

HERE FOLLOWETH THE LIFE OF S. HILARY

S. Hilary, which was Bishop of Poitiers, was born in the country of Guienne. He had a wife wedded, and a daughter, and whereas he was in habit secular he lived after the life of a monk. He profited so much in holy life and sciences that he was chosen Archbishop of Poitiers.

THE ARIAN HERETICS

A manner of an heresy reigned in his country and through all France, which was the sect of the Arians, the which he destroyed to his power. Nevertheless by the commandment of the emperor, which was of the party of the heretics, by the suggestion of two bishops of that sect he was exiled, with which two bishops he disputed, and overcame them. Afterward, for they might not gainsay the truth of the matter, ne [nor] could not bear ne answer to his eloquence, so that he was constrained to come again to Poitiers.

Hilary is said of joyousness, for he was joyous in the service of God. Or Hilary is said virtuous and high, for he was high and strong in science, and virtuous in his life. Or Hilary is said of hilum, which is to say dark matter, for he had in his dictes [things he said] great obscurity and profoundness.

THE ISLAND OF SERPENTS

And as he passed by an isle of the sea, which was full of serpents, he chased them away by the virtue of his commandment, and by his sight only, and pight [placed] a staff in the middle of the isle and gave to the serpents liberty to come to that staff and not to pass farther, and the serpents obeyed him, which part is no land now but sea.

ST. HILARY RAISES A DEAD BOY TO LIFE

When S. Hilary came to Poitiers he met a child dead, borne for to be buried, and the child was not baptized; which child by virtue of his prayer he raised to life, for he lay long in the dust in prayer, and when he arose out of his prayer the child arose from death to life.

THE DEATH OF HIS DAUGHTER AND WIFE

S. Hilary had a daughter named Apia and she would have been married, but S. Hilary preached to her so much of the estate of virginity that she changed her purpose. And when she was confirmed in this will and purpose S. Hilary doubted that she should change, and prayed our Lord for to take her while she was in good purpose, and anon she died, and S. Hilary buried her. And when her mother the wife of S. Hilary saw that her daughter was dead, she prayed to her husband, that he should impetre [pray] and get for

her like as he had done for his daughter. And anon as S. Hilary had made his orison, she died, and by this manner he sent tofore him his wife and his daughter.

ST. HILARY DISPUTES WITH POPE LEO

In this time the pope Leo, which favoured heresy, called a counsel of bishops, but he sent not for S. Hilary that he should come thereto, notwithstanding S. Hilary came thither. When the pope saw him come, he commanded that no man should arise against [for] him, ne give him no place. Then said the pope to him: “Thou art Hilary the cock, and not the son of an hen.”

And Hilary answered: “I am Hilary and no cock, but a bishop in Gallia that is in France.”

Then said the pope, “Thou art Hilary Gallus, and I am Leo of the Papal See, Judge.”

To whom Hilary said: “If [although] thou be Leo [i.e., a lion] yet art thou not of the Tribe of Judah.”

Then the pope had great indignation and said to him: “Abide thou a little, and I shall pay to thee thine hire.”

And S. Hilary answered: “And if thou come not again who shall pay me for thee?”

And the pope answered: “I shall come again and shall beat down thy pride.”

Then the pope went down into the low chamber for to ease him, and by the conduit of his nether part voided out all the entrails of his body, and so died suddenly. Thus then as he abode the pope S. Hilary found no place to sit on, ne none would remove [no one would get up] to make him place, and when he saw that, he said: “Domini est terra, [that is:] the earth longeth [belongs] to our Lord,” and sat down upon the earth, and the earth arose up by miracle by the will of our Lord, in such wise that he sat as high as the other[s]

And anon after, word came that the pope was dead. Then S. Hilary confirmed all the other bishops that were there in the faith, and so confirmed, each went in to his country.

THE DEATH OF ST. HILARY

In the end, when S. Hilary had impetred [asked] of God many miracles to be showed by his prayer, he became sick, and saw his death approach. Then he called to him one of his chaplains whom he much loved and said to him: Go thou out and bring to me word what thou hearest. When he had been long without, he came in and told to S. Hilary that he had heard a great noise in the city; and when it was midnight he sent his chaplain again to hearken as he had done tofore; and when he came again in to the chamber for to tell that he had heard nothing, a great clear light entered in, that the priest might not behold it. And when the light departed S. Hilary died, that was the year of grace three hundred and forty.

Let us pray to him that he pray for us. Amen

The iconography of St. Hilary is available at the [Christian iconography website](#).

For other saints, see the [index to this Golden Legend website](#).

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