

**Series #24: Women of the Early Church**  
**Session #6 – Saints & Martyrs of the Second Century**  
**Tuesday, June 1, 2021**

Saint	Year of Death or Martyrdom	Legend	Feast Day	Symbol(s)	Patronage
St. Eudokia	107	<p>Eudokia was very beautiful, and garnered her wealth by attracting wealthy lovers. She learned about Christianity from a monk by the name of Germanus. According to legend, Eudokia asked him if she, too, could be saved from Judgment. Germanus instructed her to remain alone in her chamber for one week, fasting and praying. Eudokia followed his instructions, and at the end of the week, Germanus told her to give away her wealth and to put her previous life behind her. She was later baptized by Bishop Theodotus of Heliopolis. At age 30, Eudokia entered a monastery near Heliopolis, and dispensed much of her wealth in various charitable projects. She rejected all of her suitors, and when one persistent suitor named Philostratos was struck down because of his persistence, Eudokia prayed for him until he recovered. Philostratos then converted to Christianity. Roman officials were angered by her actions, and had her beheaded.</p>	Mar 1		
St. Hermione	117	<p>2nd-century Christian martyr venerated by the Roman Catholic and Eastern Orthodox churches. She was the daughter of Saint Philip the Deacon. The Bible does not mention her name but says that Philip had four daughters. In the Acts of the Apostles, Hermione and her sisters are called prophetess. Hermione and her sister Eutychia went to Asia Minor in search of Apostle John. However, John had already died so she became the disciple of Petronius, a disciple of Saint Paul. When the emperor Trajan passed through her town on the way to fight the Persians, he admonished her to recant Christianity, which she refused. He then ordered that she be struck on the face for several hours, which she joyfully endured. She was released and went on to build a hospice. She was known as a prophet and healer. She was almost killed during the persecutions of Christians under the Roman emperor Hadrian. Hadrian had heard of her talents and</p>	Sep 4		

		summoned her. He questioned her and when she refused to aid him in his conquests became so enraged he ordered her first thrown into a vat full of boiling pitch, sulphur, asphalt and molten lead. When this failed to affect her she was thrown in to into a large red-hot copper vessel. Again with no effect. She was taken to a temple to offer libations, when, however, she prayed the pagan statues fell over and shattered. Hadrian then sent two men to behead her and she told them if she could pray before she got beheaded but they just ignored her. But when they tried, their arms got charred, and the men bent down and begged to her and prayed to God. After that, she lived a peaceful life, and died on September 4, 117.			
St. Thecla	117	(see Session #5)			
St. Serapia	ca. 119	Serapia was a Roman saint, a slave and martyr, also called Seraphia or Seraphima of Syria. Saint Serapia was born at Antioch in the late 1st century, of Christian parents who, fleeing the persecution of Emperor Hadrian, went to Italy and settled there. When her parents died, Serapia was sought in marriage by many, but having resolved to consecrate herself to God alone, she sold all her possessions and distributed the proceeds to the poor. Then she sold herself into voluntary slavery, and entered the service of a Roman noblewoman named Sabina. The piety of Serapia, her love of work, and her charity soon gained the heart of her mistress, who became a Christian. She is venerated in the Roman Catholic and Eastern Orthodox Churches. In the reign of Hadrian, Serapia was commanded to do homage to the gods of Rome. She refused and was handed over to two men who tried to rape her, but she resisted. They then tried to set her on fire with torches, but could not do so. By command of the judge Derillus, she was beaten with rods and then beheaded by sword. Her body was buried by Sabina in Sabina's own tomb, near the Vindician field, but the memory of her martyrdom is kept more especially on September 3, on which day their common tomb was finished, adorned and consecrated as a fitting place of prayer.	Jul 29 Sep 3	Tablet, book	

St. Symphorosa	138	<p>St. Symphorosa is venerated as a saint of the Catholic Church. According to tradition, she was martyred with her seven sons at Tibur (present Tivoli, Lazio, Italy) toward the end of the reign of the Roman Emperor Hadrian (AD 117-38). The story of their martyrdom is told in an ancient <i>Passio</i>, the credibility of which is seriously questioned by many modern hagiologists. According to the <i>Passio</i>, Symphorosa was a Tiburtine matron and the widow of the tribune Getulius, who had previously been martyred under Emperor Hadrian at Gabii (present Torri in Sabina), a town of the Sabines, Italy. When Emperor Hadrian had completed his costly palace at Tibur and began its dedication by offering pagan sacrifices, he received the following locution from the pagan gods: “The widow Symphorosa and her sons torment us daily by invoking their God. If she and her sons offer sacrifice, we promise to give you all that you ask for.” In the Catholic tradition, this locution can be attributed to demons under the guise of pagan deities, who would be tormented by Christian prayer. When all of the Emperor’s attempts to induce Symphorosa and her sons to sacrifice to the pagan Roman gods were unsuccessful, he ordered her to be brought to the Temple of Hercules, where, after various tortures, she was thrown into the Anio River with a heavy rock fastened to her neck. Her brother Eugenius, who was a member of the council of Tibur, buried her in the outskirts of the city.</p>	Jul 18	Seven sons, martyr’s palm	Tivoli, Italy
St. Theodora	120	<p>A Roman martyr. The little we know about her life is attributed to the <i>Acta</i> of Pope St. Alexander. She was the sister of St. Hermes, to whom she had given aid and care during his difficult time in prison. She was martyred some time after her brother, in 120. The siblings were later buried side by side on the Salarian road outside of Rome. She is venerated in the Roman Catholic and Orthodox Churches.</p>	Apr 1 (C) Apr 5 (O)		
St. Sabina	125	<p>Saint Sabina, matron and martyr from Rome. She was the widow of Senator Valentinus and daughter of Herod Metallarius. After her female slave St. Serapia (who had converted her) was denounced and beheaded, Sabina rescued her slave’s remains and had them interred in the family mausoleum where she also expected to be buried. Denounced as well, Sabina was accused of</p>	Aug 29		

		being a Christian by Elpidio the Prefect and was thereupon martyred in the year 125 AD in the city of Vindena in the state of Umbria, Italy. She is venerated in the Roman Catholic & Eastern Orthodox Churches. In 430 her relics were brought to the Aventine Hill, to a specially built basilica—Santa Sabina—on the site of her house, originally situated near a temple of Juno. This house may also have formed an early Christian titular church. The church was initially dedicated to both Sabina and Serapia, though the dedication was later limited to Sabina.			
St. Ariadne	130	According to legend, she was a slave in the household of a Phrygian prince. She refused to participate in rites to a pagan god as part of the prince’s birthday celebration. As she was fleeing the Roman authorities, she fell through a chasm in a ridge and was entombed. She is venerated in the Eastern Orthodox Church, Oriental Orthodox Church, Roman Catholic Church, & the Anglican Communion.	Sep 18		
St. Balbina	130	She is venerated as a virgin martyr and saint of the Roman Catholic and Eastern Orthodox Churches. She was the daughter of Quirinus, a Tribune in the Roman Army. Legend has it that Quirinus was ordered to hold Pope Alexander I and a man named Hermes in prison because of their Christian faith. They were held in separate prisons that were a great distance apart, and both were shackled and well guarded. Quirinus was trying to convert Hermes back to the old gods, but promised to become a Christian if Hermes could prove that there was an after life. Hermes explained that Pope Alexander could make a better argument than he, and asked several times to visit his prison. At first Quirinus agreed to this, but after a while he became angry, convinced that these visits were frivolous excursions. He tightened the guard so that the two would not be able to speak with one another. That night Hermes prayed, and an angel appeared to Pope Alexander, releasing his chains and bringing him to Hermes’ prison cell. The next morning Quirinus came to Hermes cell as usual, and he was shocked to find both men inside. His heart now open to what the two Christians had to say, he stayed and talked with the men for a while. Hermes shared his story and told of how the Pope with	Mar 31	Chains, fetters, young woman holding a chain, young woman kissing the chains of captive Christians	Struma, scrofulous diseases, goiters and throat/thyroid diseases

the help of God had raised his son from the dead. Hearing this, Quirinus said that his daughter Balbina had a large goiter, and if the Pope could heal her, he would believe and become a Christian. The Pope asked him to bring her to prison where he was held originally. “How can she find you there, when you’re here with Hermes?” Quirinus asked. “He who brought me here, will also bring me back”, replied the Pope. So Quirinus quickly returned home and brought his daughter to the prison where he had originally locked up Pope Alexander. There, they found Alexander patiently waiting for them, tightly shackled in the way he had been before. Seeing this, they knelt before him in reverence. Full of devotion, Balbina started to kiss the links of the chains that the Pope was attached to. But he said to her: “You shall not kiss these chains, but go out and find St. Peter’s chains. Once you’ve found them, kiss them with devotion and you will soon be well.” Knowing where Peter had been held before his martyrdom, Quirinus jumped up immediately and took Balbina with him, and there he found the chains. Balbina kissed them and was soon well. Quirinus immediately had Pope Alexander and Hermes pardoned and released. Along with his wife and daughter he was baptized by the Pope. Pope Alexander stipulated that the miracle of the chains should be celebrated from that day forward, and he built the church of the Apostle Peter, where the chains have been held ever since. The church he called “ad Vincula” (“in chains”), is today St. Peter in Chains.

Another account has Quirinus placed as the one ordered to execute Alexander and two others, Eventius, and Theodolus, who had been arrested by order of Trajan. Quirinus converted to Christianity, however, after witnessing miracles performed by these three saints, and he was baptized along with his wife, and daughter Balbina.

In both accounts, Quirinus was then arrested as a Christian and martyred through decapitation on March 30, 116. He was buried in the catacomb of Prætextatus on the Via Appia. His grave was later regarded with great veneration and is referred to in the old itineraries (guides for pilgrims) of the Roman catacombs. It is not fully known what happened to Balbina after the death of her

		<p>father, but some accounts list her as living as a virgin recluse nun until her death in 130 A.D. The general consensus is that in 130 A.D., Balbina was found guilty of being a Christian and sentenced to death by Emperor Hadrian. Whether she was drowned or buried alive is a matter of dispute among historians. There is one alternate account that Balbina was arrested along with her father in 116, and beheaded in the same manner. After her death, she was buried next to her father in the catacomb of Praetextatus on the Via Appia. At a later date, the bones and relics of Quirinus and Balbina were brought to the church built in her honor in the 4th century.</p>			
<p>St. Antia</p>		<p>Eleutherius and his mother Antia (or Anthia) are venerated as Christian saints and martyrs in Albania. Venerated in the Catholic Church, Eastern Orthodoxy, &amp; Oriental Orthodoxy. Born in Rome, Eleutherius's father died when he was a young child and his mother, Anthia, took him to Anicetus, the Bishop of Rome, who taught him in the divine scriptures. Eleutherius is venerated as a bishop of Illyricum; according to tradition, Antia was his mother. According to a source in Greek dating from before the 5th century, Antia was the widow of a consul named Eugenius. Her son Eleutherius was ordained a deacon and priest and then consecrated as bishop by a man named Anicetus. This tradition may have originated through confusion with Pope Eleutherius, who may have been a deacon of Pope Anicetus (c. 154-164). The tradition states that Eleutherius was appointed bishop of Messina and Illyricum at the age of twenty and apparently settled in Valona. He was imprisoned by a comes named Felix; Eleutherius and Antia were taken to Rome to be judged by the Emperor Hadrian. According to this source, Eleutherius and Antia were both condemned to death on December 15. According to tradition, Eleutherius was clubbed to death, while Antia was beheaded. A Latin translation of this Greek text, dating from around the 8th century, states that Anicetus, after consecrating Eleutherius, assigned him to the see of Apuliam Aecanam civitatem (Aeca). Eleutherius and Antia were then taken to Rome and killed on April 18. The source states that the citizens of Aeca retrieved the bodies of the two martyrs from Rome and returned</p>	<p>Apr 18 Sep 5 Nov 24</p>	<p>Martyr's palm</p>	

		to their city with them. They were tortured with hot boiling oil, resin, and heated irons, and then thrown to the lions; none had the desired effect and finally the two were executed. Their bodies were then, according to tradition, buried in the Roman church of Santa Sabina, in the altar of San Lorenzo, and then moved to San Giovanni della Pigna, near the Pantheon, with the relics of Genesius of Rome.			
St. Oliva	138	Saint Oliva (or Olivia) was martyred under Hadrian; her relics are venerated at Saint Afra's Church, Brescia.	Mar 5		
St. Felicitas	165	<p>Felicitas of Rome, also anglicized as Felicity, is a saint numbered among the Christian martyrs. Apart from her name, the only thing known for certain about this martyr is that she was buried in the Cemetery of Maximus, on the Via Salaria on a 23 November. However, a legend presents her as the mother of the seven martyrs whose feast is celebrated on 10 July. The Eastern Orthodox Church celebrates their martyrdom on 25 January.</p> <p>The legend of Saint Symphorosa is very similar and their acts may have been confused. She was a patron saint of healing. They may even be the same person. This Felicitas is not the same as the North African Felicitas who was martyred with Perpetua. Saint Felicitas (also known as Felicity) is said to have been a rich and pious Christian widow who had seven sons. She devoted herself to charitable work and converted many to the Christian faith by her example. This aroused the wrath of pagan priests who lodged a complaint against her with Emperor Marcus Aurelius. These priests asserted the ire of the gods and demanded sacrifice from Felicitas and her children. The Emperor acquiesced to their demand and Felicitas was brought before Publius, the Prefect of Rome. Taking Felicitas aside, he used various pleas and threats in an unsuccessful attempt to get her to worship the pagan gods. He was equally unsuccessful with her seven sons who followed their mother's example. Before the Prefect Publius they adhered firmly to their religion, and were delivered over to four judges, who condemned them to various modes of death. The division of the martyrs among four judges corresponds to the four places of their burial. She implored God only that she not to be killed before her</p>	Nov 23 (C) Jan 25 (O)	<p>Woman in widow's weeds holding a palm; woman with a palm, book, and children at her feet; woman with Saint Andrew the Apostle; woman with seven sons</p>	<p>Parents who have lost a child in death; death of children; martyrs; sterility; to have male children; widows; numerous cities and towns in Europe</p>

		<p>sons, so that she might be able to encourage them during their torture and death in order that they would not deny Christ. With joy, she accompanied her sons one by one until she had witnessed the death of all seven. We are not entirely sure as to how each of them died, but it is said that Januarius, the eldest, was scourged to death; Felix and Philip were beaten with clubs until they expired; Silvanus was thrown headlong down a precipice; and the three youngest, Alexander, Vitalis and Martialis were beheaded. After each execution she was given the chance to denounce her faith. She refused to act against her conscience and so she too suffered martyrdom. Certain communities around the United States still celebrate San Marziale (Saint Martialis/Saint Marshall) with a San Marziale festival typically held on July 10 or near that date. They suffered and entered into eternal rest in Rome about the year 164 She was buried in the catacomb of Maximus on the Via Salaria, beside St Silvanus. It is said that she died eight times. Once with each of her sons, and finally her own, and their feast day is held on January 25.</p>			
<p>St. Corona (Stephanie)</p>		<p>Saints Victor and Corona are two Christian martyrs. Victor was a Roman soldier who was tortured and killed; Corona was killed for comforting him. Venerated in the Roman Catholic &amp; Eastern Orthodox Churches. Their legend states that Victor was a Roman soldier of Italian ancestry, who was tortured, including having his eyes gouged out, and was beheaded. Most sources state that he and Corona were killed in Roman Syria during the reign of Marcus Aurelius (around the 160s-170s AD), but various hagiographical texts disagree about the site of their martyrdom, with some stating that it was Damascus, while Coptic sources state that it was Antioch. Some Western sources state that Alexandria or Sicily was their place of martyrdom. They also disagree about the date of their martyrdom. They may have been martyred during the reign of Antoninus Pius, or Diocletian, while the Roman Martyrology states that it was in the third century when they met their death. While he was suffering from the tortures, the sixteen-year-old wife of another soldier, named Corona or Stephanie (or Stefania or Stephana, from Greek στέφανος, stéphanos, “crown”, the Greek version of her Latin name, which also means “crown”)</p>	<p>170</p>	<p>May 14 (C) Nov 11 (O)</p>	<p>Corona is invoked in connection with superstitions involving money, such as gambling or treasure hunting.</p>



		<p>comforted and encouraged him. For this, she was arrested and interrogated. According to the passio of Corona, Corona was bound to two bent palm trees and torn apart as the trunks were released; the passio is considered largely fictional, and she herself may also be fictional. Other sources state that Victor and Corona were husband and wife. Corona is especially venerated in Austria and eastern Bavaria. There is a chapel dedicated to her in Sauerlach, near Munich. There are two churches named after her in the Roman Catholic Diocese of Passau and two towns named after her in Lower Austria. A statue of her stands in the Münster Cathedral. Around 1000 AD Otto III, Holy Roman Emperor brought Corona's relics to Aachen in western Germany. Her relics were rediscovered during excavation work at Aachen Cathedral in 1910. The relics were removed from a crypt and placed in a shrine inside the cathedral. Corona is the patroness of causes involving money, such as gambling and treasure hunting, a result of a later treasure hunter who credited his success to invoking her.</p>			
St. Glyceria	177	<p>Venerated in Roman Catholic &amp; Eastern Orthodox Churches. According to Christian legend, she was forced to pay tribute to a stone statue of Jupiter but it was destroyed while she stood before it. The virgin was imprisoned for this, then sentenced to be torn apart by wild animals. She, however, was not torn apart. Before the animals could render her any harm, Glyceria died a virgin martyr in Heraclea. Her relics reputedly poured forth the substance known as the Oil of Saints, and her name means "sweetness". She is honored on May 13 (Eastern Orthodox liturgics). She is primarily recognized as an Eastern Christian Saint, and has fallen out of popularity as a Catholic Saint.</p>	May 13		
The Scillitan Martyrs	180	<p>The Scillitan Martyrs were a company of twelve North African Christians who were executed for their beliefs. The martyrs take their name from Scilla (or Scillium), a town in Numidia. The Acts of the Scillitan Martyrs are considered to be the earliest documents of the church of Africa and also the earliest specimen of Christian Latin. The Scillitan sufferers were twelve in all—seven men and five women. The names of the women were Januaria, Generosa, Vestia, Donata, and Secunda, all Latin names.</p>	Jul 17		

		<p>One of the men, Speratus, was the principal spokesman. He claimed for himself and his companions that they had lived a quiet and moral life, paying their dues and doing no wrong to their neighbors. But when called upon to swear by the name of the emperor, he replied “I recognize not the empire of this world; but rather do I serve that God whom no man hath seen, nor with these eyes can see.” The response was a reference to the language of 1 Timothy 6:16. In reply to the question, “What are the things in your satchel?”, he said “Books and letters of Paul, a just man.” The dialogue between the Proconsul and the martyrs shows that the former entertained no prejudices against the Christians. He exhorts them to comply with the law, and when they decline he suggests that they take time to think on the matter. The martyrs were offered a delay of 30 days to reconsider their decision, which they all refused. They were then put to death by the sword.</p>			
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