

to the saint his sincere repentance, and by his prayers and blessing recovered his health. St. John being visited with his last sickness, foretold his death, and happily slept in the Lord on the 11th of June, 1479. He was glorified by many miracles both before and after his death, beatified by Pope Clement VIII. in 1601, and canonized by Alexander in 1690. Benedict XIII. commanded an office in his honour to be inserted in the Roman Breviary on the 12th of June.

The example of the saints teaches us that there is nothing to be got for virtue in a life of dissipation. Worldly conversation, which turns on vanity and trifling amusements, insensibly takes off the bend of the mind towards virtue, and the constitution of the soul is hereby impaired no less than that of the body is by means destructive of its health. In retirement and by frequent serious consideration, the mind acquires more strength, more extensiveness, and more activity; and is fed with pure truths, and strongly confirmed in good principles. There is nothing more useful or necessary to weaken the impression that sensible objects make upon us. Every good Christian ought from time to time to retire from the world to be alone, and to have regular hours for pious reading and consideration. "Reflection," says St. Bernard, "is the eye of the soul: it lets light and truth into it." The divine wisdom says: *I will lead her into the wilderness, and I will speak to her heart.*(1)

SS. BASILIDES, QUIRINUS OR CYRINUS, NABOR,
AND NAZARIUS, MARTYRS.

SS. GELASIUS and Gregory the Great, in their Sacramentaries, the ancient Roman Calendar published by F. Fronto, and the true Martyrology of Bede, make honourable mention of these four martyrs, who suffered at Rome, and were interred on the Aurelian road. According to the acts of their martyrdom, they were four soldiers in the army of Maxentius, son of Maximian Herculus; and after suffering many torments, were beheaded by the command of Aurelius, prefect of Rome. St. Chrodegang, bishop of Metz, in 756, having procured the relics of several martyrs from Rome, he placed those of St. Gorgonius in the

(1) Osee ii. 14.

abbey of Gorze, four leagues from Metz; those of St. Nazarius in that of Lorch or Lausheim, in the diocese of Worms; and those of St. Nabor in that of St. Hilary on the Moselle, since corruptly called St. Avol's, *i. e.* St. Nabor's in the diocese of Metz. See Paul the deacon, Rabanus Maurus, Notker, &c.

why?

ST. ESKILL, BISHOP AND MARTYR IN SWEDEN.

THIS saint was an Englishman by birth; but so long as the Catholic religion flourished in the northern kingdoms of Europe, was honoured in that part of the universe as one of the most illustrious martyrs of the gospel of Christ. St. Anscharius, archbishop of Bremen, having by his zealous labours laid the foundation of a numerous church in Sweden, was obliged to return into Germany. After his departure the Swedes returned to their paganish superstition, and expelled Simon, whom St. Anscharius had left bishop of that church. The news of this apostacy afflicted extremely the servants of God who inhabited the northern provinces of England, and St. Sigefride, archbishop of York, resolved to undertake a mission in person to rescue so many souls that were running upon the very brink of perdition. Eskill, his kinsman, desirous to have a share in this laborious and dangerous enterprise, accompanied him thither, and behaved in that country with so much zeal and prudence that, at the request of the king and people, St. Sigefride, before his return to England, consecrated him bishop at a place called Nordhan's Kogh. By his zealous labours, which were supported by the example of his apostolic life, the church was exceedingly propagated, till good King Ingon was slain by the infidels, and the wicked Sweno, surnamed the Bloody, placed on the throne. Upon this revolution they revived their most impious and barbarous superstitions, with which they celebrated a most solemn festival at a place called Strengis. St. Eskill's zeal was enkindled at such abominations, and attended by several of his clergy and of the faithful, he hastened to the place of the sacrilegious assembly. There he strongly exhorted the idolaters to renounce their impious worship. Finding them deaf to his remonstrances he addressed his prayers to the Almighty, beseeching Him by some visible sign to give evidence that He alone was the true God