

## A Synaxis of Latin Saints (Plain Reading)

August 10th

On August 10th we commemorate Saint Laurence, the Heirodeacon and Martyr of Rome. A loyal companion to Saint Sixtus II Pope of Rome, Saint Laurence was first deacon at the patriarchal cathedral of Old Rome and a witness to the martyrdom of Saint Sixtus II. Though wishing to have been martyred alongside Saint Sixtus II, Saint Laurence was entrusted with the task of gathering together all the treasure of the Church. The Roman authorities gave Saint Laurence three days to bring all the wealth of the Old Roman Church or suffer martyrdom. Saint Laurence, following the wishes of Saint Sixtus II, distributed all the valuables to the poor and needy. When, on the third day, he appeared before the authorities, he brought a great crowd of poor and destitute Orthodox Christians. "Behold the treasures of the Church," he proclaimed. Saint Laurence was immediately thrown into the dungeon and tortured over many days. During his imprisonment he converted many of the guards and torturers around him. His relics rest today in Mount Athos and Old Rome.

### *Verses*

On this day we commemorate Saint Bertram, King and Hermit of Mercia. Bertram was King of Mercia sometime around the 8th century. He is said to have traveled to Ireland in order to discern his feeling of having a religious calling. However, when he arrived in Ireland he fell in love and eloped with a beautiful princess who he brought back to Mercia with him while she was pregnant with his child. They lived a nomadic life with the baby being said to have been born in the shelter of the forest near to present day Stafford. Tragically, whilst Bertram was away hunting for food for them, some wolves came upon their camp killing both his beloved wife and their infant child.

Overcome with grief, he once again turned to God. Renouncing his royal heritage he sought now a life of prayer. It is reported that many pagans from the area were converted to Christianity by the example he gave in his new life.

Without revealing his royal lineage, and presumably in disguise, Bertram approached the court of Mercia asking for, and being granted, land (near to modern day Stafford) where he could build a hermitage. The next King of Mercia, an impious man, attempted to take the land back, but God defended Saint Bertram.

On this day we commemorate Saint Deusdedit, the shoemaker of Rome, who gave away all he earned to the poor every week on Saturday.

By the intercessions of Thy Saints, O Christ God, have mercy upon us. Amen.