

August 27

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Cesarius of Arles

(ca. 470-543)

monk and pastor

Cesarius, a monk and bishop of the diocese of Arles, France, died in 543.

Born around the year 470 near Chalon-sur-Saône, Cesarius went to live on the island of Lérins at the age of twenty, and was initiated into monastic life. When he became too extreme in his asceticism, he was forced to leave Lérins for Arles. There he sought the guidance of the bishop Eon, who asked him to direct a monastery. After Eon's death in 503, Cesarius was elected to lead the diocese, which was fraught with difficulties due to political instability in the region and the longstanding Pelagian controversies.

An impassioned preacher of the Gospel, Cesarius shared his own love for God's word with the clergy and the faithful. He was recognized as a discerning pastor and presided over several important synods in the Gallic churches. His fondness for monastic life inspired him to write rules for men's and women's communities, in which he encouraged a creative integration of the experience of the desert fathers with the cenobitic monasticism of his time.

His literary output, prolific although not always original, was widely read in the medieval West.

BIBLICAL READINGS

Acts 20:17-18a.28-32.36; Mk 4:1-9

THE CHURCHES REMEMBER...

ANGLICANS:

Monica (d. 387), mother of Augustine of Hippo

WESTERN CATHOLICS:

Monica (Roman and Ambrosian calendars)

COPTS AND ETHIOPIANS (21 misra/nahasse):

Irene daughter of Licinius (4th cent.; Coptic Church)

LUTHERANS:

Monica, mother of Augustine in North Africa

Cesarius of Arles, bishop and benefactor in South France

MARONITES:

Poemen (d. ca. 450), abba

Liberius I (d. 366), pope

ORTHODOX CHRISTIANS AND GREEK CATHOLICS:

Poemen, anacoreta

Traslazione delle reliquie di Teodosio delle Grotte di Kiev (1091; Russian Church)

OLD CATHOLICS:

Monica, confessor