

## COMMEMORATION OF SAINT PRISCA

VIRGIN AND MARTYR

FOUR Virgins grace the Christmas cycle with their presence; the brightness they cast around is interspersed with rays of a darker hue denoting that the aureola of martyrdom is theirs as well. Truly it is those who have washed their robes in the blood of the Lamb and who have likewise shed their own for him that have the double right to enter in by the gates to the city and be presented to the new-born King. Perhaps this is the thought of the Church in choosing for such an honour those only who have been twice crowned. They are the gift that Rome herself offers to the Emmanuel; each of this glorious band achieved her triumph within her walls. To-day we have Prisca, but she will be followed by Agnes, Emerentiana, and Martina. The legend which is inserted in the Roman Office gives us all the details that can be known of the sufferings and martyrdom of Saint Prisca; her relics are preserved in the Church which bears her name.

Prisca, nobilis virgo Romana, tredecim annos nata, Claudio imperatore, christianæ fidei accusata, ejusdem jussu ducta ad Apollinis templum, ut idolis immolaret, cum rem detestaretur, colaphis cæsa, in carcerem traditur: atque inde emissa, cum in fidei constantia perseveraret, affecta verberibus, ferventique adipe delibuta, rursus in carcerem includitur. Post triduum in amphitheatrum producta, leoni objicitur; qui suæ feritatis oblitus, humiliter se ad ejus pedes abjecit. Quæ postea in ergastulo triduum inedia afflicta, in equuleo suspenditur, et unguibus ferreis excarnificata in rogum injicitur, unde etiam mirabiliter evasit incolumis. Denique extra Urbem capite abscisso, virginitatis palmam martyrii corona cumulavit. Cujus corpus via Ostiensi, decimo ab Urbe milliario, a Christianis decimo quinto Kalendas Februarii sepelitur.

Prisca, a noble virgin of Rome, aged thirteen, was accused of being a Christian in the reign of the emperor Claudius. By his command she was led to the temple of Apollo that she might sacrifice to the idols, and when she had shown her detestation of them, was beaten and cast into prison. When brought out of prison she persevered in her steadfast confession of faith and was therefore scourged, tormented with boiling fat and again cast into prison. After three days she was exposed to a lion in the amphitheatre, but the beast, forgetting its natural fierceness, crouched humbly at her feet. After another three days in prison with nothing to eat, she was racked, torn with iron hooks, and cast on a funeral pyre, but was wonderfully preserved from harm. Finally she was beheaded outside the city walls, thus adding the crown of martyrdom to her virginity. Her body was buried by the Christians on the Ostian Way, about ten miles from the city, on the fifteenth of the Kalends of February.

## PROPER of the MASS

### ST PRISCA, Virgin & Martyr

January 18

*Psalm 118: 95-96, 1* INTROIT

ME expectaverunt peccatores, ut perderent me: testimonia tua, Do-mine, intellexi: omnis consummationis vidi finem: latum mandatum tuum nimis. *Ps.* Beati immaculati in via: qui ambulat in lege Domini. Gloria Patri.

The wicked have waited for me to destroy me: but I have understood Thy testimonies, O Lord: I have seen an end of all perfection; Thy command is exceeding broad. *Ps.* Blessed are the undefiled in the way: who walk in the law of the Lord. Glory be to the Father.

COLLECT

DEUS omnium largitor bonorum, qui in famula tua Bibiana cum virginitatis flore martyrii palmam conjunxisti: mentes nostras ejus intercessione tibi caritate conjunge; ut, amotis periculis, præmia consequamur æterna. Per Dominum.

Grant, we beseech Thee, almighty God, that we who celebrate the birthday of blessed Prisca, Thy Virgin and Martyr, may rejoice in her yearly festival and profit by the example of her outstanding faith. Through our Lord

*Wisdom 51: 13-17* EPISTLE

DOMINE Deus meus, exaltasti super terram habitationem meam, et pro morte defluente deprecata sum. Invocavi Dominum patrem Domini mei, ut non derelinquat me in die tribulationis meæ, et in tempore superborum sine adjutorio. Laudabo nomen tuum assidue, et collaudabo illud in confessione, et exaudita est oratio mea. Et liberasti me de perditione, et eripuisti me de tempore iniquo. Propterea confitebor, et laudem dicam tibi Domine Deus noster.

O Lord my God, Thou hast exalted my dwelling place upon the earth, and I have prayed for death to pass away. I called upon the Lord, the Father of my Lord, that He would not leave me in the day of my trouble, and in the time of the proud without help. I will praise Thy Name continually, and will praise it with thanksgiving, and my prayer was heard. And Thou hast saved me from destruction, and hast delivered me from the evil time. Therefore I will give thanks and praise to Thee, O Lord our God.

*Psalm 45: 6, 5* GRADUAL

ADJUVABIT eam Deus vultu suo: Deus in medio ejus, non commovebitur. Fluminis impetus lætificat civitatem Dei: sanctificavit tabernaculum suum Altissimus.

God will help her with His countenance: God is in the midst of her, she shall not be moved. The stream of the river maketh the city of God joyful: the Most High hath sanctified His own tabernacle.

ALLELUIA

ALLELUIA, alleluia. Hæc est Virgo sapiens, et una de numero prudentum. Alleluia.

Alleluia, alleluia. This is a wise virgin, and one of the number of the prudent. Alleluia.

*Matthew 13: 44-52*

GOSPEL

IN illo tempore: Dixit Jesus discipulis suis parabolam hanc: Simile est regnum cœlorum thesauro abscondito in agro, quem qui invenit homo, abscondit, et præ gaudio illius vadit, et vendit universa, quæ habet, et emit agrum illum. Iterum simile est regnum cœlorum homini negotiatori, quærenti bonas margaritas. Inventa autem una pretiosa margarita, abiit, et vendidit omnia quæ habuit, et emit eam. Iterum simile est regnum cœlorum sagenæ missæ in mare, et ex omni genere piscium congreganti. Quam, cum impleta esset, educentes, bonos in vasa, malos autem foras miserunt. Sic erit in consummatione sæculi: exhibunt Angeli, et separabunt malos de medio justorum, et mittent eos in caminum ignis: ibi erit fletus, et stridor dentium. Intellexistis hæc omnia? Dicunt ei: Etiam. Ait illis: Ideo omnis scribe doctus in regno cœlorum, similis est homini patrifamilias, qui profert de thesauro suo nova et vetera.

At that time, Jesus spoke to His disciples this parable: The Kingdom of Heaven is like unto a treasure hidden in a field. Which a man having found, hid it, and for joy thereof goeth, and selleth all that he hath, and buyeth that field. Again the Kingdom of Heaven is like to a merchant seeking good pearls. Who when he had found one pearl of great price, went his way, and sold all that he had, and bought it. Again the Kingdom of Heaven is like to a net cast into the sea, and gathering together of all kind of fishes. Which, when it was filled, they drew out, and sitting by the shore, they chose out the good into vessels, but the bad they cast forth. So shall it be at the end of the world: the angels shall go out, and shall separate the wicked from among the just, and shall cast them into the furnace of fire: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. Have ye understood all these things? They say to him: Yes. He said unto them: Therefore every scribe instructed in the Kingdom of Heaven is like to a man that is a householder, who bringeth forth out of his treasure new things and old.

*Psalm 44: 3* OFFERTORY

DIFFUSA est gratia in labiis tuis: propterea benedixit te Deus in æternum, et in sæcula sæculi.

Grace is poured abroad in thy lips: therefore hath God blessed thee for ever.

SECRET

HOSTIAS tibi, Domine, beatæ Bibianæ, Virginis et Martyris tuæ dicatas meritis, benignus assume: et ad perpetuum nobis tribue provenire subsidium. Per Dominum.

We beseech Thee, O Lord, may this Sacrifice which we offer in commemoration of the heavenly birthday of Thy Saints, both loosen the bonds of our iniquity and obtain for us the gifts of Thy mercy. Through our Lord.

THE COMMON PREFACE

VERE dignum et justum est, æquum et salutare, nos tibi semper, et ubique gratias agere: Domine sancte, Pater omnipotens, æterne Deus: per Christum Dominum nostrum. Per quem majestatem tuam laudant Angeli, adorant Dominationes, tremunt Potestates. Cœli, cœlorumque Virtutes ac beata Seraphim socia exultatione concelebrant. Cum quibus et nostras voces, ut admitti, jubeas, supplici confessione dicentes:

It is truly meet and just, right and for our salvation that we should at all times and in all places, give thanks unto Thee, O holy Lord, Father almighty, eternal God: through Christ our Lord. through Whom the Angels praise Thy Majesty, Dominations worship, Powers stand in awe. The Heavens and the Heavenly hosts together with the blessed Seraphim in triumphant chorus unite to celebrate it. Together with them we entreat Thee, that Thou mayest bid our voices also to be admitted, while we say in lowly praise:

*Psalm 118: 121, 122, 128*

COMMUNION

FECI judicium et justitiam, Domine, non calumnientur mihi superbi: ad omnia mandata tua dirigebar, omnem viam iniquitatis odio habui.

I have done judgement and justice, O Lord, give me not up to them that slander me: I was directed to all Thy commandments, I have hated all wicked ways.

POSTCOMMUNION

DIVINI muneris largitate satiati, quæsumus Domine Deus noster: ut, intercedente beata Bibiana Virgine et Martyre tua, in ejus semper participatione vivamus. Per Dominum.

We beseech Thee, O Lord, that we who have been fed with these saving Mysteries, may ever be helped by the prayers of her whose festival we are keeping. Through our Lord.