

his death he appointed St. Odilo his coadjutor in 991, not in 998, as D'Acheri, who published the acts of his election, imagined. It is signed by S. Maieul, by Rodolph, king of Burgundy, several archbishops, bishops, secular lords, and one hundred and seventy-seven monks. From that time, the saint gave himself up entirely to the exercises of penance and contemplation. He could not, however, decline, at the earnest request of Hugh Capet, king of France, to undertake a journey to settle a reformation in the abbey of St. Denys, near Paris. He fell sick on the road at the monastery of Souvigni, two leagues from Moulins, and there died on the 11th of May, in 994. His remains were buried there in the church of St. Peter; king Hugh honoured the ceremony with his presence, and enriched his tomb with many presents. An altar was erected there soon after, according to the manner of canonizing saints in those days. He is named in the Roman Martyrology on this day. His life is written by Syrus, a monk of Cluni, who dedicated this work to St. Odilo.

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## MAY XII.

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### SS. NEREUS AND ACHILLEUS, MARTYRS.

THEY were eunuchs or chamberlains belonging to St. Flavia Domitilla, zealous Christians, and with her were banished by Domitian into a little isle on the coast of Terracina, called Pontia. Their acts say, that they were afterward beheaded at Terricina, under Trajan. Their festival was kept at Rome with great solemnity in the sixth age, when St. Gregory the Great spoke on it his twenty-eighth homily, in which he says,

"These saints before whose tomb we are assembled, despised the world and trampled it under their feet, when peace, plenty, riches, and health gave it charms." Their old church in Rome lay in ruins, when Baronius, to whom it gave the title of cardinal, rebuilt it with splendour, and restored to it their relics, which had been removed to the chapel of St. Adrian.

### ST. FLAVIA DOMITILLA, V. M.

SHE was niece to the consul and martyr St. Flavius Clemens, being the daughter of his sister, as Eusebius testifies;<sup>1</sup> consequently she was little niece to the emperor Domitian, who, having put to death her illustrious uncle, banished her for her faith into Pontia. There she lived with her holy eunuchs, Nereus and Achilleus, in exercises of devotion, they all dwelling in separate cells which remained standing three hundred years after. St. Jerom tells us, that St. Paula, going from Rome to Jerusalem took this island in her way, visited them with respect and devotion, and by the sight of them was animated with fervour. That father calls her banishment a long martyrdom. Nerva and Trajan were perhaps unwilling to restore the relations of Domitian with the other exiles whom they recalled. The acts of SS. Nereus and Achilleus say that she returned to Terracina and was there burnt under Trajan, because she refused to sacrifice to idols. Her relics are kept together with those of SS. Nereus and Achilleus; who though her servants here on earth, enjoy an equal honour and condition with her in glory.<sup>2</sup>

1 B. 3. c. 13.

2 The elder Flavia Domitilla was niece to the emperor Domitian, and daughter of his sister Domitilla. This sister he had given in marriage to his cousin german St. Flavius Clemens, son to a brother of Vespasian. After his martyrdom, she was impeached for her faith; and, because she refused to marry another husband, banished to the isle Pandataria, now St. Mary's, near Puzzuolo. She probably returned to Rome, or at least to the continent, after the death of Domitian. She