

Friends at Court.

GLEANINGS FOR NEXT WEEK'S CALENDAR.

(Written for the N.Z. TABLET.)

- November 18, Sunday.—Twenty-fourth Sunday after Pentecost. Dedication of the Basilica of SS. Peter and Paul.
 " 19, Monday.—St. Pontianus, Pope and Martyr.
 " 20, Tuesday.—St. Edmund, King and Martyr.
 " 21, Wednesday.—Presentation of the Blessed Virgin Mary.
 " 22, Thursday.—St. Cecily, Virgin and Martyr.
 " 23, Friday.—St. Clement, Pope and Martyr.
 " 24, Saturday.—St. John of the Cross, Confessor.

PRESENTATION OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN.

It is a pious tradition in the Catholic Church that the Blessed Virgin Mary in her early childhood and in fulfilment of a vow made by her parents was taken by them to the temple in Jerusalem, where she was presented to the service of God and brought up under the care of pious matrons until the time of her espousal to St. Joseph. It is to commemorate the generous offering which Mary, enlightened and inspired by the Holy Spirit, then made of herself to God, and to glorify Him for the graces bestowed upon her while dwelling in His sanctuary that the Feast of the Presentation has been instituted by the Church and ordered to be kept as a day of special devotion.

ST. CECILY, VIRGIN AND MARTYR

St. Cecily was a noble Roman virgin, born of pagan parents, but herself a fervent and a zealous Christian. She fasted rigorously two or three days in the week, wore a hair shirt under her rich attire, and kept the book of the Holy Gospels always next her heart. Having vowed her virginity to God, she was permitted in reward for her generous sacrifice to behold her guardian angel, who promised to defend her against anyone who should seek to violate her purity.

The parents of Cecily having in spite of her own wishes espoused her to a noble Roman named Valerian, the nuptials were celebrated with music and feasting. Upon the wedding day Cecily revealed to her husband the promise which she had made to God, and informed him that a glorious spirit had been sent from heaven to protect her from every danger. Valerian did not doubt her word and expressed his desire to behold her heavenly protector, but she assured him that this was impossible until he had renounced the false gods of paganism, and his eyes had been opened by the waters of Baptism. She accordingly instructed him in the principal truths of religion, and finding him well disposed to embrace the Faith, sent him in search of the holy Pontiff Urban, who at that time lay in concealment in the Catacombs. The latter, recognising the sincerity of Valerian's conversion, completed his instruction, and administered to him the Sacrament of Baptism. On returning to the chamber of Cecily clad in his white baptismal robe, Valerian beheld the glorious spirit, shining more brightly than the sun and keeping guard over the holy virgin as she knelt in prayer. Filled with awe and admiration he fell to the ground, but recovering himself soon afterwards, went to fetch his brother Tiburtius, to whom he related all that had occurred. Tiburtius, after conversing with Cecily, was in like manner instructed and baptised by St. Urban, whereupon he was admitted to the same heavenly vision.

The news of the conversion of the two brothers coming to the ears of the Almachius the Prefect of the city, he ordered them to be brought before him, and on their refusal to renounce the Faith of Christ, commanded them to be beaten with rods. Finally, after having converted by their exhortation and example a public officer named Maximus and a number of their guards, they were led outside the city gates and beheaded. Their goods, in compliance with the Roman law, were ordered to be confiscated to the state, but Cecily had already anticipated the persecutors by distributing them among the poor.

Summoned in her turn before the Tribunal of Almachius, the holy virgin made in presence of the assembled multitude a glorious profession of her faith, confounding the persecutors by the wisdom and eloquence of her answers. Thereupon the Prefect ordered her to be brought back to her house and stifled in a vapor bath, the furnace of which was raised to an unusual heat. Here Cecily remained for a day and a night without suffering any inconvenience, for a refreshing dew descending from above tempered the burning atmosphere. Almachius being informed of the prodigy sent a lictor to strike off her head, but the latter failing to accomplish his purpose with the three strokes allowed by the Roman law, left her lying in the bath with her head half severed from her body. For three days she continued in the same condition, hovering between life and death, during which time she encouraged the faithful and comforted the poor and distressed. On the third day she was visited by St. Urban, to whom she made over the house in which she dwelt for the purpose of Christian worship. Having done this, she gave up her soul to God.

This admirable virgin and martyr suffered in the month of April, A.D. 230. Her name with that of St. Agnes is mentioned with distinction in the Canon of the Mass.

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Evening Star, June 22, 1889, says :—"Messrs W. Gawne and Co. of George Street, have sent us a sample of Worcestershire Sauce manufactured by them, which is in no respect inferior to the imported article, so long celebrated for flavouring sauces and as an agreeable addition to grills, fish, and steaks. We can safely recommend it as a valuable addition to our rapidly developing local manufactures. The bottles are neatly labelled and ornamental, not only for home use, but for exportation; and we hope the manufacturers will realise a demand equal to the merits of the savoury article they have produced."—*.*

Tussicura, Wild Cherry Pectoral Balm, the famous remedy for coughs, bronchitis, asthma, and consumption, has the largest sale of any throat and lung medicine in New Zealand. Those who have taken this medicine are amazed at its wonderful influence. Sufferers from any form of bronchitis, cough, difficulty of breathing, hoarseness, pain or soreness in the chest, experience delightful and immediate relief, and to those who are subject to colds on the chest it is invaluable, as it effects a complete cure. It is most comforting in allaying irritation in the throat and giving strength to the voice, and it neither allows a cough or asthma to become chronic nor consumption to develop. Consumption has never been known to exist where coughs have been properly treated with this medicine. No house should be without it, as, taken at the beginning, a dose is generally sufficient, and a complete cure is certain. Beware of coughs. Remember every disease has its commencement, and consumption is no exception to this rule. Obtainable from Messrs. Kempthorne, Prosser and Co., Limited, and all merchants throughout the Colony. Price, 2s 6d.—*.*

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