June 26

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Mari (1st-2nd cent.) apostle

On the second Friday of summer, the Chaldean and Assyrian churches commemorate Mar Mari, an apostle of Syria, Mesopotamia and Persia.
Mari was a disciple of Addai, who is traditionally identified as the first of the seventy (or seventy-two) disciples sent on mission by Jesus. The sources that provide information about Mari's life are late and contradict one another, but what they seek to impress upon readers is the very ancient origin of the East Syrian churches.
According to tradition, Addai chose Mari to continue his mission of evangelization in the East. After receiving this mandate, Mari travelled through Eastern Mesopotamia and preached as far as the Iranian plateau.
To him we owe the foundation of the episcopates of Nisibis and Kashkar and the evangelization of the region of Seleucia-Ctesifont.
The authorship of one of the earliest eucharistic anaphoras, which is still used in East Syrian liturgies, is attributed to Addai and Mari. The two apostles are commemorated together in various parts of the Christian East, on dates that vary from one region to another. The most important feast is perhaps the one that is celebrated in Iraq and Kurdistan on August 5, with an elaborate liturgy.

BIBLICAL READINGS

Isa 55:4-13; 1 Cor 15:1-19; Acts 4:32-5:11; Jn 20:19-21:25

THE CHURCHES REMEMBER...

WESTERN CATHOLICS:
Cyril of Alexandria (d. 444), bishop amd doctor of the church (Ambrosian calendar)
Pelagius, martyr (Spanish-Mozarabic calendar)

COPTS AND ETHIOPIANS (19 ba'unah/sane):
George the Young (?), martyr (Coptic Orthodox Church)

LUTHERANS:
Vigil (d. ca. 397), bishop and martyr at Trento

ORTHODOX CHRISTIANS AND GREEK CATHOLICS:
David of Thessaloniki (d. ca. 540), anchorite