

on which day the Copts, or Egyptian Christians, keep his festival: the Roman and other Latin Martyrologies mark it on the 27th of March.

The solitude which the Holy Ghost recommends, and which the saints embraced, resembled that of Jesus Christ, being founded on the same motive or principle, having the same exercises and employments, and the same end. Christ was conducted by the Holy Ghost into the desert, and he there spent his time in prayer and fasting. Wo to those whom humour or passion lead into solitude, or who consecrate it not to God by mortification, sighs of penance, and hymns of divine praise. To those who thus sanctify their desert or cell, it will be an anticipated paradise, an abyss of spiritual advantages and comforts, known only to such as have enjoyed them. *The Lord will change the desert into a place of delights, and will make the solitude a paradise, and a garden worthy of himself.*(1) In it only joy and jubilee shall be seen, nothing shall be heard but thanksgiving and praise. It is the dwelling of a terrestrial seraph, whose sole employment is to labour to know, and correct all secret disorders of his own soul, to forget the world, and all objects of vanity which could distract or entangle him; to subdue his senses, to purify the faculties of his soul, and entertain in his heart a constant fire of devotion, by occupying it assiduously on God, Jesus Christ, and heavenly things, and banishing all superfluous desires and thoughts; lastly, to make daily progress in purity of conscience, humility, mortification, recollection, and prayer, and to find all his joy in the most fervent and assiduous adoration, love, and praise of his sovereign Creator and Redeemer.

SAINT RUPERT OR ROBERT, C.

BISHOP OF SALTZBOURG.

HE was, by birth, a Frenchman, and of royal blood; but still more illustrious for his learning, and the extraordinary virtues he practised from his youth. He exercised himself in austere fasting, watching, and other mortifications; was a great lover of chastity and temperance; and so charitable as always to impoverish himself to enrich the poor. His reputation drew

(1) Isa. lxiii.

persons from remote provinces to receive the advice and instructions. He removed all their doubts and scruples, comforted the afflicted, cured the sick, and healed the disorders of souls. So distinguished a merit raised him to the episcopal see of Worms. But that people, being for the most part, idolaters, could not bear the lustre of such sanctity, which condemned their irregularities and superstitions. They beat him with rods, loaded him with all manner of outrages, and expelled him the city. But God prepared for him another harvest. Theodon, duke of Bavaria, hearing of his reputation and miracles, sent messengers to him, earnestly beseeching him to come and preach the gospel to the Baioarians, or Bavarians. This happened two years after his expulsion from Worms; during which interval he had made a journey to Rome. He was received at Ratisbon by Theodon and his court with all possible distinction, in 697, and found the hearts both of the nobles and people docile to the Word of God. The Christian faith had been planted in that country two hundred years before, by St. Severinus, the apostle of Noricum. After his death, heresies and heathenish superstitions had entirely extinguished the light of the gospel. Bagintrude, sister of duke Theodon, being a Christian, disposed her brother and the whole country to receive the faith. Rupert, with the help of other zealous priests, whom he had brought with him, instructed, and, after a general fast, baptized the duke Theodon and the lords and people of the whole country. God confirmed his preaching by many miracles. He converted also to Christianity the neighbouring nations. After Ratisbon, the capital, the second chief seat of his labours was Laureacum, now called Lorch,* where he healed several diseases by prayer, and made many converts. However, it was not Lorch, nor the old Reginum, thence called Regensbourg, now Ratisbon, the capital of all those provinces, that was pitched upon to be the seat of the saint's bishopric, but the old Juvavia, then almost in ruins, since rebuilt and called Saltzbourg. The duke Theodon adorned and enriched it with many magnificent donations, which enabled St. Rupert to found there several rich churches and monasteries. After that prince's death, his son, Theodebert, or Diotper, inheriting his zeal and piety, augmented consider-

* A village on the Danube, in the midway between Ratisbon and Vienna, the capital of Eastern Bavaria, at present Austria.

ably the revenues of this church. St. Rupert took a journey into France to procure a new supply of able labourers, and brought back to Saltzbourg twelve holy missionaries, with his niece St. Erentrude, a virgin consecrated to God, for whom he built a great monastery, called Nunberg, of which she was the first abbess.* St. Rupert laboured several years in this see, and died happily on Easter-day, which fell that year on the 27th of March, after he had said mass and preached; on which day the Roman and other Martyrologies mention him. His principal festival is kept with the greatest solemnity in Austria and Bavaria on the 25th of September, the day of one of the translations of his relics, which are kept in the church under his name in Saltzbourg. Mabillon and Bulteau, upon no slight grounds, think this saint to have lived a whole century later than is commonly supposed, and that he founded the church of Saltzbourg about the year 700. See his life, published by Canisius, Henschenius, and Mabillon, with the notes of the last-mentioned editor.

MARCH XXVIII.

PRISCUS, MALCHUS, AND ALEXANDER,

MARTYRS.

From Ews. Hist. b. 7. c. 12. p. 262.

A.D. 260.

THESE eminent Christians, Priscus, Malchus, and Alexander, led a retired holy life in the country near Cæsarea, in Palestine. During the fury of the persecution under Valerian, they often called to mind the triumphs of the martyrs; secretly reproached themselves with cowardice, as living like soldiers who passed their time in softness and ease, whilst their brethren and fellow-warriors bore all the heat of the battle. They could not long smother these warm sentiments in their breast; but expressed them to one another. "What," said they, "whilst the secre

* The bishop of Saltzbourg was, under Charlemagne, made an archbishop and metropolitan of Bavaria, Austria, and its hereditary territories. He is one of the first ecclesiastical princes of the empire, and is elected by the canons of the cathedral, who are all of noble extraction.