Preface

Pacian of Barcelona (d. c. AD 391)

SermonIndex.net / Church Fathers

Preface

The works of S. Pacian, which have been here subjoined, as they are kindred in subject, so may they be in some sort regarded as further fruits of the mind of S. Cyprian, whose writings S. Pacian quotes with reverence, and from whom he seems to have derived some of the texts he employs, his citations agreeing verbally also sometimes with S. Cyprian. Of his life all which is known is contained in the few words of S. Jerome, who dedicated his book de viris illustribus to his son Dexter, a Prefect of the Praetorium and his own friend , at whose suggestion it was written;

"Pacian, Bp. of Barcelona in the Pyrenees, of chastenedeloquence, eminent for his life as for his writings, wrote various works, of which is the Cervus and against the Novatians. He died lately in the reign of Theodosius, in extreme old age;" i. e. before A. 392. (in which, the 14th of Theod., S. Jerome wrote this book, Praef.) He was born then probably about 30 years after the martyrdom of S. Cyprian, was a younger contemporary of Hosius, and through him joined on to the Council of Eliberis, and the restoration of discipline in the Spanish Church. His memory was kept with great affection at Barcelona on May 9, on which he is commemorated in the Martyrologium Romanum, in words taken from S. Jerome. It is of the good Providence of God, that, of the same father, works should have come down, vindicating the doctrine of the Church on penitence,----as a doctrine, against the heresy of Novatian,----practically, against the neglect of careless sinners. The Epistles to Sympronian and the exhortation to Penitence, combined, shew how compatible are tenderness to the sinner with a strict and, as it would now seem, severe doctrine of penitence; that not earnest calls to a self-avenging and self-chastening penitence, but the denial of its fruits and of the power of the keys, is the essence of Novatianism. Well versed as S. Pacian was in the writings of S. Cyprian, who also insists on the same acts of penitence, his language approaches more both in style and vividness of expostulation to that of Tertullian, whose work on penitence he claims, as having been written by him while a Catholic . It is hoped that from this very combination, his works might be useful in these days, in which, for want of that more frequent special application of the power of the keys, which our Church suggests, any mention of more earnest penitence is thought to partake of the hard and uncompassionating heresy of Novatian.

It remains to add, that for the Translation and the basis of the Index of S. Cyprian the Editors are indebted to the Rev. H. Carey, M.A. of'Worcester College; and for S. Pacian with the Index, to the Rev. C. H. Collyns, M.A. Student of Christ Church. For S. Cyprian the Benedictine text has been adopted, except in some few cases, (which have been noticed,) in which that of Bp. Fell seemed preferable. For S. Pacian the very valuable readings, noted in the margin of the Edition of Cardinal Aguirre, (Collect. Maxima Concil. Hisp. t. ii.) from a Vatican MS. of the ninth century, formerly belonging to the Queen of Sweden, have been employed. Almost all its readings are improvements of the text; many places they clear up, in which before the meaning was altogether obscured. They are marked in the margin as V. or Vat. Some collations on the margin of the Edit. Par. 1538. Guillard. in the Bodleian, derived from a MS. in the Royal Library at Paris, (the source of which Dr. Bandinel kindly pointed out to the Editor,) have also been used. The MS. although a late one, in several places agrees with the Vatican MS. They are marked R. The Editions were also consulted for the Editor by Mr. Collyns. The collations of the Vat. MS. are wanting on the De Baptismo, but neither had the text the same difficulty.

E. B. P. Ember Week after Whitsunday, 1844. S. PACIAN I. Ep. to Sympronian, of the Catholic Name 319 II----------on Novatian's Letter 327 III ----------against the Treatise of the Novatians 336 Exhortation to Penitence 364 On Baptism 378 Indices to S. Cyprian 385 Indices to S. Pacian 413 [Note that in the original volume the works of S.Pacian were only an appendix to the Epistles of S.Cyprian. Material relating to Cyprian only is omitted]

Source. English translation: an older public-domain translation as collected in the Writings-Database (HistoricalChristianFaith), mostly from the Ante-Nicene, Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers and similar nineteenth-century editions. SermonIndex has only divided it into chapters and short sections; the wording is the translator's own. Square brackets, Greek or Latin words and footnote-free text are as the source file prints them, and a transcription error may remain. No Greek or Latin text is shown beside it yet, and no modern English version has been made.