

# St Valentine

Officially known as Saint Valentine of Rome, this third-century Roman saint widely celebrated on February 14 is commonly associated with "courtly love."



Although not much of St. Valentine's life is reliably known, and whether or not the stories involve two different saints by the same name is also not officially decided, it is highly agreed that St. Valentine was martyred and then buried on the Via Flaminia to the north of Rome.

In 1969, the Roman Catholic Church removed St. Valentine from the General Roman Calendar, because so little is known about him. However, the church still recognizes him as a saint, listing him in the Roman list of Martyrs placing him on February 14th .

One story tells that St. Valentine was imprisoned for marrying Christian couples and aiding Christians being persecuted by Claudius in Rome. Both acts were considered serious crimes. A relationship between the saint and emperor began to grow, until Valentine attempted to convince Claudius of Christianity. Claudius became so enraged he sentenced Valentine to death, commanding him to renounce his faith or be beaten with clubs and beheaded.

St. Valentine refused to renounce his faith and Christianity, and was executed

The romantic nature of Valentine's Day may have derived during the Middle Ages, when it was believed that birds paired couples in mid-February. According to English 18th-century antiquarians, Valentine's Day was most likely created to overpower the pagan holiday, Lupercalia.

Although the exact origin of the holiday is not widely agreed upon, it is widely recognized as a day for love, devotion and romance.

Whoever he was, Valentine did really exist, because archaeologists have unearthed a Roman catacomb and an ancient church dedicated to St. Valentine. In 496 AD Pope Gelasius marked February 14th as a celebration in honour of his martyrdom.