

brought into Palestine. Some years after, it was removed to Constantinople, and lastly to Rome.

The seventh general council (1) proves the use of pious pictures from the head of this holy martyr, and his miraculous image, then kept at Rome with great veneration: where it is still preserved in the church belonging to the monastery of our Lady ad Aquas Sylvias, which now bears the name of SS. Vincent and Anastasius. (2) The rest of his relics are deposited in the holy chapel ad Scalas Sanctas, near St. John Lateran. See the history of many miracles wrought by them in Bollandus. St. Anastasius foretold the speedy fall of the tyrant Chosroës: and ten days after his martyrdom the emperor Heraclius entered Persia.

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## JANUARY XXIII.

### ST. RAYMUND, OF PENNAFORT, C.

From the bull of his canonization, by Clement VIII. in 1601, and his life, written by several Spanish, Italian, and French authors. See Fleury, b. 78. n. 55. 64. and chiefly Touron, *Hommes Illustres de l'Ordre de S. Domin.* T. 1. p. 1.

A.D. 1275.

THE house of Pegnafort, or, as it is pronounced, Pennafort, was descended from the counts of Barcelona, and nearly allied to the kings of Arragon. Raymund was born in 1175, at Pennafort, a castle in Catalonia, which in the fifteenth century was changed into a convent of the order of St. Dominick. Such was his rapid progress in his studies, that at the age of twenty he taught philosophy at Barcelona, which he did gratis, and with so great reputation, that he began then to be consulted by the ablest masters. His principal care was to instil into his scholars the most perfect maxims of solid piety and devotion, to compose all differences among the citizens, and to relieve the distressed. He was about thirty years of age when he went to Bologna in Italy, to perfect himself in the study of the canon and civil law, commenced Doctor in that faculty, and taught with the same disinterestedness and charity as he had done in his own country. In 1219 Berengarius, bishop of Barcelona, who had been at Rome,

(1) Act 4.

(2) Mabill. Iter Ital. p. 141.

took Raymund home with him, to the great regret of the university and senate of Bologna; and, not content with giving him a canonry in his church, made him his archdeacon, grand vicar, and official. He was a perfect model to the clergy, by his innocence, zeal, devotion and boundless liberalities to the poor, whom he called his creditors. In 1222 he took the religious habit of St. Dominick at Barcelona, eight months after the death of the holy founder, and in the forty-seventh year of his age. No person was ever seen among the young novices more humble, more obedient, or more fervent. To imitate the obedience of a Man-God, who reduced himself to a state of subjection to his own creatures, to teach us the dangers and deep wound of self-will, and to point out to us the remedy, the saint would depend absolutely on the lights of his director in all things. And it was upon the most perfect self-denial that he laid the foundation of that high sanctity which he made the object of his most earnest desires. The grace of prayer perfected the work which mortification had begun. In a spirit of compunction he begged of his superiors that they would enjoin him some severe penance, to expiate the vain satisfaction and complacency which he said he had sometimes taken in teaching. They indeed imposed on him a penance, but not such a one as he expected. It was to write a collection of cases of conscience for the instruction and convenience of confessors and moralists. This produced his *Sum*, the first work of that kind. Had his method and decisions been better followed by some later authors of the like works, the holy maxims of Christian morality had been treated with more respect by some moderns, than they have been, to our grief and confusion.

Raymund joined to the exercises of his solitude the functions of an apostolical life, by labouring without intermission in preaching, instructing, hearing confessions with wonderful fruit, and converting heretics, Jews, and Moors. Among his penitents were James, king of Arragon, and St. Peter Nolasco, with whom he concerted the foundation of the Order of the B. Virgin of mercy for the redemption of captives. James, the young king of Arragon, had married Eleonora of Castile within the prohibited degrees, without a dispensation. A legate was sent by Pope Gregory IX. to examine and judge the case. In a council of bishops of the two kingdoms, held at Tarragon, he declared the marriage null, but that their son, Don Alphonso should be reputed lawfully born, and heir to his father's crown. The king had taken his confessor

with him to the council, and the cardinal legate was so charmed with his talents and virtue, that he associated him in his legation, and gave him a commission to preach the holy war against the Moors. The servant of God acquitted himself of that function with so much prudence, zeal, and charity, that he sowed the seeds of the total overthrow of those infidels in Spain. His labours were no less successful in the reformation of the manners of the Christians, detained in servitude under the Moors, which were extremely corrupted by their long slavery or commerce with these infidels. Raymund showed them, by words full of heavenly unction and fire, that, to triumph over their bodily, they must first conquer their spiritual, enemies, and subdue sin in themselves, which made God their enemy. Inculcating these and the like spiritual lessons, he ran over Catalonia, Arragon, Castile, and other countries. So general a change was wrought hereby in the manners of the people, as seemed incredible to all but those who were witnesses of it. By their conversion the anger of God was appeased, and the arms of the faithful became terrible to their enemies. The kings of Castile and Leon freed many places from the Moorish yoke. Don James, king of Arragon, drove them out of the islands of Majorca and Minorca, and soon after, in 1237, out of the whole kingdom of Valentia. Pope Gregory IX. having called St. Raymund to Rome in 1230, nominated him his chaplain, (which was the title of the Auditor of the causes of the apostolic palace,) as also grand penitentiary. He made him likewise his own confessarius, and in difficult affairs came to no decision but by his advice. The saint still reserved himself for the poor, and was so solicitous for them that his Holiness called him their father. He enjoined the pope, for a penance, to receive, hear, and expedite immediately all petitions presented by them. The pope, who was well versed in the canon law, ordered the saint to gather into one body all the scattered decrees of popes and councils, since the collection made by Gratian in 1150. Raymund compiled this work in three years, in five books, commonly called the Decretals, which the same Pope Gregory confirmed in 1234. It is looked upon as the best finished part of the body of the canon law; on which account the canonists have usually chosen it for the texts of their comments. | In 1235, the pope named St. Raymund to the archbishopric of Tarragon, the capital of Arragon: the humble religious man was not able to avert the storm, as he called it, by tears and entreaties; but at

length fell sick through anxiety and fear. To restore him to his health, his Holiness was obliged to consent to excuse him, but required that he should recommend a proper person. The saint named a pious and learned canon of Gironne. He refused other dignities with the like constancy.

For the recovery of his health he returned to his native country, and was received with as much joy, as if the safety of the whole kingdom, and of every particular person, had depended on his presence. Being restored again to his dear solitude at Barcelona, he continued his former exercises of contemplation, preaching, and administering the sacrament of penance. Except on Sundays, he never took more than one very small refection in the day. Amidst honours and applause he was ever little in his own eyes: he appeared in the schools like a scholar, and in his convent begged the superior to instruct him in the rules of religious perfection, with the humility and docility of a novice. Whether he sung the divine praises with his brethren, or prayed alone in his cell, or some corner of the church, he poured forth an abundance of tears; and often was not able to contain within himself the ardour of his soul. His mildness and sweetness were unalterable. The incredible number of conversions, of which he was the instrument, is known only to Him who, by his grace, was the author of them. He was employed frequently in most important commissions, both by the holy see and by the king. But he was thunderstruck by the arrival of four deputies from the general chapter of his order at Bologna, in 1238, with the news that he was chosen third general, Jordan of Saxony being lately dead. He wept and entreated, but at length acquiesced in obedience. He made the visitation of his order on foot, without discontinuing any of his penitential austerities, or rather exercises. He instilled into his spiritual children a love of regularity, solitude, mortification, prayer, sacred studies, and the apostolical functions, especially preaching. He reduced the constitutions of his order into a clearer method, with notes on the doubtful passages. This his code of rules was approved in three general chapters. In one held at Paris in 1239, he procured the establishment of this regulation, that a voluntary demission of a superior, founded upon just reasons, should be accepted. This he contrived in his own favour: for, to the extreme regret of the order, he in the year following resigned the generalship, which he had held only two years. He alleged for his reason his age of sixty-five years.

Rejoicing to see himself again a private religious man, he applied himself with fresh vigour to the exercises and functions of an apostolic life, especially the conversion of the Saracens. Having this end in view, he engaged St. Thomas to write his work 'Against the Gentiles,' procured the Arabic and Hebrew tongues to be taught in several convents of his order; and erected convents, one at Tunis, and another at Murcia, among the Moors. In 1256 he wrote to his general, that ten thousand Saracens had received baptism. King James took him into the island of Majorca. The saint embraced that opportunity of cultivating that infant church. This prince was an accomplished soldier and statesman, and a sincere lover of religion, but his great qualities were sullied by a base passion for women. He received the admonitions of the saint with respect, and promised amendment of life, and a faithful compliance with the saint's injunctions in every particular; but without effect. St. Raymund upon discovering that he entertained a lady at his court, with whom he was suspected to have criminal conversation, made the strongest instances to have her dismissed, which the king promised should be done, but postponed the execution. The saint, dissatisfied with the delay, begged leave to retire to his convent at Barcelona. The king not only refused him leave, but threatened to punish with death any person that should undertake to convey him out of the island. The saint, full of confidence in God, said to his companion, "A king of the earth endeavours to deprive us of the means of retiring; but the king of heaven will supply them." He then walked boldly to the waters, spread his cloak upon them, tied up one corner of it to a staff for a sail, and having made the sign of the cross, stepped upon it without fear, whilst his timorous companion stood trembling and wondering on the shore. On this new kind of vessel the saint was wafted with such rapidity, that in six hours he reached the harbour of Barcelona, sixty leagues distant from Majorca. Those who saw him arrive in this manner met him with acclamations. But he gathering up his cloak dry, put it on, stole through the crowd, and entered his monastery. A chapel and a tower, built on the place where he landed, have transmitted the memory of this miracle to posterity. This relation is taken from the bull of his canonization, and the earliest historians of his life. The king became a sincere convert, and governed his conscience, and even his kingdoms, by the advice of St. Raymund from that time till

the death of the saint. The holy man prepared himself for his passage to eternity, by employing days and nights in penance and prayer. During his last illness, Alphonsus, king of Castile, with his queen, sons, and brother; and James, king of Arragon, with his court, visited him, and received his last benediction. He armed himself with the last sacraments; and, in languishing sighs of divine love, gave up his soul to God, on the 6th of January, in the year 1275, and the hundredth of his age. The two kings, with all the princes and princesses of their royal families, honoured his funeral with their presence: but his tomb was rendered far more illustrious by miracles. Several are recorded in the bull of his canonization, published by Clement VIII. in 1601. Bollandus has filled fifteen pages in folio with an account of them. His office is fixed by Clement X. the 23rd of January.

The saints first learned in solitude to die to the world and themselves, to put on the spirit of Christ, and ground themselves in a habit of recollection and a relish only for heavenly things, before they entered upon the exterior functions even of a spiritual ministry. Amidst these weighty employments, not content with reserving always the time and means of frequent retirement for conversing with God and themselves, in their exterior functions by raising their minds to heaven with holy sighs and desires, they made all their actions in some measure an uninterrupted prayer and exercise of divine love and praise. St. Bonaventure reckons it among the general exercises of every religious or spiritual man, (1) "That he keep his mind always raised, at least virtually, to God: hence, whensoever a servant of God has been distracted from attending to him for ever so short a space, he grieves and is afflicted, as if he was fallen into some misfortune, by having been deprived of the presence of such a friend who never forgets us. Seeing that our supreme felicity and glory consists in the eternal vision of God, the constant remembrance of him is a kind of imitation of that happy state: *this* is the reward, *that* the virtue which entitles us to it. Till we are admitted to his presence, let us in our exile always bear him in mind; every one will behold him in heaven with so much the greater joy, and so much the more perfectly, as he shall more assiduously and more devoutly have remembered him on earth. Nor is it only in our repose, but also in the midst of our employments,

(1) S. Bonav. de Profectu Religios. l. 2. c. 20. p. 604.

that we ought to have him present to our minds, in imitation of the holy angels, who, when they are sent to attend on us, so acquit themselves of the functions of this exterior ministry as never to be drawn from their interior attention to God. As much as the heavens exceed the earth, so much larger is the field of spiritual meditation than that of all terrestrial concerns."

### ST. JOHN THE ALMONER, C.

#### PATRIARCH OF ALEXANDRIA.

HE received his surname from his profuse almsdeeds: was nobly descended, very rich, and a widower, at Amathus in Cyprus, where, having buried all his children, he employed the whole income of his estate in the relief of the poor, and was no less remarkable for his great piety. The reputation of his sanctity raised him to the patriarchal chair of Alexandria, about the year 608, at which time he was upwards of fifty years of age. On his arrival in that city he ordered an exact list to be taken of his Masters. Being asked who these were, his answer was, "The Poor:" namely, on account of their great interest in the court of heaven in behalf of their benefactors. (1) Their number amounted to seven thousand five hundred, whom he took under his special protection, and furnished with all necessaries. He prepared himself, by this action, to receive the fulness of grace in his consecration. On the same day he published severe ordinances, but in the most humble terms, conjuring and commanding all to use just weights and measures, in order to prevent injustices and oppressions of the poor. He most rigorously forbade all his officers and servants ever to receive the least presents, which are no better than bribes, and bias the most impartial. Every Wednesday and Friday he sat the whole day on a bench before the church, that all might have free access to him to lay their grievances before him, and make known their necessities. He composed all differences, comforted the afflicted, and relieved the distressed. One of his first actions at Alexandria was to distribute the eighty thousand pieces of gold, which he found in the treasury of his church, among hospitals and monasteries. He consecrated to the service of the poor the great revenues of his see, then the first in all the East, both in riches and rank. Besides these, incredible charities flowed through his hands in

(1) Luke xvi. 9.