

**Series #24: Women of the Early Church**  
**Session #7 – Saints & Martyrs of the Third Century**  
**Tuesday, June 8, 2021**

Saint	Year of Death or Martyrdom	Legend	Feast Day	Symbol(s)	Patronage
<b>Persecution under Septimus Severus and the Severan Dynasty</b>					
St. Gundenis	203	Gundenis was a virgin martyr. She suffered martyrdom during the persecutions of Septimius Severus. She is venerated in the Roman Catholic Church.	Jul 18		
Sts. Perpetua and Felicity	203	Perpetua and Felicity (Latin: Perpetua et Felicitas) were Christian martyrs of the 3rd century. Vibia Perpetua was a recently married well educated noblewoman, said to have been 22 years old at the time of her death, and mother of an infant she was nursing. Felicity, a slave imprisoned with her and pregnant at the time, was martyred with her. They were put to death along with others at Carthage in the Roman province of Africa. <i>The Passion of Perpetua and Felicity</i> narrates their death. According to the passion narrative, a slave named Revocatus, his fellow slave Felicitas, the two free men Saturninus and Secundulus, and Perpetua, who were catechumens – that is, Christians being instructed in the faith but not yet baptized – were arrested and executed at the military games in celebration of the Emperor Septimius Severus's birthday. To this group was added a man named Saturus, who voluntarily went before the magistrate and proclaimed himself a Christian. Perpetua's first person narrative was published posthumously as part of the Passion. They are commemorated (always together) in the Roman Catholic Church, Eastern Orthodox Church, Oriental Orthodox Church, the Anglican Communion, the Lutheran Church.	Mar 7		mothers expectant mothers ranchers butchers


Saint	Year of Death or Martyrdom	Legend	Feast Day	Symbol(s)	Patronage
St. Potamiana	ca. 205	Potamiana, (or Potamiæna) is venerated as a Christian saint and martyr. According to her legend, she, along with her mother Marcella, were arrested in Alexandria, Egypt, and Potamiana was threatened with being handed over to gladiators to be abused, if she refused to renounce her Christianity. The judge regarded her response as impious and ordered their immediate death by fire. Boiling pitch was subsequently dripped over her body. The early church historian Eusebius wrote of her, “[Basilides] led to martyrdom the celebrated Potamiæna, who is still famous among the people of the country for the many things which she endured for the preservation of her chastity and virginity. For she was blooming in the perfection of her mind and her physical graces. Having suffered much for the faith of Christ, finally after tortures dreadful and terrible to speak of, she with her mother, Marcella, was put to death by fire.” She is venerated in the Coptic Orthodox, Eastern Orthodox, Oriental Orthodox, and Roman Catholic Churches.	Jun 28		rape victims
St. Phillipa	220	Theodore, Philippa, and companions were martyrs, who suffered crucifixion during the reign of Elagabalus. Theodore of Perge was a Roman soldier, and Philippa was his mother. Their companions who suffered martyrdom with them, included Socrates, a fellow soldier, Dionysius, a convert to Christianity who thitherto was a pagan priest, and Dioscorus. They are venerated in the Roman Catholic and Eastern Orthodox Churches.	Sep 20 RC Apr 21 OC		
St. Martina	228	The daughter of an ex-consul and orphaned at an early age, she was described as a noble and beautiful virgin. She so openly testified to her Christian faith that she could not escape the persecutions under Alexander Severus. Arrested and commanded to return to idolatry, she refused, whereupon she was subjected to various tortures and was finally beheaded. These tortures according to her vita include being scourged and scaled, was	Jan 30	palm of martyrdom	nursing mothers

		condemned to be devoured by wild beasts in the amphitheater but was miraculously untouched by them. She was then thrown onto a burning pyre, from which she also escaped unhurt, and was finally beheaded. She is venerated in the Roman Catholic Church.			
St. Cecilia	222-235	<p>St Cecilia is one of several virgin martyrs commemorated by name in the Canon of the Mass in the Latin Church. It is popularly supposed that Cecilia was a noble lady of Rome who, with her husband Valerian, his brother Tiburtius, and a Roman soldier named Maximus, suffered martyrdom in about 230, under the Emperor Alexander Severus. Giovanni Battista de Rossi, however, argues that instead she perished in Sicily under the Emperor Marcus Aurelius between 176 and 180, citing the report of Venantius Fortunatus, Bishop of Poitiers (d. 600). According to the story, despite her vow of virginity, she was forced by her parents to marry a pagan nobleman named Valerian. During the wedding, Cecilia sat apart singing to God in her heart, and for that she was later declared the saint of musicians. When the time came for her marriage to be consummated, Cecilia told Valerian that watching over her was an angel of the Lord, who would punish him if he sexually violated her but would love him if he respected her virginity. When Valerian asked to see the angel, Cecilia replied that he could if he would go to the third milestone on the Via Appia and be baptized by Pope Urban I. After following Cecilia's advice, he saw the angel standing beside her, crowning her with a chaplet of roses and lilies. The martyrdom of Cecilia is said to have followed that of her husband Valerian and his brother at the hands of the prefect Turcius Almachius. The legend about Cecilia's death says that after being struck three times on the neck with a sword, she lived for three days, and asked the pope to convert her home into a church. Cecilia symbolizes the central role of music in the liturgy and is frequently depicted playing a viola, a small organ, or other musical instrument. She is venerated in the Catholic, Orthodox, Anglican and some Lutheran churches, such as the Church of Sweden.</p>	Nov 22	<p>flute organ roses violin harp harpsichord songbird singing</p>	<p>hymns great musicians poets pipe organs</p>

Saint	Year of Death or Martyrdom	Legend	Feast Day	Symbol(s)	Patronage
St. Tatiana	226-235	Saint Tatiana was a deaconess of the early church. According to legend, she was the daughter of a Roman civil servant who was secretly Christian, and raised his daughter in the faith, and she became a deaconess in the church. This was dangerous, and one day the jurist Ulpian captured Tatiana and attempted to force her to make a sacrifice to Apollo. She prayed, and miraculously, an earthquake destroyed the Apollo statue and part of the temple. Tatiana was then blinded, and beaten for two days, before being brought to a circus and thrown into the pit with a hungry lion. But the lion did not touch her and lay at her feet. This resulted in a death sentence being pronounced, and after being tortured, Tatiana was beheaded with a sword.	Jan 12	martyr's cross plate with eyes	students
<b>Persecution under Maximinus the Thracian</b>					
St. Barbara	unknown	Saint, known in the Eastern Orthodox Church as the Great Martyr Barbara, was an early Christian Lebanese and Greek saint and martyr. Accounts place her in the 3rd century in Heliopolis Phoenicia, present-day Baalbek, Lebanon. There is no reference to her in the authentic early Christian writings nor in the original recension of Saint Jerome's martyrology. Despite the legends detailing her story, the earliest references to her supposed 3rd-century life do not appear until the 7th century, and veneration of her was common, especially in the East, from the 9th century. Barbara, the daughter of a rich pagan named Dioscorus, was carefully guarded by her father who kept her locked up in a tower in order to preserve her from the outside world. Having secretly become a Christian, she rejected an offer of marriage that she received through her father. Before going on a journey, her father commanded that a private bath-house be erected for her use near her dwelling, and during his absence, Barbara had three windows put in it, as a symbol of the Holy Trinity, instead of the two originally intended. When her father returned, she acknowledged	Dec 4	Three- windowed tower, palm, chalice, lightning, crown of martyrdom	armorers architects artillerymen firemen mathematicians miners tunnelers lightning chemical engineers prisoners

	<p>herself to be a Christian; upon this he drew his sword to kill her, but her prayers created an opening in the tower wall and she was miraculously transported to a mountain gorge, where two shepherds watched their flocks. Dioscorus, in pursuit of his daughter, was rebuffed by the first shepherd, but the second betrayed her. For doing this, he was turned to stone and his flock was changed to locusts. Dragged before the prefect of the province, Martinianus, who had her cruelly tortured, Barbara held true to her Christian faith. During the night, the dark prison was bathed in light and new miracles occurred. Every morning, her wounds were healed. Torches that were to be used to burn her went out as soon as they came near her. Finally, she was condemned to death by beheading. Her father himself carried out the death sentence. However, as punishment, he was struck by lightning on the way home and his body was consumed by flame. Barbara was buried by a Christian, Valentinus, and her tomb became the site of miracles. This summary omits picturesque details, supplemented from Old French accounts. Saint Barbara is venerated by Catholics who face the danger of sudden and violent death at work. She is invoked against thunder and lightning and all accidents arising from explosions of gunpowder. She became the patron saint of artillerymen, armorers, military engineers, gunsmiths, and anyone else who worked with cannon and explosives. Following the widespread adoption of gunpowder in mining in the 1600s, she was adopted as the patron of miners, tunnellers, and other underground workers. As the geology and mine engineering developed in association with mining, she became patron of these professions. A portion of the coast of California, now occupied by the city of Santa Barbara, California and located approximately 100 miles northwest of Los Angeles, is named after her. It was given the name in 1602, after a maritime explorer, Sebastián Vizcaíno, survived a violent storm just offshore on the eve of her feast day. A Roman Catholic missionary church, the Mission Santa Barbara, was founded there on her feast day in 1786, and is one of the twenty-one such churches that were operated by the Franciscan Order and collectively known as the California missions.</p>			
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Saint	Year of Death or Martyrdom	Legend	Feast Day	Symbol(s)	Patronage
St. Apollonia		<p>Saint Apollonia was one of a group of virgin martyrs who suffered in Alexandria during a local uprising against the Christians prior to the persecution of Decius. According to church tradition, her torture included having all of her teeth violently pulled out or shattered. For this reason, she is popularly regarded as the patroness of dentistry and those suffering from toothache or other dental problems. Dionysius, Bishop of Alexandria (247–265), relates the sufferings of his people in a letter addressed to Fabius, Bishop of Antioch. After describing how a Christian man and woman, Metras and Quinta, were seized and killed by the mob, and how the houses of several other Christians were pillaged, Dionysius continues: “At that time Apollonia, parthénos presbytis (mostly likely meaning a deaconess) was held in high esteem. These men seized her also and by repeated blows broke all her teeth. They then erected outside the city gates a pile of wood and threatened to burn her alive if she refused to repeat after them impious words (either a blasphemy against Christ, or an invocation of the heathen gods). Given, at her own request, a little freedom, she sprang quickly into the fire and was burned to death. She is venerated in the Catholic Church, Eastern Orthodox Church, and Oriental Orthodoxy.</p>	Feb 9	Tongs (sometimes with a tooth in them), cross, martyr's palm, or crown	dentists tooth problems
St. Cointha	249	<p>Cointha, also known as Quinta or "Cynthia", suffered martyrdom during the persecutions of Emperor Trajanus Decius. Cointha was martyred by having her feet tied to a horse then being dragged through the streets of Alexandria.</p>	Feb 8		
St. Cyriaca (Dominica)	249	<p>Cyriaca, also known as Dominica, was a Roman widow, and patroness to St. Lawrence, and eventually suffered martyrdom. St. Lawrence used her home in Rome to give food to the poor. Cyriaca suffered martyrdom, by being scourged to death for her faith. They are venerated in the Roman Catholic and Eastern Orthodox Churches.</p>	Aug 21 RC May 19 OC		

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<b>Persecution under Decius</b>					
St. Ammonaria St. Mercuria St. Dionysia	250	Alexandrian martyrs. Two women named Ammonaria, and two others named Mercuria and Dionysia were martyred in the persecution of Emperor Decius. Dionysia was a mother. The two Ammonarias were very young. They are venerated in the Roman Catholic Church.	Dec 12		
St. Fusca St. Maura	250	Martyrs of Ravenna, Italy. Fusca was a young girl. Maura, her nurse, shared her martyrdom. They are venerated in the Roman Catholic Church.	Jan 16		
St. Agatha	251	One of the most highly venerated virgin martyrs of Christian antiquity, Agatha was put to death during the Decian persecution (250–253) in Catania, Sicily, for her determined profession of faith. Her written legend comprises "straightforward accounts of interrogation, torture, resistance, and triumph which constitute some of the earliest hagiographic literature," and are reflected in later recensions. = According to the 13th-century Golden Legend (III.15) by Jacobus de Voragine, fifteen-year-old Agatha, from a rich and noble family, made a vow of virginity and rejected the amorous advances of the Roman prefect Quintianus, who thought he could force her to turn away from her vow and marry him. His persistent proposals were consistently spurned by Agatha. This was during the persecutions of Decius, so Quintianus, knowing she was a Christian, reported her to the authorities. Quintianus himself was governor of the district. He expected her to give in to his demands when she was faced with torture and possible death, but she simply reaffirmed her belief in God by praying: "Jesus Christ, Lord of all, you see my heart, you know my desires. Possess all that I am. I am your sheep: make me worthy to overcome the devil." With tears falling from her eyes, she prayed for courage. To force her to change her mind,	Feb 5	<p>shears tongs breasts on a plate</p>  <p>Minuzze di Sant'Agata (Sicilian pastry)</p>	<p>bellfounders breast cancer bakers against fire earthquakes jewelers martyrs natural disasters nurses rape victims single laywomen sterility torture victims volcanic eruptions wet nurses Sicily San Marino</p>

		<p>Quintianus sent Agatha to Aphrodisia, the keeper of a brothel, and had her imprisoned there. Agatha never lost her confidence in God. Quintianus sent for her again, argued, threatened, and finally had her imprisoned and tortured. She was stretched on a rack to be torn with iron hooks, burned with torches, and whipped. Amongst the tortures she underwent was the excision of her breasts with pincers. After further dramatic confrontations with Quintianus, represented in a sequence of dialogues in her passio that document her fortitude and steadfast devotion, Agatha was then sentenced to be burnt at the stake, but an earthquake saved her from that fate; instead, she was sent to prison where St. Peter the Apostle appeared to her and healed her wounds. Agatha died in prison, probably in the year 251 according to the Legenda Aurea. Although the martyrdom of Agatha is authenticated, and her veneration as a saint had spread beyond her native place even in antiquity, there is no reliable information concerning the details of her death. She is venerated in the Roman Catholic Church, Eastern Orthodox Church, Oriental Orthodoxy, and the Anglican Communion.</p>			
<p>St. Callinica St. Basilissa</p>	<p>252</p>	<p>Saints Callinica and Basilissa (died 252) were two Christian martyrs. They were "wealthy matrons" who helped imprisoned Christians by providing them with food, money, and other necessities. They were "arrested for their generosity" and beheaded by the sword in Rome in 252, probably during the persecution conducted by Roman emperor Decius. Basilissa was described as "a rich lady of Galatia in Asia Minor, was distinguished for her charitable zeal". Callinica was her helper in her good works. Callinica was arrested first; her testimony led to Basilissa's arrest. Hagiographer Agnes Dunbar said this about them: "Both avowing their belief in Christ, and steadfastly refusing to sacrifice to the idols, they were tortured and beheaded". They are venerated in the Roman Catholic Church.</p>	<p>Mar 22</p>		
<p>St. Victoria St. Anatolia (St. Audax)</p>	<p>250</p>	<p>Their legend recounts that, in the time of the Emperor Decius, Anatolia and Victoria were sisters whose marriage was arranged to two noble, non-Christian Roman men. They resisted matrimony and their prospective grooms denounced them as</p>	<p>Jul 10</p>		



		Christians. They received permission to imprison the women on their estates and convince them to renounce their faith. Anatolia's suitor, Titus Aurelius, gave up, and handed her back to the authorities. Victoria's suitor, Eugenius, was more persistent, but also ended up returning her to the authorities. They are venerated in the Roman Catholic and Eastern Orthodox Churches.			
St. Messalina	ca. 250	Saint Messalina was a consecrated virgin who had received the religious veil from St. Felician, Bishop of Foligno. She cared for him during his imprisonment, and for this she was also arrested and clubbed to death when she refused to sacrifice to the Roman gods.	?		
St. Restituta	255 (or 304)	Saint Restituta (Santa Restituta of Africa; died in AD 255 or 304) is a saint and martyr of the Roman Catholic and Eastern Orthodox Churches. She was said to have been born in Carthage or Teniza (presently Ras Djebel, Tunisia) and martyred under Roman Emperor Diocletian. The location and date of her martyrdom are not precisely known. She sometimes is considered one of the Martyrs of Abitinae, Roman Province of Africa, a group of North Africans including St. Dativus, St. Saturninus, et alia, who were martyred in AD 304. A later medieval legend, recounted by Pietro Suddiacono in the 10th century and similar to legends associated with Saints Devota, Reparata, and Torpes of Pisa, states that after being horribly tortured, Restituta was placed in a blazing boat loaded with oakum and resin. Restituta was unharmed by the fire, and asked for aid from God. God sent an angel to guide her boat to the island of Aenaria (present-day Ischia), and she landed at the present-day site of San Montano. The legend further states that a local Christian woman named Lucina had dreamt of the angel and the boat. When she walked to the beach, she found the resplendent and incorrupt body of Restituta, who was now dead. Lucina gathered the population together and the saint was solemnly buried at the foot of Monte Vico in Lacco Ameno, where a paleochristian basilica was dedicated to her, and is now the site of a sanctuary dedicated to her.	May 17		

Saint	Year of Death or Martyrdom	Legend	Feast Day	Symbol(s)	Patronage
<b>Persecution under Valerian</b>					
St. Anastasia of Rome		<p>The Martyr Anastasia was born in Rome of well-born parents and left an orphan at the age of three. As an orphan, she was taken into a women's monastery near Rome, where the abbess was one Sophia, a nun of a high level of perfection. She raised Anastasia in fervent faith, in the fear of God and obedience. After seventeen years, Anastasia was known in the whole neighborhood, to the Christians as a great ascetic and to the pagans as a rare beauty. The persecution against Christians by the emperor Decius (249-251) began around that time. The pagan administrator of the city, Probus, heard of her and sent soldiers to bring Anastasia to him. The good Abbess Sophia counselled Anastasia for two hours on how to keep the Faith, how to resist flattering delusion and how to endure torture. Anastasia said to her: 'My heart is ready to suffer for Christ; my soul is ready to die for my beloved Jesus.' Blessed by her abbess to suffer for Christ, the young martyr Anastasia humbly came out to meet the armed soldiers. Brought before the governor Probus, Anastasia openly proclaimed her faith in Christ the Lord. On seeing her youth and beauty, Probus first attempted flattery to make her deny Christ and dissuade her from the Faith, "Why waste your youth, deprived of pleasure? What is there to gain by enduring tortures and death for the Crucified? Worship our gods, marry a handsome husband, and live in glory and honor." The holy maiden steadfastly replied, "My spouse, my riches, my life and my happiness are my Lord Jesus Christ, and you will not turn me away from Him by your deceit! I am ready to die for my Lord, not once but - oh, if it were only possible! - a thousand times." Probus then subjected Anastasia to fierce tortures. The holy martyr bravely endured them, glorifying and praising the Lord. When they stripped her naked, to humiliate her, she cried to the judge: 'Whip me and cut at me and beat me; my naked body will be hidden by wounds, and my shame will be</p>	Oct 29		

		covered by my blood!" She was whipped and beaten and cut about. She twice felt a great thirst and asked for water, and a Christian, Cyril, gave her a drink, for which he was blessed by the martyr and beheaded by the pagans. Then her breasts and tongue were cut off, and an angel of God appeared to her and upheld her. The people, seeing the inhuman and disgusting treatment of the saint, became indignant, and the ruler was compelled to end the tortures. She was finally beheaded with the sword outside the city. The body of the saint was thrown out beyond the city to be eaten by wild animals, but the Lord did not permit her holy relics to be dishonored. At the command of a holy angel, Abbess Sophia went to find St. Anastasia's mutilated body, and with the help of two Christians buried it in the earth. In this manner, St Anastasia received the crown of martyrdom. She is venerated in the Eastern Orthodox Church.			
St. Basilla	257	Basilla of Rome, also known as Basilissa and Babilla, was a saint and martyr of the 3rd century. Born into a Roman noble family and niece of the emperor Gallienus, she was beheaded in 257 under the Roman emperor Valerian because she refused to marry Pompeius (or Pompey), a patrician and pagan described as "a man of equal rank" to her, after she converted to Christianity. She was baptized by Pope Cornelius. Her maid accused her of being a Christian, and Pompeius betrayed her to Valerian when "she remained steadfast in her refusal to marry him." She is venerated in the Roman Catholic Church.	May 20		
St. Eugenia	258	Eugenia was an early Christian Roman martyr. Her legend states that she was converted by and martyred with Protus and Hyacinth, her Chamberlains, during the persecution of Valerian. She was said to have been the daughter of Philip, "duke" of Alexandria and governor of Egypt. She had fled her father's house dressed in men's clothing and was baptized by Helenus, bishop of Heliopolis. She later became an abbot, still pretending to be a man. As the story goes, while she was an abbot and still dressing like a man, she cured a woman of an illness, and when the woman made sexual advances, which she rebuffed, the woman accused her publicly of adultery. She was taken to court, where, still	Dec 25		

		disguised, she faced her father as the judge. At the trial, her real female identity was revealed and she was exonerated. Her father converted to the faith and became Bishop of Alexandria but the emperor had him executed for this. Eugenia and her remaining household moved to Rome where she converted many, especially maidens, but this did not prevent their martyrdom. Protus and Hyacinth were beheaded on September 11, 258, and Eugenia followed suit after Christ appeared to her in a dream and told her that she would die on the Feast of the Nativity. She is venerated in the Roman Catholic Church, Eastern Orthodox Church, and the Armenian Apostolic Church.			
Sts. Rufina & Secunda	257	Rufina and Secunda (died 257) were Roman virgin-martyrs and Christian saints. Their feast day is celebrated on 10 July. According to the legendary Acts, they suffered in 287 during the persecution of Emperor Valerian. Their legend states that they were daughters of a Roman senator named Asterius. Their fiancés, Armentarius and Verinus, were Christians, but renounced their faith when Valerian began his persecutions. Escaping to Etruria, Rufina and Secunda were captured and brought before a prefect, who tortured and then beheaded them. Their bodies were buried on the Via Aurelia and the church of Sante Rufina e Secunda was built in their honor in Rome.	Jul 10	two maidens floating in the Tiber River with weights attached to their necks	
Sts. Digna & Emerita	259	Saints Digna and Emerita (died 259 AD) are venerated as saints by the Roman Catholic Church. They were martyred at Rome, while praying before their judges.	Sep 22		
St. Agrippina	262	Agrippina of Mineo, also known as Saint Agrippina was venerated as a virgin martyr in the Roman Catholic and Eastern Orthodox Churches. Her legend states that she was a blonde princess born of a noble Roman family, and that she was martyred during the reign of Roman Emperor Valerian. She was either beheaded or scourged to death.	Jun 23	palm of martyrdom	against evil spirits leprosy thunderstorms bacterial diseases bacterial infections

Saint	Year of Death or Martyrdom	Legend	Feast Day	Symbol(s)	Patronage
<b>Persecution under Aurelian</b>					
St. Aurea	mid-3 <sup>rd</sup> Cent.	<p>Saint Aurea of Ostia (or Aura; in Greek, Chryse; both names mean “golden girl”) is venerated as the patron saint of Ostia. According to one scholar, “[a]lthough the acts of Saint Aurea are pious fiction, she was a genuine martyr with a very early cultus at Ostia.” According to tradition, she was martyred sometime during the mid-third century, either during the reign of Roman Emperor Claudius Gothicus or Trebonianus Gallus. Said to have been of royal or noble blood, Aurea was exiled from Rome to Ostia because she was a Christian. In Ostia, she lived on an estate outside of the city walls and maintained contact with local Christians, including the bishop of Ostia, Cyriacus (Quiriacus). Miracles associated with Aurea while she was in Ostia relate how a Christian prisoner named Censorinus had his chains miraculously loosened after he had been comforted by Aurea. Seventeen soldiers converted to Christianity as a result of this miracle, and were later beheaded near Ostia's Arch of Caracalla. Another legend states that Aurea and her friends also brought back to life the dead son of a shoemaker. Ulpian executed Aurea's friends and tortured Aurea. When she refused to sacrifice to the Roman gods, she was thrown into the sea with a stone tied around her neck.</p>	<p>Aug 24 May 20</p>	<p>depicted as she is thrown into the sea with a millstone around her neck</p>	<p>Ostia, Italy</p>
St. Martha	270	<p>Saints Marius, Martha, Audifax, and Abachum (died 270) were four saints of the same family (a husband, his wife, and their two sons). They came from Persia to Rome, and were martyred in 270 for sympathizing with Christian martyrs and burying their bodies. Their story relates how the family's assistance to Christians exposed them to persecution. They were seized and delivered to the judge Muscianus or Marcianus, who, unable to persuade them to abjure their faith, condemned them to various tortures. Despite the torture, the saints refused to abjure. Marius and his two sons</p>	<p>Jan 19</p>		

		were thus beheaded on the Via Cornelia, and their bodies were burnt. Martha meanwhile was cast into a well at a place called in Nimpha or Nymphae Catabassi (later called Santa Ninfa), thirteen miles from Rome.			
<b>Persecution under Diocletian</b>					
St. Zoe	ca. 286	Saint Zoe of Rome was a noblewoman, married to Nicostratus, a high Roman court official. For six years she had been unable to speak. Saint Sebastian made the sign of the cross over the woman, and she immediately began to speak and she glorified Jesus. Nicostratus and his wife asked for baptism. She was greatly devoted to Saint Peter, and was praying by his tomb when she was arrested for her faith. She died, stifled by smoke, hung over a fire. Her body then was thrown into the River Tiber. She is considered a saint in the Roman Catholic and Eastern Orthodox Churches.	Jul 5		
St. Aquilina	293	Aquilina was a Christian child from Byblos, Lebanon. At that time, the Church wasn't yet divided and only one Church existed. Between 63 B.C. and 330 A.D., Byblos was under Roman rule, and although Christianity existed in Byblos from the time of the Apostles, Christians were a minority among the majority pagans. During their rule, the Romans not only strengthened the worship of idols, but some of their governors actively persecuted the Christians. She was a native of the Phoenician city of Byblos. Her father's name was Eutolmius. She was raised in Christian piety by her parents. She received her catechism from Evthalios, Bishop of Byblos. When she was only twelve years old, she persuaded a pagan friend to convert to Christ through her example and teachings. One of the servants of Governor Volusian accused her of teaching others to reject paganism. She was taken before the governor where she firmly confessed her belief in Christ and said that she would not renounce Him. Volusian tried to influence her through persuasion and flattery, but seeing her confidence, he ordered her to be tortured. She was struck upon the face, then stripped and flogged. Heated metal rods were then drilled through	Jun 13		

		<p>her ears, and St. Aquilina fell down as if dead. The torturers thought that she had actually died, and gave orders that her body be thrown outside the city to be eaten by dogs. However, later that night, an angel appeared to Aquilina, roused her and said, “Arise and be healed. Go and denounce Volusian, so that he and his plans may come to nothing.” Aquilina regained consciousness and went before the magistrate, who sentenced her to be decapitated in the morning, saying that she was a sorceress who refused his imperial decrees. Before the executioner could carry out the sentence, the martyr gave up her spirit. She is venerated in the Roman Catholic, Eastern Catholic, and Eastern Orthodox Churches.</p>			
<p>Sts. Alexandra, Claudia, Euphrasia, Matrona, Juliana, Euphemia, Theodosia</p>	<p>ca. 310</p>	<p>The holy virgin martyrs Alexandra, Claudia, Euphrasia, Matrona, Juliana, Euphemia and Theodosia were arrested in the city of Amisa (on the coastal region of the Black Sea) during the persecution against Christians under the emperor Maximian Galerius (305-311). Under interrogation they confessed their faith and were subjected to cruel tortures for this. The malefactors scourged and beat them with rods, and cut off their breasts. After this, they were suspended and torn with sharp hooks. Finally, the holy virgins were burned alive in a red-hot oven. They are venerated in the Eastern Orthodox Church.</p>	<p>Mar 20</p>		