

AUGUST VIII.

SS. CYRIACUS, LARGUS, SMARAGDUS,

AND THEIR COMPANIONS, MM.

A. D. 303.

ST. CYRIACUS was a holy deacon at Rome, under the popes Marcellinus and Marcellus. In the persecution of Dioclesian, in 303, he was crowned with a glorious martyrdom in that city. With him suffered also Largus and Smaragdus, and twenty others, among whom are named Crescentianus, Sergius, Secundus, Alban, Victorianus, Faustinus, Felix, Sylvanus, and four women, Memmia, Juliana, Cyriacides, and Donata. Their bodies were first buried near the place of their execution on the Salarian way; but were soon after translated into a farm of the devout lady Lucina, on the Ostian road, on this eighth day of August, as is recorded in the ancient Liberian Calendar, and others.

To honour the martyrs and duly celebrate their festivals, we must learn their spirit, and study to imitate them according to the circumstances of our state. We must, like them, resist evil unto blood, must subdue our passions, suffer afflictions with patience, and bear with others without murmuring or complaining. Many practise voluntary austerities cheerfully, only because they are of their own choice. But true patience requires, in the first place, that we bear all afflictions and contradictions from whatever quarter they come; and in this consists true virtue. Though we pray for heaven our prayers will not avail, unless we make use of the means which God sends to bring us thither. The cross is the ladder by which we must ascend.

ST. HORMISDAS, M.

ISDEGERDES, king of Persia, renewed the persecution which Cosroes II. had raised against the church. It is not easy, says Theodoret, to describe or express the cruelties which were then invented against the disciples of Christ. Some were flayed alive, others had the skin torn from off their backs only, others off their faces from the forehead to the chin. Some were