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Saint Felix, Priest and Martyr.

Saint Maurus, Abbot.

Saint Marcellus, Pope and Martyr.

Saint Sulpicius, Bishop and Confessor.

Saint Prisca, Virgin and Martyr.

Edited by William Renwick.

HAMILTON ONTARIO.

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## *Saint Felix.*

(January xiv.)

### *At Matins.*

*Simple Invitatory.* The Lord, the King of Martyrs. [886].

*Ps. Venite.* 36\*.

*Hymn.* Martyr of God. [874].

*Three Lessons.*

#### *Lesson j.*

**I**N the time of the Emperors Diocletian and Maximian, an edict went forth throughout all the provinces : that the sacred books should be taken away from the hands of the bishops and priests. Then blessed Felix, Bishop of the city of Tibiuca, was arrested : he was sent to Carthage to Anulinus the proconsul. To whom Anulinus said, Hast thou the unnecessary scriptures ? Felix the Bishop said, I have the scriptures, however, those that thou claimest are not unnecessary : know

that such shall not be surrendered by me. Therefore Anulinus the proconsul : sent him to Rome to the prefect of the Praetorium. The prefect sent him to Nola after the emperors : and blessed Felix was fettered in hard bondage of chains as he lay on a bench of the ship under the feet of the horses for four days and four nights neither eating bread nor drinking water, and came fasting to Nola. But thou, O Lord, have mercy upon us.

#### *Lesson ij.*

**T**HE attorney, thus mindful of the citizens, unbound blessed Felix the Bishop from the heavy chains : for him to be presented. Who saith thus, If in thine own city or in Bapud Carthage thou hadst given over the deific scriptures to be burned : thou should have by no

means been brought thus far to me. Felix the Bishop said, Consequently just as I have already responded previously to various investigations : thus yet again to thee I most certainly make known my manner, because in no way shall I deliver up the sacred scriptures. The attorney said, If thou

refuse to surrender the deific scriptures : thou shalt be punished capitally. Felix the Bishop said, I am prepared rather for capital punishment : than that the books of the Lord be delivered to sacrilege. Then the aforementioned attorney said,

Seeing that Felix the Bishop so strongly remaineth in this confession : therefore according to the command of the Emperor I resolve to put this very same to the sword. But thou, O Lord, have mercy upon us.

*Lesson iij.*

**B**lessed Felix the Bishop, raising his eyes to heaven : said, O God I give thee thanks : because for six and fifty years thou hast vouchsafed to keep my virginity in this present world. And now O Lord I suffer this for thee and for thy law : and joyful I bow my neck to the sacrifice. I therefore entreat that thou wouldst take my spirit from this mortal world : because thou alone art the living God, and abidest gloriously for ever and ever. This prayer completed, he was

led out by soldiers on the nineteenth of the Kalends of February and was there beheaded : and his body was placed at Nola, moreover by devout servants of God and sons of Mother Church the remains of blessed Felix were carried to Carthage. In which place by the merits of blessed Felix many miracles take place : through the goodness of the Lord our God, to whom be honour and glory through the endless ages of ages. Amen. But thou, O Lord, have mercy upon us.

*Chapter.* Every high priest. [928].

*Prayer.* Grant, we beseech thee. [924]. *and all the rest from the Common of one Martyr and Bishop.*

*From this day until Ash Wednesday let a Memorial of Saint Mary and of All Saints be made at Vespers and at Lauds on Feasts of iij. Lessons and on ferias which are made without Rulers of the Choir.*

## *Saint Maurus.*

(January xv.)

*Let Vespers be of Saint Maurus, Abbot : and nothing of Saint Felix.*

### *At j. Vespers.*

¶ *Ferial Antiphons and Psalms.*

*The Chapter* The righteous man. *and all the following from the Common of one Confessor and Abbot.* [1055]. *with this Prayer.*

Ⓐ God, who didst grant to thy blessed deacon and abbot Maurus to become a partaker of thine eternal glory : mercifully grant unto

us an entrance into the kingdom of heaven, through the intercession of him by whose example we are taught to live aright. Through.

*Memorial of Saint Mary and of All Saints.* 185.

*Compline as in the Psalter.* [532].

¶ *Here first let be made the Vigils of the Dead as in Advent : and let them be made until Maundy Thursday as is indicated above in the Advent of the Lord.* [596].

### *At Matins.*

¶ *Simple Invitatory. Three Lessons.*

*Lesson j.*

Ⓐ Blessed Maurus, coming forth from a family of illustrious senators, by almighty God nourished under regular instruction : at the age of twelve was given over by his parents to Saint Benedict. Who while thus far still young and strong in good manners : just as we likewise have seen him, began to be assistant to his master, and to be co-worker in his miracles.

Indeed Saint Benedict always loved him dearly above all and instructed him : and thus he was formed by servitude for almighty God, as no one after him hath followed in such holy monastic observance. Who indeed hath ever so austerely conquered the body by individual fasting, abstinence, and wakefulness, likewise by squalour and by excessive cold ? Frequently indeed have we seen him in the days

of holy Lent, neither in a tunic nor a cloak but clad only in a sackcloth of goat's hair : and only twice in a week rather taking a most small taste than accepting food. That custom was of course in the whole of life with Saint Benedict. Thus blessed Maurus, called forth by the example of his master, mortified the flesh by very strong affliction : just as much as by his own father he was allowed liberty. On the other hand during all the other seasons of the year : under the monk's tunic he was always clad from the shoulders to the kidneys in a jagged scapular. In bed, to be sure upon a mound of chalk and sand, he always made use of a hair shirt (except in the season of Lent). Then indeed not reclining but rather standing : or

when he had been forced by his too great exhaustion, he had been accustomed to take a little sleep while sitting. No one ever saw him arise from bed with the other brethren : he always took care to anticipate diligently the hymns of the Nocturns. Frequently fifty, often indeed more, and not infrequently all of the series of the Psalter : were completed by him before the office of the Nocturns began. Thus the aforesaid blessed man Maurus, overflowing with virtue, from that Saint Benedict and in the assembly of the brethren mostly suppressed his name as if another were being spoken of : he set himself to follow after the juniors and the negligent. But thou, O Lord, have mercy upon us.

*Lesson ij.*

**W**E have seen (said blessed Benedict of Saint Maurus) in your generation a certain most vigorous youth of nobility, below the years of adolescence, so suddenly seized with the perfection all monastic religion : that even by comparison with some of the older monks, more than with his equals, in all respects he is deemed most worthy. But this blessed and beloved of God Maurus, granted that some of his

brethren would suppose that he might be advanced by Saint Benedict through eloquence : never did he succumb to this, to the vice of boasting, always desiring the lofty and holy, and striving by all effort to advance from strength to strength. When therefore blessed Maurus, in the monastery of Father Benedict, was performing the duty of overseer and deputy in his place, and in his absence on a certain day returned

from the labour of the field : he found a certain lame and mute little boy in the way. Whose father and mother, casting themselves down at the feet of the blessed man, implored by the terrible name of God, that by him their son should be restored to health. And he, bathing in tears and also prostrate in prayer : then making the sign of the cross upon the cripple and also raising his eyes to heaven, said, In the name of the holy and undivided Trinity, aided by the merits of our most holy master : stand up sound and unimpaired. And at once restored to the most proper health, he began to walk about before him and to bless God with a voice of exultation. There was at that time a certain man of the name of Florus, among the first of the nobles in the Kingdom of the Franks, certainly well disposed in the worldly state : but always eager to please almighty God.

Which man was desiring to find in this religion excellent men : with his possessions to build a monastery, and to offer his only son to God, and so eventually to cast off all the affairs of the world and in the same place to serve God. Now among those to whom these tidings were brought from the blessed man : was a certain man named Arcleradus, a first cousin of the aforesaid Florus. Who, becoming acquainted with Florus' desire, immediately came near to him : and forthwith made known the reason of his coming to the blessed man. Florus therefore filled with joy soon approached the king : and he entreated that they be permitted to build a monastery as was desired. Then the blessed man made him come to him : and made known to him his desire of building a monastery. But thou, O Lord, have mercy upon us.

*Lesson iij.*

**A**fter this Florus shewed the blessed man a suitable place where the monastery ought to be built, and handed over his son, a little boy named Bertulph, to the master to be instructed in his doctrine : and many craftsmen having been assembled, the work hastened to begin.

And now when the said work was raised on high by the help of God : a certain cleric which was in charge of the workmen toppled backwards from the highest step, and fell down heavily upon the hard stone. And when all believed him dead : the man of God arrived with Florus, and

prostrated himself on the ground. And when he had prayed at length : he arose and making the sign of the cross on his crushed body said, In the name of God arise sound : and finish thy work. Who at once arose healthy, just as if from sleep. Moreover some of these workmen began to disparage the blessed man among themselves : but an evil spirit suddenly took possession of three of them, and immediately tore away the soul of one of them. Which as soon as the man of God recognized : he began to weep exceedingly. And then he lay in prayer : and those who were as yet alive he delivered from the demoniac infestation. After this the man of God, with fasting and incessant sighing pleading to the Lord, and offering to the Lord the sacrifice of our redemption for the soul of the dead : then approaching the body said, by the Lord Jesus Christ : who revived Lazarus after four days : restore to this body the soul which the enemy of mankind hath driven away. And when he had said this : forthwith the whole body moved itself, and immediately arose. Now the construction of the monastery

being completed : the aforesaid Florus himself offered to serve the Lord faithfully, and lived in holy religion for twelve years afterwards. Moreover in the same monastery many men from everywhere came together : and surrendered themselves to the service of almighty God. And when the congregation of the brethren had been made not a little time, and the holy man had been in charge of his flock for thirty years after the foundation of his monastery : the aforesaid Bertulph, who had been brought up in holy religion, substituted for him as pastor, and he chose to lead a separate life in a remote cell. And at the end of two years and a half, in contrition of spirit and mortification of the body : a pain of the side entered into him. Which, growing serious, lying upon a blanket before the altar of blessed Martin, his departure fortified by the reception of the life giving sacraments : then happily he departed to the Lord. In which place God worketh many miracles : to the praise and glory of his name. But thou, O Lord, have mercy upon us.

*The rest from the Common of one Confessor and Abbot. [1053].*

## ☩ *Saint Marcellus, Pope and Martyr.*

(January xvj.)

*Chapter.* Every high priest. [928].

*Prayer.*

**M**ercifully hear, O Lord, we beseech thee, the prayers of thy people, that we may be holpen through the merits of thy blessed Martyr and Bishop Marcellus, in

whose passion we rejoice. Through Jesus Christ thy Son, Our Lord, who liveth and reigneth with thee in the unity of the Holy Ghost, one God, world without end. *R̄*. Amen.

*Three Lessons.*



**M**aximian Augustus, the son of Diocletian, ordered that Christians wheresoever they might be found should be punished. At the same time he held Cyriacus, Deacon the city of Rome : and sent him into prison, and ordered that on the day of his procession, for an example of the Christians he was obliged to be dragged naked in chains before his carriage. Now on the day of his procession Marcellus the

*Lesson j.*

Bishop coming to the city of Rome : presented himself to Maximian Augustus saying to him, Of thy goodness I submit, wherefore dost thou slaughter the servants of God which pray for thy reign and for the republic ? Then angered, Maximian Augustus ordered that he be smitten with clubs, and that Bishop Marcellus be banished. But thou, O Lord, have mercy upon us.

*Lesson ij.*

**A**fter this Maximian Augustus commanded all those in chains which were in prison : together with Cyriacus the Deacon to be beheaded. And having been given sentence : they were led, with Cyriacus the Deacon, of both sexes in number one

and twenty, and were beheaded on the Salarian way, between the baths of Sallust and the gates in the walls. Which bodies John the priest recovered in the night : and buried. After eight days blessed Marcellus the Bishop coming with Lucina, a most

Christian matron, embalmed the bodies of the saints with spices and linen cloths, and transported them to his manor on the Ostian way, seven miles from the city of Rome : where

they rest in a sarcophagus of stone, who by her hand blessed Lucina buried secretly in peace, on the eighth day of the month of August. But thou, O Lord, have mercy upon us.

*Lesson iij.*

**A**T the same time blessed Lucina made a donation from her means : to the catholic church. Hearing this, Maximian Augustus : indignant, condemned her by proscription. Moreover blessed Lucina asked blessed Marcellus the Bishop, that he would consecrate her house as a church : and which blessed Marcellus the bishop did with all devotion. But when he frequently celebrated mass in the same house in the midst of the Via Lata : Maximian Augustus hearing this : commanded that in the

same church stakes would be laid out for the animals of the public stable, and the same Marcellus the bishop was assigned to the tend the animals with a state guard. Where indeed after many years of serving God : he rested in peace. Whose body John the priest carried off in the night with blessed Lucina, and embalmed with spices : and buried in the cemetery of Priscilla the virgin, on the Salarian way, not far from the city of Rome. But thou, O Lord, have mercy upon us.

*The rest from the Common of one Martyr and Bishop. [928].*

## ¶ *Saint Sulpicius, Bishop and Confessor.*

(*January xvij.*)

### *Prayer.*

**G**Rant, we beseech thee, almighty God, that we who commemorate the deposition of thy blessed confessor and bishop Sulpicius, may be helped by his

intercession before thee. Through Jesus Christ thy Son, Our Lord, who liveth and reigneth with thee in the unity of the Holy Ghost, one God, world without end. *R̄*. Amen.

### *At Matins.*

#### *Three Lessons.*

#### *Lesson j.*

**T**he blessed Bishop Sulpicius, whilst he lived a worldly life, remained in the house of his parents. Being devoted to good works, he was seen to do nothing else but build a church or construct a monastery, or to keep himself tirelessly busy in works of mercy for the poor. He was seen to express the bond of marriage with his love of chastity, and when the Lord deigned to satisfy his prayers and good intentions : with his hair cut off from the crown of his head, he received the burden of clerical office, and succeeded the steps of ecclesiastical dignities until he ascended to the dignity of the bishopric by election of the

people and with the support of the clergy. No one else persisted in that office, according to the church law, more than he did, as he endeavoured to care for the poor. And he worked always with such great effort to minister nourishments to them and to prepare shelter for them. Who out of the clergy, in comparison with the blessed man, could be thus able to maintain a vigil for continual nights or to fast for a month ? At night he would come to the church : and would not retire from the church before he had finished singing the whole Book of Psalms. But thou, O Lord, have mercy upon us.

*Lesson ij.*

**A**T that same time, being filled with longing, King Dagobert ordered his general Lollonus, a man of ferocious morals : who was without any vestige of mercy, that an unaccustomed tax should be imposed on the people of Bourges : and that they should live under the weight of the tax, and that they should serve the king's command. At this affliction, all the people of that region came in a crowd to the memorable man of God in a multitude of lamenting : and with elevated moaning, they implored the man of God in a confused voice that he should come down to them. Having been moved by piety and not bearing up to their wailing and tears : he beseeched God's mercy through the imposition of a three-day fast on the clergy, so that the people might

be brought to remembrance and he might relieve them of their affliction. Therefore he sent a certain man of his clergy, one Ebargisilus by name, to impugn the king to notice this crime : and that he should denounce this destruction quickly, unless it were quickly amended. Hearing this, the king was terrified with fear : and at once ordered that the people be relieved of the tax and that all record of it should be deleted. And so the population was relieved of that affliction : and to this day remaineth in perfect liberty. Nonetheless, revenge followed : it is believed that it was on account of this crime that the king and his satellite were killed shortly thereafter. But thou, O Lord, have mercy upon us.

*Lesson iij.*

**W**hen however the memorable pontiff saw himself seriously encumbered with such a great task between the care of the church and the care for the poor, as well as the business of the whole community : he asked the king for a partner to support this burden. The king offered his approval to this : and he gave him what he had sought, a most prudent

man whose name was Vulfolendus. Indeed, because of his humility, that man who cared first for the poor was then seen to give help more and more to the defence of the poor. Indeed, some drew away from him because he had left the episcopate and handed it over to another : and he took pleasure in the multiplication of certain animals. But he persisted in the work

he had undertaken, and fleeing human praise and shunning the boasting of vanity : he persisted always in this work, so that he might relieve the poor from want of food and clothing. And after the span of his life was completed : he went to the Lord in peace and full of days. That place, the basilica where the memorable man of God is buried, is called *navis*, because it seems as if there is a port for ships there. It is a most lovely place between two rivers, with pastures and woods and vine-

yards in great number : with fields and the rivers flowing between huge plains so that there the inhabitants seem to possess the very image of paradise. In that place he was honoured, by the grace of the Lord, to continue steadfastly for the helath of human kind : by him who is most excellent, who liveth and reigneth in perfect Trinity one God eternal and without end remaining unchangeable for ever and ever. Amen. But thou, O Lord, have mercy upon us.

*Chapter.* Behold a great priest. *and the rest from the Common of one Confessor and Bishop.* [998].

## ¶ *Saint Prisca, Virgin and Martyr.*

*(January xviiij.)*

*Prayer.*

**G**Rant, we beseech thee, almighty God, that we who keep the feast-day of thy blessed Virgin and Martyr Prisca, may both rejoice in the yearly solemnity, and profit by the

example of such great faith. Through Jesus Christ thy Son, Our Lord, who liveth and reigneth with thee in the unity of the Holy Ghost, one God, world without end. *R̄. Amen.*

*Let three Lessons be made from the Common. XX.*

*The rest from the Common of one Virgin and Martyr.*

*Chapter. O Lord, my God. XX.*

*Prayer as above.*