

American Minute with Bill Federer Origin of Saint Valentine's Day

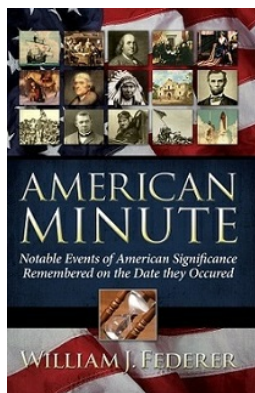
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The origin of **Saint Valentine's Day** goes back to early Christian history.

Today, at a time when governments are increasing their persecution of Christians, it is important to remember that the Church was born into a one-world anti-Christian government - the Roman Empire. ... [continue reading ...](#)



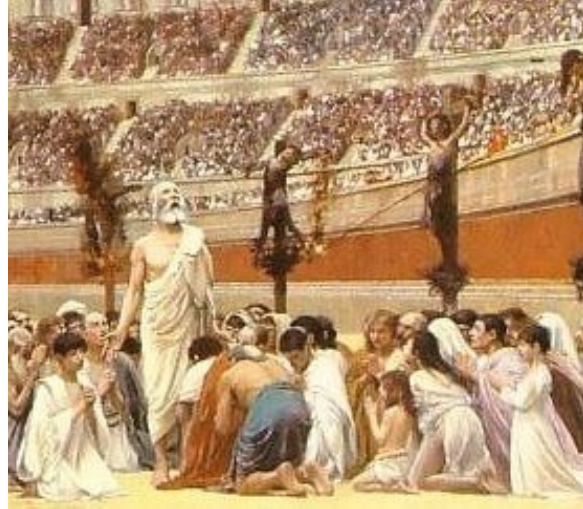
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In the Book of Acts 1:8,
Jesus told His disciples:

"But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth."



According to Easton's Bible Dictionary, the word for "**witness**" in Greek is "martus," which is the root word for "**martyr**."

Eleven of the twelve apostles were martyred, with John boiled in a pot of oil but miraculously surviving and banished to the Island of Patmos.

During the **first three centuries of Christianity**, there were **ten major persecutions**, along with innumerable smaller ones. Initially, Romans persecuted Jews and Christians together.

Government agents threw believers to the lions in the Colosseum, boiled them alive, had their tongues cut out, or worse:

64-68 A.D.:
Emperor Nero
blamed fire in
Rome on
Christians and
began first
persecution;

69-79 A.D.:

Emperors
Vespasian and
Titus persecuted
Christians, in
addition to
destroying the
Jewish Temple in
Jerusalem;



89-96 A.D.: The
persecution under
Emperor Domitian included boiling the Apostle John
in oil then banishing him to Patmos, in addition to
hunting down and killing descendants of David;

108-117 A.D.: The persecution under Emperor
Trajan;

117-138 A.D.: The persecution under Emperor
Hadrian crushed the Jewish Bar Kokbah Revolt and
renamed the Roman province of Judea to Syria
Palaestina;

161-180 A.D.: The persecution under Emperor
Marcus Aurelius killed Polycarp, the disciple of
John;

192-211 A.D.: Persecution under Emperor
Septimius Severus;

235-238 A.D.: Persecution under Emperor
Maximinus the Thracian;

249-251 A.D.: Persecution under Emperor Decius;

253-260 A.D.: Persecution under Emperor Valerian;

268-270 A.D.: Persecution under Emperor Claudius the Second, during which Saint Valentine was reportedly martyred;

274-285 A.D.: Persecution under Emperor Aurelian;

285-305 A.D.: Persecution under Emperor Diocletian, considered the worst of them all, decimating the entire Roman Theban Legion, which had become Christian, in addition to imprisoning Saint Nicholas;

305-313 A.D.: Finally, the persecution under Emperor Galerius.

Christians met in catacombs, which were caves carved underground, for their church meetings, and risked their lives every time they gathered together.

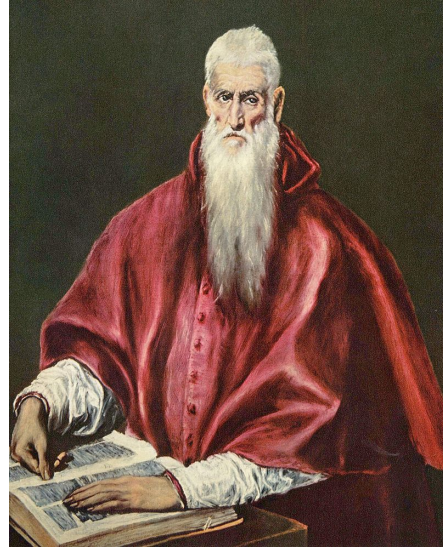


A pietist movement began of withdrawal from the corrupt society, with some believers living in caves as hermits or joining monasteries.

Roman soldiers raided meetings and arrested believers, dragging them before corrupt judges, and also confiscated and **destroyed Christian writings, scriptures and church records**. As a result of this, records of the life of **Saint Valentine** are scant.

What little is known is from the works of Eusebius of

Caesarea, and the *Martyrologium Hieronymianum* - *Martyrology of Jerome*, compiled around 460-544 A.D.



Passio Marii et Marthae, published in the 5th or 6th century includes a story of the martyrdom of Saint Valentine of Rome.

Venerable Bede's *Martyrology*, compiled in the 8th century, described St. Valentine being arrested and interrogated by Emperor Claudius the Second. Claudius was impressed with Valentine and tried to convert him to paganism to save his life. Valentine refused and tried to convert Claudius to Christianity instead. Because of this, he was executed.

The 8th-century *Gelasian Sacramentary* recorded the celebration of the Feast of Saint Valentine on February 14.

St. Valentine is mentioned in the *Legenda Sanctorum* by Jacobus de Voragine in 1260 and in the *Nuremberg Chronicle*, 1493.

Though several individuals may have had that name, it appears **Saint Valentine** was either a priest in Rome or a bishop in Terni, central Italy.



In the third century after Christ, the **Roman Empire** was being **invaded by Goths**.

At the same time, the **Plague of Cyprian**, probably **smallpox**, broke out killing at its height 5,000 people a day.



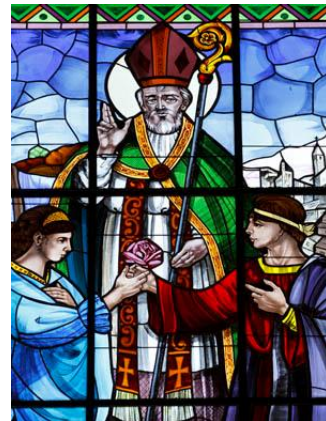
So many died that the **Roman army** was **depleted of soldiers**.



Roman Emperor Claudius II needed more soldiers to fight the invading Goths.

He believed that **men fought better if they were not married**, so he **banned traditional marriage in the military**.

Valentine risked the Emperor's wrath by standing up for traditional marriage, secretly marrying soldiers to their brides.



Rome was also being torn from internal rivalries which continued since the

assassination of the previous **Emperor Gallienus**.



Emperor Claudius the Second quelled political tensions by requesting the Roman Senate **deify Emperor Gallienus**, so he would be **worshiped along with the other Roman gods**.



Citizens were forced by government mandates to worship them by **placing a pinch of incense on a fire before their statues**.

It was a simple act, and some Christians caved, but since is clearly "an act of worship," others chose rather to die in the Colosseum before they would worship anything other than the one true God.

Those who refused were considered "politically incorrect" or "unpatriotic" enemies of the state. They were cancelled and killed.

Emperor Deccan's persecution intentionally **targeted Christians** by issuing mandates and executive orders specifically designed to force them to deny their consciences or die.

Roman soldiers would break

into church meetings, catacombs, and homes, confiscating and **destroying Christian writings, scriptures and church records.**



Because so many records were destroyed, details of **Saint Valentine's** life are scant.

Saint Valentine is mentioned in ***Legenda Sanctorum*** by Jacobus de Voragine in 1260 and in the ***Nuremberg Chronicle***, 1493.



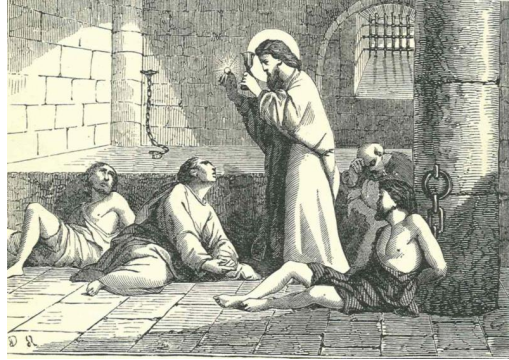
Though several individuals may have had that name, it appears **Saint Valentine** was either a **priest in Rome** or a **bishop in Terni**, central Italy.



When **Emperor Claudius** demanded that Christians worship pagan idols and statues of deified Emperors, **Saint Valentine** refused.

The name Valentine is derived from the word "valor," which means, strength of mind or spirit that enables a person to encounter danger with firmness and personal bravery.

Valentine was arrested and dragged before the Prefect of Rome, who condemned him to die.



While awaiting execution, he preached to guards and other prisoners. His jailer, Asterius, asked **Saint Valentine** to pray for his blind daughter.

When she miraculously regained her sight, the jailer converted and was baptized, along with his entire family.

Right before his execution, **Saint Valentine** wrote a note to the jailer's daughter, encouraging her in the faith, signing it, "**from your Valentine.**"



Saint Valentine was beaten with clubs and stones, and when that failed to kill him, he was beheaded outside the Flaminian Gate on **FEBRUARY 14, 269 A.D.**

I John 4:18 "Perfect love casteth out fear."

I Timothy 4:8: "Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing."

In 496 A.D., **Pope Gelasius** is

credited with
designating **FEBRUARY**
14th as "**Saint Valentine's Day.**"



How did St. Valentine's Day get associated with love?

In the High Middle Ages, circa 1393, **Geoffrey Chaucer**, called the father of English literature, wrote a poem called *Parliament of Fowles - Assembly of Fowls, or Birds*. "Fowl" is an old word for "bird."



It is he described how many bird species
birds, **chose their mates in mid-February:**

"For this was **Saint Valentine's day**, when every bird of every kind that men can imagine comes to this place to choose his mate."

He made another mention in the final chapter of *The Canterbury Tales*:

"The book of the Duchesse; the book of **Seint Valentynes day** of the Parlement of Briddes - Birds."

The association
of **birds** with **fidelity in marital love** came about because a

large percent of bird species are monogamous.

Many bird species mate for life, such as varieties of:



Lovebirds History and Meaning of the Symbol *Cherry*

Swans, Geese, Ravens, Cranes, Blue Jays, Owls, Hawks, Woodpeckers, Ospreys, Raptors, Puffins, Pigeons, Dove, Penguins, and Bald Eagles.

After elaborate courtships, depending on the species, these birds remain together until one partner dies.



Birds that mate for life often take turns sitting on the eggs, females at night and males during the day. They have offspring that require more extensive care and instruction from parents.

These species mate earlier in the season which allows their young more time to develop before the fall and winter seasons of long migrations or harsh winter weather.

After **Chaucer's poems**, more references appeared in literature associating **Saint Valentine's Day** with courtly love, such as John Donne's Marriage Song; and William Shakespeare's "Hamlet" and "Midsummer Night's Dream."



This eventually developed into the **18th-century English traditions** of presenting flowers, offering confectionery, and sending **St. Valentine's Day** greeting cards.

People often sign **Valentine cards** with X's and O's. Where did this come from?



To answer this, we must go back to Rome.

Remember Emperor Diocletian's terrible persecution?

Believers prayed and Diocletian was struck with an intestinal disease so painful he abdicated the throne on May 1, 305 A.D.

The next Emperor, Galerius, continued the persecution and was also struck with an intestinal disease, dying in 311 A.D.

Four Roman generals fought it out as to who would be the next emperor.

Two were defeated and it came down to Constantine and Maxentius and the Battle of the Milvian Bridge in 312 AD.

Reportedly, the day before the battle, Constantine saw the sign of Christ in the sky, put it on his shields and banners, and won the battle. Afterwards he stopped the persecution of Christians.

What was the sign of Christ?

It is said to be the first two letters of the Greek name for Christ. Just like we often abbreviate states with the first two letters, Greek abbreviated names with the first two letters.



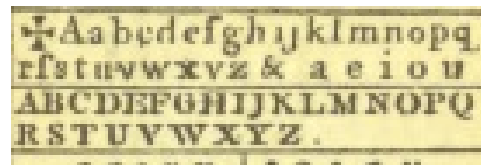
The Greek name for **Christ** is **Χριστός**.

The first letter which makes the "kha" sound is written as an "X" and is called "Chi." The second letter, that makes the "rrr" sound is written as a "P" and is called "rho." These two letters were called the "Chi-Rho."

Over the centuries, it got shortened just to the Chi or X. "**X**" became a common **abbreviation** for the name **Christ**.

This is why **Christ-mas** is abbreviated as **X-mas**.

In Medieval times, the "**X**" was called the **Christ's Cross**, or "**Criss-Cross**."



In colonial America, young students were taught the alphabet, but before it was an "X." Children would begin their recitation of the alphabet with the saying, May Christ's cross grant me speed - or success. It reminded students that "the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom."

One of the colonial school books had the rhyme:
"Mortals ne'er shall know --

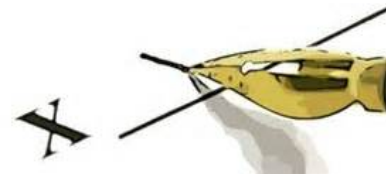
More than contained of old
the **Chris'-cross row.**"



The **Christ's Cross** was a form of a written oath. This came down to us as, "put your X here"; or "sign at the X," or saying, "I swear, cross my heart."



Similar to the ancient practice of swearing upon a Bible, saying "so help me God," then kissing the Bible, people would **sign a document with or next to the Christ's Cross** to swear before God they would keep the agreement, **then kiss it to show sincerity.**



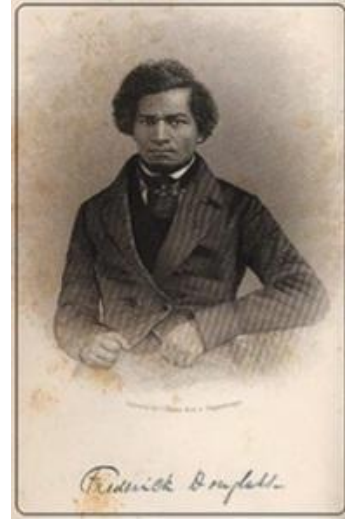
This is the origin of signing a **Valentine's card** with an "X" to express a **pledge before God to be faithful**, and an "O" to **seal the pledge with a kiss of sincerity.**



History is intertwined with **Valentine's** references:

On February 14, 1688, William and Mary were placed by Parliament on the English throne.

On February 14, 1778, John Paul Jones, sailing the USS Ranger, was given a nine-gun salute by French Admiral Lamotte-Picquet. This was the first time the Stars and Stripes flag was formally recognized by a foreign nation.



On February 14, 1779, British Captain James Cook is killed in Hawaii.

On February 14, 1817, Frederick Douglass, the Republican advisor to President Lincoln, was born a slave on a southern Democrat plantation. He was separated from his mother as a child and only remembers that his mother would call him, "my little valentine," leading him to assume he was born on Valentine's Day.

On February 14, 1844, John C. Fremont was the first explorer to discover Lake Tahoe. He later became the first Republican candidate for President.



On February 14, 1859, Oregon became a state.

On February 14, 1876, Alexander Graham Bell applied for a patent for the telephone.

On February 14, 1884, Theodore Roosevelt's wife and mother died on Valentine's Day. Depressed, he dropped out of New York politics, left his infant daughter with his sister, and went off to ranch in the Dakotas. He later came back to New York, took his

daughter back, remarried and had five more children, then ran for President.

On February 14, 1912, Arizona became a state.

On February 14, 1929, the St. Valentine's Day Massacre took place during the Prohibition era. Al Capone's Chicago mob murdered seven members of Bugs Moran's Irish gang.



Al Capone's hitman Frank Nitti was accompanied by the young Saul Alinsky, who later incorporated gang tactics into his political technique of "community organizing." Alinsky wrote in Rules for Radicals, 1971: "The organizer must first rub raw the resentments of the people of the community ... fan the latent hostilities of many of the people to the point of overt expression."

On February 14, 1949, the first Jewish Knesset meeting was held, with Israel's first President Chaim Weizmann.

Since the **Roman persecutions**, **Christianity** has become the **most persecuted faith in the world**, with over 300 being martyred each day, or one every five minutes, mostly in communist and fundamentalist Islamic countries.



The Center for Studies on New Religions reported that in 2016, 90,000 Christians killed, 30 percent by sharia Islamic terrorists. Several organizations keep

track of this, such as Voice of the Martyrs,
and **SavethePersecutedChristians.org**

**Saint Valentine's
willingness to be a martyr
for Christ and his loving
example of heroic valor still
inspires believers to follow
the scriptures:**



Matthew 5:44: "Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them that despitefully use you, and persecute you; That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven."

John 13:35: "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another."

John 15:13 "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends."

I John 4:10 "Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins."

I John 4:19 "We love him, because he first loved us."

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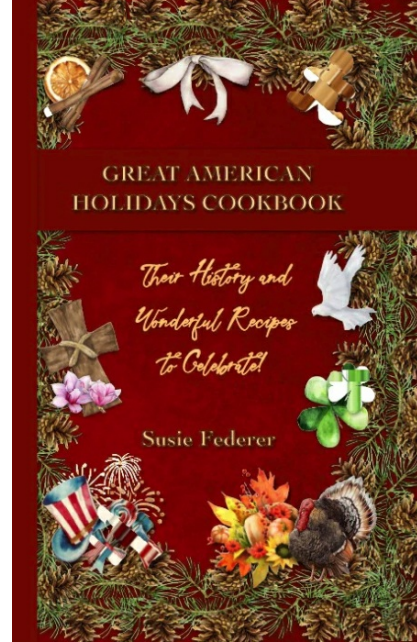
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- by Susie Federer



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