February 18th − St. Simeon of Jerusalem BM (RM)

(Also known as Simon of Jerusalem)

Died c. 107. Not all of Jesus' relatives understood His teaching or recognized His divinity. One who did was Simeon, his first cousin. Tradition says that Simeon was the son of Cleophas (Alpheus, brother to Saint Joseph) and Mary (sister−in−law of the Blessed Virgin). Some think that Simeon was the bridegroom for which Jesus changed the water into wine at Cana.

Some Christians believe that this Simeon was the same person as Jesus' disciple who was nicknamed 'the Zealot' because he belonged to a party of strongly nationalistic Jews. If Simeon and Simon are one, he was also brother to Saint James the Lesser and Saint Jude, apostles, and of Joseph. If they are identical, Simeon was among the band of followers, who, after His Resurrection, devoted themselves to prayer in Jerusalem until the descent of the Holy Spirit to bless and inspire them all.

Saint Epiphanius relates in "Panarion seu adversus LXXX haereses (78, c. 14)" that when the Jews massacred Saint James the Lesser in 62 AD, Simeon reproached them for their atrocious cruelty. Simeon was unanimously chosen successor to his brother as patriarch of Jerusalem. He was the natural choice because he had probably assisted his brother in the government of that church.

Tradition says that, like Lot in Sodom, Simeon was supernaturally warned of the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans in AD 66, and withdrew with many fellow−Christians to the small city of Pella, where they remained until it was safe for them to return to Jerusalem after its destruction in AD 70.

Epiphanius and Eusebius assure us, that the church flourished at Pella, and that multitudes of Jews were converted by the great number of prodigies and miracles wrought in it. Nevertheless, already during this early period the Church saw the rise of heresy in the form of the Nazareans, who thought Jesus to be the greatest of prophets but only a man, and the Ebonites and Docetists, which seems to be gnostic sects. The Nazareans joined all the ceremonies of the old law with the new, and observed both the Jewish Sabbath and the Lord's Day (Sunday). Ebion added other errors to these, which Cerenthus had also espoused, and taught many superstitions, permitted divorces, and allowed of the most infamous abominations. The authority of Simeon kept the heretics in some awe during his
life, which was the longest upon earth of any of our Lord's disciples. But, as Eusebius says, he was no sooner dead than a deluge of execrable heresies broke out of hell upon the Church, which durst not openly appear during his life.

Simeon's life was never free of danger. He escaped the death ordered by Emperors Vespasian and Domitian when they decreed that all of Jewish origin were to be executed, but finally, during the persecutions of Atticus under the Emperor Trajan in 107, Simeon was caught, tortured, and crucified like his Lord. Reputedly, he was well over 100 (120 by most accounts) years old at the time of his death. Atticus and the executioners expressed admiration of Simeon's fortitude and strength in martyrdom. Tradition places the site of his martyrdom in far-flung Persia, Egypt, or the British Isles (Benedictines, Bentley, Delaney, Encyclopedia, Husenbeth).

In art, Saint Simeon is portrayed as an ancient bishop being crucified (easily confused with Saint Nestor) (Roeder).

This Version taken from:
http://www.saintpatrickdc.org/ss/ss–index.htm

Quote:
If the Lord should give you power to raise the dead, He would give much less than He does when he bestows suffering. By miracles you would make yourself debtor to Him, while by suffering He may become debtor to you. And even if sufferings had no other reward than being able to bear something for that God who loves you, is not this a great reward and a sufficient remuneration? Whoever loves, understands what I say.
—Saint John Chrysostom

Bible Quote
1 But the souls of the just are in the hand of God, and the torment of death shall not touch them. 2 In the sight of the unwise they seemed to die: and their departure was taken for misery: 3 And their going away from us, for utter destruction: but they are in peace. (Wisdom 3:1–3)

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Hail, Saving Victim

Salve, salutaris Victima, pro me at omni humano genere in patibulo Crucis oblata.
Salve, pretioso Sanguinis, de vulneribus Crucifixi Domini nostri Jesu Christi profluens, et peccata totius mundi abluens.

Recordare, Domine, creaturae tuae, quam pretioso Sanguine redemisti.

Hail saving Victim, offered for me and for all mankind upon the scaffold of the Cross.
Hail, Precious Blood, flowing from the wounds of our crucified Lord, Jesus Christ, and washing away the sins of the whole world.
Remember, O Lord, Thy creature, whom Thou hast redeemed by Thy Precious Blood.

THE RACCOLTA

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O Lord, I give thanks unto Thee, because Thou didst die upon the Cross for my sins.

ST. PAUL OF THE CROSS