

instant in which a soul is not employed for God, and studies not with her whole heart to please him. Every step, every thought and desire, is a sacrifice of fidelity, obedience, and love offered to him. Even meals, recreation, and rest are sanctified by this intention; and from the religious vows and habitual purpose of the soul of consecrating herself entirely to God in time and eternity, every action, as St. Thomas teaches, renews and contains the fervour and merit of this entire consecration, of which it is a part. In a secular life, a person by regularity in the employment of his time, and fervour in devoting himself to God in all his actions and designs, may in some degree enjoy the same happiness and advantage. This St. Frances perfectly practised, even before she renounced the world. She lived forty years with her husband without ever giving him the least occasion of offence; and by the fervour with which she conversed of heaven, she seemed already to have quitted the earth, and to have made paradise her ordinary dwelling.

#### ST. GREGORY OF NYSSA, B. C.

HE was younger brother to St. Basil the Great; was educated in polite and sacred studies, and married to a virtuous lady. He afterwards renounced the world, and was ordained lector; but was overcome by his violent passion for eloquence to teach rhetoric. St. Gregory Nazianzen wrote to him in the strongest terms, exhorting him to renounce that paltry or ignoble glory, as he elegantly calls it.(1) This letter produced its desired effect. St. Gregory returned to the sacred ministry in the lower functions of the altar: after some time he was called by his brother Basil to assist him in his pastoral duties, and in 372 was chosen bishop of Nyssa, a city of Cappadocia, near the Lesser Armenia. The Arians, who trembled at his name, prevailed with Demosthenes, vicar or deputy-governor of the province to banish him. Upon the death of the Arian emperor, Valens, in 378, St. Gregory was restored to his see by the Emperor Gratian. Our holy prelate was chosen by his colleagues to redress the abuses and dissensions which heresy had introduced in Arabia and Palestine. He assisted at the council of Constantinople in 381, and was always regarded as the centre of the Catholic communion in the East. Those

(1) ἀδόξην εὐδοξίαν, Naz. ep. 4<sup>a</sup>.

prelates only who joined themselves to him, were looked upon as orthodox. He died about the year 400, probably on the 10th of January, on which the Greeks have always kept his festival: the Latins honour his memory on the 9th of March. The high reputation of his learning and virtue procured him the title of Father of the Fathers, as the seventh general council testifies. His sermons are the monuments of his piety; but his great penetration and learning appear more in his polemic works, especially in his twelve books against Eunomius. See his life collected from his works, St. Greg. Nazianzen, Socrates, and Theodoret, by Hermant, Tillemont, t. 9. p. 561. Ceillier, t. 8. p. 200. Dr. Cave imagines, that St. Gregory continued to cohabit with his wife after he was bishop. But Saint Jerom testifies that the custom of the eastern churches did not suffer such a thing. She seems to have lived to see him bishop, and to have died about the year 384; but she professed a state of continency: hence St. Gregory Nazianzen, in his short eulogium of her, says, she rivalled her brothers-in-law who were in the priesthood, and calls her sacred, or one consecrated to God; probably she was a deaconness.

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## APPENDIX

### ON THE

### WRITINGS OF ST. GREGORY OF NYSSA.

ST. GREGORY OF NYSSA wrote many learned works, extant in three volumes in folio, published by the learned Jesuit, Fronto le Duc, at Paris, an. 1615 and 1638. They are eternal monuments of this father's great zeal, piety, and eloquence. Photius commends his diction, as surpassing that of all other rhetoricians, in perspicuity, elegance, and a pleasing turn of expression; and says, that in the beauty and sweetness of his eloquence, and the copiousness of his arguments in his polemical works against Eunomius, he far outwent the rest who handled the same subject. He wrote many commentaries on holy scripture. The first is his *Hexameron*, or book on the six days' work of the creation of the world. It is a supplement to his brother Basil's work on the same subject, who had omitted the obscurer questions, above the reach of the vulgar, to whom he preached. Gregory filled up that deficiency, at the request of many learned men, with an accuracy that became the brother of the great Basil. He shows in this work a great knowledge of philosophy. He finishes it by saying, the widow that offered her two mites did not hinder the magnificent presents of the rich; nor did they who offered skins, wood, and goats' hair towards the tabernacle, hinder those who could give gold, silver and precious stones. "I shall be happy," says