

Sermon on All Saints Day  
probably delivered in the Church of Santa Maria in martirii in Rome  
(a.k.a. the Pantheon)

(Text found in Vat. lat. 5046 ff. 88rb-89vb; transcribed and translated by W.L. North)

This sermon was added at the end of what might be called an anonymous "pastoral care manual" which occupies ff.8v-88ra. The pope at the center of the sermon is Boniface IV (608-15), who did, according to the Liber Pontificalis (ed. L. Duchesne, v.1, p.317), receive the Pantheon from the emperor Phokas (602-610) and turned it into a church dedicated in honor of St. Maria and all the martyrs. A dedication date of 13 May is noted in the small Roman martyrology. This would be the first conversion of a pagan site into a church in Rome, according to Louis Duschesne.

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Today, dearest brothers, we shall tell you how this solemn festival which we are celebrating in honor of all the saints, was established.

There was in the city of Rome a wondrous, round temple in which the devil was sitting in his throne and forced his servants to render him an account of their fraudulent ministry. As a result, the Romans were so thoroughly terrified that they customarily did not dare to go near the temple even at noon. When Pope Boniface, who was the fourth from the blessed Pope Gregory [I], saw the power which the devil had in the temple and the trouble he caused the people, he journeyed to the emperor Phokas and received power [over the temple] from him. [Boniface] exhorted the Roman people to celebrate a three day fast. When the fast was over, the venerable pope carried the cross, the relics of the saints, and incense and proceeded barefoot with his clergy and laypeople to the temple. When he was in front of the door chanting *Kyrie eleison* [Lord have mercy] he heard a crowd of demons become vexed. Firm in the faith of our lord Jesus Christ, he swore on oath that they would no longer remain in the building from that time on. The devil who was prince of the other demons lifted himself in the air with all of his ministers and with a terrific noise left [the temple] through the very middle of the roof and thus it shall remain broken until the end. The doors opened by themselves. The most blessed pope entered and ordered the whole building washed with water. When this was accomplished, he consecrated it in the honor of holy Mary, mother of God, and in honor of all the saints, and this is the festival that we celebrate today. He then sent an edict throughout the world that all bishops should admonish the people to celebrate this day, just like the day of the birth of our lord Jesus Christ. Whoever did not fast on the

established fast days because of some necessity and celebrated this vigil well and fasted, God would forgive them their sins through the intercession [of the saints] and St Mary, in whom we trust.

Let us all rejoice in the Lord and exult and let us on this day give to the poor from our goods and keep charity between ourselves, in order that we may receive indulgence for our sins in the present life and may possess the Lord's inheritance with them [the poor] in the life to come. With the aid of our Lord Jesus Christ to whom there is honor and glory forever and ever.

Amen.

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Karissimi fratres, de ista sollemnitate quam nos hodie in honore omnium sanctorum celebramus, annuntiamus vobis quomodo fuit ordinata. Erat in romana civitate unum templum mirabile et rotundum in quo diabolus sedebat in sua sede et faciebat reddere ministris suis rationem de fraudulento ministerio eorum. Unde romani tanto timore perterriti ut a solitu illorum etiam in meridie iuxta templum non audebant appropinquare. Videns autem sanctus Bonifatius papa, qui fuit quartus a beato papa gregorio, potestatem quam diabolus habebat in templo et vexationem quam in populo faciebat, perguit ad imperatorem nomine foca et accepit potestatem ab illo. admonuit populum romanum ut triduanum ieiunium celebrarent. Expleto autem ieiunio, tulit venerabilis papa crucem et reliquias sanctorum simulque cum incenso et cum clero suo simulque cum laicis pedibusque discalciatis et pergunt ad templum. Cum autem fuit ante portam decantando Kurie eleyson, audivit catervam demoniorum vexare. Ipse vero firmus in fide domini nostri iesu Christi coniuravit illos ut nunquam deinceps manerent. Diabolus autem qui princeps erat aliorum demoniorum alleviavit se in aera cum omnibus suis ministeris et cum universo clamore et per medium culmen exierunt et sic confractum permanet usque in fine. Aperiuntque porte per semetipsas. Intravit autem beatissimus papa et precepit de aqua totum lavare. Quo facto, consecravit illud in honore sancte marie genetricis dei et in honore omnium sanctorum quam hodie sollempnitatem colimus. Qua propter misit edictum per universum mundum, ut omnes episcopi commonerent populum ut istum diem celebrarent, sicut diem nativitatis domini nostri iesu Christi. Qui autem propter aliquam necessitatem constituta ieiunia non ieiunavit et istam vigiliam bene celebraverit et ieiunaverit per istorum intercessionem et sancte marie quorum fidutiam habemus, dimittet ei deus peccata eorum. Gaudeamus omnes in

domino et exsulemus et de nostris bonis hodie in pauperibus erogemus et pacem et caritatem inter nos habeamus, ut cum istis sanctis quorum sollempnitatem hodie celebramus, ut in presenti vita de nostris peccatis indulgentiam accipiamus et in futura vita cum illis hereditatem domini possideamus. Auxiliante domino nostro iesu Christo cui est honor et gloria in secula seculorum. Amen.