

was made for the holy relics, and, for greater veneration, placed above the pavement in the sanctuary. He added, that the grave which had been sanctified by so great a miracle of heavenly grace, would not remain long empty. This was accordingly done, and presently after Eadbert, the bishop beloved of God, fell dangerously sick, and his distemper daily increasing, on the 6th of May following he departed to our Lord.

His body was laid in St. Cuthbert's grave, and over the place was deposited the uncorrupted body of that glorious servant of God. "Miracles here wrought from time to time, in curing the sick, bear testimony to the merits of them both," says Bede. The same historian informs us, that St. Eadbert covered with lead the church of Lindisfarne, which was dedicated by the archbishop Theodorus, under the patronage of St. Peter. It had been formerly built by bishop Finan, after the Scottish fashion, of oak boards and thatched with reeds. See Bede, Hist. l. 3. c. 25. l. 4. c. 29, 30. and his life of St. Cuthbert. St. Eadbert is named on this day in the Roman Martyrology.

MAY VII.

SAINT STANISLAS, BISHOP OF CRACOW, MARTYR.

From his life, elegantly written by Longinus Dugloss. Also from Chromerus, Krantzius.

A. D. 1079.

STANISLAS SEZEPANOWSKI was born on the 26th of July, 1030, at Sezepanow, in the diocess of Cracow. His parents, both of the most illustrious families of Poland, had passed thirty years together without issue, when this son was given them by heaven, after they had lost all hopes of children. They received him with thanksgiving to God, and devoted him from his birth to the divine service. The example of their extraordinary piety, charity to the poor, and constant practice of mortification, made insensible impressions upon the tender heart of their son, which were strengthened by their assiduous instruc-

tions. Young Stanislas, from his very infancy, showed an unusual affection for prayer, seriousness, and mortification, being very temperate in his meals, often secretly lying on the ground, and inuring himself to suffer cold and other inconveniences; in which acts of self-denial he was privately encouraged by his parents; who were far from giving in to the preposterous fondness of many who, by a false tenderness, too often make themselves the spiritual, and sometimes also the corporal murderers of their offspring. Stanislas being sent to school, by his progress in learning surpassed the expectation and even wishes of his friends; yet was always more careful to advance in piety. He had no relish for superfluous amusements; the time allowed for recreation he abridged as much as his health would permit, and the money which was given him for his pocket was always secretly employed in relieving the poor. When grown up he was sent to pursue his studies at Gnesna, the first university in the kingdom, and thence to Paris. His mildness, modesty, simplicity, and candour, joined with his capacity for learning, gained him every where as many friends and admirers as he had masters and acquaintance. After seven years spent in the schools of canon-law and divinity at Paris, refusing, out of humility, the degree of doctor, which was offered him, he returned home; and, upon the demise of his parents, disposed of his plentiful fortune in favour of the poor. He received the holy order of priesthood from the hands of Lampert Zula, bishop of Cracow, and was by him made canon of his cathedral, and soon after his preacher and vicar-general. His assiduous sermons, animated by the Spirit of God, with which he was replenished, and supported by the example and sanctity of his life, produced a wonderful reformation of manners, and inspired many with a contempt of the

world to follow Christ. Both clergy and laity had recourse to his advice in all spiritual concerns from every part of the kingdom: and his diocesan, desirous of having him for his successor, made an offer to resign to him his bishopric; but the saint's opposition proved a bar not to be moved. However, upon the death of Lampert, he found himself unable to withstand the united votes of the king, clergy, and people, seconded by an express order they had obtained from pope Alexander II. for complying with their choice. Wherefore, not to resist the voice and will of heaven, he obeyed, and was consecrated bishop in 1072. This see, which had been formerly metropolitocal, had at that time lost its archiepiscopal prerogative.

Stanislas, seeing himself vested with the character of a successor of the apostles, studied to be such in his spirit and manners. His house was always crowded with poor, and he kept a list of all the widows and distressed persons. He was indefatigable in his functions, especially preaching, and scarce knew how to set bounds to his mortification and the exercises of prayer. He visited his whole diocess every year, and no irregularity, whether in clergy or laity, could pass unobserved by him. Boleslas II. was then king of Poland. This prince sullied the glory of his victories (having had great success against the Russians) by his unbridled lust and debaucheries, and by horrid acts of tyranny and injustice, which procured him the surname of the Cruel. Though married, he was not ashamed to offer violence to several ladies of quality: and from private crimes broke at last into the most public and brutish extravagances. Those who approached him durst not make him proper remonstrances: such was the dread of his fury. Stanislas, however, boldly laid before him in private the scandal and enormity of his conduct. The king endeavoured at

first to extenuate his guilt, and when pressed closer by the saint, made some show of repentance. But whatever impression his remonstrances might make upon his mind, it soon wore off, and the king fell into his usual disorders, and began to express his aversion against the good bishop, and to complain of his boldness; neither were flatterers wanting to inflame his resentment. The prince carried off, and kept by violence, a very beautiful woman, wife of Miecislav, a gentleman in the palatinate of Sirad, and had by her several children. The archbishop of Gnesna, and others of the episcopal order that had free access to the king's person, were hereupon solicited by the nobility to carry their complaints to the king, and lay before him the enormity of his crime; but the fear of offending their sovereign stopped their mouths: and this their silence was construed by the people in no other light than that of a mercenary connivance. Stanislas was the only person that had the courage requisite to discharge this duty. Having accordingly recommended the success of the affair to God, he went to court at the head of several gentlemen and ecclesiastics, and once more conjured the king, upon the most pressing considerations, to put an end to his enormous and scandalous disorders. He concluded his remonstrance with telling him, that if he persisted in his crimes, he ran the risk of being cut off from the communion of the faithful by the sentence of excommunication. This threw the king into a violent rage, who, regarding the saint's charitable exhortation as an insult not to be borne, gave a free loose to his passion, and vowed revenge. He had first recourse to calumnies. The saint having purchased, some years before, an estate of one Peter, a gentleman of Piotrawin, who was since dead, and settled it upon his church, the nephews of the deceased were inveigled to accuse the bishop contrary to truth, that he had

never paid for the premises. The cause was pleaded before the king, and the witnesses of the payment durst not appear, having been privately intimidated by the king's agents. The Polish historians of later ages relate, that the saint, after three days spent in fasting and prayer, went, accompanied with his clergy, to the church of Piotrawin, which is in the palatinate of Lublin, and causing the grave to be opened, raised Peter to life, and brought him into open court, where he declared before the king and the assembly that the land was bought and paid for by Stanislas; after which, being led back to his grave, he again returned to his former state.

After this trial the king seemed reconciled with the saint; but the succeeding acts of cruelty which he exercised upon his subjects, to whom he became a more inhuman tyrant than he had been even to his conquered enemies at Kijow, in Russia, stirred up again the zeal of the holy pastor; and when he could not be admitted into the king's presence, he zealously applied himself to fastings, tears, and prayers for his conversion. Seeing no remedy applied to the evils he deplored, he made the king a third visit, and endeavoured to open his eyes. But the prince, like a mad and desperate patient, who looks upon the physician that comes to cure him as his greatest enemy, threatened the saint with certain death if he continued to disturb him. Stanislas still thought it his duty not to abandon his trust, and left nothing untried to compass his charitable ends; but finding all measures ineffectual, he, after a fourth visit, excommunicated him. And having left orders with the canons of the cathedral to break off the church-office in case the king, in defiance of the censure, should attempt to enter the church while the service was performing, he left the city and retired to St. Michael's, a small chapel at a little distance from Cracow. Thither the king followed

him with his guards, whom he ordered to massacre him on the spot: but going into the chapel with this intent, they were struck with such a respect and dread at the presence of the venerable bishop, that they durst not attempt it, telling the king that a great light from heaven had affrighted them, and prevented their executing his orders. The like happened to a second and a third troop: upon which the king went in himself to animate them to perpetrate the murder. Yet no one durst strike the man of God, till the king himself, calling them base cowards, rushed forward and dispatched him with his own hand. Then his life-guards fell on, and cut the martyr's body into pieces, which they scattered about the fields to be devoured by beasts and birds of prey. But eagles are said to have defended them, till the canons of his cathedral, three days after, gathered them together, and privately buried them before the door of the chapel in which he was martyred. Ten years after the body was translated into the cathedral in Cracow, in 1088, and honoured with innumerable miracles. The barbarous king forbade all marks of sorrow or mourning for his death. Pope Gregory VII. excommunicated the tyrant and all his accomplices in this sacrilegious act, and the unhappy prince, tormented with the rack of his own conscience, and seeing himself detested by all his subjects, fled out of Poland into Hungary, and there perished miserably, some say by becoming his own executioner. Stanislas was crowned on the 8th of May, 1079. He was solemnly canonized by Innocent IV. in 1253.

Many, like this unhappy prince, employ the first part of their lives to render the other miserable. Those who in their youth imbibe the maxims of the world, and regulate their minds and conduct by them, plunge themselves into an abyss of the most fatal errors and dreadful mis-

eries. By indulging pride, self-love, and spiritual sloth, they suffer their passions soon to grow rebellious, and when they become enslaved to them, fall into so strange a spiritual blindness as to be no longer governed by the light of reason or faith. How carefully are we bound to guard our heart even in our tender youth, that it may be a constant source of innocence and happiness! Who will discover to us all the illusions of our passions! all the snares they lay for us! We must watch these domestic enemies, and observe all their motions. In all our undertakings we must narrowly examine our own hearts, and ask them if some passion does not secretly steal into our souls, and seek some by-interest in what we do. We must particularly suspect whatever seems to lean toward our darling or ruling passions. These especially deceive us under a thousand disguises. Those which we mistrust most, put on the appearance of those against which we are less upon our guard. It is by this watchfulness to discover and curb their first irregular motions, by habitual self-denial and assiduous prayer, that we shall purify and cultivate our hearts, and keep our enemies under due restraint, which is the victory of virtue.

ST. BENEDICT II. POPE, C.

HE was a native of Rome, and having been brought up from his infancy in the service of the Church, was well skilled in the holy scriptures, and in the ecclesiastical chanting, or church music, of which he was a devout admirer. To sing assiduously the divine praises on earth is a kind of novitiate to the state of the blessed in heaven, and an employment the most sweet and comfortable to a soul that truly loves God.¹ Benedict

¹ The Cistercian Breviary calls this the principal end and function of that holy Order, from an affectionate regard to which several monas-