



Saint Cornelius And Saint Cyprian

In the 200s AD, the Roman Emperor Decius ordered all Christians to sacrifice to the Roman gods or face punishment.

Many Christians were afraid and did as the emperor demanded, becoming known as the "lapsed".

Cornelius was the Pope in Rome. Cyprian was a bishop in the city of Carthage, which is in North Africa. They were good friends and allies, and they both believed that God's love was for everyone, even those who had failed.

They felt that Christians who had fallen away during the persecution could be forgiven and return to the Church after a period of penance (showing they were sorry and that they would change their ways).

A different church leader named Novatian strongly disagreed with Cornelius and Cyprian.

Novatian argued that Christians who had "lapsed" could never be forgiven and could not rejoin the Church. This led to a temporary split, or schism, in the Church, with Novatian and his followers disagreeing with Pope Cornelius and his supporters.

Because of the persecutions, Pope Cornelius was arrested and sent into exile, where he was martyred.

Saint Cyprian also faced persecution and was eventually condemned and martyred for his faith.

They are remembered together as martyrs for Christ and for their belief in God's mercy and the unity of the Church.

Prayer:

God our Father, You gave Saint Cornelius and Saint Cyprian to Your Church as faithful pastors and steadfast martyrs. Strengthen our faith and our courage by their prayers, so that we may strive with all our power for the unity of the Church. We make our prayer through our Lord Jesus Christ, Your Son, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, God, for ever and ever. Amen.