROCEDERE · POSSET  
CATHOLICAM · DIXISSE · FIDEM · SEQVERENTVR · VT · OMNES  
SIC · NOSTER · MERVIT · CONFESSVS · MARTYR · VT · ESSET  
HAEC · AVDITA · REFERT · DAMASVS · PROBAT · OMNIA · CHRISTVS

"It is said that whilst the persecution of the tyrant raged and that a sword pierced the bosom of Mother Church, the priest Hippolytus always remained attached to the schism of Novatus. When, however, he was on the point of leaving this world for the sake of Christ, the people asked him to whom they should turn. He answered them that they should all follow the Catholic faith. By this confession he merited to become one of our martyrs. Damasus relates that which he heard, but Christ alone is judge."

However, Damasus was not rightly informed as to the particulars of the Novatian schism which broke out some thirty years after the death of Hippolytus.

Another epigraph, containing the acrostic of the priest Leo, records the adornment of the tomb of Hippolytus by Pope Damasus :

LAETA · DEO · PLEBS · SANCTA · CANAT · QVOD · MOENIA · CRESCVNT  
ET · RENOVATA · DOMVS · MARTYRIS · YPPOLITI  
ORNAMENTA · OPERIS · SVRGVNT · AVCTORE · DAMASO  
NATVS · QVI · ANTISTES · SEDIS · APOSTOLICAE  
INCLYTA · PACIFICIS · FACTA · EST · HAEC · AVLA · TRIVMPHIS  
SERVATVRA · DECVS · PERPETVAMQVE · FIDEM  
HAEC · OMNIA · NOVA · QVAEQVE · VIDES · LEO · PRESBYTER ·  
HORNAT

"Let the faithful people sing a hymn of thanksgiving to God, because the walls are enlarged and the basilica of the martyr Hippolytus renewed. The originator of these embellishments is Damasus, who seems as though he had been born to fill the Apostolic See. This temple, which has been made famous by his peaceful triumphs, will preserve its beauty through the ages and will be a perpetual monument of faith."

This wish expressed by the priest Leo, however, was not fulfilled, for the invasion of the Goths followed and the



sanctuary was destroyed. Pope Vigilius was obliged to restore it, and he placed there this commemorative epigraph :

DEVASTATA · ITERVM · SVMMOTA · PLEBE · PRECANTVM  
PRISCVM · PERDIDERANT · ANTRA · SACRATA · DECVS  
NEC · TVA · IAM · MARTYR · POTERANT · VENERANDE · SEPVLCHRA  
HVIC · MVNDO · LVCEM · MITTERE · QVA · FRVERIS  
LVX · TAMEN · ISTA · TVA · EST · QVAE · NESCIT · FVNERA · SED ·  
QVO

PERPETVO · CRESCAT · NEC · MINVATVR · HABET  
NAM · NIGRA · NOX · TRINVM · STVPVIT · PER · SPECVLA · LVMEN  
ADMITTVNTQVE · NOVVM · CONCAVA · SAXA · DIEM  
FRVSTRA · BARBARICIS · FREMVERVNT · AVSIBVS · HOSTES  
FAEDARVNTQVE · SACRVM · TELA · CRVENTA · LOCVM  
INCLYTA · SED · MELIVS · SPLENDESCIT · MARTYRIS · AVLA  
AVCTOREMQVE · GRAVANT · IMPIA · FACTA · SVVM  
PRAESVLE · VIGILIO · SVMPSERVNT · ANTRA · DECOREM  
PRESBYTERI · ANDREAE · CVRA · PEREGIT · OPVS

“The venerated tomb, several times destroyed in such a manner that the crowds of the faithful could no longer come there to pray, had lost all its ancient glory. Thy sepulchre, O holy martyr, could no more shine upon the world with that light in which thou rejoicest; that light of thine which never fades, since it has always that which increases it instead of growing less. The thick darkness in which the vault was wrapt was at last dispelled by the light which now shines through three windows, so that the crypt excavated in the tufa sees the daylight once more. In vain the enemies vent their rage and cast their darts upon the holy place. The sanctuary of the illustrious martyr rises in greater beauty, whilst shame covers him who committed the crime. This crypt was decorated during the pontificate of Vigilius, and the work is wholly due to the diligence of the priest Andrew.”

So much veneration was shown to Hippolytus at Rome, that a sanctuary was dedicated to him in the very house in the *vicus Patricius*, near the *titulus* of the Pastor, where he had exercised the Office of Doctor.

This is recorded in the following epigraph, found in 1850 near St Praxedes :

OMNIA · QVAE · VIDENTVR  
A · MEMORIA · SANCTI · MAR  
TYRIS · YPPOLITI · VSQVE · HVC  
SVRGERE · TECTA · ILICIVS  
PRESB · SVMPTV · PROPIO · FECIT



Notwithstanding the great devotion paid to St Hippolytus at Rome, his body at the time of the great translation of relics from the catacombs was transferred to the famous monastery of San Salvatore on Monte Letenano near Rieti. Many ancient martyrologies note this translation on May 9 : *Beati Ippoliti martyris, quando sacratissimum corpus eius translatum est in comitatu Reatino, in Monasterio Domini Salvatoris.*

The transference of the relics of St Hippolytus to the Sabine country caused the monks of Farfa to become great propagators of his *cultus*; so we find the following places named after him in the *Chronicon Farfense* alone : *Curtis S. Ippoliti, ecclesia sancti Hyppoliti, ecclesia sancti Yppoliti in Aviliano, ecclesia sancti Yppoliti in Retiano, ecclesia sancti Yppoliti in comitatu Tudertino, monasterium sancti Yppoliti in Firmana Civitate, monasterium sancti Hippoliti in silva, etc.*

The number and variety of the literary works of Hippolytus made a great impression on the Christians of those early times, consequently the Eastern churches attributed to the Roman Doctor—who no doubt was in good faith—such undisputed authority that we find extracts from his works in ancient translations—Latin, Syriac, Coptic, Arabic, Ethiopian, Armenian, and Slavonic.

The temporary separation from Callixtus brought about by Hippolytus leaves a painful impression on us, but we may apply to his case St Augustine's words about St Cyprian and his disagreement with Pope Stephen.

"The divine husbandman has already cut off with the pruning hook of martyrdom all that was excessive and rank in the branches of the tree." Or as St Jerome said of another great Doctor of old, Origen, whom Hippolytus resembles in many ways : *Non imitemur eius vitia, cuius virtutes assequi non possumus.*

In the Leonine Sacramentary the name of Pontianus is joined with that of Hippolytus in the heading of to-day's Mass; but the Preface refers only to the latter. The later Sacramentaries, however, omit altogether the name of the Pontiff who died an exile in *insula nociva*, and preserve no more than the memory of the great Roman Doctor, with whose feast that of St Cassian of Imola was associated only in later years.



## AUGUST 13

ST CASSIAN, MARTYR

*Station on the Via Tiburtina.*

The praises of this martyr were sung by Prudentius, who described in the *Peristephanon* the paintings which adorned his sepulchral basilica. In these the saint was represented as being tormented by the boys, his pupils, into whose power he was delivered in order that they might vent their spite upon their somewhat severe teacher.

It was near this sanctuary that St Peter Chrysologus desired to yield his soul to God.

Devotion to St Cassian spread throughout Italy. His image, reproduced in mosaic, appears in the fifth century at Ravenna, both in the vaulting of the chapel of the *Episcopium*, as well as in the procession of the saints at St Martin *in caelo aureo*. Towards the end of the same century Pope Symmachus built an Oratory in his honour at the Vatican, near the round chapel of St Andrew; another chapel was dedicated to him at the Agro Verano, near which St Leo IV restored a monastery, whose duty it was to serve the Basilica of St Lawrence.

The Mass is *Salus autem*, as on February 15.

The Collect, with the simple addition of the names of the martyrs Hippolytus and Cassian, is taken from the Mass of a Confessor and Bishop. "Grant, we beseech thee, almighty God, that the holy festival of thy blessed martyrs Hippolytus and Cassian may both increase our devotion and advance our salvation."

In the Gregorian Sacramentary the first Collect is as follows: *Sancti martyris tui Hippolyti, Domine, quaesumus, veneranda festivitas salutaris auxilii nobis praestet augmentum.*

According to the Codex of Würzburg the Gospel Lesson to-day, *Attendite a fermento Phariseorum*, is that given for June 26.

The next two Collects are the same in the Missal as in the Gregorian Sacramentary.

Secret: "Look, O Lord, upon the gifts which thy people offer up to thee on the feast of thy saints; and may their witness to thy truth avail us for salvation."

This Collect also appears to-day in the Leonine Sacramentary.

We should always remember the original meaning of the word martyrdom when applied to Christians. It did not



actually imply the sufferings of a cruel death at the hands of others, but the confession of the Christian faith sealed by death which the martyr fearlessly faced for the name of Christ. In this confession and in this death consists the apologetic value of Christian martyrdom: *Martyrem non poena, sed causa facit.*

The tradition of the Sacramentaries, from the Leonine to the Gregorian, assigns a special Preface to the feast of the great Hippolytus. This is the one from the Leonine Sacramentary: *Vere dignum . . . Tibi enim, Domine, festiva solemnitas agitur, tibi dies sacrata celebratur, quam sancti Hippolyti martyris tui sanguis in veritatis tuae testificatione profusus, magnifico nominis tui honore signavit. Per . . .*

Post-Communion: "May the sacraments which we have received in communion save us, O Lord, and strengthen us in the light of thy truth."

The Liturgy on this day is so much concerned with the "light of truth," the "confession of the truth," and the "witnessing to the truth," that it is impossible not to recognize in these phrases an echo of the disputes in which Catholics and schismatics were engaged at Rome during the lifetime of Hippolytus. He, however, learnt from his own experience how precious a thing is the Catholic Faith, which he at length purchased, so to speak, by a glorious martyrdom.

## AUGUST 14

### ST EUSEBIUS, PRIEST AND CONFESSOR

#### *Station "ad titulum Eusebii."*

To-day the Martyrology of St Jerome thus notes the feast: *Eusebii tituli conditoris*, a notice which we have again on October 8: *Romae, depositio Eusebii conditoris tituli sui.*

The *Dominicum Eusebii* is mentioned in two inscriptions of the fourth century, which were discovered in the cemetery of the martyrs Peter and Marcellinus. The founder of the *titulus* was originally buried as a mark of special honour in the papal crypt of Callixtus. Later on, however, his relics together with those of Vincent, one of the deacons of Sixtus II, likewise buried in the *cubiculum* of the Pontiffs, were transferred to the *Dominicum Eusebii*, where they may still be venerated.

A later story has made of Eusebius a martyr in the persecution which the Arian Emperor Constans II and Pope Liberius had together set on foot against the Catholics in Rome. Liturgical tradition, however, contradicts this as being an



idle tale, and consistently attributes to the founder of the *Dominicum Eusebii* the title of simple Confessor.

The Mass is the same as for St Paul the Hermit on January 15.

Collect: "O God, who dost gladden us with the yearly solemnity of blessed Eusebius thy confessor; mercifully grant that, as we this day celebrate his birthday to immortality, so, by following his example, we may draw nigh unto thee."

This is the true object of these ecclesiastical festivals. Otherwise, as St John Chrysostom says, the examples of the saints might become to us a cause of condemnation, if we were merely to praise them and not imitate them.

The other two Collects are as for St Raymund on January 23.

According to the Würzburg List of Gospels, that for to-day should be *Vigilate, quia nescitis*, as on December 11, the feast of St Damasus.

The Gregorian Sacramentary also gives this Preface: *Vere dignum . . . aeterne Deus; et clementiam tuam pronis mentibus implorare, ut per beati Eusebii confessoris tui intercessionem, salutiferam in nostris mentibus firmes devotionem; concedasque ut, sicut te solum credimus Auctorem et veneramur Salvatorem, sic in perpetuum, eius interventu, habeamus adiutorem. Per . . .*







# EUCHOLOGICAL APPENDIX

## ANTIPHONS OF THE GREATER LITANIES

De Ierusalem exeunt reliquiae et salvatio de monte Sion ; propterea protectio erit huic civitati, et salvabitur propter David famulum eius. Alleluia.

The survivors come forth from Jerusalem and those who have escaped from Sion. This city shall therefore be protected and shall be saved through the merits of David the servant of Jehovah. Alleluia.

Ambulate, Sancti, viam quam elegistis ; festinate ad locum qui vobis praeparatus est ; nos in terra canimus, Sanctorum laudes dicimus ; nos sanctos portamus ; in caelis gaudent angeli. Alleluia.

Proceed, O ye Saints, in the way which you have chosen, hasten to the place prepared for you. Whilst on earth we sing and celebrate the praises of the Saints, bearing their relics, the angels in heaven exult. Alleluia.

Cognoscimus, Domine, quia peccavimus ; veniam petimus quam non meremur ; manum tuam porrige lapsis, qui latroni confitenti, paradisi ianuam aperuisti. Alleluia.

We acknowledge, O Lord, that we have sinned, wherefore, although unworthy, we beg for mercy. Stretch forth thy hand to all those who lie prostrate, O thou who didst open the gates of heaven to the penitent thief upon the cross. Alleluia.

Salvator mundi, salva nos omnes. Sancta Dei Genitrix, semper Virgo Maria, ora pro nobis. Precibus quoque Apostolorum Martyrumque omnium et confessorum atque sanctarum Virginum, suppliciter petimus, ut a malis omnibus eruamur, bonisque omnibus nunc et semper perfrui mereamur. Alleluia.

O Saviour of the world, save us all. Holy Mother of God, Mary, immaculate Virgin, pray for us. Through the prayers of the Apostles, of all the Martyrs, of the Confessors, and of the holy Virgins, we humbly pray that, being delivered from all evil, we may rejoice in all blessings now and for ever. Alleluia.



Deprecamur te, Domine, in omni misericordia tua, ut auferatur furor tuus et ira tua a civitate tua ista et de domo sancta tua, quoniam peccavimus. Alleluia.

We implore thy mercy, O Lord, that thy wrath and thine anger may not fall on this thy city, and on thy holy house, for alas we have sinned. Alleluia.

Christe, qui regnas in caelis et sedes ad dexteram Patris et habitas inter Angelos et Archangelos, Thronos et Dominationes; et Apostoli tui te laudant, et Martyres tibi hymnum cantant; Confessores in paradiso voce concordant et dicunt: O Beati omnes qui gloriam Deo dicunt, et habitant cum eo in pace; quia omnes qui propter Deum laboraverunt in terrenis, illos perducis ad caelestia regna. Nos autem oportet te laudare et benedicere, quia nos de terra ad caelos vocare dignatus es. Alleluia.

Thou, O Christ, dost reign in heaven, thou sittest at the right hand of the Father, and dwellest among the Angels, Archangels, Thrones, and Dominations. The Apostles praise thee, the Martyrs sing a hymn to thee. The Confessors in Paradise sing in unison and cry aloud: Blessed are all those who glorify God and dwell in eternal peace with him, for all who for love of God have laboured here on earth have been raised by thee to the heavenly kingdom. It is fitting, therefore, that we praise and bless thee, for thou hast called us out of the world to thy heavenly kingdom. Alleluia.

Domine Rex, Deus Abraham, dona nobis pluviam super faciem terrae ut discat populus iste quia tu es Dominus Deus noster. Numquid est in idolis gentium qui pluat, nisi tu Deus? Non caeli possunt dare pluviam, nisi tu volueris. Tu es Dominus Deus noster, quem expectabamus; dona nobis pluviam.

O King and Lord, O God of Abraham, send thy rain upon the earth that this people may know that thou art the Lord our God. Is there any among the idols of the peoples who can give rain, as thou canst? The heavens cannot yield rain unless thou dost will it. Thou art the Lord our God, upon whom we have waited. Give us rain!

Placet Ierusalem, civitas sancta, ornamento Martyrum decorata, cuius plateae sonant laudes de die in diem.

How beautiful art thou, O Jerusalem, adorned by thy martyrs! Thy streets resound day by day with unending hymns of praise.



Peccavimus, Domine, peccavimus Tibi; parce peccatis nostris et salva nos; qui gubernasti Noe super undas diluvii, exaudi nos; qui Ionam de abyssu revocasti, libera nos; qui Petro mergenti manum porrexisti, auxiliare nobis, Christe Fili Dei.

We have sinned, O Lord, we have sinned against thee, forgive us our sins and save us. Thou who didst guide Noe upon the waters of the deluge, hear us; thou who didst call Jonas out of the abyss, deliver us, thou who didst stretch forth thy hand to Peter when he was sinking, help us, O Christ, Son of God.<sup>1</sup>

(*Ex Antiphonario Romano in Litania Major. P.L., LXXVIII, col. 683 sqq.*)

#### AD PLURES SANCTOS

(*Ex officio Graecorum Sancti Olei.*)

O Salvator, qui velut unguentum incorruptum, effusum in gratia et expurgans mundum existi; compatere, miserere illius qui divina tua fide carnis cicatrices perungit.

O Saviour, who art come into this world as an incorruptible ointment poured forth in thy grace to purify the earth, have pity and mercy on him who in thy divine faith is about to anoint the wounds of his flesh.

Deipara, perpetua Virgo sanctissima; protectrix valida, portus et murus, scala et munimen; miserere, compatere; ad te namque solam recurrit aegrotus.

O Mother of God, ever Virgin and all holy, powerful protector, our refuge, our bulwark, our ladder, our defence, have pity and mercy, for the sick man calls only on thee.

Pura, celebranda, super omnes benigna Domina, oleo divino unctorum miserere, et famulum tuum serva.

O Lady most pure, worthy of every praise, blessed above all, have mercy on those who are anointed with the holy oil and preserve thy servant.

Ut Domini discipulus suscepisti, o iuste Iacobe, Evangelium; ut Martyr, coronam a nullo describendam consecutus

<sup>1</sup> It is superfluous to call attention to the archaic character of these prayers, some of which, as the last, are derived from a Jewish source.



es; ut Frater Domini, auctoritate polles; ut pontifex, ius intercedendi nactus es; interpella Christum Deum, ut animae nostrae salventur.

Thou, O blessed James, as a disciple of the Lord, hast received the Gospel; as a martyr thou hast won a crown which none has words to describe; as a cousin to the Saviour, thou art invested with great authority; as a bishop thou hast the right of mediation. Pray then to Christ our Lord for us, that our souls may be saved.

Verbum Patris, unigenitus Filius, ultimis temporibus ad nos adveniens, Iacobe venerande; primum te dedit Ierosolymorum pastorem et doctorem, et divinorum sacramentorum oeconomum fidelem; hinc omnes, o Apostole, te colimus.

The Word of the Father, the only-begotten Son of God, coming to us in these latter days, O venerable James, established thee as the first pastor and teacher at Jerusalem, and as the faithful steward of the divine Sacraments. Because of this we all venerate thee, O holy Apostle.

In unguentis, Sancte, sacerdos probatus es. Christi namque Evangelium adimplens, beate Nicolae, animam pro populo tuo posuisti, innocentes morte eripuisti, sanctusque propterea effectus es, ut magnus Dei gratiae mystes.

By the oil which drops from thy relics thou art well-known, O holy priest. Fulfilling the Gospel of Christ, O blessed Nicolas, thou didst offer thy life for the people entrusted to thee, thou didst rescue the innocent from death, and wast sanctified on that account as the great minister of God's grace.

Magnum te invenit in periculis defensorem orbis, gentes adversas in fugam vertentem, trophaeis inclite, o Demetri. Ut igitur Liaei elationem repressisti, et in stadio Nestorem animasti, sic, O Sancte, Christum interpella, ut magnam nobis misericordiam elargiatur.

O Demetrius, the whole world has known thy protection in perils; thou hast put the enemy to flight, thou art laden with many trophies. As once thou didst crush the insolence of Liaeus and didst encourage Nestor in the stadium, so now, O Saint, do thou invoke Christ for us, that he may extend the fulness of his mercy towards us.

Trophaeis praeclare, sancte et mediator Panteleemon, misericordem Deum roga, ut peccatorum veniam animabus nostris donet.



O holy Pantaleemon, our protector, illustrious by thy trophies, implore the mercy of God for us, that he may grant to our souls the forgiveness of our sins.

Sancti praetio non conducti, et miraculorum operatores, Cosma et Damiane, animas nostras visitate; ut gratis accepistis, sic et gratis elargiamini.

Cosmas and Damian, you who worked miracles, yet refused all reward, visit our souls, and continue to bestow on us freely that which you freely received from God.

Magnitudinem tuam quis narrare sufficiat, o Virgo Iohannes? miraculis enim scaturis, et curationibus abundas, et pro animabus nostris intercede, ut Theologus et amicus Christi.

Who can depict the dignity, O John, of thy pure soul? Thou dost still work many miracles and perform many cures; intercede for our souls, as the great theologian and friend of Christ.

Intercessio fervens, munimen inexpugnabile; misericordiae fons, mundi refugium, impense clamemus ad te, Deipara Domina. Succurre et a periculis nos eripe, quae sola protectionem velociter praebes.

Let us cry earnestly to thee, O Lady, Mother of God, who art so fervent an intercessor, so sure a protector, a fountain of mercy, and a refuge for all the world. Hasten to succour us and save us from all dangers, O thou who alone dost not delay to give thy help.

(Cf. Martène, *De ant. Eccl. rit.*, I, col. 969 sqq.)

## IN SANCTOS APOSTOLOS

Οἱ ἐν πάσῃ τῇ γῇ μαρτυρήσαντες,  
Καὶ ἐν τοῖς οὐρανοῖς μετοικήσαντες,  
Οἱ τὰ πάθη Χριστοῦ μιμησάμενοι,  
Καὶ τὰ πάθη ἡμῶν ἀφαιρούμενοι  
Ἐνταῦθα σήμερον ἀθροίζονται,  
Πρωτοτόκων δεικνύοντες ἐκκλησίαν,  
Ὡς τῆς ἁνῶ τῶν τύπον ἐπέχουσιν,  
Καὶ Χριστῷ ἐκβοῶσαν· Θεός μου εἰ σύ,  
Διὰ τῆς Θεοτόκου συντήρησον πολυέλεε.

Those who have borne witness to thee throughout the world and have gone to dwell in heaven; those who have



vied with Christ in his sufferings, and have delivered us from pain, are gathered together here to-day, an image of the early Church which reflected the Church in heaven where a hymn is sung in honour of Christ: Thou art my God. Through the merits of the Mother of God protect us, O depth of mercy.

#### IN MARTYRUM LAUDEM

Ὡς, ἀπαρχὰς τῆς φύσεως,  
 Τῷ φυτουργῷ τῆς κτίσεως,  
 Ἡ οἰκουμένη προσφέρω σοι, Κύρια.  
 Τοὺς θεοφόρους μάρτυρας.  
 Ταῖς αὐτῶν ἱκεσίαις,  
 Ἐν εἰρήνῃ βαθεῖα,  
 Τὴν ἐκκλησίαν σου,  
 Τὴν πολιτείαν σου,  
 Διὰ τῆς Θεοτόκου συντήρησον,  
 Πολυέλεε.

As the firstfruits of creation I offer to thee, O maker of the world, the whole earth. Behold the blessed martyrs, by whose intercession do thou preserve in perfect peace thy Church and thine Empire, through the merits of the Mother of God, O thou who art abounding in mercy.

(From the Greek *Pentekostarion* for the κυριακὴ τῶν ἁγίων πάντων.)