

golden altar on the three last days of Holy Week, when the emperor, court, army, clergy, and others went to that church at different hours, to kiss that sacred wood. (1) The festival of St. Adamnan is kept with great solemnity in many churches in Ireland, of which he is titular patron, and in the whole diocese of Raphoe, of which he was a native. The abbatial church of Raphoe was changed into a cathedral soon after, when St. Eunan was consecrated the first bishop: of whom Sir James Ware could not find any further particulars. See Ware, p. 270, Colgan in MSS. ad 23 Sept: Suysken, t. 6, Sept. p. 640.

SEPTEMBER XXIV.

ST. GERARD, BISHOP OF CHONAD, M.

From his exact life in Surius, Bonfinius, Hist. Hung. Dec. 2, l. 1, 2.—
 Fleury, t. 9. Gowget Mezangui and Roussel, Vies des Saints, 1730.
 Stilting, t. 6, Sept. p. 713. Mabillon, Act. Ben. sæc. 6, par. 1, p. 628.

A. D. 1046.

ST. GERARD, the apostle of a large district in Hungary, was a Venetian, and born about the beginning of the eleventh century. He renounced early the enjoyments of the world, forsaking family and estate to consecrate himself to the service of God in a monastery. By taking up the yoke of our Lord from his youth he found it light, and bore it with constancy and joy. Walking always in the presence of God, and nourishing in his heart a spirit of tender devotion by assiduous holy meditation and prayer, he was careful that his studies should never extinguish or impair it, or bring any prejudice to the humility and simplicity by which he studied daily to advance in Christian perfection. After some years, with the leave of his superiors, he undertook a pilgrimage to the holy sepulchre at Jerusalem. Passing through Hungary, he became known to the holy king St. Stephen, who was wonderfully taken with his sincere piety, and with great earnestness persuaded him that God had only inspired him with the design of that pilgrimage, that he might assist, by his labours, the souls of so many in that country, who

(1) See Mabillon, t. 4. Act. Ord. Bened. p. 456. Bo. Tanner, de Scriptor. p. 5.

were perishing in their infidelity. Gerard, however, would by no means consent to stay at court, but built a little hermitage at Beel, where he passed seven years with one companion called Maur, in the constant practice of fasting and prayer. The king having settled the peace of his kingdom, drew Gerard out of his solitude, and the saint preached the gospel with wonderful success. Not long after, the good prince nominated him to the episcopal see of Chonad or Chzonad, a city eight leagues from Temeswar. Gerard considered nothing in this dignity but labours, crosses, and the hopes of martyrdom. The greater part of the people were infidels, those who bore the name of Christians in this diocese were ignorant, brutish, and savage. Two-thirds of the inhabitants of the city of Chonad were idolaters; yet the saint, in less than a year, made them all Christians. His labours were crowned with almost equal success in all the other parts of the diocese. The fatigues which he underwent were excessive, and the patience with which he bore all kinds of affronts was invincible. He commonly travelled on foot, but sometimes in a waggon: he always read or meditated on the road. He regulated everywhere all things that belonged to the divine service with the utmost care, and was solicitous that the least exterior ceremonies should be performed with great exactness and decency, and accompanied with a sincere spirit of religion. To this purpose he used to say, that men, especially the grosser part, (which is always the more numerous,) love to be helped in their devotion by the aid of their senses.

The example of our saint had a more powerful influence over the minds of the people than the most moving discourses. He was humble, modest, mortified in all his senses, and seemed to have perfectly subdued all his passions. This victory he gained by a strict watchfulness over himself. Once finding a sudden motion to anger rising in his breast, he immediately imposed upon himself a severe penance, asked pardon of the person who had injured him, and heaped upon him great favours. After spending the day in his apostolic labours, he employed part of the night in devotion, and sometimes in cutting down wood and other such actions for the service of the poor. All distressed persons he took under his particular care, and treated the sick with uncommon tenderness. He embraced lepers and persons

afflicted with other loathsome diseases with the greatest joy and affection; often laid them in his own bed, and had their sores dressed in his own chamber. Such was his love of retirement, that he caused several small hermitages or cells to be built near the towns in the different parts of his diocese, and in these he used to take up his lodging wherever he came in his travels about his diocese, avoiding to lie in cities, that, under the pretence of reposing himself in these solitary huts, he might indulge the heavenly pleasures of prayer and holy contemplation; which gave him fresh vigour in the discharge of his pastoral functions. He wore a rough hair shirt next his skin, and over it a coarse woollen coat.

The holy king St. Stephen seconded the zeal of the good bishop as long as he lived. But that prince's nephew and successor Peter, a debauched and cruel prince, declared himself the persecutor of our saint: but was expelled by his own subjects in 1042, and Abas, a nobleman of a savage disposition, was placed on the throne. This tyrant soon gave the people reason to repent of their choice, putting to death all those noblemen whom he suspected not to have been in his interest. St. Stephen had established a custom, that the crown should be presented to the king by some bishop on all great festivals. Abas gave notice to St. Gerard to come to court to perform that ceremony. The saint, regarding the exclusion of Peter as irregular, refused to pay the usurper that compliment, and foretold him that if he persisted in his crime, God would soon put an end both to his life and reign. Other prelates, however, gave him the crown; but, two years after, the very persons who had placed him on the throne turned their arms against him, treated him as a rebel, and cut off his head on a scaffold. Peter was recalled, but two years after banished a second time. The crown was then offered to Andrew, son of Ladislas, cousin-german to St. Stephen, upon condition that he should restore idolatry, and extirpate the Christian religion. The ambitious prince made his army that promise. Hereupon Gerard and three other bishops set out for Alba Regalis, in order to divert the new king from this sacrilegious engagement.

When the four bishops were arrived at Giod near the Danube, St. Gerard, after celebrating mass, said to his companions: "We

shall all suffer martyrdom to-day, except the bishop of Benetha.' They were advanced a little further, and going to cross the Danube, when they were set upon by a party of soldiers, under the command of Duke Vatha, the most obstinate patron of idolatry, and the implacable enemy of the memory of St. Stephen. They attacked St. Gerard first with a shower of stones, and, exasperated at his meekness and patience, overturned his chariot, and dragged him on the ground. Whilst in their hands the saint raised himself on his knees, and prayed with the proto-martyr St. Stephen: "Lord, lay not this to their charge; for they know not what they do." He had scarcely spoken these words when he was run through the body with a lance, and expired in a few minutes. Two of the other bishops, named Bezterd and Buld, shared the glory of martyrdom with him: but the new king coming up, rescued the fourth bishop out of the hands of the murderers. This prince afterwards repressed idolatry, was successful in his wars against the Germans who invaded his dominions, and reigned with glory. St. Gerard's martyrdom happened on the 24th of September, 1046. His body was first interred in a church of our Lady near the place where he suffered; but soon after removed to the cathedral of Chonad. He was declared a martyr by the pope, and his remains were taken up, and put in a rich shrine in the reign of St. Ladislas. At length the republic of Venice, by repeated importunate entreaties, obtained his relics of the king of Hungary, and with great solemnity translated them to their metropolis, where they are venerated in the church of our Lady of Murano.

The good pastor refuses no labour, and declines no danger for the good of souls. If the soil where his lot falls be barren, and he plants and waters without increase, he never loses patience, but redoubles his earnestness in his prayers and labours. He is equally secure of his own reward if he perseveres to the end; and can say to God, as St. Bernard remarks: "Thou, O Lord, wilt not less reward my pains, if I shall be found faithful to the end. Zeal and tender charity give him fresh vigour, and draw floods of tears from his eyes for the souls which perish, and for their contempt of the infinite and gracious Lord of all things. Yet his courage is never damped, nor does he ever repine or disquiet himself. He is not authorized to curse the

fig-tree which produces no fruit, but continues to dig about it, and to dung the earth, waiting to the end, repaying all injuries with kindness and prayers, and never weary with renewing his endeavours. Impatience and uneasiness in pastors never spring from zeal or charity; but from self-love, which seeks to please itself in the success of what it undertakes. The more deceitful this evil principle is, and the more difficult to be discovered, the more careful must it be watched against. All sourness, discouragement, vexation, and disgust of mind are infallible signs that a mixture of this evil debases our intention. The pastor must imitate the treasures of God's patience, goodness, and long-suffering. He must never abandon any sinner to whom God, the offended party, still offers mercy.

ST. GERMER OR GEREMAR, ABBOT

His parents, Rigobert and Aga, were of the prime nobility in the territory of Beauvais. He was born at their castle in the village Warandra, in the reign of King Clotaire; married a pious lady named Domana, and whilst yet a layman, built a monastery in honour of St. Peter, called the Island, which was afterwards destroyed by the Normans, and is now an estate belonging to St. Germer's abbey. Germer, by the advice of St. Owen, made his monastic profession in the monastery of Pental, in the territory of Rouen. He was soon after chosen abbot, but finding the monks averse to regularity he left the abbacy, and led an anchoretical life in a cave near the river Seine five years and six months. His only son Aimalbert, dying, was buried in St. Peter's monastery. Germer, with the estate which reverted to him from his son's death, founded the monastery of Fley or Flaviacum, now St. Germer's, five leagues from Beauvais towards Rouen, in which he assembled a community of fervent monks, in 655. Having governed this house three years and a half, he happily died on the 24th of September, 658. His body was interred in the church of his abbey, which soon after took his name. His relics, for fear of the Norman plunderers, were conveyed secretly to Beauvais, where they are still kept in the cathedral, except the bones of one arm, which have been given back to St. Germer's. In 1643 Aug. Potier, bishop of Beauvais, placed monks of the congregation of St.