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Francis-Xavier Brunel

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Francis-Xavier Brunel (* 18 Jun 1744 – † 20 Aug 1794)

1. Name variants: Gervais-Protais Brunel (baptismal name), François-Xavier Brunel

2. Places: Magnières, La Trappe, Rochefort

3. Biography: F.-X. is one of 13 Rochefort martyrs listed in the DCS. The others are Philip Brandel, Paul Charles, Onuphrius Clavier, Elias Desgardins, Stephen d'Huberte, Macarius d'Incamps, Michael-Joseph Dujonquoi, Matthew Gachet, Joseph-Louis Girod, René Leroy, Florentinus Maillet, and Eligius Richy. F.-X. was born in Magnières. He was vested in La Trappe 17 Jun 1767 and professed 15 Jul 1768. He was later named prior. In order to understand his fate and that of his companions, a brief account of the historical background follows.

In France in 1794, 2412 clerics were deported to prison camps. 829 of them were sent to Rochefort and among these, 9 were Trappists. Only a small fraction of the prisoners survived the brutal conditions there. After the abbot of La Trappe had died on 7 Feb 1790, Prior Brunel wanted to remain in France; novice master de Lestrangle wanted to found a community abroad. The latter departed La Trappe on 1 May 1791 with 22 companions. The monks who remained in La Trappe were forced to leave the abbey on 25 May 1792. F.-X. fled to his parents in Magnières with Michael-Joseph Dujonquoi, the master of lay brothers, arriving 16 Jun 1792. F.-X. was refused his pension on 22 Apr 1793, prompting further flight to Switzerland. Both monks were arrested 12 May 1793, sentenced to deportation but kept in prison until March 1794. The march to the hulks of Rochefort, with 48 priests forced to march, took place from 1 Apr to 28 Apr 1794. A third monk from La Trappe, laybrother Eligius Richy, was also on the march. All three perished, beginning with F.-X., who died on the feast of St. Bernard. F.-X. was beatified as one of the Rochefort martyrs on 1 Oct 1995.

4. Cultus

a. Relics: –

b. Liturgical commemoration: 10 Jun, 18 Aug (OCSO)

c. Patronage: –

d. Attributes: –

5. Fontes: –

6. Literature: J.-B.-N. BLIN, *Les prêtres réfractaires dans le diocèse de Séez* 2, Paris 1876, 96-103; Y. BLOMME, *Les prêtres déportés sur les pontons de Rochefort*, Saint-Jean-d'Angély 1994, Nr. 40; A. G. DE MONTLÉON, *Les martyrs de la foi pendant la révolution française ou Martyrologe*, 4 vols., Paris 1821; B. DE LA TRINITÉ KERVINGANT, *Des moniales face à la Révolution française. Aux origines des Cisterciennes-Trappistines*, Paris 1989; A. LATREILLE, *L'Église catholique et la Révolution française* 1, Paris 1970; A. LEQUIN, *Manuscrit d'un prêtre rescapé, Saintes 1795* (http://pretres-deportes.rabany.eu/manuscrit_d_un_pretre_rescape.html); *Martyrologe du clergé français pendant la Révolution*, Paris 1840, 49; L.-A. MICHEL, *Biographie historique et généalogique des hommes marquans de l'ancienne province de Lorraine*, Nancy 1829, 370; F. ROUSSEAU, *Moines bénédictins martyrs et confesseurs de la foi pendant la Révolution*, Paris 1926, 242.

7. Illustrations: –

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