

and with the kings Odoacer and Theodoric, though all of opposite interests. By his admirable eloquence and charity he often disarmed the most savage barbarians, saved the lives and obtained the liberty of whole armies of captives, the abolition of several oppressive laws, and the mitigation of heavy public imposts and taxes. By his profuse charities he preserved an incredible number of distressed persons from perishing, and by his zeal he stemmed the torrent of iniquity in times of universal disorder and calamity. He performed an embassy to the emperor Anthemius, and another to king Euric at Tolouse; both to avert the dangers of war. He rebuilt Pavia, which had been destroyed by Odoacer, and mitigated the fury of Theodoric in the heat of his victories. He undertook a journey into Burgundy, to redeem captives, detained by the kings Gondebald and Godegisile, and died of a cold and fever at Pavia, in the fifty-eighth year of his age. His body was translated to Hildesheim in Lower Saxony, in 963. Brower thinks it lies in a silver coffin near the high altar. His name is inserted in the Roman Martyrology. See his panegyric in verse, by Ennodius, his successor, the masterpiece of that author, published by Bollandus and F. Sirmond. Consult also Marroni, of the Schola Pia, *Comment. de Ecclesia et Episcopis Papiensibus*. Romæ. An. 1758.\*

---

## JANUARY XXII.

### ST VINCENT, MARTYR.

From Prudentius, hymn. 5. and St. Austin, serm. 274, 275, 276, 277, all four preached on his festivals. His ancient acts in Bollandus are also authentic, but not those in Metaphrastes and Surius. See Tillemont, T. 5. p. 217.

A.D. 304.

THE most glorious martyr, St. Vincent, was born, some say at Saragossa, others at Valentia, but most authors say, and more probable, at Osca, now Huesca, in Granada. He was instructed

---

\* B. MACELAIN, A. His name in Irish signifies the son of Chilian. Passing into Belgic Gaul, in order to lead there an anchoretical life, he was appointed abbot of St. Michael's, on the borders of Hainault, and of Vasour, or Vasencour, on the Meuse, in the diocese of Namur; monasteries, which were just founded. He appointed St. Cadroe, who had accompanied him

in the sacred sciences and in Christian piety by Valerius, the bishop of that city, who ordained him his deacon, and appointed him, though very young, to preach and instruct the people. Dacian, a most bloody persecutor, was then governor of Spain. The Emperors Dioclesian and Maximian published their second and third bloody edicts against the Christian clergy in the year 303, which in the following year were put in force against the laity. It seems to have been before this last that Dacian put to death eighteen martyrs at Saragossa, who are mentioned by Prudentius, and in the Roman Martyrology, January the 16th, and that he apprehended Valerius and Vincent. They spilt some of their blood at Saragossa, but were thence conducted to Valentia, where the governor let them lie long in prison, suffering extreme famine and other miseries. The proconsul hoped that this lingering torture would shake their constancy; but when they were brought out before him, he was surprised to see them still intrepid in mind, and vigorous in body, and he reprimanded his officers as if they had not treated the prisoners according to his orders. Then, turning to the champions of Christ, he employed alternately threats and promises to induce them to sacrifice. Valerius, who had an impediment in his speech, making no answer, Vincent said to him: "Father, if you order me, I will speak." "Son," said Valerius, "as I committed to you the dispensation of the word of God, so I now charge you to answer in vindication of the faith which we defend." The holy deacon then acquainted the judge that they were ready to suffer every thing for the true God, and little regarded either his threats or pro-

---

from Ireland, provost of the latter in 946, and died in 978. Ferrarius, Saussey, and Wilson, falsely place this monastery of St. Michael's at Virdun, mistaking the epithet *Vir Dni*, which is given him in the chronicle of Flodoard, for the name of that town. Though he is styled saint in the catalogue of the abbots of Vasour, and by several martyrologists on this day, he never was honoured in any public office even in either of his monasteries, as Bollandus observes; who makes the same remark of his two companions, B. Forannand and B. Cadroe. This latter was called from Vasour, and made abbot of St. Clement's, at Metz, where he died in 975. See Bolland. T. 2. p. 386. Chatelain, p. 371. Gallia Christ. Nova, T. 3. p. 570.

B. FORANNAND, B. C. This saint is styled in ancient chronicles, Archbishop of Domnachmor, in Ireland. Domnach signifying church, and mor, the greater, says Mabillon: by which epithet many understand Armagh. Resigning his see, he travelled into Belgic Gaul, with twelve companions, among whom were B. Macelain, and B. Cadroe. After leading for some time an eremitical life, he was commanded by Pope Benedict VII. to take upon himself the charge of the government of Vasour, in which employment he died on the last day of April, in 982. See Gallia Christ. Nova, T. 3. p. 571.

mises in such a cause, Dacian contented himself with banishing Valerius.\* As for St. Vincent, he was determined to assail his resolution by every torture his cruel temper could suggest. St. Austin assures us, that he suffered torments far beyond what any man could possibly have endured, unless supported by a supernatural strength; and that he preserved such a peace and tranquillity in his words, countenance, and gestures, in the midst of them, as astonished his very persecutors, and visibly appeared as something divine; whilst the rage and distraction of Dacian's soul was as visible in the violent agitations of his body, by his eyes sparkling with fury, and his faltering voice.

The martyr was first stretched on the rack by his hands and feet, drawn by cords and pullies, till his joints were almost torn asunder: whilst he hung in this posture, his flesh was unmercifully torn off with iron hooks. Vincent, smiling, called the executioners weak and faint-hearted. Dacian thought they spared him, and caused them to be beaten, which afforded the champion an interval of rest: but they soon returned to him, resolved fully to satisfy the cruelty of their master, who excited them all the while to exert their utmost strength. They twice stayed their hands to take breath, and let his wounds grow cold; then began with fresh vigour to rend and tear his body, which they did in all its limbs and parts with such cruelty, that his bones and bowels were in most places exposed bare to sight. The more his body was mangled, the more did the divine presence cherish and comfort his soul, and spread a greater joy on his countenance. The judge seeing the streams of blood which flowed from all the parts of his body, and the frightful condition to which it was reduced, was obliged to confess with astonishment, that the courage of the young nobleman had vanquished him, and his rage seemed somewhat abated. Hereupon he ordered a cessation of his torments, begging of the saint for his own sake, that if he could not be prevailed upon to offer sacrifice to the gods, he would at least give up the sacred books to be burnt, according to the order of the late edicts. The martyr answered, that he feared his torments less than that false compassion which he testified. Dacian, more incensed than ever, condemned him to the most cruel of tortures, that of fire upon a kind of gridiron,

---

\* He is named in the Roman Martyrology, January the 28th, and his relics are kept with veneration at Saragossa, famous for miracles wrought by them even in the last age. See Bollandus, January the 28th, p. 838.

called by the acts the legal torture.(1) The saint walked with joy to the frightful engine, so as almost to get the start of his executioners, such was his desire to suffer. He mounted cheerfully the iron bed, in which the bars were framed like scythes, full of sharp spikes made red-hot by the fire underneath. On this dreadful gridiron the martyr was stretched out at length, and bound fast down. He was not only scourged thereon; but, while one part of his body was broiling next the fire, the other was tortured by the application of red-hot plates of iron. His wounds were rubbed with salt, which the activity of the fire forced the deeper into his flesh and bowels. All the parts of his body were tormented in this manner, one after the other, and each several times over. The melted fat dropping from the flesh nourished and increased the flames; which, instead of tormenting, seemed, as St. Austin says, to give the martyr new vigour and courage; for the more he suffered, the greater seemed to be the inward joy and consolation of his soul. The rage and confusion of the tyrant exceeded all bounds: he appeared not able to contain himself, and was continually inquiring what Vincent did and what he said; but was always answered, that he suffered with joy in his countenance, and seemed every moment to acquire new strength and resolution. He lay unmoved, his eyes turned towards heaven, his mind calm, and his heart fixed on God in continual prayer.

At last, by the command of the proconsul, he was thrown into a dungeon, and his wounded body laid on the floor strewed with broken potsherds, which opened afresh his ghastly wounds, and cut his bare flesh. His legs were set in wooden stocks, stretched very wide, and strict orders were given that he should be left without provisions, and that no one should be admitted to see or speak to him. But God sent his angels to comfort him, with whom he sung the praises of his protector. The gaoler observing through the chinks the prison filled with light, and the saint walking and praising God, was converted upon the spot to the Christian faith, and afterwards baptised. At this news Dacian chafed, and even wept through rage, but ordered that some repose should be allowed the prisoner. The faithful were then permitted to see him, and coming in troops wiped and kissed his wounds, and dipped cloths in his blood, which they kept as an assured protection for themselves

(1) Quæstio legitima.

and their posterity. After this a soft bed was prepared for him, on which he was no sooner laid but he expired, the happy moment he had not ceased to pray for, ever since his torments, and his first call to martyrdom. Dacian commanded his body to be thrown on a marshy field among rushes; but a crow defended it from wild beasts and birds of prey. The acts in Ruinart and Bollandus, and the sermon attributed to St. Leo, add, that it was then tied to a great stone and cast into the sea, in a sack, but miraculously carried to shore, and revealed to two Christians. They laid it in a little chapel out of the walls of Valentia, where God honoured these relics with many miracles, as the acts and St. Austin witness. Prudentius informs us, that the iron on which he lay, and other instruments of his passion, were likewise preserved with veneration. Childebert, king of France, or rather of Paris, besieging Saragossa, wondered to see the inhabitants busied continually in making processions. Being informed they carried the stoie of St. Vincent about the walls in devout prayer, and had been miraculously protected by that martyr's intercession, he raised the siege upon condition that the relic should be given him. This he with great solemnity brought to Paris, and enriched with it the magnificent church and abbey of St. Vincent, now called St. Germain-des-Prez, which he built in 559, and which his successor Clotaire caused to be dedicated.(1) In the year 855, his sacred bones were discovered at Valentia, and conveyed into France, and deposited in the abbey of Castres, now an episcopal see in Languedoc, where they remain; but several portions have been given to the abbey of St. Germain-des-Prez at Paris, and other churches; and part was burnt at Castres by the Huguenots about the end of the sixteenth century.(2) Aimoinus, a contemporary monk, wrote the history of this translation, with an account of many miracles which attended it.\* St. Gregory of Tours, mentions a portion of his relics to have been famous for miracles in a village church near

(1) S. Greg. Tur. Hist. Franc. l. 3. c. 29. Aimoin. de Gestis Franc. l. 2. c. 19 & 20. Ado, in Chron. &c.

(2) See Chatelain, Notes on the Martyrol. p. 378.

---

\* This Aimoinus is something more ancient than another monk of the same name, who has left us a history of France. His relation depends upon the authority of Audald, a monk of Conques in the diocess of Rhodes, who brought them from Valentia into Languedoc. See his account in Bollandus, which yet the Spaniards deny, and say it could only be a small part of these bones; or the body of another martyr of the same name.

Poitiers.(1) In the life of St. Domnolus mention is made of a portion placed by him in a great monastery in the suburbs of the city of Mans. But it is certain that the chief part of this martyr's body was conveyed to Lisbon. To escape the cruel persecution of the Saracen King Abderamene, at Valentia, many Christians privately withdrew themselves, and carrying with them the body of St. Vincent, took shelter on the south-west cape, called the Sacred Promontory, and from these relics St. Vincent's in the kingdom of Algarb then under the Saracens. Alphonsus Henry, the most pious first king of Portugal, son of count Henry, having defeated five Moorish kings, at Ourique, in the year 1139, received from those faithful keepers the body of St. Vincent, sent it by sea to Lisbon, and built the royal monastery of the Cross of regular canons of St. Austin, in which he most religiously deposited this treasure, rendered more famous by miracles, in the year 1148. This account is recorded by contemporary unexceptionable vouchers in Bollandus, p. 406. Mariana, and especially Thomas ab Incarnatione, a regular canon, in his *Historiâ Ecclesiæ Lusitanæ*, printed at Lisbon, A. D. 1759, Sæc. 4. c. 6. t. 1. p. 215. The Portuguese, ever since the year 1173, keep an annual commemoration of this translation on the fifteenth of September, which feast was confirmed by Sixtus V.

Prudentius finishes his hymn on this holy martyr by a prayer to him, that he would present the marks of his sufferings to Christ, to move him to compassion in his behalf.

God never more visibly manifested his power, nor gave stronger or more wonderful proofs of his tenderness and love for his church, than when he suffered it to groan under the most violent oppression and persecution; nor does his grace any where appear more triumphant than in the victories of his martyrs under the severest trials, and in the heroic virtues which they displayed amidst torments and insults. Under the slightest disappointments and afflictions we are apt to fall into discouragement, and to imagine, by our sloth and impatience, that our situation is of all others the most unhappy and intolerable. If nature feel, and we implore the divine mercy, and a deliverance, if this may be conducive to God's honour, we must be careful never to sink under the trials, or consent to the least secret murmuring; we must bear them, if not with joy, at least with perfect submission; and remain assured that God

(1) De Gl. Mart. l. 1. c. 90.

only seems to withdraw himself from us, that we may follow him more earnestly, and unite ourselves more closely to him.

### ST. ANASTASIUS, MARTYR.

From his genuine acts, which are commended in the seventh general council, about one hundred and sixty years after his death.

A.D. 628.

ST. ANASTASIUS was a trophy of the holy cross of Christ, when it was carried away into Persia by Chosroës, in the year 614, after he had taken and plundered Jerusalem. The martyr was a Persian, son of a Magian, instructed in the sciences of that sect, and a young soldier in the Persian troops. Upon hearing the news of the taking of the cross by his king, he became very inquisitive concerning the Christian religion: and its sublime truths made such an impression on his mind, that being returned into Persia from an expedition into the Roman empire, he left the army with his brother, who also served in it, and retired to Hierapolis. In that city he lodged with a devout Persian Christian, a silversmith, with whom he went often to prayer. The holy pictures which he saw, moved him exceedingly, and gave him occasion to inquire daily more into our faith, and to admire the courage of the martyrs whose glorious sufferings were painted in the churches. At length, desirous of baptism, he left Hierapolis, which city was subject to the Persians, and went to Jerusalem, where he received that sacrament by the hands of Modestus, who governed that church as vicar, during the absence of the patriarch Zachary, whom Chosroës had led away captive into Persia. In baptism he changed his Persian name Magundat, into that of Anastasius, meaning, according to the signification of that Greek word, that he was risen from death to a new and spiritual life. He had prepared himself with wonderful devotion for that sacrament whilst a catechumen, and he spent in no less fervour the several days after it, which persons baptized passed in white garments, in prayer, and in receiving more perfect instructions in the faith. At the end of this term, Anastasius, the more easily and more perfectly to keep inviolably his sacred baptismal vows and obligations, desired to become a monk in a monastery five miles distant from Jerusalem. Justin, the abbot, made him first learn the Greek tongue and the psalter; then cutting off his hair, gave him the monastic habit, in the year 621.