

THE RICHES OF THE CHURCH OF ROME.

P. Ribes, s.j

St. Lawrence Martyrdom

After the death of Sixtus, the prefect of Rome demanded that Lawrence - being in charge of moneys of the Church of Rome - should turn over to him the wealth of the Church.

Lawrence asked for three days to gather together the wealth. of the Church.. In the meantime, he moved swiftly to distribute as much Church property to the poor as possible, so as to prevent its being seized by the prefect.

On the third day, at the head of a small delegation, he presented himself to the prefect, and when ordered to give up the treasures of the Church, he presented to The Prefect, the poor, the crippled, the blind and the suffering, and said: These are the t treasures of the Church. "The Church is truly rich, far richer than your emperor."

This act of defiance led directly to his martyrdom. Tradition holds that Lawrence was burned alive or "grilled" to death, and that Lawrence while still burning on the gridiron, joked asking the Prefect to turn him over to the other side, because he was cooked enough already from his back to be eaten up