

For the Pious and Most Studious Reader of Truth, Caesar Baronius writes:

As to what I set out in these my comments on the restored Roman Martyrology, the judgment will be yours, friendly and learned reader. I have certainly worked very hard that you not want for many things concerning this genre, for I have carefully combined the other Martyrologies of the Latins and the Menology of the Greeks with this Roman one. I have collected the acts and actions of the Saints from the entire memory of antiquity, and in place of an explanation of the text at the beginning, I have thus briefly touched upon the sources, indicating where they can be drawn in greater detail. I have provided advice about which writers and which narratives are more faithful and more trustworthy, I have distinguished certain matters from uncertain matters, I have endeavored to explain, resolve, and settle several difficulties, debates, and controversies, either ones which then were being conducted by some people or which could appear; and to show through established arguments that nothing was done boldly or with a lack of careful consideration. Then, I have demonstrated the very obscure investigation and cogency of many of the discussions, especially those which describe the instruments and machines by which the most terrifying opponents of the faith tortured and tormented the bravest martyrs in unbelievable ways; in the explanation of these instruments and some other matters, others have strayed sometimes, I believe, from the truth, for we are all men: and I do not simply attribute to myself so much that I think in no way I have offended, but the materials which I have prepared with long effort and labor for myself I now publish for the glory of God and the common utility, when it seemed right to those with whom it was right to comply, and I present them to be examined by the judgment of learned men. I have prefaced this work with a description of Roman Martyrology, lest there be anything of this sort missing which you would desire further. You, benevolent reader, take these things favorably, and, while you delight yourself often in the holy

reading of the Martyrology and you wonder at the glory and triumphs of the Saints, in which God is wonderful, show no reluctance to imitate the virtue and piety of them with the help of divine grace.

To Christopher Plantin, Royal Printer, Caesar Baronius writes:

I received a very pleasant letter from you on the 7th of March, my most beloved Plantin, in which you promised industry and eagerness in printing our notes on the Roman Martyrology. Indeed, nothing could have happened to me more pleasant and desirable than this. It will happen, I hope, somehow, that my late-night labors, whatever sort they were, will be clarified by your effort, though to this point they have been plagued with errors, and for this reason not yet brought forth into the light as much as hidden in darkness. I was unhappy that these materials, not fully perfected, had been taken from my hands; but, I have been troubled by a greater concern, when I discovered that they were swarming with errors: and, what is even more unpleasant, without consulting me at all, the printer sent these same materials to the Venetians without any emendations, with the result that I now am almost in despair that they, as they deteriorate, will rather have to be recovered and restored to their natural splendor. But amidst so many troubles of my soul, I believe that they are very lucky who have procured the very detail-oriented Plantin (I speak freely as much as truly) as their printer in publishing their works. But it was fortunate that your letter came to me when I was afflicted by these concerns; which I think did not happen except by God's plan, to whose providence I am always accustomed to subject all my affairs. Therefore, I will most willingly see to what you ask. As soon as possible, I will send the Roman Martyrology itself, now that it is emended and with several other additions added. Soon, I will add to that the volume of Annals, which although it is as yet in press, nevertheless just five

quires are left to be printed, and also the index: all these things should be resolved completely within a month. In the meantime, I would wish that you inform me to whom I should entrust the package, by which it may be sent to you more securely and also more quickly. Indeed, it happened by some misfortune that earlier the Reverend Doctor Lindanus¹ received these same comments almost two years after they had been sent to him, and only finally got them recently. Farewell, my Plantin, and indeed, please know that I will be very much indebted to you for this reason. In the meantime, as to my duty, I will strive with prayers in the presence of God that he deign to be present for you always as you labor in these matters which are of the Catholic Church. Farewell again. Written at Rome on March 8th, 1588

¹ William Damasus Lindanus (also known as Van der Lindt), Bishop of Roermond and Bishop of Ghent