

1327. Some postpone his death to the decline of that century, and think he went into Italy only in 1348, when historians mention that a pestilence made dreadful havoc in that country. Many cities have been speedily delivered from the plague by imploring his intercession, in particular that of Constance during the general council held there in 1414. His body was translated from Montpellier to Venice in 1485, where it is kept with great honour in a beautiful church; but certain portions of his relics are shown at Rome, Arles, and many other places. See Pinius the Bollandist, t. 3. Augusti, p. 380. F. Berthier, the last continuator of F. Longueval's *Hist. de l'Eglise de France*, t. 13, ad an. 1327, and the life of St. Roch by Maldura, translated into French by D'Andilly. Also Pagi the Younger. Bened. XIV. &c.

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## AUGUST XVII.

### ST. MAMAS, M.

From the panegyrics composed in his honour by St. Basil, hom. 26, and St. Gregory Nazianzen, Or. 43. No use is made of the modern Greek acts of his martyrdom.

### ABOUT THE YEAR 275.

St. MAMAS is ranked by the Greeks among the great martyrs. His martyrdom is placed under Aurelian. That prince was a Scythian, a native of Dacia or Moesia, and upon the death of Claudius II. in 270, was chosen emperor by the army at Sirmium, and his election was confirmed by the unwilling senate. Could the majesty of the Roman name be reduced to a meaner slavery than that of obeying any slave or barbarian whom the fortune of war had advanced in the army, and on whom it pleased the soldiery to bestow the empire? Aurelian was a good soldier, bold, enterprising, and severe in military discipline. Being raised to the imperial throne, he discovered his inclination to cruelty by putting to death many senators upon the slightest pretences, and was insolent, haughty, and proud, excessively fond of magnificence, pomp, jewels, and gold. Aurelius Victor says he was the first among the Roman emperors who wore a diadem. He was author of the ninth persecution

raised against the Christians. To this he was excited in an expedition he made into Asia.

Zenobia, queen of the East, by the concession of Gallien, was mistress of large dominions, the reward of her and her late husband Odenatus's valour in bravely repulsing the Persians. Aurelian determined to divest her of her kingdom; but she defended herself by the counsels of Longinus, the most judicious critic and rhetorician, who had been her preceptor and counsellor. Aurelian defeated her armies, destroyed Palmyra in Syria, the capital city of her kingdom, in 273, took her and Longinus prisoners, basely put the latter to death, and led her in triumph. He indeed, spared her life, and gave her very great estates in Italy, and she lived at Rome in great dignity many years till her death. Zenobia had favoured the Christians in the East; and, though none of them had taken up arms against Aurelian, being returned to Rome from this war, he published most bloody edicts against them in 275, but was himself cut off by a conspiracy in Thrace, as he was marching at the head of his army against the Persians, in April the same year. Lactantius says, (1) that by his persecution he drew down the divine displeasure on himself; and he lived not long enough to to execute what he had designed, ending his days in the beginning of his rage. Nevertheless St. Austin (2) and others mention his bloody persecution, and the calendars testify that many suffered in it. (3) Among these none is more famous than St. Mamas. St. Basil and St. Gregory Nazianzen inform us that he was a poor shepherd's boy at Cæsarea in Cappadocia, who, seeking from his infancy the kingdom of God with his whole heart, distinguished himself by his extraordinary fervour in the divine service. Being apprehended by the persecutors about the year 274 or 275, he suffered the most cruel torments with a holy joy, and attained in his youth a glorious crown of martyrdom. Sozomen (4) and St. Gregory Nazianzen (5) tell us, that Julian the Apostate and his brother Gallus, being educated at Cæsarea, diverted themselves, when children, in building churches to the martyrs, particularly one to St. Mamas; but

(1) De Mort. Persec. c. 6.

(2) L. 18, de Civ. c. 52, &c.

(3) See Berti Diss. Chronol. t. 2, p. 267.

(4) Hist. l. 5, c. 2.

(5) Or. in 3, Julian.

that while Gallus's part advanced, that of Julian fell down again every day.

Every Christian ought to rejoice exceedingly, that, how mean soever his condition may be as to the world, an eternal kingdom, compared to which all the sceptres of the earth are mere shadows and dust, is offered him by God, and that it is in his power, through the divine grace, to obtain it; for heaven is justly called in the holy scriptures a kingdom, and all its glorious inhabitants are truly great kings, God communicating to every one of them a full partnership of that honour, in an entire possession of overflowing joy and unspeakable pleasure, of all riches, honour, power, and liberty of doing and commanding according to their own will, which is in all things subject and conformable to the divine. Our faith must be exceedingly weak if we do not, with the saints, offer violence, and strain every sinew to make sure our election; if we do not find our joy in all sufferings and disgraces here, by which we may purchase an eternal weight of glory; and if we do not scorn from our hearts this little point of the earth, with all its empty and false enjoyments and promises, making no other use of its goods than as steps to conduct us to God's immense and immortal kingdom, framed by his almighty hand to display his infinite power, munificence, love, and goodness in favour of his faithful chosen servants to all eternity.

#### SS. LIBERATUS, ABBOT, AND SIX MONKS, MM.

HENERIC, the Arian Vandal king in Africa, in the seventh year of his reign, published fresh edicts against the Catholics, and ordered their monasteries to be every where demolished. Seven monks who lived in a monastery near Capsa, in the province of Byzacena, were at that time summoned to Carthage. Their names were Liberatus the Abbot, Boniface deacon, Servus and Rusticus subdeacons, Rogatus Septimus, and Maximus, monks. They were first tempted with great promises; but answered, "One faith, one Lord, and one baptism. As to our bodies, do with them what you please, and keep to yourselves those riches which you promise us, and which will shortly perish." As they remained constant in the belief of the Trinity, and of one baptism, they were loaded with irons, and thrown