TEXT, TRANSLATION, AND COMMENTARY ON
THE ACTS OF SS. DATIVUS, SATURNINUS
THE PRIEST, AND THEIR COMPANIONS

TRANSLATED AND EDITED
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A THESIS

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Among the early Christian writings are the accounts of martyrdoms. One of the most interesting of these is the Passio Ss. Dativi, Saturnini Presbyteri, et Aliorum. It concerns the trial and torture of Saturninus the priest and forty-seven other Christians in Abitina in Africa during the persecution of Diocletian.

This Passio has never before been completely translated into English. The purpose of this thesis is to translate and edit the Passio and consider it in its historical aspects. A brief account of the persecution of Diocletian and a survey of the Donatist schism will provide the general background.

I gratefully acknowledge the help and encouragement of Rev. Father M. Joseph Costelloe, S.J., Mother Leo Frances, and the members of my community in the preparation of this thesis.
### ABBREVIATIONS

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<tr>
<td>AB</td>
<td>Analecta Bollandiana</td>
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<td>ASS</td>
<td>Acta Sanctorum</td>
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<td>CAH</td>
<td>Cambridge Ancient History</td>
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<td>DACL</td>
<td>Dictionnaire d'archéologie chrétienne et de liturgie</td>
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<td>DAGR</td>
<td>Dictionnaire des antiquités grecques et romaines</td>
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<td>DThC</td>
<td>Dictionnaire de théologie catholique</td>
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<td>NET</td>
<td>Nouvelle encyclopédie théologique</td>
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<tr>
<td>RE</td>
<td>Real-Encyclopädie der Classischen Altertumswissenschaft</td>
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With regard to the writings of Optatus, Tertullian, Cyprian, and Augustine, only the title of the work and the chapter— as found in Migne's *Patrologia Latina*— have been given.
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INTRODUCTION

"The Great Persecution"

The persecution begun by Diocletian and Galerius which lasted from 303 to 312 is known as the "Great Persecution." During recent decades it has been the object of much research, but it still presents many problems, some of which perhaps will never be solved. The most important sources for this persecution are the writings of Eusebius and Lactantius, but a considerable amount of information can also be derived from the acts of the martyrs.¹

One of the most difficult problems connected with this persecution is that of determining the reasons for Diocletian's change of policy from twenty years of tolerance to violent persecution. Many historians believe that this persecution was due to the influence of his co-regent Galerius, but others attribute it to his own policy of restoration. The violent anti-Christian polemics of writers such as Porphyry and Hiercles undoubtedly had a far reaching influence together with the

¹See Eusebius, Hist. eccl. viii, and Lactantius, De mort. persec.
deep seated hostility of the people toward foreign cults. In 297 Diocletian published an edict against the Manichees indicating that not only Christianity, but any religion considered dangerous to the empire and the established state religion might be outlawed.

Diocletian issued his first edict against the Christians on February 24, 303, and this was followed by two others in the same year. The first edict ordered the Sacred Scriptures to be burned, churches to be destroyed, and Christians of rank to be deprived of their liberty. The second edict, which was issued in March, 303, ordered the clergy to be imprisoned, and in Catholic areas the prisons were soon filled to capacity. Diocletian celebrated his vincennalia in Rome in the summer of that year. This celebration marked the twentieth anniversary of his reign, and it was customary at such a festival to grant amnesty to criminals. Many criminals were apparently freed at this time, but the Christians still remained in the prisons. The third edict, of December 21, 303, granted freedom to

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the imprisoned Christians who agreed to sacrifice. In order to empty the prisons the officials constrained the prisoners to comply. In some cases they even had them carried bodily to the places of sacrifice where their hands were raised in the accepted gestures, and in this way they were given their freedom. These edicts were aimed chiefly at Church possessions and Church leaders. Wholesale bloodshed was not as yet the order of the day. The final blow came the following year. Galerius, who was acting as temporary head of the empire during an illness of Diocletian, issued a final edict in April, 304, commanding all to make libations and sacrifices or be put to death.

These decrees were carried out with various degrees of intensity throughout the empire. In Africa and Italy the persecution was violent. In Britain and Gaul, the territories of Constantius, the edicts were published but not rigorously enforced, though some churches were destroyed. The persecution continued sporadically in still other areas of the East until 311. At this time there was a period of respite when Galerius suffering from a fatal disease issued a decree of toleration. His death came soon afterwards and Maximin Daia resumed the persecution in the East,
ending it only after the promulgation of the Edict of Milan in 313. 

Documents on the Persecution

The documents of the "Great Persecution" are often vague. The principal persecutors Diocletian, Maximian, Galerius, Maximin, and Licinius all had their own territories to rule, and in the sources for the persecution they are sometimes not named, or they are confused among themselves. As a result of the edicts a great many church archives were destroyed especially in Africa, and those who rewrote the acts and accounts often had to depend on memory or oral tradition. Dates, names and places often became confused. In spite of such discrepancies, however, we have a number of acts and passions for this persecution from Africa.


6 See Moreau, Persecution, p. 120.
Passio Ss. Dativi, Saturnini Presbyteri, et Aliorum

One of the most interesting and most historical of all of the acts of the martyrs of this period in Africa is the Passio Ss. Dativi, Saturnini Presbyteri, et Aliorum. These acts, according to St. Augustine, were introduced by the Donatists at the Council of Carthage in 411. The martyrs were arrested and tried February 12, 304. Several versions of the trial and martyrdom have come down to us. The texts as they exist today contain three parts: a prologue, the actual interrogations of the martyrs, and an appendix.

Pio Franchi de' Cavalieri was of the opinion that the text of the acts presented at the Council of Carthage was not the official record. He further maintained that the text thus presented has been lost and that what we now have is a text edited by a Donatist. The Donatist editor would have added the prologue and

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8 Tunç Donatistae protulerunt martyrum gesta, ubi audit et pro confessione passi sunt (Augustine, Brev. coll. 3. 17. 32).
the appendix and would have inserted comments into the record of the interrogations. Delehaye agreed with his conclusions. Monceaux, on the contrary, believed that two Donatists edited the acts. The prologue and the passion would have been written by an intelligent sectarian in a clear and lively style, but the appendix by a violent polemicist in an obscure and wordy style.

Section one and sections nineteen to twenty-three are the parts of the Passio that are attributed to the Donatist editor or editors. These parts are much more elaborate than the middle sections containing the account of the trial, though even here, as we have already noted, remarks and observations have been inserted. Franchi de' Cavalieri has drawn attention to similarities running throughout the passion which would substantiate his theory that one man rewrote the

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11 Monceaux, Histoire, p. 144.
entire acts.\footnote{For example, the Donatist editor has written the phrase \textit{fide praeditus} in both the prologue and the appendix (Passio 1, 19). He describes his method of writing with great speed, \textit{necessario breviter} \... \discurram in section nineteen, and he uses almost the identical terms in section one, \textit{necessario breviter} \... \discurrere} (Passio 1, 19). The adjective \textit{santissima} appears often in connection with the word religion (Passio 1, 18, 22). The combination of the adverbs \textit{constanter et fortiter} occurs several times as well as adjectives formed from these words (Passio 1, 4, 19). There are numerous other similarities, but these will suffice to prove the point. \textit{See Franchi de' Cavalieri, Note agiografiche, p. 5, n. 3.}

the Church was a body of elect whose members were vivified by the Holy Spirit in Baptism. Even St. Cyprian believed that the validity of priestly acts depended on the presence of the Holy Spirit in the soul of the minister and that a priest who was not in the state of grace could not therefore administer the sacraments validly. Along with this theological rigorism there was also a certain excessive contempt for worldly goods and for the Roman empire.

This rigorism was manifested at the time of the "Great Persecution" when certain members of the African Church refused to be reconciled with the traditores, that is, with those who had surrendered the Scriptures. When Mensurius bishop of Carthage died in 311, there was a bitter struggle over the election of his successor. The rigorists claimed that Caecilian, who was ultimately elected, had allowed himself to be consecrated by a traditor bishop, Felix of Aptonga. Secundus of Tigisi, primate of Numidia, who had the traditional

14 See Mourret, History, p. 401.

15 One of the greatest problems of the persecution under Diocletian was that of the traditores. This name was applied to any Christian who had complied with the edicts by handing over the Sacred Scriptures, church possessions, or his fellow Catholics. See Paul Allard, La persécution de Dioclétian, (3rd ed. rev.; Paris: Librairie Victor Lecoffre, 1908), I, p. 272, n. 1.
right of consecrating the bishop of Carthage felt slighted because he had not been asked to consecrate Caecilian. He came to Carthage with seventy bishops, organized a council, and declared Caecilian's election invalid. The council then elected Majorinus bishop in place of Caecilian. The so-called "Pure Church" was thus set up. It gradually spread throughout all of North Africa, with rival bishops residing in many localities.  

When Majorinus died, Donatus of Casae Nigrae was elected in his place. Donatus, who became the organizer of the schismatical church, was a man of outstanding qualities. He had received an excellent education and had a reputation of being a good writer and speaker. He was also filled with ambition and pride and aimed at obtaining the support of the Roman government for his sect. He and his followers therefore sent letters to the new emperor Constantine requesting a council to settle the disputes they had with other Christians. Constantine, who was anxious to secure peace for the Church, willingly complied.

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16 For an explanation of the rapid spread of Donatism in North Africa, see Frend, Martyrdom, pp. 347-380.

The council was scheduled for Arles in southern France in 314. This council, which was composed of Italian and Gallic bishops, pronounced Caecilian innocent of all the charges that had been laid against him. Among the various canons adopted at this meeting were several pertaining to the Donatist controversy. One canon provides for the dismissal of members of the clergy who have been proved guilty of handing over church property. Proof for this is to be sought in the public records and is not simply to be based on a mere accusation. The consecration of a priest by a traditor bishop is to be considered valid if the priest is a good man. Another canon states that those who have been baptized by heretics are not to be rebaptized on returning to the Church.

For a time it seemed that the Donatist schism would die out, but with the accession of Julian the Apostate in November, 361, the Donatists enjoyed something of a revival. In 411 St. Augustine summoned the

18The Council of Arles was a general council of the West. Since Constantine had summoned this council, he assumed many expenses, such as the cost of traveling, provisions for housing and entertainment, and so forth. See J. Hefele, A History of the Christian Councils, trans. and ed. William Clark (Edinburgh: T. and T. Clark, 1883), I, pp. 3-7. See also p. 182.

19Ibid., pp. 180-199.
Conference at Carthage to settle the controversies. The imperial tribune Marcellinus presided over the meetings. There were two hundred and eighty-six Catholic, and two hundred and seventy-nine Donatist bishops present; seven orators represented each side. The council decided in favor of the Catholics on June 26, 411. In their official statement the bishops declared that the Church was a mixed body composed of good and bad members held together by the sacraments. The ordination of Caecilian was again declared valid. Pope Honorius issued decrees against the Donatists, and after the invasion of the Vandals in 429 they gradually lost their influence.  

Summary of the Passio

With these points in mind, it may be well to give a brief summary of the Passio. The prologue sets the stage for the account of the trial by describing the reasons for writing the Passio: to prepare the Christians to imitate the martyrs and to confer everlasting glory on God's saints.  

The main portion of the Passio consists in an account of the questioning and the torture of the martyrs. The language is at


\(^{21}\)Passio 1.
times simple and restrained, particularly in the ques-
tions, answers, and prayers. But when the Donatist
editor inserts his own comments it becomes obscure, or-
nate, and redundant. These passages are as a conse-
quence difficult to render into good English.\textsuperscript{22}

From the \textit{Passio} we learn that forty-eight
Christians were arrested while assisting at Mass in
Abitina\textsuperscript{23} in the home of Octavius Felix. Saturninus,
an elderly priest, was conducting the services. Ap-
parently these Christians had attended Mass every Sun-
day and feastday, coming together now in one, now in
another private house to avoid arousing the suspicions
of the officials. From Abitina they were sent under
police escort to Carthage, where Anulinus the proconsul
interrogated a number of them individually. Some of
those who were questioned were subjected to horrible
tortures, but we are led to believe that only two died
as a result of this. The others were questioned and
then sentenced to prison without being tortured.\textsuperscript{24}

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{22}\textit{Passio} 22.
\item \textsuperscript{23}Abitina was a proconsular city situated in the
valley of Bagrades not far from Membressa. It was about
one hundred and fifty miles from Carthage. See F. Van
der Meer and Christine Mohrman, \textit{Atlas of the Early Chris-
tian World}, trans. and ed. Mary Hedlund and H. Rowley
\item \textsuperscript{24}\textit{Passio} 2, 18.
\end{itemize}
\end{footnotesize}
In the appendix we read that the martyrs held some kind of an assembly or "council" as the editor of the acts calls it, at which they excommunicated the traditores and those in sympathy with them.\textsuperscript{25} Besides alluding to this council, the appendix also comments on Bishop Mensurius' attitude toward the imprisoned Christians. The accusations brought against him are quite bitter, but a careful examination of them shows that generally they are unfounded.\textsuperscript{26} In his conclusion the editor informs us that after a long period of suffering the martyrs died of starvation. The account of the martyrs' sufferings in prison, at least in regard to the treatment of the clergy, seems to be greatly exaggerated.\textsuperscript{27}

\textbf{Use of the Passio by the Donatists}

The Donatists used the \textit{Passio} as a means of propaganda.\textsuperscript{28} Passages directed against Catholic bishops and against Catholics in general supply evidence for this. The sect also employed the document as a means of vin-

\textsuperscript{25}\textit{Passio} 20.

\textsuperscript{26}See Hefele, \textit{History}, pp. 172-173.

\textsuperscript{27}Chapman, "Donatists," p. 121.

\textsuperscript{28}Ibid.
indicating their own position.

The opening lines of the *Passio* inform us that the interrogations took place on February 12; the second section mentions the names of Diocletian and Maximian. There are no allusions to dates or the names of consuls, or events that might aid in dating the document. It is from St. Augustine that we get the precise date.

On March 5, 305, a council of African bishops had met at Cirta to elect a successor to the deceased head of that Church. The presiding prelate, Secundus of Tigisi, asked the other bishops how they had reacted to the decrees of the persecution. Most admitted that they had handed over books and other treasures that belonged to their churches. Purpurius asked Secundus in turn what he had done, but he could give no satisfactory answer. The bishops then all agreed

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29 *Passio* 1-2.


32 *Purpurius respondit . . . quomodo te liberasti ab ipsis, nisi quia dedisti aut iussisti quodcumque dari* (Augustine, *Contra Cresc.* 3.27).
that it should be left up to each one to answer for his own actions. The question put to Secundus was thus dropped.

The minutes of this meeting contained evidence damaging to the Donatists since Secundus and some of the other bishops had been unable to exonerate themselves. When the Council of Cirta was brought up at the Conference of Carthage, the Donatists produced the *Passio* of St. Saturninus. They claimed that the minutes of the council and the *Passio* were both dated from the year 304, and that no meeting could have been held at Cirta because the persecution was in full force. It would have been difficult to prove or disprove this since the *Passio*, at least as we know it, gives no definite dates. The Catholics replied that if forty-eight Christians could have met in private homes to celebrate Mass regularly, then certainly a small group of bishops could have easily assembled for a

33 The Catholics claimed that the Council of Cirta had been summoned in March, 305, while the Donatists said, that, if there was one, it had been held in March, 304. According to St. Augustine there had been an error in computing the date. *Officium autem in computando errans falsum renuntiaverat* (*Brev. coll.* 3.17.32).

34 ... *ex more ...* (*Passio* 2). See also Augustine, *Brev. coll.* 3.17.32.
meeting in a private dwelling. This was actually the case, as St. Optatus later proved from the council records.

According to the Passio, as we have seen, the martyrs held a council in the prison after their trial. Since Saturninus was the only priest in the group, the question arises as to the binding force of such a declaration. The confessors may have been claiming the same rights that earlier confessors had claimed. During and after the persecution of Decius, lapsi had sought to obtain forgiveness by means of certificates granted by imprisoned confessors. The martyrs and confessors seem to have felt that their position gave them a right to grant privileges or make declarations in the name of the Church, though this was opposed by Cyprian and others.

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35 Quod Catholici . . . respondebant multo facilier homines in domum convenire potuisse eo tempore quo etiam congregationes plebium fieri solem. quamvis persecutione fervente . . . (Augustine, Brev. coll. 3. 17. 32).

36 Hi et caeteri, [bishops] . . . post persecutionem apud Cirtam civitatem . . . in domum Urbani Carisi sederunt (Optatus, De schis. Don. 1. 14).

37 Passio 20.

38 Frend, Martyrdom, p. 502.

39 See Mourret, History, p. 392.
editor notes that a great number of clergymen were in prison, and he may have inferred by this statement that they were present at the council. The Conference of Carthage does not mention a council held in the prison at this time, nor does the Donatist editor give any specific names of bishops or priests who might have participated. It would seem then that the whole claim of a council was invented for the purpose of advancing the Donatist cause.

By means of certain phrases and well-chosen Scriptural quotations the Donatist editor strengthens his contention that the martyrs followed the command of God in separating themselves from the traditores and condemning their actions. One phrase he employs is the "authority of the law." It appears that the reader is being reminded by this expression that the martyrs did not act on impulse, but rather based their actions on God's commands. The martyrs' decisions were therefore justified; and when they issued their decrees from the prison council, they were "firmly established on the authority of the divine law." This law rejected the

40 Passio 19.
41 See Delehaye's review in AB, p. 294.
42 Passio 2.
traditores from communion with the Church, for it was not right that there should be martyrs and traitors in the Church of God at the same time.43

The last four Biblical quotations in the appendix strengthen this contention. They all maintain, though in somewhat different terms, that the just are contaminated by consorting with the wicked. The Donstists also argued that St. Cyprian had urged the Christian community to separate itself from unworthy prelates, and they cited one of his letters written to the Spanish people concerning the lapsed bishops Basilides and Martial.44 The ideas that sins were passed on from generation to generation and that all Catholics were tainted by the sins of a few were prevalent. According to this way of thinking there was no place in the Church for sinners. All of these statements bring out the strong puritan element in the African Church.45

43Passio 22.

44Propter quod plebs absequens praeceptis domini­cis et Deum metuens a peccatore praeposito separare se debet, ne se ad sacrilegi sacerdotis sacrificia miscere quando ipsa maxime habeat potestatem vel eligendi dignos sacerdotes vel indignos recusandi (Cyprian, Ep. 67. 3).

45Frend, Martyrdom, p. 419.
Texts and Manuscripts

There are various manuscripts of these acts. Henschen published the acts without the appendix, while Ruinart published only the interrogations. In spite of the many extant recensions of these acts, Delehaye believed that they are substantially authentic. He included them in his third class of acts. The translation of what follows is based on the text of Pio Franchi de' Cavalieri which he collated from codices in the National Library in Paris, the civil library in Trier, and the library of the school of Medicine in Montpelier.

Conclusion

The Passio, as we have seen, contains both truth and fiction. It has an abundance of interesting material, and in the more direct and simple sections this is presented with grace and dignity. Even the interpolated

46Franchi de' Cavalieri, Note, pp. 45-46.
47See Delehaye's review in AB, p. 294.
49Franchi de' Cavalieri, Note, pp. 45-46.
passages are valuable for the insight they give on the Donatists. The Passio introduces us, moreover, to a group of little known martyrs whose cult was widespread in the early Church in Africa and who can furnish us with needed inspiration.
PASSIO SS. DATIVI, SATURNINI

PRESBYTERI, ET ALIORUM

Incipiunt confessiones et actus martyrum
Saturnini presbyteri, Dativi, Felicis, Ampelii et
ceterorum infra scriptorum, qui propter collectas et
scripturas dominicas sub Anulino tunc proconsule
Africae die pridie idus Februarii Kartagine Dominum
confessi, diversis locis temporibusque discretis
beatissimum sanguinem profuderunt.

I. Qui religionis sanctissimae fide praeditus
exultat et gloriatur in Christo, quique dominica veri-
tate gaudet errore damnato, ut ecclesiam catholicam
teneat, sanctam quoque communionem a profana discernat,
acta martyrum legat, quae necessario in archivo memoriae

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1 Inscriptions bearing the names of martyrs sim­
lar to the ones in Abitina have been found at several
points in Africa. One such inscription discovered at
Guelma in northeast Algeria has the names of Felix and
Vincent. It is possible that these are the martyrs who
were in the group with Saturninus. See Paul Allard,
La persécution de Diocletian, (3rd ed. rev.;Paris:
Librairie Victor Lecoffre, 1908), I, p. 263, n. 2.

2 The name Anulinus occurs in accounts from dif­
erent places in the empire. This has led some to sup­
pose that the name is used simply as a prototype for the
typical, cruel Roman magistrate. Nevertheless there was
an Anulinus, a proconsul who served in Africa under
Diocletian. He is mentioned frequently enough in
THE PASSION OF SAINTS DATIVUS, SATURNINUS

THE PRIEST, AND OTHERS

Here begin the confessions and acts of the martyrs Saturninus the priest, Dativus, Felix,\(^1\) Ampelius, and the others mentioned below who, on account of their assemblies and the Lord's Scriptures, having confessed the Lord in different places and separate times, poured forth their blessed blood on the day before the Ides of February at Carthage under Anulinus,\(^2\) who was then the proconsul of Africa.

I. He who, endowed with the faith of our most holy religion, exults and glories in Christ, and he who rejoices in the Lord's truth and in the condemnation of error, so that he holds fast to the Catholic Church and distinguishes the holy from profane communion, should read the acts of the martyrs which have perforce been written down in the public record,\(^3\) so that neither the writings so that he can be easily recognized. The many other officials bearing this name are suspect. See H. Leclercq, "Actes des martyrs," DACL, I, Part I, (1924), cc. 373-446.

\(^3\) The word memoria here in the acts probably refers to ecclesiastical books in which the accounts of martyrdom were collected. See "Monumenta vetera ad Donatistarum historiam pertinentia," Patrologia Latina, ed. J. Migne (Paris: J. P. Migne, 1844-55), VIII (1844), p. 690, n. 1.
conscripta sunt, ne saeculis transeuntibus obsolesceret et gloria martyrum et domnatio traditorum. Adgredior itaque caelestes pugnas novaque certamina gesta per fortissimos milites Christi, bellatores invictos, martyres gloriosos; adgredior, inquam, ex actis publicis scribere, non tam ingenio praeditus quam civico illis amore conjunctus, consulto quidem hoc faciens duplici scilicet modo, ut et imitatoribus eorum ad martyrium animos preparamus et, quos vivere in perpetuum atque cum Domino Christo regnare confidimus, etiam confessiones ipsorum, pugnas atque victorias, cum in litteras digerimus, aeternae memoriae conferamus. Sed non invenio, fratres diletissimi, quibus utar exordiis quove principio laudis adgrediar sanctissimorum martyrum felicissimam confessionem. Magnis enim rebus magnisque virtutibus rapior, et quicquid est quod in ipsis aspicio, id totum divinum atque caeleste admiror, in devotione fidem, in vita sanctitatem, in confessione constantiam, in passione victoriam. Quae res quanto solae in suis vir-

4 The interrogations of the martyrs would be placed in the archives according to Roman law. One might at times obtain a copy of these by paying for them or simply requesting a copy. See Giuseppe Ricciotti, *The Age of the Martyrs*, trans. Anthony Bull (Milwaukee: Bruce Publishing Co., 1959), p. 64. Eusebius refers to the public records when he writes of a man who passed as a Christian after he had been
glory of the martyrs nor the condemnation of the traitors should grow dim with the passing of time. I am therefore going to describe the heavenly battles and the strange contests waged by courageous soldiers of Christ, unconquered warriors, glorious martyrs; I shall, I say, describe them from the public acts, not being so much endowed with talent as having been united with them in mutual love; and I do this indeed in a twofold manner, so that we may both prepare the souls of those who imitate them for martyrdom and so that we may bestow an everlasting remembrance upon those whom we trust are living forever and reigning with the Lord Christ when we put down in writing their confessions, battles, and victories. But, dearly beloved brethren, I do not find any introduction that I can use or any word of praise with which to begin the account of the happy confession of those most holy martyrs. For I am carried off by their great accomplishments and virtues, and I admire whatever I see in them as something that is wholly divine and heavenly, their devout faith, their holy lives, their constancy in confession, and their victorious martyrdoms; and these virtues, bril-
tutibus fulgent, tanto sunt omnes in singulis martyribus clariores. Placet igitur in principio causam ipsius belli tractare totiusque mundi discrimen necessario breviter omni celeritate discurrere, ut agnita veritate et praemia martyrum et poenas quis noverit traditorum.

II. Temporibus namque Diocletiani et Maximiani bellum diabolus Christianis indixit isto modo, ut sacrosancta Domini testamenta scripturasque divinas ad exurendum peteret, basilicas dominicas subverteret et ritus sacros coetusque sanctissimos celebrari Domino prohiberet. Sed non tulit exercitus Domini tam inmane praeceptum, sacrilegamque iussionem perhorruit et mox fidei arma corripuit, descendit in proelium, non tam contra homines quam contra diabolum pugnaturus. Et quamvis tradendo gentilibus scripturas dominicas atque

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5 For references to the decrees see Eusebius, Hist. eccl. viii. 2.

6 A basilica was a Roman building constructed in the shape of a rectangle which was used as a social or commercial meeting place. It was associated with a forum. The first known basilica was built in Rome in 184 B.C. by Cato. Later basilicas influenced Christian churches. See T. Fyfe, "Basilica," Oxford Classical Dictionary, ed. M. Cary et al. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1957), p. 132.

7 From Eusebius we learn that a great number of
liant as they are in themselves, are all the more conspicuous in each of the individual martyrs. We have therefore decided to treat first the cause of the combat itself and to discuss with the necessary brevity and all speed the threat hanging over the whole world so that when the truth had been revealed, all may know the rewards of martyrs and the punishments of traitors.

II. During the reign of Diocletian and Maximian, the devil declared war on the Christians in the following manner: he sought the sacred testaments of the Lord and the divine Scriptures in order to burn them; he destroyed the Lord's basilicas and forbade the sacred rites and holy services to be celebrated in honor of the Lord. But the army of the Lord did not tolerate so cruel a command and shuddered at the sacrilegious order. At once it took up the arms of faith and descended into battle, intending to fight not so much against men as

basilicas were built to accommodate the huge crowds that attended them. His. eccl. viii. 1.

St. Perpetua uses the same expression when writing of her own approaching martyrdom. This young Carthaginian woman was martyred in 203 during the persecution of Septimus Severus. The acts of Perpetua are among the classics of Christian literature. Et experrecta sum: et intellexi me non ad bestias, sed contra diabolum esse pugnaturam . . . (Passio Perpetuae et Felicitatis 3).
testamenta divina profanis ignibus comburenda a fidei cardine cecidere non nulli, conservando tamen ea et pro ipsis libenter suum sanguinem effundendo, fortiter fecere quam plurimi. Quique pleni Deo, devicto ac prostrato diabolo, victoriae palmam in passione gestantes, sententiam in traditores atque in eorum consortes, qua illos ab ecclesiae communione reiecerant, cuncti martyres proprio sanguine consignabant; fas enim non fuerat ut in ecclesia Dei simul essent martyres et traditores.

Advolabant igitur undique versum ad certaminis campum immensa agmina confessorum, et ubi quisque hostem reppererat, castra illic dominica collocabat. Namque in civitate Abitinensi, in domo Octavii

9In the History of the Donatists by Optatus we also have a reference to the burning of books. See His. Don. 1. 1.

10The word nonnulli was used in the same work to show that some of the Christians obeyed the edicts. Ibid.

11The palm is the symbol of victory and has been so from very early times. No doubt its origin was in the East where the tree was well known. See H. Leclercq, "Palm, Palmier," DACL, XIII, Part I (1937), cc. 947-48.

12The word communion may refer specifically to the sacrament of the Eucharist, but it may also refer to an expression familiar to the early Church in which a person was said to be "in peace and communion with the Apostolic See." This expression is still seen today in the encyclicals. See Ludwig Hertling, A History of the Catholic Church, trans. Anselm Biggs (Westminster, Maryland: Newman Press, 1957), pp. 35-43.
against the devil, and although some, by handing over
the Lord's Scriptures and the divine testaments to the
Gentiles to be burned in profane fires, fell from the
rule of faith, very many by preserving them and wil-
lingly shedding their blood for them acted courageously.
Filled with the grace of God they overthrew and con-
quered the devil and, carrying the palm of victory
during their passion they all, through the witness of
their own blood, passed sentence upon the traditores
and their colleagues, and in this way they cast them
out from the communion of the Church. For it was not
right that there should be martyrs and traitors at the
same time in the Church of God.

From all sides therefore, immense columns of con-
fessors hastened to come to the field of the contest, and,
where each one found the enemy, there set up the Lord's
camp. In the city of Abitina, in the home of Octavius

13 The spelling of the name Abitina varies in the manus-
scripts from Africa, but it is taken to be an episcopal
city of the province of proconsularis in Africa. St. Augustine speaks of Saturninus of Abitina, and Bishop
Maximus of Abitina was present at the Conference of
Carthage in 411. "De sanctis martyribus et Saturnino
presbytero et al." ASS, V, p. 516.

14 Since the edicts concerning the destruction of
churches had already been published, the only place left
to conduct services would be a private dwelling. In the
earliest days of the Church assemblies for worship were
held in homes. See Ludwig Eisenhofer and Joseph Lechner,
Liturgy of the Roman Rite, trans. A. and E. Peeler, ed.
Felicis, bellica cum caneret tuba,\textsuperscript{15} dominica signa gloriosi martyres erexerunt, ibique celebrantes ex more dominicum a coloniae magistratibus atque ab ipso stationario\textsuperscript{16} milite adprehenduntur Saturninus presbyter\textsuperscript{17} cum filiis quattuor, id est Saturnino iuniore et Felice lectoribus, Maria\textsuperscript{18} sanctimoniali,\textsuperscript{19} Hilariano infante, itemque Dativus, qui et Senator, Felix, alius Felix, Emeritus, Ampelius, Rogatianus, Quintus, Maximianus, Telica, Rogatianus, Rogatus, Ianuarius, Cassianus, Victorianus, Vincentius, Caecilianus, Restituta, Prima, Eva, Rogatianus, Givalius, Rogatus, Pomponia, Secunda, Ianuaria, Saturnina, Martinus, Clautus, Felix,

\textsuperscript{15}The tuba which was straight like our trumpet was used mainly in times of war. From an inscription of the year 203 we know that a legion in Africa had thirty-nine trumpeters. Their chief duties were to give the signals for attacking, retreating, assembling and so forth. See A. Reinach, "Tuba," DAGR, V, pp. 527-528.

\textsuperscript{16}The stationarius was a military police officer assigned to posts throughout the country to keep public security. See Adolf Berger, Encyclopedic Dictionary of Roman Law (Philadelphia: The American Philosophical Society, 1953), p. 714.

\textsuperscript{17}In the early Church the presbyter and the other clergy assisted the bishop in conducting the Eucharistic service. In the case of the Christians of Abitina, Fundanus no longer seemed to be welcome by the congregation. Cf. Ricciotti, Age, p. 93 and Allard, Histoire, p. 263.
Felix, when the trumpet of battle sounded, the glorious martyrs raised up the Lord's standards, and there while celebrating the divine mysteries according to custom, Saturninus, a priest, with his four children, that is, with Saturninus the Younger and Felix, lectors, Maria, a virgin consecrated to God, and Hilarian, a child, were seized by the magistrates of the colony and a military guard. The following were likewise arrested: Dativus who was also called Senator, Felix, another Felix, Emeritus, Ampelius, Rogatian, Quintus, Maximian, Telica, Rogatian, Rogatus, Januarius, Cassian, Victorian, Vincent, Cecilian, Restituta, Prima, Eva, Rogatian, Givalius, Rogatus, Pomponia, Secunda, Januaria, Saturnina, Martin, 

18 From early times virgins dedicated themselves to God and practiced asceticism. They lived with their own families before convents and monasteries were established. In the West nuns began living a community life in the time of St. Augustine. See H. Leclercq, "Nonne," DACL, XII, Part II (1936), cc. 1557ff. Cyprian wrote of the glory of virginity: Gaudet per illos atque in illis largiter floret Ecclesiae matris gloriosa foecunditas; quantoque plus copiosa virginitas numero suo addit, tanto plus gaudium matris augescit (De hab. vir. 3).

19 Franchi de' Cavalieri notes that since the word sanctimonialis was not used until the end of the fourth century, it probably did not appear in the original text. See Note agiografiche, p. 7, n. 2. According to Diehl an inscription found in Africa identifies a woman as a sanctimonialis. He believes that the inscription can be dated between 349 and 436. See Inscriptioes latinae Christianae veteres, ed. Ernest Diehl (Berlin: Druckerei Hildebrand, 1961), I, 1684.
Margarita, Maior, Honorata, Regiola, Victorianus, Pelusius, Faustus, Dacianus, Matrona, Caecilia, Victoria, Berectina, Secunda, item Matrona, Ianuaria.

**III.** Qui adprehensi producebantur alacres ad forum. Adhuc in primum certaminis campum prior Dativus ibat, quem sancti parentes candidum senatorem caelesti curiae genuerunt. Ibat etiam presbyter Saturninus numerosa vallatus propagine liberorum, cuius partem sibi sociam ad martyrium destinavit, partem sui nominis pignus ecclesiae relinquebat. Hos agmen dominicum sequebatur, in quo fulgebat caelestium splendor armorum, scutum fidei, lorica iustitiae, salvationis galea.

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20 The name **Major** frequently occurs in inscriptions found in Africa. It seems a strange name for a woman, but it occurs more frequently in lists of women's names than in those of men. See Allard, *Histoire*, p. 264, n. 1.

21 In the Roman colonies the **forum** was usually laid out and constructed according to the plan of the forum in Rome. See H. Thedenat, "Forum," *DAGR*, II, pp. 1277-1320. Perpetua and Felicitas were also taken to the forum for questioning. *Et pervenimus ad forum* (Passio Ss. Perpetuae et Felicitatis 4).

22 A **curia** could be the council of administration, the senate of a town, or the building in which the council held its sessions. See Berger, *Dictionary*, p. 422. From the use of the word **senator** here the editor may have been thinking of the **curia** as the town senate.

23 Franchi de' Cavalieri questions the meaning of this expression and concludes that four children were arrested with Saturninus while the others were not present at the assembly of the Christians. However, they may have all been present for the interrogations, as was the case in the accounts of other acts. See Franchi
Clautus, Felix, Margarita, Major, Honorata, Regiola, Victorian, Pelusius, Faustus, Dacian, Matrona, Cecilia, Victoria, Berectina, Secunda, another Matrona, and Januaria.

III. After they had been arrested, they were quickly led forth into the forum. Now Dativus, whom holy parents brought forth as a white-robed senator of the heavenly court, went forth first into the field of combat. Saturninus, the priest, also went forth, surrounded by his numerous offspring, some of whom he destined to be his associates in martyrdom; and some he left to the Church as a pledge of his name. The Lord's column followed them, and in it shone forth the brilliance of heavenly arms, the shield of faith, the breastplate of justice, the helmet of salvation,

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22The scutum was a shield formed of two boards whose outer surface was covered with canvas or animal hides, and was reinforced by an iron rim or an iron surface. It had a slight curvature and could thus give greater protection to the body. See Charles Anthon, _A Manual of Roman Antiquities_ (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1858), p. 233.

23The breastplate or lorica was made of leather and covered with iron rings or iron plates. See Alexander Adam, _Roman Antiquities_, rev. Lorenzo DaPonte (New York: W. E. Dean, 1842), p. 250.

24The galea was a helmet coming to the shoulders but leaving the face uncovered. It was adorned with a crest at the top. _Ibid_.

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et gladius bifrons, sermo Dei: quorum praesidio fultti spem victoriae fratribus promittebant. Sed iam ad supra dictae civitatis pervenerunt forum, ibique primo congressi confessionis palmam magistratus elogio sustulerunt. In isto namque foro iam pro dominicis scripturis dimicaverat caelum, cum Fundanus, ipsius civitatis quondam episcopus, scripturas dominicas traderet exurendas: quibus cum magistratus sacrilegos ignes adponeret, subito imber sereno caelo diffunditur, ignis scripturis sanctis admotus extinguitur, grandines adornunt omnisque ipsa regio, pro scripturis dominicis elementis furentibus, devastatur.

IV. De hac igitur civitate martyres Christi exoptata prima vincula susceperunt, directique ad Kartaginem,

27The word bifrons may refer to the machaera, a short two-edged sword used for cutting rather than stabbing. The comparison of the word of God to a sword is very common. Such passages probably are attempting to reveal the tremendous power of God's word. See W. Leonard, "Epistle to the Hebrews," A Catholic Commentary on Holy Scripture ed. Dom Bernard Orchard et al. (New York: Nelson and Sons, 1953), p. 1163, s. 936b.

28Heb. 4:12.

29The elogium was a report sent to higher authorities about criminals who had been arrested. See Berger, Dictionary, p. 451. In the Passio the report was the one compiled by the officials at Abitina and then sent to Anulinus at Carthage.
and the two-edged sword, the word of God. Relying upon their help, they kept promising the hope of victory to the brethren. But now they had arrived at the forum of the city we have already mentioned. Having first congregated there, they bore the palm of their confession according to the judicial statement of the magistrate. For in that very forum heaven had already struggled on behalf of the Lord's Scriptures, when Fundanus, at one time bishop of that city, handed over the Lord's Scriptures to be burned. But when the magistrate had placed sacrilegious fires to the Scriptures, rain poured down suddenly from a clear sky. The fire placed near the Sacred Scriptures was extinguished, hailstones fell, and the entire region was devastated by the elements raging on behalf of the Lord's Scriptures.

IV. From this city, therefore, the martyrs of Christ first received their desired chains, and being sent

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30Fundanus handed the Scriptures over to the Roman officials in 303. The books were burned in the forum. See Monceaux, Histoire, p. 141.

31Eusebius mentions the fact that he had seen books burned in the forum of a town. His. eccl. viii. 2.

32Prisoners received vincula, bonds or chains, during their time of public or private custody. Saturninus and his companions were no doubt chained on the long journey from Abitina to Carthage. See Adam, Antiquities, p. 180.
alacres ac laeti per totum iter hymnos Domino canticaque psallebant. Quique cum ad officium Anulini tunc pro-
consulis pervenirent starentque in acie constanter ac fortiter, saevientis impetus diaboli dominica constantia retundebant. Sed cum non contra omnes simul milites Christi diabolica rabies praevaleret, singulos in certamina postulavit. Quorum certaminum pugnas non tam meis exequar quam martyrum dictis, ut et saevientis hostis audacia in tormentis atque in ipsa sacrilega invectione noscatur et Christi Domini praepotentis virtus in tolerantia martyrum atque in ipsa confessione laudetur.

33Since Carthage was about one hundred and fifty miles from Abitina, the journey would have taken several days. It hardly seems possible that the police escort would have permitted singing throughout the entire trip. See W. H. C. Frend, Martyrdom and Persecution in the Early Church (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1965), p. 464.

In some circumstances the military guards would give concessions. The friends of Perpetua and Felicitas were able to get many visitors into their prison, probably by bribing the guards. . . . Pudens miles optio . . . multos fratres ad nos admittebat (Passio Ss. Per. et Fel. 9).

34Anulinus was probably the same proconsul who interrogated St. Felix of Tibiuca and St. Crispina. There is no proof that he was the official whom Eusebius mentions in the correspondence of Constantine. See Seeck, "Anulinus," RE, I (1937), c. 2651.
to Carthage they joyfully and cheerfully sang hymns and canticles to the Lord throughout the entire journey. When they arrived at the tribunal of Anulinus, the proconsul at that time, and were standing bravely in the contest, they beat back the attacks of the raging devil with the Lord's constancy. But since the diabolical madness did not prevail on all of Christ's soldiers at one time, it summoned them to combat one by one. I shall describe the progress of these contests not so much in my own as in the martyrs' words, so that the savage boldness of the enemy in inflicting torments and sacrilegious abuse may be known, and the strength of the all-powerful Lord Christ may be praised in the very endurance and confession of the martyrs.

35 The provinces of Africa were called consulares, and the governor who ruled them was an ex-consul with the title of proconsul. See Berger, Dictionary, p. 653. The martyrs might be examined the first time by the municipal magistrates of the town in which they were seized. These magistrates could question the prisoners, but they could not sentence them. The governor of the province was the only official who had jurisdiction of this kind. See Paul Allard, Ten Lectures on the Martyrs, trans. Luigi Cappadella (London: Trübner and Co., 1907), p. 233.

36 The word diabolus and its derivatives was a favorite expression of the editor of the acts. The word comes from the Greek διαβόλος and means "adversary" or "calumniator." See Ricciotti, Age of Martyrs, p. 95.
V. Cum igitur ab officio proconsuli offerrentur suggeriturque quod a magistratibus Abitinensium transmissi essent Christiani, qui contra interdictum imperatorum et caesarum collectam sive dominicum celebrasset, primum proconsul Dativum interrogat cuius esset conditionis et utrum collectam fecisset. Qui cum se Christianum et in collecta fuisse profiteretur, auctor ab ipso collectionis sanctissimae postulatur: statimque iubetur officium eundem in eucleum sublevare extensumque ungulis praeparare. Sed cum carnifices iussa crudelia truci velocitate complerent starentque sae-

37 The officium could be the official duties of a public official. It could also mean the office of a magistrate and the personnel in the office. It was used especially when referring to provincial offices and magistrates. In the Passio of Saturninus the meaning varies from context to context. Cf. Passio 4: qui ad officium Anulini tunc proconsulis pervenirent; and Passio 5: statimque iubetur officium eundem in eucleum sublevare.

38 In the Passio the ordinary word for assembly is collecta or collectio, though congregatio is written twice. All three words mean an assembly of either good or bad people, but the word congregatio seems to be found only in a derogatory sense. Cf. Passio 6 and Passio 23. The collecta or collectio was a gathering of Christians for prayer, and in these acts it could be taken to signify the sacrifice of the Mass offered in the presence of the community. See "De sanct. mart. et Sat. pres. et al." ASS, p. 517.
V. Therefore after they had been presented to the proconsul by the attendant, and it had been reported that the Christians who had celebrated the assemblies and the divine mysteries against the edict of the emperors and the Caesars had been handed over by the magistrates of Abitina, the proconsul first asked Dativus about his rank and whether he had organized the assembly. When he declared that he was a Christian and that he had been at the assemblies, he was asked to name the one who had summoned the assembly. And immediately the attendant was ordered to lift him unto the rack, to stretch him out, and to get him ready for the claws. But when the executioners were carrying out the cruel

39 In the course of the questioning the proconsul was careful to ask only two questions: "Did the martyrs possess any sacred books? Had the martyrs been present at the services?" He never inquired whether the prisoners were Christians, for this was not prohibited by the first edict. See Baynes, "Persecution," CAH, p. 666.

40 At first the equuleus was employed only as an instrument for torturing slaves, but later its use was extended to free men. The name equuleus was applied to it because it resembled a horse. The victim was suspended or stretched on it, and his limbs and muscles were dislocated or broken by means of pulleys. See E. Saglio, "Equuleus," DAGR, II, Part II, p. 794.

41 The persecutors used the ungula a great deal in the torturing of the Christians. It was an instrument having hooks or claws for tearing the flesh or organs. See G. LaFaye, "Ungula," DAGR, V, p. 598.
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viences in dictis\(^{42}\) et denudatis ad vulnera martyris lateribus erectis ungulis imminerent, subito sese in medium Tazelita fortissimus martyr tormentis obiecit exclamavitque: Christiani sumus nos, nos, inquid, collegimus.

Statim proconsulis furor exarsit, et ingemiscens, spiritali gladio graviter vulneratus, martyrem Christi gravissimis ictibus tutudit, in eculeum suspensum extendit, ungulis perstridentibus laniavit. At contra gloriosissimus Tazelita martyr media de ipsa carnis aculnicum rabie huius modi preces Domino cum gratiarum actione effundebat: Deo gratias,\(^{43}\) in nomine tuo, Christe Dei filius, libera servos tuos.

VI. Talia precanti proconsul, Quis est auctor tecum, inquit, congregationis vestrae?

\(^{42}\)Reading in digitis for in dictis in the text edited by Franchi de' Cavalieri. He thinks that this passage is rather exaggerated since the torturers would not have had much time to take such a position. This expression recalls a scene in Vergil in which two of Aeneas' warriors are preparing to participate in the games in honor of the anniversary of Anchises' death. They take the same position in preparation for the fight. ... constitit in digitis ex templo arrectus uterque (Aen. v. 425).
commands with savage speed and were raging on tiptoes and with raised claws were threatening the sides of the martyr bared for the wounds, Tazelita a courageous martyr suddenly rushed into their midst and exposed himself to the torments saying: "We are Christians, we have met together."

The fury of the proconsul immediately flared up and severely wounded with a spiritual sword he groaned and repeatedly struck Christ's martyr with heavy blows. He hung him up and stretched him on the rack and mangled him with the strident claws. But in return the glorious martyr Tazelita, in the midst of the madness of his tormentors, gave thanks and poured forth prayers of this kind to the Lord.

"Thanks be to God. Christ, Son of God in your name free your servants."

VI. As the martyr was thus praying, the proconsul spoke to him as follows:

"Who together with you is the leader of your congregation?"

43Deo gratias was a Christian formula for showing gratitude, and was especially common in Africa where it was somewhat opposed to the Donatist expression Deo laudes. See Eisenhofer, Liturgy, p. 78.
Qui crudelius saeviente carnifice clara voce respondit: Saturninus presbyter et omnes.\footnote{44} O martyrem primatum omnibus dantem! Non enim presbyterum fratribus praetulit, sed presbytero fratres confessionis consortio copulavit. Quaerenti igitur proconsuli Saturninum ostendit; non quod illum prodidit, quem secum adversus diabolum pariter dimicare cernebat, sed ut illi panderet integre se celebrasse collectam, quando cum ipsis etiam presbyter fuerat. Manabat igitur cum voce sanguis Dominum deprecantis, et praeceptorum evangelii\footnote{45} memor inimicis suis veniam martyr in ipsa corporis sui laniamenta poscebat.


\footnote{44}{In this sentence Tazelita gives the name of the leader and then as an afterthought he adds the word omnes. The Donatist editor immediately injects words of praise to cover up his apparent weakness. It would have been more natural and more indicative of the human element to have left the statement as it was. Franchi de' Cavalieri, Note, p. 16.}

\footnote{45}{Cf. Matt. 5:44.}
But he answered in a clear voice as the executioner raged even more cruelly, "Saturninus, the priest, and all the rest." \(^{44}\)

O martyr giving primacy to all! For he did not set the priest above the brethren but joined the brethren with the priest in their common confession. Therefore he pointed Saturninus out to the proconsul when he was asked to do so, not that he betrayed him whom he perceived was struggling equally with himself against the devil, but that he might openly show the proconsul that he had celebrated the service when a priest had also been present with them. His blood therefore flowed with his voice as he prayed to the Lord, and the martyr, mindful of the commands of the gospel, \(^{45}\) begged pardon for his enemies in the very tearing of his body.

For amidst the most painful torments of his wounds he rebuked his torturers and the proconsul alike in these terms: "Unhappy men, you are acting unjustly; you are acting against God. Most high God, do not attribute these sins to them. Unhappy men, you are multiplying your sins. You are acting against God, unhappy men. We keep the commandments of the most high God. O unhappy ones, you are acting unjustly; you mangle the innocent. We are not murderers; we have done no wrong. God have
43

homicidae, non fraudem fecimus. Deus miserere: gratias tibi ago: pro nomine tuo, Domine, da sufferentiam. Libera servos tuos de captivitate huius saeculi; gratias tibi ago, nec sufficio tibi gratias agere.

Et cum ictibus ungularum concussa fortius latera sulcarentur proluensque sanguinis unda violentis tractibus emanaret, proconsulem sibi dicentem audivit: Incipies sentire quae vos pati oporteat.


Cui talibus oranti cum a diabolo per iudicem dicetur: Custodire te oportuit iussionem imperatorem et caesarum.

Defatigato iam corpore, forti atque constanti sermone victrix anima proclamavit: Non curo nisi legem

46 Prayers of the type that are given here were almost like the acclamationes which were recited to show approval for some ruling of the public officials or to greet the notables of the state. They consisted of certain words fixed in a definite rhythm. Nero employed the services of a special group trained to give Oriental greetings. See Momigliano, "Acclamatio," Oxford Classical Dictionary, p. 2.
mercy. I give you thanks. For your name, O Lord, grant
durability. Free your servants from the captivity of
this world. I give you thanks, nor can I thank you as
I should."

And after his sides struck by the blows of the
claws had been grievously torn, and a tide of blood had
flown profusely from the terrible furrows, he heard the
proconsul say to him: "You will begin to feel what you
must suffer."

And he added: "For glory. I give thanks to the
God of kingdoms. The eternal kingdom, the incorruptible
kingdom is being manifested. Lord Jesus, we are Chris-
tians, we are your servants. You are the hope of Chris-
tians. O most holy God, most high God, almighty God.
Praise be to You for your name, O Lord God almighty."

But as he was praying in this way, the devil ad-
dressed him through the judge as follows: "You should
have obeyed the command of the emperors and Caesars."

Worn out now in body, his victorious spirit pro-
claimed with a strong and steady voice: "I care for
nothing except the law of God which I have learned. I
Dei, quam didici; ipsam custodio, pro ipsa morior, in ipsa consumor; in lege Dei praeter quam non est alia. Talibus itaque dictis Anulinum gloriosissimus martyr in suis tormentis magis ipse torquebat.47

Cuius tandem rabies ferocitate saginata, Parce, inquid, reclusumque in carcerem passioni condignae martyrem destinavit.

VII. Post hunc Dativus a Domino in certamen erigitur, qui Tazelitae fortissimum proelium de proximo comminus, cum penderet eculeo, spectaret extensus, idemque cum se voce saepius repetita Christianum esse et collectam fecisse fortiter proclamaret, emersit Fortunatianus sanctissimae Victoriae martyris frater, vir sane togatus, sed a religionis Christianae sanctissimo cultu ipsis temporibus alienus.49

Qui suspensum in eculeo martyrem profanis vocabus hactenus arguebat: Hic est, ait, domine, qui per absentiam patris nostri, nobis hic studentibus, sororem nostram Victoriam seducens, hinc de splendidissima

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47Cyprian expressed a similar thought in one of his letters to the martyrs. Steterunt torti torquentibus fortiores (Ep. 10. 2).

48Victoria's brother was considered a member of the Carthaginian senate by one author. See "Saturnin," NET, cc. 914-926. Ricciotti calls him a lawyer. See Age of Martyrs, p. 94.
keep it, I suffer for it, I am being consumed in it; I suffer for the law of God, and there is no other beside it." And so with such words the most glorious martyr himself inflicted greater torments upon Anulinus than he was enduring in his own torments.47

When at last his fierce madness had been allayed, he said: "Spare him." And he shut the martyr up in prison and destined him for a worthy passion.

VII. After him Dativus was raised up by the Lord for the combat, who, while he was hanging nearby on a rack had observed the courageous combat of Tazelita; and when the same Tazelita had repeatedly proclaimed in brave terms that he was a Christian and that he had brought the assembly together, Fortunatian,48 the brother of the holy martyr Victoria, then came forth. He was indeed a Roman citizen, but he did not belong to the holy Christian religion at this time.49

He accused the martyr suspended on the rack with impious words to this effect: "My lord," he said, "this is the one who in the absence of our father, while we were studying here, seduced our sister Victoria and led her off with Secunda and Restituta from this place, the

49From this line it would be logical to conclude that Victoria's brother was later converted to Christianity. See Franchi de' Cavalieri, Note, p. 17.
Kartaginis civitate una cum Secunda et Restituta ad Abitinensem coloniam secum usque perduxit, quique numquam domum nostram ingressus est, nisi tunc, quando quibusdam persuasionibus puellares animos illiciebat.

Sed enim non tulit Victoria, clarissima martyr Domini, collegam et conmartyrem suum falsa adpeti Senatorem; statimque Christiana libertate prorumpens, nullius, inquid, persuasionibus profecta sum, nec cum ipso ad Abitinas veni. Hoc possum per cives probare. Omnia mea sponte atque voluntate perfeci; nam et in collecta fui et dominicum cum fratribus celebravi, quia Christiana sum.

Tunc impudens advocatus maledicta exaggerabat in martyrem: e contra martyr gloriosus de eculeo cuncta vera responisone solvebat.

VIII. Inter haec Anulinus ardescens premi ungulas in martyrem iubet. Statim carnifices in nuda praeparata-

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50 Carthage was considered the intellectual as well as the political capital of Africa. The study of rhetoric held a prominent place in the curriculum of the schools in those days. See Ch.-André Julien, Histoire de l'Afrique du nord (Paris: Payot, 1964), p. 181.

51 The quality of liberty belongs to all Christians since they have been freed from the bondage of sin by Christ. This newfound liberty of the Christian is not license but rather implies a complete surrender to God's will which actually makes the person more free. See J.
splendid city of Carthage, to the colony of Abitina. He never entered our house except at that time when he was enticing the minds of the young women with various arguments."

But Victoria, the illustrious martyr of the Lord, did not allow Senator, her colleague and fellow martyr, to be accused falsely, and immediately bursting forth with Christian liberty she said: "I was not persuaded by anyone, nor did I come to Abitina with him. I am able to prove this through the citizens. I did everything of my own accord and my own free will. For I was also at the assembly, and I celebrated the Lord's supper with the brethren because I am a Christian."

Then the shameless advocate increased the accusations against the martyr; but the martyr, on the other hand, glorious from the rack solved everything with his truthful answer.

VIII. As this was happening Anulinus inflamed with anger ordered the claws to be pressed into the martyr.

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The term dominicum was common in Africa in the third and fourth centuries. It implied the idea of "supper" or "sacrifice" and was characterized by a personal element. See W. O'Shea, Worship of the Church (Westminster, Maryland: Newman Press, 1957), p. 308.
que ictibus latera cruentis vulneribus venerunt. Ad-
volabant truces manus iussis velocibus leviores secre-
taque pectoris disruptis cutibus visceribusque divulsis nefandis aspectibus⁵³ profanorum adnexa crudelitate pan-
debant. Inter haec martyris mens inmobilis perstat et 
licet membra rumpantur, divellantur viscera, latera dis-
sipentur, animus tamen martyris integer inconcussusque 
perdurat.

Denique dignitatis suae memor Dativus, qui et 
Senator,⁵⁴ tali voce preces Domino sub carnifice rabi-
ante fundebat: O Christe Domine, non confundar.

His dictis beatissimus martyr quod a Domino 
poposcerat tam facile meruit quam breviter postulavit.

Denique mox proconsul, mente concussa, lingua 
nolenti, Parce, prosilivit.

Cessavere carnifices: fas enim non erat martyrem 
Christi in conmartyris suae Victoriae causa torqueri.

IX. Namque cum contra eum Pompeianus suspicionis

⁵³Cyprian in a letter to the martyrs spoke of 
one person who suffered such terrible torments that it 
was no longer his limbs which were being tortured but 
his wounds... quamvis rupta conpage viscerum tor-
quenteruntur in servis Dei iam non membra sed vulnera (Ep. 
10. 2).

⁵⁴Senator may have been a proper name or a kind 
of nickname for Dativus. Ricciotti believes that he was 
a decurion, while another author calls him a senator. 
The executioners immediately attacked the sides which were bared and softened by blows with bloody wounds. Their cruel hands flew more lightly than the swift commands, and they broke the skin, tore out the internal organs, and disclosed, cruelly bared, the hidden recesses of the breast to the abominable gaze of the impious. In the midst of these torments the martyr's mind remained firm, and, although his limbs were broken, his internal organs torn out, and his sides lacerated, the martyr's spirit still remained constant and unalterable.

Finally Dativus, who was also called Senator, mindful of his dignity in the face of the executioner's madness, poured out prayers to the Lord in such words: "O Lord Christ, I shall not be confounded."

With these words the blessed martyr merited what he had asked of the Lord as easily as he had begged for it.

Then at last the proconsul terrified jumped up and said reluctantly, "Spare him."

The executioners stopped. For it was not right that a martyr of Christ should be tortured for the sake of his fellow martyr Victoria.

IX. For even when Pompeianus, the cruel and suspi-
indignae saevus accusator accederet calumniosa etque conjungeret actionem, despectus a martyre est et retusus: Quid agis hoc in loco, diabole? Quid contra martyres Christi adhuc usque conaris?

A Senatore Domini martyre et potestas simul et forensis rabies superata est. Sed quoniam debuerat clarissimus martyr etiam pro Christo torqueri, cum interrogatus utrum in collecta fuisset et profiteretur constanter et diceret ad collectam se supervenisse et dominicum cum fratribus congrua religionis devotione celebrasse auctoremque eiusdem collectionis sanctissimae non unum fuisse, in sese rursus proconsulem acerius excitavit. Cuius recrudescente saevitia geminata martyris dignitas iterato ungulis sulcantibus exaratur.

At martyr inter vulnerum cruciatus gravissimos pristinam suam repetens orationem, Rogo te, ait, Christe, non confundar. Quid feci? Saturninus est presbyter noster.

X. Huius cum latera duri trucesque carnifices magistra crudelitate monstrante aduncis ungulis raderent, Saturninus presbyter ad proelium postulatur. Quique
cious accuser, came up and brought a calumnious action against him, he was despised and rejected by the martyr: "What are you doing in this place, you devil? What are you still attempting to do against the martyrs of Christ?"

Senator, the Lord's martyr, overcame at the same time both the judicial power and madness. But since the illustrious martyr had also to be tortured for Christ, when he was asked whether he had been at the assembly and steadfastly confessed that he had come to the assembly and had celebrated the Lord's service with his brethren with suitable religious devotion and said that no single person had called together the same holy assembly, he again aroused the proconsul more keenly against himself. Because of the proconsul's renewed rage, the martyr's glory was redoubled since he was again torn by the furrowing claws.

But the martyr in the midst of the grievous torments of his wounds repeated his original prayer: "I entreat you, Christ, I shall not be confounded. What have I done? Saturninus is our priest."

X. When the harsh and savage hangmen, prompted by their own cruelty, scraped his sides with the hooked claws, Saturninus the priest was summoned to the battle.
caelestis regni contemplatione considerans parva admodum ac levia suos conmartyres sustinere, congregi etiam ipse taliter coepit. Nam dicente proconsule: Tu contra iussionem imperatorum et caesarum fecisti ut hos omnes colligeres?

Respondit presbyter Saturninus Domini spiritu suggerente: Securi dominicum celebravimus.

Proconsul ait: Quare?

Respondit Saturninus: Quia non potest intermit-ti dominicum.

Qui mox ut haec dixit, contra Dativum statim iubetur aptari. Spectabat interea Dativus lanienam corporis sui potius quam dolebat, et cuius ad Deum mens animusque pendebat, nihil dolorem corporis aestimabat, sed tantum ad Dominum precabatur dicens: Subveni, rogo, Christe, habe pietatem; serva animam meam, custodi spiritum meum ut non confundar. Rogo, Christe, da sufferentiam.

Cui cum a proconsule diceretur, Ex hac splendi-
Contemplating the heavenly kingdom and thinking that his fellow martyrs sustained very slight and trivial sufferings, he himself also began to approach the combat in such a way. For while the executioner was saying: "Did you act against the command of the emperors and the Caesars in such a way that you gathered all these together?"

Saturninus the priest responded, being prompted by the Spirit of the Lord: "We have confidently celebrated the Lord's service."

The proconsul said: "Why?"

Saturninus replied: "Because the Lord's service cannot be suspended."

As soon as he had said this he was immediately ordered to be hung up opposite Dativus. Dativus in the meantime was observing rather than mourning the mangling of his own body, and his mind and spirit were trusting in God. He looked upon his bodily sufferings as nothing, but simply prayed to the Lord as follows: "Come to my aid, I beg, Christ, have compassion. Save my soul, guard my spirit so that I shall not be confounded. I beg, Christ, grant endurance."

The proconsul then told him: "You should rather have called others from this splendid city to a sound
dissima civitate magis debueras alios ad bonam mentem\textsuperscript{55} vocare et non contra praecptum imperatorum et caesarum facere.

Fortius atque constantius adclamat: Christianus sum.

Qua voce diabolus superatus: Parce, inquit, simulque illum in carcerem tradens, passioni condignae martyrem reservabat.

XI. At vero presbyter Saturninus recenti martyrum sanguine delibatus cum penderet eculeo, admovebatur in eorum fide persistere, in quorum cruore perstabat. Hic cum interrogaretur utrum auctor ipse esset et omnes ipse adunasset et diceret: Etiam, ego praesens in collecta fui.

Emeritus lector\textsuperscript{56} ad certamen exiliens congridiente presbytero, Ego sum auctor, inquit, in cuius domo collectae factae sunt.

At proconsul, qui iam totiens victus fuerat, impetus Emeriti perhorrebat; et tamen in presbyterum versus, Quare contra praecptum faciebas, inquit, se-

\textsuperscript{55}In other acts the officials made comments which were intended to bring the martyrs back to their senses. See, for example, \textit{Passio Sanct. Scil.} 11: \ldots si mentem bonam \textit{redeatis}.
mind\textsuperscript{55} and not have acted against the precepts of the emperors and Caesars."

Dativus exclaimed more bravely and firmly: "I am a Christian."

The devil conquered by these words said: "Spare him," and at the same time he cast the martyr into prison and reserved him for a worthy passion.

XI. But the priest Saturninus, having been bathed with the fresh blood of the martyr hanging from the rack, was encouraged to continue steadfast in the faith of those in whose blood he was standing. When he was asked whether he was himself the leader and had brought all the brethren together, he replied: "I also was present in the assembly."

Emeritus the lector,\textsuperscript{56} springing into the combat while the priest was fighting, said: "I am the organizer, and in my home the assemblies were held."

But the proconsul, who had already been conquered so many times, shuddered at the assault of Emeritus. But still, turning toward the priest he asked: "Why

\textsuperscript{56}The office of lector was the oldest and most widespread of the minor orders. In the beginning the one who held this office was responsible for all reading during the liturgical services. This order is no longer prominent in the West, but in the East it is still very important. See Eisenhofer, \textit{Liturgy}, p. 394.
cundum quod profiteris, Saturnine?

Cui Saturninus: Intermitti dominicum non potest, ait, lex sic iubet.

Tunc proconsul: Non tamen debuisti prohibita contemnere, sed observare potius et non facere contra praeceptum imperatorum.

Et meditata iam diu in martyribus voce tortores saevire commonuit. Cui non pigro paretur obsequio; nam carnifices in senile corpus presbyteri ruunt et gras-sante rabie ruptam nervorum connexionem discerpunt. Ingemiscenda supplicia et novi generis in sacerdotem Dei exquisita tormenta! Videbas, quasi in pabulum vulnerum, fame rabida saevire carnifices, apertisque vis-

ceribus ad horrorem videntium, inter ruborem sanguinis ossa nudata pallere, et ne inter moras tormentium ex-
clusa anima corpus subplicio pendece desereret, tali voce Deum presbyter precabatur: Rogo, Christe, exaudi.

Gratias tibi ago, Deus. Iube me decollari. Rogo, Christe, miserere Dei filius, subveni.
did you act against the command, Saturninus, as you confessed?"

Saturninus replied: "The Lord's service cannot be interrupted. The law so orders."

Then the proconsul said: "Still you should not have scorned the prohibition, but rather have observed it and not have acted against the order of the emperors."

And now having spoken at length with the martyrs, he urged the torturers to vent their fury, and they readily obeyed him. The executioners rushed upon the body of the old priest and in their growing fury rent and tore his muscles and sinews. O horrible tortures and strange and exquisite torments that were inflicted upon the priest of God! You could see the executioners rage with rabid hunger as if fed by the wounds. And when his entrails had been laid open, to the horror of the bystanders, his bared bones were white amidst the redness of his blood; and, as the torturers delayed their work, lest his soul be driven from the body under the impending torment, the priest entreated the Lord in such words: "Christ, I beg you, hear me. God, I thank you. Command me to be beheaded. Have mercy on me. I beg you, Christ, have mercy on me, Son of God, come to my aid."
Cui proconsul: Quare contra praeceptum faciebas?

Et presbyter: Lex sic iubet, lex sic docet, inquit.

O admiranda satis ac praedicanda presbyteri doctoris divina responsio! Legem sanctissimam etiam in tormentis presbyter praedicat, pro qua libenter supplicia sustinebat.

Legis denique voce deterritus Anulinus: Parce, inquit, eumque in custodiam carceris redigens exoptato subplicio destinavit.

XII. At vero Emerito applicito: In tua, inquit proconsul, domo collectae factae sunt contra praeceptum imperatorum?

Cui Emeritus sancto Spiritu inundatus: In domo mea, inquit, egimus dominicum.

At ille: Quare permettebas, ait, illos ingredi? Respondit Emeritus: Quoniam fratres mei sunt et non poteram illos prohibere.

Sed prohibere, inquit, illos debuisti.

Ait ille: Non poteram, quoniam sine dominico

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57 The Council of Cirta was also conducted in a private home because the basilicas had not yet been restored. Hi et caeteri bishops ... apud Cirtam civitatem, (qua basilicae necdum fuerant restitutae) in domum Urbani Carisi consederunt (Optatus, De schis. Don. 1. 14).
The proconsul asked him: "Why did you act against the decree?"

And the priest replied: "The law so decrees; the law so teaches."

O divine response of the priest teacher, so admirable and worthy of being proclaimed! Even in his torments the priest proclaimed the sacred law for which he willingly endured tortures. Finally Anulinus, terrified by the word "law," said: "Spare him."

And sending him back into the custody of the prison, he destined him for his desired death.

XII. Then directing his attention to Emeritus, the proconsul asked him: "Have assemblies been held in your home contrary to the decree of the emperors?"

Emeritus filled with the Holy Spirit answered: "In my house we celebrated the Lord's service."

Then the proconsul asked: "Why did you permit them to enter?"

Emeritus replied: "Because they are my brothers and I was not able to prevent them."

He said: "But you should have prevented them."

Emeritus replied: "I could not, because we cannot
non possumus.

Statim etiam ipse in eculeo iubetur extendi ex-
tensusque vexari. Qui cum validos ictus innovato car-
nifice pateretur, Rogo, Christe, ait, subveni. Contra
praeeptum Dei facitis, infelices.

Et interloquenti proconsuli, Non oportuerat te
eos suscipere, respondit: Non poteram nisi suscipere
fratres meos.

At proconsul sacrilegus: Sed prior, inquit,
erat iussio imperatorum et caesarum.

Contra religiosissimus martyr: Deus, inquit,
maior est, non imperatores. Rogo, Christe; tibi laudes;
Christe Domine, da sufferentiam.

Cui talia precanti haec proconsul iniecit: Ha-
bes ergo scripturas aliquas in domo tua?

Et respondit: Habeo, sed in corde meo.

Et proconsul, In domo tua, inquit, habes an non?
Emeritus martyr ait: In corde meo illas habeo.
Rogo, Christe, tibi laudes. Libera me, Christe: patior
be without the Lord's service."

He also was immediately ordered to be stretched out on the rack and, after being stretched out, to be tortured. While he was undergoing the powerful blows of a new executioner, he said: "I beg you Christ, come to my aid. Unhappy man, you are acting against the command of God."

When the proconsul interrupted him and said: "You should not have received them," he replied: "I could not do otherwise than receive my brethren."

Then the sacrilegious proconsul said: "But more important was the order of the emperors and Caesars."

To this the pius martyr replied: "God is greater than the emperors. I entreat you, Christ; praise be to you. Lord Christ, grant endurance."

While he was praying in this manner, the proconsul spoke as follows: "Do you then have some of the Scriptures in your home?"

And he answered: "I have, but they are in my heart."

Then the proconsul asked: "Do you have them in your home, or not?"

Emeritus the martyr said: "I have them in my heart. I entreat you, Christ. Praise be to you. Free
in nomine tuo: breviter patior, libenter patior.
Christe Domine, non confundar.

O martyrem apostoli memorem, qui legem Domini conscriptam habuit, non atramento sed spiritu Dei vivi, non in tabulis lapideis\textsuperscript{58} sed in tabulis cordis carnalibus! O martyrem legis sacrae idoneum diligentissimumque custodem!\textsuperscript{59} Qui traditorum facinus perhorrescens, scripturas dominicas ne perderet, intra secreta sui pectoris collocavit.

Quo cognito proconsul: Parce, inquit, eiusque professionem\textsuperscript{60} in memoriam una cum ceterorum confessionibus redigens, Pro meritis vestris omnes, inquit, secundum confessionem vestram poenas meritas persolvetis.

XIII. Sed iam ferina rabies ore cruento tormentis martyrum saginata languebat. Sed cum Felix nomine et passione processisset in proelium aciesque Domini omnis incorrupta invictaque perstaret, tyrannus mente prostrata, voce dimissa, animo et corpore dissoluto, Spero vos,

\textsuperscript{58}The picture of an ink holder, a pen for writing on papyrus, and a stone tablet that are displayed in the Biblical Encyclopedia serve to illustrate this passage very clearly. See "Cor. 3:3," Illustrated World of the Bible, ed. Michael Avi-Yonah et al. (New York: McGraw Hill Book Co., 1961), p. 232.

\textsuperscript{59}Cor. 3:3.

\textsuperscript{60}The professio was a declaration concerning age, family, children, and so forth, which was made by
me, Christ, I suffer in your name. I suffer for a short time. I suffer willingly. Lord Christ, I shall not be confounded."

O martyr, mindful of the Apostle who had the law of the Lord written not in ink but in the spirit of the living God, not on stone tablets but on the fleshy tablets of the heart! O martyr, apt and diligent guardian of the holy law, who, shuddering at the crimes of the traditores, collected the Lord's Scriptures in the hidden recesses of his heart lest he should lose them!

When he had learned this the proconsul said: "Spare him," and placing his public declaration in the archives together with the confessions of all the others he said: "In accordance with your just deserts you will pay the due penalties according to your confession."

XIII. But now his cruelty with its bloody mouth fattened by the torments of the martyrs was becoming less savage. When Felix, "happy" in his name and sufferings, had gone forth into battle, and the entire battleline of the Lord stood firm, unconquered and uncorrupted, the tyrant, broken in mind, weakened in voice, and desheartened in body and soul said: "I hope that you will

an individual, his representative, or guardian in the presence of a public official. See Berger, Dictionary, p. 656.
inquit, hanc partem potius eligere, quo possitis vi-
vere, ut iussiones conservetis.

Quae contra confessores Domini, invicti martyres
Christi, tamquam ex uno ore dixerunt: Christiani sumus:
non possimus nisi legem Domini sanctam usque ad effusio-
nem sanguinis custodire.

Qua voce percussus inimicus Felici dicebat:
Non quaero utrum Christianus sis, sed an collectam
feceris vel scripturas aliquid habes.

O stulta iudicis et ridenda interrogatio!
Christianus, inquit, utrum sis tace; et addidit: Si
in collecta fuisti responde. Quasi Christianus sine
dominico possit aut dominicum sine Christiano cele-
brari.

An nescis, Satanas, in dominico Christianum et
in Christiano dominicum constitutum, nec alterum sine
altero valere aut esse? Cum nomen audieris, frequen-
tiam Domini disce, et cum collectam audieris, nomen
agnosce.

Denique cognosceris a martyre et rideris; tali

61The early Christians considered Sunday their
regular day for sharing the Eucharistic celebration.
See Eisenhofer, Liturgy, p. 170.
rather choose that side where you may be able to live so that you can keep the commands."

In answer to this the confessors of the Lord, the unconquered martyrs of Christ, replied as if with one voice: "We are Christians. We can do nothing except keep the Lord's holy law even to the shedding of our blood."

The enemy, struck with this response, said to Felix: "I do not ask whether you are a Christian, but whether you organized the assembly or whether you have any writings."

O foolish and ridiculous question of the judge! "Keep quiet," he said, "if you are a Christian." And he added, "Answer if you were at the assembly;" as if there can be a Christian without the Lord's service, or the Lord's service can be celebrated without a Christian. 61

Do you not know, Satan, that the Christian has been established in the Lord's service, and the Lord's service has been established in the Christian, and that the one cannot be or act without the other? When you hear the name "Christian," know that there is an assembly of the Lord, and when you hear the word assembly, know that there is the name "Christian."

Finally you will be recognized by the martyr and
responsione confunderis: Collectam, inquit, gloriosissimam celebravimus, ad scripturas dominicas legendas in dominicum convenimus semper.

Qua professione concussus graviter Anulinus, fustibus caesum exanimem caelesti consilio martyrem, prope ante ipsa tribunalia expleta passione consociat. XIV. Sed Felicem alius sequitur Felix nomine pariter et confessione atque ipsa passione consimilis. Pari etenim virtute congressus, etiam ipse fustium illisione quassatus, animam in tormenta carceris ponens, superioris Felicis est martyrio copulatus.


62 The fustis was a kind of club employed in beating criminals. Tacitus described the same punishment meted out to a disobedient Roman legion... de-cumum quemque ignominiosae cohortis sorte ductos fustinecat (Ann. iii. 21).

63 A tribunal was a platform from which legal proceedings were conducted. The presiding magistrate, secretary, and council members were seated on this platform. See Berger, Dictionary, p. 742.
you will be laughed at; you will be confounded with such an answer: "We have frequented the glorious assembly and we have always gathered at the services of the Lord to read the Lord's Scriptures."

Anulinus, greatly struck by this confession, had the martyr beaten with clubs and joined him in death to the heavenly court after his passion had been completed almost before the very tribunal.

XIV. Another Felix followed the first Felix, equally "happy" in name and confession and like him in his passion as well. For when he had contended with equal courage and had also been beaten with the blows of clubs, he lay down his life in the torments of the prison and was united in martyrdom with the first Felix.

After these, Ampelius, a guardian of the law and faithful preserver of the divine Scriptures, began his contest. When the proconsul asked him whether he had been at the assembly, he answered cheerfully and confidently in a ready voice: "I attended the assembly with the brethren, I celebrated the Lord's service, and I have the Lord's Scriptures with me, but written in my heart. Praise be to you, O Christ. Hear me, Christ."
Qui cum haec dixisset, cervice contusus, in carcerem, quasi lumen\(^{64}\) in dominicum tabernaculum, laetus cum fratribus religatur. Hunc sequitur Rogatianus, qui confessus Domini nomen supra dictis fratribus iungebatur illaesus. Verum Quintus applicitus, nomen Domini egregie magnificeque confessus, caesus fustibus in carcerem truditur, digno martyrio reservatus. Hunc sequebatur et Maximus in confessione par, in congressione similis, in victoriae triumphis aequalis.

Post quem iunior Felix, spem salutemque Christianorum dominicum esse proclamans, cum similiter etiam ipse fustibus caederetur, Ego, inquit, devota mente celebravi dominicum collectam cum fratribus feci, quia Christianus sum. Qua confessione supra dictis fratribus meruit etiam ipse sociari.

XV. At iunior Saturninus, martyris Saturnini presbyteri sancta progenies, in certamen optatum festinus accessit, ad properans patris virtutibus gloriosissimis adaequari. Cui cum proconsul furibundus diabo-lo sug-

\(^{64}\) Tertullian also refers to the martyrs as the "light of the prison": Habet\(^{[}\) the prison\(]\) tenebras sed lumen estis ipsi; habet vincula, sed vos soluti Deo estis (Ad martyres 2. 6).
After he had said this, he was beaten on the neck and happily banished into prison with the brethren as if he were a light for the Lord's tabernacle. He was followed by Rogatian, who, after he had confessed the Lord's name unharmed, was joined to the above-mentioned brethren. But when Quintus had been called and had confessed the Lord's name admirably and magnificently, he was beaten with clubs, thrust into prison, and reserved for a worthy martyrdom. Maximus also followed him, resembling him in his confession, similar to him in his combat, and equal to him in his victorious triumph.

After him came the younger Felix proclaiming that the Lord's service is the hope and salvation of Christians; and, after he had himself in a similar fashion been beaten with clubs, he said: "I have celebrated the Lord's service with a devout mind. I took part in the assembly with the brethren because I am a Christian."

Because of this confession he also deserved to be associated with the above-mentioned brethren.

XV. But the younger Saturninus, saintly offspring of Saturninus the martyr priest, came quickly into the desired combat, hastening to be made equal to the glorious virtues of his father. And when the furious pro-
gerente dixisset, Et tu, Saturnine, interfuisti? Res-
ponditque Saturninus, Christianus sum.

Non a te quaero, inquit, hoc, sed utrum egeris
dominicum.

Cui Saturninus respondit: Egi dominicum, quia
saluator est Christus.

Quo nomine salvatoris audito Anulinus exarsit
et in filium patrium instaurat eculeum; extensoque
Saturnino, Quid, inquit, Saturnine, profiteris? Vide
ubi positus sis. Habes scripturas aliquas?

Respondit: Christianus sum.

Proconsul: Ego quaero an conveneris et an
scripturas habeas.

Respondit: Christianus sum: aliud non est no-
men, quod post Christum oportet nos sanctum observare.

Qua confessione diabolus inflammatus, Quoniam
permanes, inquit, in obstinatione tua, etiam tormentis oportet te fateri an aliquid scripturas habeas.

Et ad officium dixit: Vexa illum.

Ibant in adolescentis latera paternis vulneri-
bus lassati tortores et adhuc humentem in ungulis patri-
consul, at the suggestion of the devil, had said to him, "And you, Saturninus, were you present?" Saturninus replied: "I am a Christian."

He said: "I did not ask you this, but whether you celebrated the Lord's service."

Saturninus replied: "I celebrated the Lord's service because Christ is the Savior."

After he had heard the name Savior, Anulinus raged and prepared the father's rack for the son. And after Saturninus had been stretched on it, he asked him: "Saturninus, what do you say? See where you are placed. Do you have any books?"

He answered: "I am a Christian."

The proconsul then said: "But I am asking whether you went to the assembly or whether you have any writings?"

He answered: "I am a Christian. There is no other name except that of Christ which we must keep holy."

Inflamed by this confession the devil said: "Since you continue in your obstinacy, you must confess even under torture whether you have any Scriptures."

And he said to the attendant; "Torture him."

The torturers, already wearied by the wounds they had inflicted on his father, assailed the young
um sanguinem cognato filii cruori miscebant. Videbas per hiantium vulnerum sulcos de lateribus nati genitornis sanguinem fluere et cruorem filii paterno permixtum ungulis rorantibus emanare. At iuvenis genuini sanguinis admixtione recreatus medelam potius quam tormenta sentiebat, et decepto in tormenta tortore fortissimis vocibus exclamabat: Scripturas dominicas habeo, sed in corde meo. Rogo, Christe, da sufferentiam. Spes est in te.

Ait Anulinus: Quare contra praeceptum faciebas?
Respondit: Quia Christianus sum.
Quo audito, Parce, inquit.
Et statim cessante tormento in patrium consortium religatur.

XVI. Interea mergebat in noctem horis labentibus dies, et consumptis cum sole tormentis, defatigata tortorum rabies cum sui iudicis crudelitate languebat. Sed legiones dominicae, in quibus Christus perpetuum lumen, armorum caelestium corusco splendore fulgebant, for-
man's sides, and they mixed the still moist blood of the father clinging to the claws with that of the son. You could see in the furrows of the gaping wounds that the blood of the father flowed from the sides of the son, and the blood of the son, mixed with the father's blood flowed from the dripping claws. But the youth refreshed by the mixing of his father's blood felt a healing rather than torments. And after he had deceived the executioners in his torments, he cried out in a very loud voice: "I have the Lord's Scriptures, but they are in my heart. Christ, I entreat, grant endurance. My hope is in you."

Anulinus said: "Why did you act against the command?"

He answered: "Because I am a Christian."

When he had heard this he said, "Spare him."

At once the torments ceased and he was sent off to the company of his father.

XVI. In the meantime, as the hours passed, day turned into night, and an end was made of the tortures. Both the madness of the torturers and the cruelty of the judge were worn out and exhausted. But the Lord's legions, in which Christ, the everlasting light, shone with the gleaming splendor of celestial arms, sprang
tius atque constantius in certamina prosilivant. Cumque adversarius Domini tot martyrum proelia glori-
sissimis victus tantisque ac talibus congressionibus superatus, desertus a die, comprehensus a nocte, de-
ficiente iam carnificum rabie profiligatus, cum singulis congregi ulterius non valeret, totius exercitus Domini animos percunctatur devotasque confessorum mentes tali interrogatione propulsat.

Vidistis, inquit, eos qui perseveraverunt quid sustinuerunt, vel quid in sua confessione perstantes adhuc habeant sustinere. Et ideo qui vult vestrum ad indulgentiam pervenire, ut salvus esse possit, profi-
teatur.

Ad haec confessores Domini, gloriosi martyres Christi, laeti ac triumphantes simul, non ex proconsu-
lis dictis, sed ex victoria passionis, Spiritu Sancto ferventes, fortius clariusque, tamquam ex uno ore dixerunt: Christiani sumus.

Qua voce prostratus est diabolus et concidit

66The term *indulgentia* might signify a favor granted by the emperor. When it had this meaning it occurred mainly in imperial decrees concerning amnesty in criminal matters. See Berger, *Dictionary*, p. 500.

67Tertullian states that the Holy Spirit permeates the lives of Christians and inspires them to witness for Christ and suffer martyrdom. See *De fuga in per.* 9, 14.
to the contests more bravely and more steadfastly. And after the adversary of the Lord had been conquered by the glorious battles of so many martyrs and had been overcome by such great and noble encounters, he, deserted by daylight and overtaken by night, and overthrown by the now failing madness of the executioners, since he could no longer encounter individuals in combat, examined the souls of the entire army of the Lord and assailed the devout minds of the confessors with the following questioning.

"You have seen," he said, "what they who have persevered have endured or what they still have to endure if they persist in their confession. Therefore anyone of you who wishes to obtain pardon so that he may be saved, let him speak up."

Then the confessors of the Lord, glorious martyrs of Christ, happy and triumphant at the same time, not because of the words of the proconsul, but because of their victorious sufferings, being kindled by the Holy Spirit, more bravely and clearly replied as if with a single voice: "We are Christians."

The devil was overpowered, and Anulinus was over-
Anulinus, confususque omnes in carcerem trudens, sanc-
tos illos martyrio destinavit.

XVII. Et ne devotissimus feminarum sexus florentissi-
musque sacrarum virginum chorus certaminis tanti gloria
privaretur, omnes feminae Christo Domino auxiliante in
Victoria congressae sunt et coronatae. Etenim Victoria,
sanctissima feminarum, flos\(^{68}\) virginum, decus et digni-
tas confessorum, honesta natalibus, religione sanctis-
sima, moribus temperata, in qua naturae bonum candida
pudicitia reluebat respondebatque pulchritudini cor-
poris fides pulchrior mentis et integritas sanctita-
tis ad secundam palmam restitutam sibi in Domini mar-
tyrio laetabatur. Huic namque ab infantia iam clara
pudicitiae signa fulgebant et in rudibus adhuc annis
apparebat rigor castissimus mentis et quaedam dignitas
futurae passionis.

Denique, postquam plena virginitas adultum
aetatis\(^{69}\) tempus explevit, cum puella nolens et re-

\(^{68}\) Flos or flower is an epithet applied to the
martyrs and virgins by the early writers. Cyprian calls
virgins "flowers of the Church." Flos est ille ecclesi-
astici germanis, decus atque ornamentum gratiae spiritu-
lis (De. hab. vir. 3).

\(^{69}\) Ricciotti says that a girl was of the mar-
riageable age when she was twelve years old. See Age
of Martyrs, p. 99. According to Tertullian girls reach
puberty at the age of twelve, and boys at the age of
fourteen. (De vir. vel. 11. 4). See also H. Leclercq,
"Mariage," DACL, X Part II (1932), cc. 1843ff.
come by these words. In his confusion, he thrust all those saints into prison and destined them for martyrdom.

XVII. And, lest the devout female sex and the flower-er ing chorus of consecrated virgins be deprived of the glory of so great a combat, all women with the help of Christ the Lord came together and were crowned in Victoria. For Victoria was a most saintly woman, the flower of virgins, the honor and glory of the confessors. She was noble in birth, devout in her practice of religion, and temperate in her way of life. Her natural goodness shone forth in her candid modesty, and the beautiful faith of her mind was even more than that of her body, and the perfection of her sanctity rejoiced that a second palm had been given to her martyrdom in the Lord. For from her very infancy clear signs of purity had already shone forth in her; and when she was still in her early years, a chaste severity of mind and a certain dignity of her future passion were apparent.

Finally after she had reached the full maturity of her virginity, although she was unwilling and reluctant, her parents compelled her to marry and gave her a
luctans in nubtias a parentibus cogeretur invitaeque
sibi traderent sponsum parentes, ut praedonem (pud)oris
urgeret, clam sese per praeceps puella dimittit,
aurisque famulantibus subportata, incolulis gremio ter-
rae suscipitur. Neque fuerat postmodum etiam pro Christo
Domino passura, si pro sola tunc pudicitia moreretur.
Liberata igitur nubtialibus taedis illusoque simul cum
parentibus sponso, media paene de ipsa nubtiaum fre-
quentia prosiliens, ad aedem pudicitiae portumque pu-
doris ecclesiam intacta virgo confugit; ibique conse-
crati Deo dicatique capitis in perpetuam virginitatem
sacratissimum crinem inconcusso pudore servavit. Haec
ergo ad martyrium properans, florentem pudicitiae
palmam triumphali dextera praeferebat.

Namque interrogante proconsule quid profite-}
tur, clara voce respondit: Christiana sum.

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70 Reading fugeret for urgeret in the text edited by Franchi de' Cavalieri.

71 It appears that in the Church at this time the
virgins took no public vows. They made a private vow of
chastity, but there were no vows of poverty or obedience.
See Cyprian, De hab. vir. trans. Sister Angela Elizabeth
Keenan ("The Catholic University of America Patristic
Studies"; Washington, D. C.: Catholic University of
America Press, 1932), XXIV, p. 7.

72 The virgins of Carthage, Italy, and Gaul did
not cut their hair when they consecrated themselves to
husband even though against her will. In order that she might flee from the robber of her chastity, she secretly cast herself down from on high, but was borne up by a favorable breeze and received unharmed by the bosom of the earth. Nor would she afterwards have also suffered for Christ the Lord, if she had died then for her chastity alone. Freed therefore from the marriage torches and escaping from both her parents and betrothed, she, springing up almost from the very midst of the crowded marriage ceremony, fled as an undefiled virgin to the church, the shrine of chastity and the harbor of modesty. And there in unbroken chastity she preserved the holy hair of her head, consecrated and dedicated to God in perpetual virginity. She therefore hurrying to her martyrdom triumphantly bore the flourishing palm of chastity in her right hand.

For when the proconsul asked her what she professed, she answered in a clear voice: "I am a Chris-

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God. In Egypt and Syria the virgins did cut their hair. See "Saturnin," NET, c. 925. n. 1.

Et cum a Fortunatiano fratre togato eiusque defensore\textsuperscript{74} vanis argumentationibus mente capta esse diceretur, Victoria respondit: Mens mea est, inquit, numquam mutata sum.

Ad haec proconsul, Vis ire, inquit, cum Fortunatiano fratre tuo.

Respondit: Nolo, quia Christiana sum et illi sunt fratres mei, qui Dei praecepta custodiunt.\textsuperscript{75}

O puellam divinae legis auctoritate fundatam! O virginem gloriosam aeterno regi merito consecratam! O beatissimam martyrem evangelica professione clarissimam! Quae dominica voce respondit: Hi sunt fratres mei, qui Dei praecepta custodiunt.\textsuperscript{76}

Quibus auditis Anulinus deposita iudicis auctoritate, ad persuasionem puellae descendit.\textsuperscript{77} Con-

\textsuperscript{74}A \textit{defensor} was a person who defended another in a trial with or without authorization, or on account of a relationship with the person involved. Fortunatian, because of his relationship with Victoria, took it upon himself to argue her case in the trial. See Berger, \textit{Dictionary}, p. 428.

\textsuperscript{75}Cf. Matt. 12:50; Mark 3:35.

\textsuperscript{76}In answering the proconsul Victoria chose an appropriate selection from Scripture. In these lines Our Lord acknowledged a relationship only with those who were truly obedient to God. These were the only people He would call "His brothers." Many times in the acts
And when her brother Fortunatian, a citizen and her defender, vainly argued that she was out of her mind, Victoria answered: "It is my mind. I have never changed it."

At this the proconsul said: "Do you wish to go with your brother Fortunatian?"

She answered: "No, because I am a Christian; and they are my brothers who keep the commandments of God."  

O maiden, firmly rooted in the authority of the divine law! O glorious virgin, rightly consecrated to the Eternal King! O blessed martyr, illustrious for your profession of the Gospel, who responded in the Lord's words, "They are my brothers who keep the commandments of God."

After he had heard this Anulinus casting aside his role as judge descended to persuade the girl.

we find the martyrs stressing the fact that they were obliged to obey the commands of God before they could observe the precepts of men. See A. Jones, "The Gospel of St. Matthew," A Catholic Comm. on Holy Scrip., p. 875, s. 679g.

Since Anulinus was on a platform it would seem that he actually stepped down to Victoria in order to persuade her to follow the commands of the emperors. On a later occasion Anulinus told Crispina that "all Africa has sacrificed" and that she should therefore do likewise. Some officials would try almost any ruse to make the Christians comply. See Passio S. Crispinae 1.
Sule tibi, inquit, vides enim fratem tuum providere cupientem saluti tuae.

Cui martyra Christi, Mens mea est, inquit, numquam mutata sum; nam et in collecta fui et dominicum cum fratribus celebravi, quia Christiana sum.

Mox cum haec Anulinus audisset, furiiis agitatus exarsit et puellam sacratissimam martyrem Christi in carcerem una cum ceteris religans, passioni omnes dominicae reservavit.

XVIII. Sed Hilarianus adhuc supererat, unus de natis presbyteri martyris Saturnini, qui aetatem parvulam suam ingenti devotione vincebat. Hic patris fratrumque triumphis adproperans iungi, diras tyranni minas non tam exhorruit quam in nihilum duxit.

Huic cum diceretur: Patrem tuum aut fratres tuos secutus es? Subito brevi de corpore vox iuvenalis auditur et angustum pueri pectus ad confessionem Domini

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78 The words and expressions revealing the intense agitation and rage of the proconsul are undoubtedly additions made by the Donatist editor. It is interesting to note that in two other acts in which Anulinus appears he is pictured as cruel but restrained in his dealings with the prisoners. See Passio S. Crispinae and Passio S. Felicis. Another point to consider is his attitude toward Bishop Mensurius. The pagans, who suspected that Mensurius had given them heretical books in place of the Scriptures, requested permission for a
"Think of yourself," he said, "for you see that your brother desires to provide for your welfare."

The martyr of Christ answered him: "I have made up my mind and I have never changed it. For I also was at the assembly, and I celebrated the Lord's service with the brethren because I am a Christian."

As soon as Anulinus had heard this, he was aroused and raged with fury and, sending the saintly girl, the martyr of Christ, into the prison together with all the rest, he reserved them all for the Lord's passion.

XVIII. But Hilarian still remained, one of the sons of the martyr priest Saturninus, who conquered his extreme youth through his great devotion. He, hastening to be joined to the triumphs of his father and brothers, was so far from shuddering at the harsh threats of the tyrant that he considered them nothing.

When he was asked, "Have you followed your father or your brothers?" at once the voice of the child was heard issuing from his small body, and the narrow breast second search. The proconsul would not grant this permission, and the accusations were of no avail. Anulinus may have feared that the books would be found and thus a trial would be required. See Ricciotti, Age of Martyrs, p. 76.
totum aperitur in voce respondentis: Christianus sum
et mea sponte atque voluntate cum patre meo et cum
fratribus feci collectam.

Audiebas patris Saturnini martyris vocem per
dulces filii meatus exire et confitentem Christum Domi-
num linguam de fratri exemplo securam. Sed proconsul
stultus non intelligens contra se non homines sed Deum
martyribus dimicare nec quia in puerilibus annis ingen-
tes animos sentiebat, putabat puerum tormentis infant-
tiae posse terreri.

Denique, Amputabo, inquit, et comam tibi et
nasum et auriculas, et sic te dimittam.

Ad haec Hilarianus puer, patris fratumque vir-
tutibus gloriösus, qui iam didicerat a maioribus suis
tormenta contemnere, clara voce respondit: Quicquid
facere volueris fac; Christianus sum.

Mox in carcerem recipi etiam ipse iubetur, in-
gentique cum gaudio vox Hilariani auditur dicentis:
Deo gratias.

Hic certaminis magni pugna perficitur, hic dia-
bolus superatur et vincitur, hic martyres Christi de
of the child was wholly opened in the confession of the Lord as he replied: "I am a Christian, and of my own free will I took part in the assembly with my father and brothers."

You could hear the voice of his father Saturninus sweetly speaking through the mouth of the boy and his tongue strengthened by the example of his brother confessing Christ the Lord. But the foolish proconsul, not understanding that God, not men, was struggling against him in the martyrs, and because he did not perceive the great spirit in the boy's childish years, thought that the child could be terrified by torments contrived for children.

He then said to him: "I shall cut off your hair, your nose, and your ears, and thus send you away."

At this the boy Hilarian, glorious because of the virtues of his father and brothers, who had already learned from his elders to scorn torments, answered in a clear voice: "Do whatever you wish; I am a Christian."

Immediately he also was ordered to be taken to prison, and the voice of Hilarian was heard saying with great joy: "Thanks be to God!"

Here ended the battle of the great contest. Here the devil was overcome and conquered. Here the martyrs
passionis futurae gloria aeterna cum gratulatione lae­tuntur.

XIX. Verum, quoniam nos, ut supra diximus, scismatis tempus admonuit confessionibus tantis ac talibus martyrum decreta coniungere, constitutionesque sanctissimas amicorum Dei gestis superioribus catenare, necessario breviter cuncta quae martyres in carcere ex auctoritate legis divinae sanxerunt servandaque posteris reliquerunt discurram, nec lapsorum superbiam atque audaciam traditorum in hac ipsa mea festinatione praeteream. Cogit enim me transcendere nihil gestorum fides, amor legis, ecclesiae status, salus publica, vita communis. His enim de rebus Catholica ecclesia quae sit poterit recognosci, si labes pestifera traditorum nefandis actibus suis sententiaque martyrum omnibus saeculis declaretur. Postquam igitur supra dictos martyres Christi exoptatus carcer exceptit, confessores, qui priores illuc detrusi fuerant victoribus palmis, triumphales dexteras venientibus adiungebant. Veniebant praeterea ad eundem locum et ex diversis provinciae partibus alii quoque quam plurimi confessores, inter quos erant episcopi, presbyteri, diaconi ceterique
of Christ rejoiced over the glory of their future sufferings with joy.

XIX. But since, as we said above, this time of schism has encouraged us to unite the decisions of the martyrs to such great and distinguished confessions, and to join the holy decrees of the friends of God to their former deeds, I must briefly discuss all that the martyrs decreed in prison from the authority of the divine law and left behind to be kept by posterity, nor in this haste of mine shall I pass over the pride of the lapsed and the boldness of the traditores. For faith, love of the law, the state of the Church, the public welfare, and the common life compell me to pass over none of their deeds. For from these matters anyone will be able to recognize what the Catholic Church is, if the deadly pestilence of the traditores in their abominable actions and the judgment of the martyrs be declared to all ages. Therefore after the long desired prison received the above-mentioned martyrs of Christ, the confessors who had first been thrust there with their victorious palms joined their triumphant right hands with those who were entering. Furthermore, there also came to the same place from different parts of the province very many other confessors, among whom were bishops, priests,
clericae dignitatis praepositi; qui legem Domini asserentes, collectam dominicumque constanter et fortiter celebrabant, quique scripturas dominicas divinaque testimonia de flamma atque de incendio conservantes se ipsos diris ignibus cruciatibusque diversis machabeico more pro divinis legibus obtulerunt.

XX. Ea igitur tempestate cum horridus carcer intra se clusos retineret testes fidelissimos Dei crassisque tenebris et ingenti catenarum pondere devota membra vinciret, cum debilitaret fames, fatigaret sitis, frigus quateret, turba comprimeret, latera denique ipsa recenti ungularum laceratione disrupta fervent, inter catenas et ferrum instrumentaque omnia tormentorum ex auctoritate legis divinae, quam sibimet posterisque martyres conservarent, celebrantes concilium, cæ-

79 The Maccabees were regarded from the third century as the prototypes for martyrdom; they thus became a source of inspiration to all confessors. They were on the Carthaginian and Syrian lists of martyrs. See Frend, Martyrdom, p. 20.

80 In the acts of Perpetua we also find an indication of the terrible darkness that was characteristic of the ancient prisons. Post paucos dies recipimus in carcerem: et expavi, quia numquam experta eram tales tenebras. See Passio Ss. Per. et Fel. 3.

81 The catena were bonds or chains with which the prisoners were sometimes fastened when they were in custody. See Adam, Antiquities, p. 180.
deacons, and others of clerical rank, who, upholding the Lord's law constantly and bravely, celebrated the Lord's service, and, preserving the Lord's Scriptures and divine testaments from the flame and fire offered themselves to horrible fires and various torments in the manner of the Maccabees on behalf of the divine laws.

XX. Therefore at that time, when the horrid prison held fast those faithful witnesses shut up within it and bound their devout limbs shrouded in thick darkness with an enormously heavy weight of chains, when they were weakened with hunger and worn out with thirst, shaken by the cold, oppressed by the crowd, and, finally, when their sides torn by the recent mangling of the claws were becoming feverish, in the midst of chains and irons and all the instruments of torture, from the authority of the divine law which they preserved for themselves and posterity, the martyrs proclaimed a council and passed heavenly decrees. For

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82 The term concilium occurred for the first time in Tertullian's writings. This term is almost synonymous with synod, which comes from the Greek συνόδος. Both terms in ecclesiastical documents signify a regular meeting of the rulers of the Church for discussion and decision regarding Church affairs. See J. Hefele, A History of the Christian Councils, trans. and ed. William Clark (Edinburgh: T. and T. Clark, 1883), I, p. 1.
lestia decreta condebant. Vivit enim, vivit sanctus ille spiritus confessorum qui aeternis auris et divino colloquio pascebantur post crudelem ac saevam sui temporis tempestatem ac persecutoris horribiles minas.

Qui, dum Christianam religionem tyrannica rabies infestabat, fore quondam sanctissimum diem sciebant, quo se iterum purior ac serenior ab iacturis extollens Christiani nominis pax aeterna lucesceret, nec defuturam traditorum omnium calidissimam fraudem conspirationemque pestiferam naufragorum diabolica arte composi-tam, quae sub praetextu religionis impugnaret fidem, everteret legem divinaque iura turbaret, maxime cum iam Mensurius, Kartaginis quondam episcopus, recenti scripturarum traditione pollutus, post paenitendam sui sceleris amentiam peiora coepisset facinora publicare; quippe qui ambustorum veniam librorum a martyribus pos-

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83 Eusebius also uses the figure of a shipwreck to describe the devastation resulting from Diocletian's persecution. *Hist. eccl.* viii. 2.

84 From the letters of Mensurius we are informed that certain dishonest people claimed that they pos-sessed copies of the Scriptures because they preferred imprisonment to the payment of debts, or because they hoped to benefit from the generous gifts that the Christian community donated to those in the prisons. This was only another reason why the bishop was very cautious about permitting Christians to visit the prisons. Qua-dam etiam in eadem epistola [letter of Mensurius] faci-
that vital and holy spirit of the confessors who were nourished by a breeze of eternal freshness and by divine discourse lives on after the passing of the cruel and fierce storm of the crisis and the terrible threats of the persecutor. While the tyrannical madness attacked the Christian religion, they knew that there would sometime in the future be a most holy day when the eternal peace of the Christian name would shine, raising itself again more purely and serenely from its losses; and they knew that the clever deceit of the traditores would not be lacking and a deadly conspiracy of the shipwreckers drawn out with diabolic skill which, under the pretext of religion would impugn the faith, overturn the law, and disturb the divine rights, especially since Mensurius, a former bishop of Carthage, stained by his recent surrender of the writings, after he had repented of the madness of his crime, had already begun to commit worse deeds. And yet he should have begged and implored pardon for the burned books

norosi arguebantur et fisci debitores, qui occasione persecutionis vel carere, vellent onerosa multis debitis vita, vel purgare se putarent, et quasi abluere facinora sua, vel certe acquirere pecuniam, et in custodia deliciis perfrui de obsequio Christianorum (Augustine, Brev. coll. cum Don. 13. 25).
cere atque implorare debuerat; ut delicta sua flagitiis
maioribus cumularet, eo animo saeviebat in martyres,
quo divinas tradiderat leges. Etenim hic tyranno sae-
vior, carnificie crudelior, idoneum sceleris ministrum
diaconum suum elegit Caecilianum, eundemque loris ac
flagris armatum ante fores carceris ponit, ut ab ingressu
atque aditu cunctos qui victum potumque in carcere
martyribus afferebant, gravi affectos iniuria propulsaret. Et caedebantur a Caeciliano passim qui ad
alendos martyres veniebant; sitientibus intus in vinculis
confessoribus pocula frangebantur ante carceris
limina, cibus passim lacerandus carnibus spargebatur.
Iacebant martyrum patres ante carceris fores matresque
sanctissimae, et ab extremo conspectu liberorum exclusi,
graves noctu dieque vigilias ad ostium carceris exercer-

85 About this time there was a great increase in the power of the diaconate. The man who was the archidiaconus was commonly considered the bishop's right-hand man, and thus likely to succeed him. See Frend, Martyrdom, p. 464. Caecilian certainly supported the policies of Mensurius, and in spite of the opposition of some, was chosen by the majority of the people to guide the Church of Carthage. He was considered the rightful bishop outside of Africa during the entire controversy over his consecration. See Hefele, Councils, p. 177.

86 The word caedere may mean to strike or to kill, but it is difficult to determine what meaning it has here in the context of the acts. From some sources we might conclude that in carrying out Mensurius' commands Caecilian's measures were very harsh, possibly because
from the martyrs. That he might increase his crimes with greater disgraces, he raged against the martyrs with that spirit with which he had handed over the divine laws. For, fiercer than a tyrant, and crueler than an executioner, he chose his deacon Caecilian as a suitable minister of his crimes, and placed him armed with whips and scourges before the door of the prison so that he might drive off all from approaching and entering the door and inflict serious injury upon all who were carrying food and drink to the martyrs in the prison. And any who came to feed the martyrs were struck by Caecilian; for while the cups were broken before the threshold of the prison and the food torn to bits and scattered abroad for the dogs, the confessors enchained within the prison were languishing for thirst. The fathers and holy mothers of the martyrs lingered before the door of the prison, being excluded from a last sight of their children, and day and night they exercised painful vigils at the entrance. There was frightful weeping

he was hostile to the veneration which the imprisoned Christians received. See Frend, Martyrdom, p. 464. Ferrère states that on occasion the authorities were so agitated by the congestion of the Christians outside the prison doors that some unfortunate individuals were actually killed. La situation religieuse de l'Afrique romaine (Paris: Felix Alcan, 1949), p. 130.
bant. Erat fletus horribilis et acerba omnium qui adherant lamentatio, prohiberi a complexu martyrum pios et divelli a pietatis officio Christianos, Caeciliano saeviente tyranno et crudeli carnifice.

XXI. Interea martyres Christi non carceris squalor, non viscerum dolor, non denique ulla rerum penuria movebat, sed mentis pura consilia ipsi iam Deo de confessione sua vicini dirigebant in posteros salutemque communem et Christiani nominis progeniem redivivam ab omni faece et communione traditorum secernendam esse tali sub comminatione censebant: Si quis traditoribus communicaverit, nobiscum partem in regnis caelestibus non habebit.

Et hanc sententiam suam Sancti Spiritus auctoritate conscriptam tali de comparatione firmabant: Scriptum est, inquit, in Apocalypsi: Quicumque adiecerit ad librum istum apicem unum aut litteram unam, adiciet Dominus super illum innumerabiles plagas; et quicumque deleverit, delebit Dominus partem eius de libro vitae. Si ergo additus apex unus aut littera

87 Cyprian describes the squalor and other horrors of the prison: Famem vincitis et sitim spernitis et squalorem carceris . . . vigore calcatis (Ep. 38. 3).

88 Apoc. 22:18. Cf. Matt. 5:18. It is evident from this passage where the Christian is warned not to change even "one letter" of the law, that the Jewish
and bitter mourning of all present that devout souls should be held back from the embraces of the martyrs and that Christians should be snatched from a duty of piety, while Caecilian was raging as a fierce tyrant and cruel executioner.

XXI. In the meantime the filth of the prison did not disturb the martyrs, nor the internal pain of the wounds, nor finally the lack of any necessities, but fresh from their confession they were already directing the pure thoughts of their minds to God for those to come after them and for the common welfare; and they thought that the renewed offspring of the Christian name should be cut off from every contact and association with the traditores under a threat of this kind: "If anyone has communicated with the traditores, he will not have a share in the heavenly kingdom with us."

And they strengthened this judgment of theirs written with the authority of the Holy Spirit by means of the following comparison: "It is written," they said, "in the Apocalypse: 'Whoever will add one mark or one letter to this book, the Lord will add to him innumerable blows; and whoever will destroy one, the Lord will blot out his share in the book of life.' If tradition was carried into the early Church. See Frend, Martyrdom, p. 45.
una, vel adempta de libro sancto, radicitus amputat et
sacrilegi facti subvertit auctorem, necesse est omnes
eos, qui testamenta divina legesque venerandas omnipot-
tentis Dei et Domini nostri Iesu Christi profanis igni-
bus tradiderunt exurendas, aeternis gehennae ardonibus
atque inextinguibili igne torqueri. \(8^9\) Et ideo, ut
supra diximus, si quis traditoribus communicaverit,
nobiscum partem in regnis caelestibus non habebit.

Haec comminantes singuli ad passionis glori
festinabant, supremamque testationem ita unusquisque
martyrum cruore proprio consignabat. Exinde ecclesia
sancta sequitur martyres et detestatur Mensurii per-
fidiam traditoris.

XXII. Igitur cum haec ita sint, quisnam est divini
iuris peritia pollens, fide praeditus, devotione prae-
clarus, religione sanctissimus, qui iudicis Dei memor
veritatem ab errore discernat, a fide perfidiam dis-
iungat simulationemque fictam a certa et integra san-
titate secludat, separat ab stante lapsum, ab integro
vulneratum, ab iusto reum, ab innocent缎 dampnatum, a

\(8^9\) In the first century B. C. the word *gehenna*
came to signify the place where the soul was subjected
to the fiery torments of the last judgment. Fire was
a popular figure of speech symbolizing destruction
because of its power to consume whatever it contacted.
See T. Gaster, "Gehenna," *Interpreter's Dictionary of
the Bible*, II, pp. 361-362.
therefore one mark or letter when added or taken away from the Sacred Book cuts off at the roots and makes one responsible for a sacrilegious deed, it is necessary that all those who handed over the divine testaments and the venerable laws of the almighty God and our Lord Jesus Christ to be burned in profane fires should be tortured in the eternal flames and the inextinguishable fire of gehenna. And so, as we have said above, if anyone has communicated with the tradi-tores, he will not have a share in the heavenly kingdom with us."

Threatening these things, they individually hastened to the glory of their passion, and each one of the martyrs thus sealed the last testimony with his own blood. Consequently holy Church follows the martyrs and curses the treachery of the traitor Mensuriius.

XXII. Therefore since these things are so, does anyone who is powerful in the knowledge of divine law, endowed with faith, distinguished in devotion, devout in religion, mindful of the judgment of God, who discerns truth from error, distinguishes treachery from faith, cuts off fictitious pretence from a certain and pure sanctity, separates the lapsed from the worthy, the wounded from the uninjured, the guilty from the just,
custode legis proditorem, a confessore Christi nominis negatorem, a martyre Domini persecutorem, et unum atque idem esse existimet et ecclesiam martyrum et conventicula traditorum?


902 Cor. 6:13-18. This section of Scripture contains a warning against associating with pagans and thus becoming contaminated with them. See W. Rees, "The Second Epistle to the Corinthians," A Catholic Comm. on Holy Scrip., p. 1105, s. 888c. The Donatist claim that the good were tainted by the sins of a few was strengthened by this comparison.
the condemned from the innocent, the *traditor* from the guardian of the law, the betrayer of Christ's name from the confessor, the persecutor from the Lord's martyr, think that the church of the martyrs and the assembly of the *traditores* are one and the same?

No one of course thinks this because these things are as repugnant in themselves and contrary to each other as light to darkness, life to death, holy angel to devil, Christ to antichrist, since Paul the apostle says: "I speak as to my children, be you also open wide to us. Do not bear the yoke with unbelievers. For what has justice in common with iniquity? Or what fellowship has light with darkness? What harmony is there between Christ and Belial? Or what part has the believer with the unbeliever? And what agreement has the temple of God with idols? For you are the temple of the living God, as God says, 'I will dwell and move among them, I will be their God and they shall be my people. Wherefore, come out from among them, be separated says the Lord almighty, and touch not an unclean thing; and I will welcome you, and will be a father to you, and you shall be my sons and daughters, says the Lord almighty.""
Quam ob rem fugienda bonis et vitanda semper est religiosis conspiratio traditorum, hypocritarum domus pharisaeorumque sententia. Utinam in adoptionem filiorum filiarumque Dei in sancta ecclesia spiritualiter nati digne succedant et non alienis facinoribus mersi, pro luce tenebras, pro vita mortem, interitum sibi pro salute adquirant. Hanc etenim non dico partem, quia ecclesia Domini, quae una semper singularis est, contra sese scindi et in partes duas dividi non potest, sed potius curiam naufragorum, post teterrimam persecutionis noctem turbinesque pestiferos tyrannorum ad deceptionem innocentium praedamque populorum diabolus sibi versutia callidissimae fraudis invenit, ut quos aperta persecutionis clade transvorare non valuit, nec in saeculo sacrilego idolorum servitio mancipatos delictorum nexibus in perpetuam perniciem potuit retinere, eos pollutis traditoribus iungens, sub praetextu sanctissimae religionis extinguat.

Denique illic falsi sacrorum ritus fictaque mysteria non tam in salutem quam in perniciem

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91 The word mysterium is a transliteration of the Greek word μυστήριον. When this Greek word passed into the Latin version of the Scriptures it was translated as sacramentum, and so the two words have been closely associated. The Mass, the mysterium in a very special sense of the word, is a re-enactment of the redemption of Christ, and the sacraments are means by which we share
For this reason the good should flee, and the devout should always avoid the union of the traditores, the house of hypocrites, and the judgment of the pharis-isees. May they worthily succeed in being born spiritually into the adoption of sons and daughters of God in the holy Church, and when they have been saved from the crimes of others, let them not mistake darkness for light, death for life, destruction in the place of salvation. I do not call this [union of traditores] a part [of the Church] because the Church of the Lord which is always one and unique cannot be divided into two parts, but rather the devil with the wiles of his clever tricks has found for himself an assembly of shipwrecked after the frightful night of the persecution and the destructive disturbances of the tyrants for the deception of the innocent and the plunder of the people, so that those whom he was not able to retain in perpetual ruin, by joining them to the defiled traditores he could kill them under the pretext of holy religion after they had been delivered up to slavery by the bonds of their sins in the sacrilegious time of idols.

Finally the false rites of worship and the false mysteries\(^91\) are there celebrated, not so much for the

\(^91\) mystically in the life of Christ. See Eisenhofer, Liturgy, pp. 335-336.
miserorum celebrantur, cum erigit altare sacrilegus, celebrat sacramenta\textsuperscript{92} profanus, baptizat reus, curat vulneratus, nominat martyres persecutor, legit evangelia traditor, hereditatem caeli promittit divinorum testamentorum exustor,\textsuperscript{93} quos increpat Dominus et obiurgat in evangelio dicens: Vae vobis, scribae et pharisaei hypocritae, quoniam circuitis mare et aridam facere unum proselytum, et cum factus fuerit, facitis eum filium gehennae dupliciter plus quam estis vos.\textsuperscript{94} Et per prophetam polluta eorum sacrificia respuens ait: Sacrificia eorum tamquam panis luctus omnis qui tetigerit illum inquinabitur.\textsuperscript{95} Sed et per Aggeum clarissimum prophetarum, Interroga, inquit Dominus, sacerdotes legem: si acceperit homo carnem sanctam in summo vestimenti sui et tetigerit summitas vestimenti eiusmod aliquam creaturam panis, vini, aut olei, si sanctifi-

\textsuperscript{92}In the Latin language the \textit{sacramentum} was the oath taken by a recruit on entering the military service. In legal usage it was money left at the public treasury by someone who had lost a suit. In both meanings there was something of the idea of something or someone "consecrated" for a particular purpose. Tertullian applied the word \textit{sacramentum} to Baptism, endeavoring to show a certain rite of initiation or consecration. In Cyprian and other writers we find connotations of a sacramental oath and a sacramental mystery. See A. Michel, "Sacrements," DThC, XIV, Part I (1939), cc. 485ff. With the phrase \textit{celebrat sacramenta} it does not matter whether the editor intended to signify the administration of the Eucharist or the administration of all of the sacraments, because he was evidently thinking of the word sacrament in its actual meaning.
salvation as the destruction of the wretched when a sacrilegious person erects an altar, a profane one celebrates the sacraments, an accursed one baptizes, a wounded one cures, a persecutor names the martyrs, a traditor reads the gospels, a burner of the divine testaments promises the inheritance of heaven. These the Lord rebukes and chastises in the gospel saying: "Woe to you, Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites, because you traverse sea and land to make one convert; and when he has become one, you make him twofold more a son of hell than yourselves." And, rejecting their polluted sacrifices, he said through the prophet: "Theirs will be like mourners' bread, that makes unclean all who eat of it." And also, through Aggeus the most famous prophet, the Lord said: "Ask the priests for a decision: If a man carries sanctified flesh in the fold of his garment and the fold touches bread, or wine, or oil, do they become sanctified? No, the priests said.

93Caecilian of Bilta spoke in a very similar manner at the Council held at Carthage to discuss the rebaptism of heretics. . . . pacem dat inpacificus, Deum invocat blasphemus, sacerdotium administrat profanus, ponit altare sacrilegus (Cyprian, Sent. epis. 1).

94Matt. 23:15.

95See 9:4.
cabitur? Et dixerunt sacerdotes: Non, et dixit Dominus: Si tetigerit inquinatus in anima horum ali­quid, si inquinabitur? Et dixerunt sacerdotes: Inquinabitur. Et dixit Dominus: Sic et populus hic et sic gens haec coram me, dicit Dominus; et omnis quicumque accesserit illuc inquinabitur. 96

XXIII. Fugienda est ergo et execranda pollutorum omnium congregatio vitiosa et adpetenda omnibus beatissimorum martyrum successio gloria, quae est ecclesia una, sancta et vera Catholica, ex qua martyres profecti sunt et cui martyres testamenta divina servarunt. Haec etenim sola persecutionis infestae impetus fregit, haec legem Domini usque ad effusionem sanguinis conservavit, in hac virtute apostolicae Sancti Spiritus praesentia frequentantur, baptisma salutare perficitur, vita perpetua reparatur. Semper enim illi propitius insidet Deus, adest Dominus Christus, collaetatur et gaudet Spiritus Sanctus, in confessoribus victor, in martyribus triumphator.

96Agg. 2:12. The interpretation of the last line would indicate that the man was carrying home blessed meat in the pocket of his garment. This pocket was formed by the double fold of his tunic above the belt. The idea that meat or other objects could become unclean by touching unclean things was of course applied to the Jewish people by the prophet. See S. Bullough,
The Lord said: If one unclean in soul touches any of these, will he be defiled? The priests said: He will be defiled. And the Lord said: So is this people and so is this nation in my sight, and all whoever approach there will be defiled. 

XXIII. Therefore you should flee and curse the vicious assembly of all defiled people, and you should seek in all the glorious association of the most blessed martyrs which is the one, holy, and true Catholic Church, from which the martyrs set out and for which they preserve the divine testaments. This alone broke the attack of the hostile persecution, this preserved the law of the Lord even to the shedding of blood. In this the apostolic virtues are filled with the presence of the Holy Spirit, baptism is salutarily accomplished, and perpetual life is renewed. For a gracious God is always resting in it; Christ the Lord is present; the Holy Spirit is glad and rejoices, being victorious in the confessors, and triumphant in the martyrs.

"Aggeus," A Catholic Comm. on Holy Scrip., p. 688, ss. 544h-544i. Here again we see the Donatist doctrine that the good must be separated from the bad.
Postremo, cum nec Mensurius nec minister eius
Caecilianus ab hac inmani crudelitate cessare vellent,
Anulino proconsule aliisque persecutoribus interim
circa alia negotia occupatis, beati martyres isti cor-
poreis alimentis destituit, paulatim et per intervalla
dierum naturali conditione, famis atrocitate cogente,
cesserunt et ad sidera regna cum palma martyrii
migraverunt, praestante Domino nostro Iesu Christo,
qui cum Patre regnat in saecula saeculorum. Amen.

97 Franchi de' Cavalieri contrasts the statement
that the martyrs' deaths came as a result of starvation
with the first sentence which claims that the martyrs
"poured forth their blood in different places." This
seems to show some contradiction and adds authority to
the claim of some authors that they were released and
were martyred later in other places, or were condemned
to the mines where they eventually died. See Note
agiografiche, p. 42.

98 Cyprian felt the those who died in prison,
even though they had not been tortured, were entitled
to be counted in the number of the martyrs. He ordered
the day of their death to be commemorated. Corporibus
etiam omnium, qui etsi torti non sunt, in carcere tamen
 glorioso exitu mortis excedunt, inpertiatur et vigilantia
et cura propension... dies eorum quibus excedunt ad-
notate, ut commemorationes eorum... celebrare pos-
simus (Ep. 12).
Finally since neither Mensurius nor his minister Caecilian wished to desist from this horrid cruelty, and Anulinus the proconsul and the other persecutors were occupied with other employments, those blessed martyrs, destitute of food for their bodies and oppressed with atrocious famine, gradually died as the days passed by from weakness and a cruel lack of nourishment and, carrying palms of martyrdom entered the starry kingdom during the reign of Our Lord Jesus Christ, who rules forever and ever with the Father. Amen.
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