English Martyrs
September

The Holy Name of Mary.

Mother! to that dear name we greet to-day
A threefold meaning have thy Doctors given;
Receive my love, and may my life for aye
Yield homage to that name in earth and heaven!

May thy sweet rays e'er guide me through the gloom
And brighten all my path, dear Ocean Star;
Round my frail bark a thousand dangers loom,
Years pass, and still the haven seemeth far.

Mistress and Queen, take thou my heart to-day,
And fold me closely to thy tender breast;
Rule thou my will with sweet maternal sway—
Yea, heart and will are thine, and thine are blest.

Mingle my sorrows and my trials with thine,
(And none as thou have suffered, Mother dear);
Rest by my side, and though the Cross be mine,
Yet bitterness is sweet if thou be near.

D.B.C.

September 1.

I have lifted up mine eyes unto the hills, from whence my help shall come. Psalm cxx. 1.

Good Lord, give me the grace in all my fear and agony to have recourse to that great fear and wonderful agony that Thou, my Sweet Saviour, hadst at the Mount of Olivet before Thy most bitter Passion, and in the meditation thereof to conceive ghostly comfort and consolation profitable for my Soul.

Written by Blessed Thomas More after his condemnation.

September 2.

O magnify the Lord with me : and let us extol His Name together. Psalm xxxiit. 3.

When Edmund Arrowsmith was a boy, his daily practice twas, as he went to school in the morning, to recite with his brethren the Little Hours of our Laby's Office; and when he was coming home at night the Vespers and Compline.

September 3.

A man's life doth not consist in the abundance of things which he possesseth. S. Luke xii. 15.

If everyone would read and make good use of S. Liuke xii., a prison would be better than a palace; and a confinement for religion and a good conscience sake, more pleasant than all the liberties the world could afford.

Imprisonment, in these times especially, when none can send to their friends, nor friends come to them, is the best means to teach us how to put our confidence in God alone in all things; and then He will make His promise good that all things shall be added to us.

Ven, John Wall, O.F.M.

September 4.

Ven. Richard Horner, priest; martyred at York, 1598.
Everlasting joy shall be upon their heads, Isaias xxxv. 10,

The joy of this life is nothing, and the joy of the after life is everlasting.

Blessed William Hart.

O eternity, eternity ! how momentaneous are the glories, riches, and pleasures of this world, and how desirable art thou, O endless eternity!

Ven. David Lewis.

September 5.

Ven. William Brown, layman; martyred at Ripon, 1605.

Lazarus in his life-time received evil things, but now he is comforted, S. Luke xvi, 25.

As God did more for poor Lazar in helping him patiently to die for hunger at the rich man's door, than if He had brought him to the door all the rich glutton's dinner: so, though He be gracious to a man whom He delivereth out of painful trouble, yet doth He much more for a man if through right painful death He deliver him from this wretched world into eternal bliss. *Blessed Thomas More.*

September 6.

For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain. Philippians i. 21.

My time is spent, and eternitie approtsheth, not of miserie, but of joy. I fear not death, nor contemne not life; if life were my lott, I should endure it patientlie, but if death, I, shall receive it joyfullie. . . . Never since my receiving of Holie Orders did I soe much feare death as I did life, and now when it approtsheth, can I. faint? *Ven. John Duckett.*

September 7.

VV. Ralph Corby, priest, S.J., and John Duckett, priest; martyred at Tyburn, 1644.

I am the Mother of holy hope. Ecclesiasticus xxiv. 24.

The martyrs looked forward with joy, as Father Corby wrote, to "that blessed and happy Saturday which is the Vigil of her glorious Nativity by whose holy intercession I hope to be born again to a new and everlasting life."

September 8.

Nativity of our Lady.

In me is all grace of the Way and of the Truth, in me is all hope of life and of virtue. Ecclesiasticus xxiv. 25.

Joy in the rising of our Orient Star
That shall bring forth the Sun that lent her light;
Joy in the peace that shall conclude our war
And soon rebate the edge of Satan's spite;
Loadstar of all engulphed in worldly waves,
The Card and Compass that from shipwreck saves.

The patriarchs and prophets were the flowers
Which Time by course of ages did distil,
And culled into this little Cloud the showers
Whose gracious drops the world with joy shall fill;
Whose moisture suppleth every soul with grace,
And bringeth life to Adam's dying race. *Ven, Robert Southwell, SJ.*

September 9.

Ven. George Douglas, priest; martyred at York, 1587.

Asarias the priest... . withstood the king and said: It doth not belong to thee to burn incense to the Lord, but to the priests, the sons of Aaron: go out of the sanctuary. II. Paralipomenon xxvi. 17, 18,

Being examined whether he acknowledged the Queen to be Supreme Head of the Church in England, he most freely denied it, and proved his point with such authorities and arguments that for that cause alone he was convicted of high treason.

September 10.

Ven. Ambrose Barlow, priest, O.S.B.; martyred at Lancaster, 1641.

I am instructed both to be full, and to be hungry; both to abound, and to suffer need. Philippians iv. 12.

Lord, Thy will be done; a due conformity of our will to Thine, is to be preferred to the use of the Sacraments, and even to martyrdom itself. I reverence and earnestly desire Thy Sacraments; and I have often wished to lay down my life for Thee, in the profession of my faith: but if it be pleasing to Thy infinite wisdom by this illness to take me out of the prison of this body, Thy will be done.

Ven. Ambrose Barlow.

September 11.

And they loved not their lives undo death. Apocalypse xii, 11.

Some reprehended the Venerable Ambrose Barlow for going about so publicly. To whom he replied: "Let them fear that have anything to lose which they are unwilling to part with"; which was not his case, who had set his heart upon nothing in this world, and was even desirous to lay down his life for God's cause.

September 12.

Who is she that cometh forth as the morning rising, fair as the moon, bright as the sum, terrible as an army set in array? Canticles vi, 9.

How well her Name an ARMY doth present,
In whom the Tord of Hosts did pitch His tent!

George Herbert.

September 13.

God shall find consolation in His servants, II. Machabees vii. 6,

Christ, in the form of His true Bride,
Again hung, pierced and crucified,
And groaned: "T thirst!" Not still ye stood,
Ye had your hearts, ye had your blood;
And pouring out the eager cup,—
"The wine is weak, yet, Lord Christ, sup!"
Ah, blest! who bathed the parched Vine
With richer than His Cana-wine,
And heard, your most sharp supper past,
"Ye kept the best wine to the last!"

Francis Thompson.

September 14.

Exaltation of the Holy Cross.

The Holy Cross is exalted by all kings; the royal sceptre by which the Saviour triumphed, is lifted up. Antiphon from the Office of the Holy Cross.

See the glory of the Cross. That Cross that was the derision of His enemies, is now placed on the foreheads of kings. The effect is a proof of His power: He conquered the world not by the sword, but by the wood.

S. Augustine.

September 15.

And they gave Him to drink wine mingled with myrrh; but He took it not. S. Mark xv. 23.

As Blessed Thomas More passed by a good woman's house on bis way to execution, she came forth and offered him a cup of wine, which he refused, saying: "Christ at His Passion drank no wine, but gall and vinegar."

September 16.

Ven. Laurence Baily, layman; martyred at Lancaster, 1604,

The glorious liberty of the children of God. Romans viii, 21,

Only for assisting a priest he was thrown into prison, where he suffered much with great patience and constancy.

Enjoy thy bondage, make thy prison know
Thou hast a liberty thou canst not owe
To those base punishments; keep entire, since
Nothing but guilt shackles the conscience.

Zouch Towneley,

September 17.

A bundle of myrrh is my Beloved to me. Canticles i, 12,

O Ladye, thou hast felt this worldes teen—
Ladye of Sorrowes thou art yclept of men—
Seven sacred sorrows reft in twain thine heart;
A murtherous sword did work it grievous smart,
When that thy bleeding Son did meet thy ken
Afresh ensanguined from the lashes keen.

O Ladye, by the sorrows of thine heart,
Aind by thy Sonnes Sacred Woundes Five,
Cast down one crumb of comfort, yea, but one,
From thy bright throne above the golden sun;
So that I, may not pine away, but thrive,
FInd have assuagement of mine heartes smart.

Thomas P. Bullivant.

September 18.

This day thou shalt be with Me in Paradise, S. Luke xxiij. 43.

The comforts at the present instant are unspeakable; the dignity too high for a sinner; but God is merciful. . . The day and hour of my birth is at hand, and my Master saith "Tolle crucem tuam et sequere Me."

Blessed Everard Bause, writing trom prison on the eve of his martyrdom,

September 19.

He that believeth and is baptised shall be saved. S. Mark xvi. 16.

For Jesus' sake have a care of pour souls, than which nothing is more precious; and become members of the true Church as you tender your salvation, for hereafter that alone will do you good.

Ven. Edmund Arrowsmith.

September 20.

With the heart we believe unto justice; and with the mouth confession is made unio salvation. Romans x. 10.

Whatsoever the most sacred Council of Trent hath established touching faith and manners, I believe and hold. And whatsoever it hath condemned, I condemn in my soul, and renounce here under my hand, and abjure from the bottom of my heart. *Ven. Philip Howard.*

From my earliest pears down to this present day I have held the faith of that Church which throughout the whole Christian world is knit and bound together. . . . But as for this new Church of England, I, do not acknowledge it.

Blessed Thomas Percy at the scaffold.

September 21.

What is His good Thing, and what is His beautiful Thing, but the Corn of the Elect, and Wine springing forth virgins? Zacharias ix. 17.

All our good works put together can never equal the Sacrifice of the Mass. . . . Martyrdom itself is nothing in comparison with it; for martyrdom is the sacrifice which man makes to God of his life, while the Mass is the sacrifice which God offers for man of His Body and Blood.

Blessed Jean Baptiste Vianney, Curé d'Ars

September 22.

At Thy right hand are delights even to the end. Psalm xv. 11,

Why lovest thou so this brittle worldes joy?
Take all the mirth, take all the phantasies,
Take every game, take every wanton toy,
Take every sport that men can thee devise,
And among them all on warrantise,
Thou shalt no pleasure comparable find
To th' inward gladness of a virtuous mind.

So should the lover of God esteem that he
Which all the pleasure hath, mirth and disport
That in this world is possible to be,
Yet till the time that he may once resort
Unto that blessed, joyful, heavenly port,
Where he of God may have the glorious sight,
Is void of perfect joy and sure delight.

Blessed Thomas More, from Pico della Mirandola.

September 23.

Ven. John Ireland, priest ; martyred at Tyburn, 1544.

All things have their season, and in their times all things pass under heaven. Ecclesiastes iii. 1.

Where words are weak and foes encount'ring strong,
Where mightier do assault than do defend,
The feebler part puts up enforced wrong,
And silent sees that speech could not amend.
Yet higher powers must think, though they repine,
When sun is set, the little stars will shine.

Ven. Robert Southwell, S.J,

September 24.

VV. William Spenser, priest, and Robert Hardesty, layman ; martyred at York, 1589.

When Placid was being drawen out of the water, he saw over his head the cowl of the Abbot, which lifted him out of the lake. Antiphon from Office of the Patronage of S. Benedict.

Mr. Spencer, a priest in York, being called before Meares and others in authority, and coming in his attire priest-like, Dr. Meares would have had him stript unto bis doublet and hose, saying, his very habit was able to persuade folk in the streets to be of his religion.

September 25.

Behold thou hast taught many, and thou hast strengthened the weary hands: thy words have confirmed them that were staggering. Job iv. 3, 4.

From the time he was a boy, the Venerable William Spenser's zeal for souls was marvellous. He instructed in the true Faith the young men and boys who came fresh to his College, many of whom he converted from heresy. He then taught them a method of prayer, and put into their hands pious praper-books, especially the Jesus Psalter. In fine, he laboured so hard, that I have often doubted whether he gained more souls after he became a priest, than he did before.

Father Warford, S.J.

September 26.

Be ye therefore merciful, as your Father also is merciful. S. Luke vi, 36.

Almighty God, have mercy on all that bear me evil will, and would me harm, and their faults and mine together, by such easy, tender, merciful means as Tbine infinite wisdom best can devise, vouchsafe to amend and redress, and make us saved souls in heaven together.

Blessed Thomas More.

September 27.

When He granteth peace, who is there that can condemn? Job xxxiv. 29.

The least favour of God Almighty is more to be esteemed, than all the evil which the devil and all his wicked instruments can do unto us, is to be valued.

Blessed John Fisher.

September 28.

Behold, we count them happy which endure. S. James v, 11.

When the Venerable Margaret Clitheroe had heard any Catholic to be persecuted, or shut in more close prison, or debarred from things necessary, or otherwise cruelly dealt with, she would say: “They are most happy. I pray God give them patience and joy.”

September 29.

S. Michael.
Restoration of the English Hierarchy, 1850.

The Lord will not cause thy teacher to flee away from thee any more: and thy eyes shall see thy teacher. And thy ears shall hear the word of one admonishing thee: This is the way, walk ye in it: and go not aside, neither to the right hand, nor to the left. Isaias xxx. 20, 21.

Shall the past be rolled back? . . . Yes, for grace can, where nature cannot. . . . The Church can in any time, at her Lord's will, "inherit the Gentiles, and inhabit the desolate cities." Saints shall rise out of them, if God so will, and Doctors once again shall give the law to Israel, and Preachers call to penance and to justice, as at the beginning.

J.H. Newman

September 30.

The Lord taketh my part with them that help me. Psalm cxvii. 7.

If it be God's blessed will, not Saints alone, not Preachers only, shall be ours—but Martyrs, too, shall reconsecrate the soil to God. We know not what is before us, ere we win our own. . . . One thing alone I know— that according to our need, so will be our strength. One thing I am sure of, that the more the enemy rages against us, so much the more will the Saints in Heaven plead for us.

J.H. Newman