

St. Barnabas, the more perfectly to disengage his affections from all earthly things, set to the primitive church an heroic example, by divesting himself of all his large possessions in favour of the poor: riches are a gift of God to be received with thankfulness, and to be well employed. But so difficult and dangerous is their stewardship; so rare a grace is it for a man to possess them and not find his affections entangled, and his heart wounded by them, that many heroic souls have chosen, with St. Barnabas, to forsake all things, the more easily to follow Christ in perfect nakedness of heart. Those who are favoured with them must employ them in good offices, and in relieving the indigent, not dissipate them in luxury, or make them the fuel of their passions: they must still dare to be poor; must be disengaged in their affections; and must not be uneasy or disturbed if their money takes its flight, being persuaded that the loss of worldly treasures deprives them of nothing they can properly call their own.

ST. TOCHUMRA, VIRGIN IN IRELAND,

WAS titular saint of the parish of Tochumracht, in the diocese of Fenabore, otherwise called Killfenora; the cathedral of which bears the name of St. Fachnan, who seems to have been the first bishop of this see, which is situated in Munster; but since the year 1660 is annexed to the archbishopric of Tuam.

ANOTHER ST. TOCHUMRA, V.,

IN the diocese of Kilmore, was also much honoured in Ireland on this day, and invoked by women in labour. Colgan could discover no Acts, &c.

JUNE XII.

ST. JOHN OF SAHAGUN, C.

HERMIT OF THE ORDER OF ST. AUGUSTINE.

From his life, contained in nine letters of blessed John of Seville, written soon after his death, extant in *Acta Sanct.* with the notes of F. Papebroke, Junij, t. 2, p. 616. Also *La Vie de S. Jean Gonzalez ou de S. Facond*, par P. Nic. Robine, Paris, 1692, and Nævius, in his *Ere-mus Augustiniana*, p. 201.

A. D. 1479.

ST. JOHN, son of John Gonzalez of Castrillo, was a native of

Sahagun, or St. Fagondez, in the kingdom of Leon in Spain. He went through the course of his studies in the schools of the Benedictin monks of St. Fagondez, and no sooner had he received the ecclesiastical tonsure than his father procured him a small benefice. The bishop of Burgos took him shortly after into his family and preferred him to a canonry, though the abbot of St. Fagondez had already put him in possession of three small benefices. The pretence for this plurality was the incompetency of the livings for the maintenance of the incumbent. John had lived always blameless in his morals, and his life had an appearance of virtue above the general bulk of Christians. But the divine grace opening his eyes, he at length discovered many errors in his conduct, and set himself seriously to reform them. The first step he took was to extort, by repeated importunity, leave from the bishop of Burgos to resign his church livings, reserving only one chapel in which he every day said mass, often preached, and catechized the ignorant. He lived in the strictest evangelical poverty and mortification, retired from the world, and began by serious consideration to take a view of himself, and of the state of his soul. He learned by experience that pious reading, meditation and prayer afford a purer joy than all the train of worldly pleasures can give. Having at length procured his bishop's consent, he repaired to Salamanca, where he applied himself during four years to the study of theology. After which term he attended the care of souls in the parish church of St. Sebastian, and frequently preached with wonderful zeal and fruit. In the meantime he lived with a virtuous canon, and inured himself to the practice of great austerities during nine years, till he was obliged to be cut for the stone. As soon as he had recovered his health after the operation, he took the religious habit among the hermits of St. Austin in Salamanca, in 1463. In his novitiate he appeared already a perfect master in a spiritual life, and made his solemn vows on the 28th of August, in 1464. He so perfectly attained the spirit of his rule, that no one was more mortified, more obedient, more humble, or more disengaged from creatures than he appeared to be in all his actions. Being commanded to employ his talents in preaching, he delivered from the pulpit the word of God with

such energy and force, as discovered how much his understanding was enlightened, and his heart filled with the holy maxims of the gospel. By his pathetic sermons and private exhortations he introduced an entire reformation of manners throughout the whole city, and extinguished the most inveterate feuds and animosities, which, especially among the noblemen, produced daily bad effects; for, by the spirit of meekness with which he was endued, he had a particular talent in reconciling enemies, and in appeasing dissensions. Those whom he found full of bitterness against their neighbour he inspired with the love of peace and charity, and taught them to seek no other revenge than that of forgiving all injuries, and of overcoming enmity by benefits.

Being appointed master of the novices, he discharged that important office with extraordinary prudence and sweetness. In 1471 he was chosen prior of his convent, which was a house famous for the severity of its discipline, and for maintaining the true spirit of the Order. The saint was sensible that all advice and precepts are ineffectual when they are not supported by example, and thought it his duty to conduct his religious in the path of perfect virtue more by example than by authority. The high opinion which every one had of his sanctity contributed to give the greatest weight to his words and example. Our saint, by his purity of heart and eminent spirit of prayer, was prepared to receive of God a singular prudence and gift of discerning spirits. He was favoured with an extraordinary light in penetrating the recesses of the hearts of penitents. He heard the confessions of all who presented themselves; but was severe in deferring absolution to habitual sinners, and to ecclesiastics who did not live according to the spirit of their most holy profession. He said mass with a devotion that exceedingly edified all who were present. Without respect of persons, he repressed vice in the great ones with a liberty which often drew upon him severe persecutions. A certain duke, whom he had exasperated by his charitable exhortations to forbear provoking heaven by the oppression of his vassals, sent two assassins to murder him; but at the sight of the holy man, the ruffians were struck with remorse, and casting themselves at his feet, begged pardon for their crime. The duke falling sick, humbly testified

to the saint his sincere repentance, and by his prayers and blessing recovered his health. St. John being visited with his last sickness, foretold his death, and happily slept in the Lord on the 11th of June, 1479. He was glorified by many miracles both before and after his death, beatified by Pope Clement VIII. in 1601, and canonized by Alexander in 1690. Benedict XIII. commanded an office in his honour to be inserted in the Roman Breviary on the 12th of June.

The example of the saints teaches us that there is nothing to be got for virtue in a life of dissipation. Worldly conversation, which turns on vanity and trifling amusements, insensibly takes off the bend of the mind towards virtue, and the constitution of the soul is hereby impaired no less than that of the body is by means destructive of its health. In retirement and by frequent serious consideration, the mind acquires more strength, more extensiveness, and more activity; and is fed with pure truths, and strongly confirmed in good principles. There is nothing more useful or necessary to weaken the impression that sensible objects make upon us. Every good Christian ought from time to time to retire from the world to be alone, and to have regular hours for pious reading and consideration. "Reflection," says St. Bernard, "is the eye of the soul: it lets light and truth into it." The divine wisdom says: *I will lead her into the wilderness, and I will speak to her heart.*(1)

SS. BASILIDES, QUIRINUS OR CYRINUS, NABOR,
AND NAZARIUS, MARTYRS.

SS. GELASIUS and Gregory the Great, in their Sacramentaries, the ancient Roman Calendar published by F. Fronto, and the true Martyrology of Bede, make honourable mention of these four martyrs, who suffered at Rome, and were interred on the Aurelian road. According to the acts of their martyrdom, they were four soldiers in the army of Maxentius, son of Maximian Herculus; and after suffering many torments, were beheaded by the command of Aurelius, prefect of Rome. St. Chrodegang, bishop of Metz, in 756, having procured the relics of several martyrs from Rome, he placed those of St. Gorgonius in the

(1) Osee ii. 14.