



Historical archives make mention of at least three different individuals (and perhaps as many as seven) credited with the name of Saint Valentine (or Valentinus). The three discussed here were all martyred for their faith and have been recognized by the Catholic Church. The first is described as a priest who resided in Rome and the second is described as a Bishop who resided in Interamna (known today as Terni) in Italy. These two Saint Valentines appear to have been alive during the second half of the Third Century and are said by some sources to be buried on the Flaminia Consular Way...but at different distances from the City of Rome. The ancient Flaminian Gate is now called the Porta del Popolo, but was formerly referred to as the Gate of Saint Valentine. The name seems to have originated from a small church dedicated in the name of the saint which was in the immediate vicinity. Official reports regarding the interrogation of both the aforementioned saints are preserved, but are of a relatively late date and deemed to have little, if any, historical value. Some authorities on the subject believe that the two Saint Valentines mentioned above are likely one and the same individual...a Roman priest who became Bishop in Interamna and was then sentenced there before being returned to Rome for execution. Since both lived during the reign of the same Roman emperor and are believed to have died on the same day, this assumption probably has some validity. The third Saint Valentine is said to have practiced in Africa with a number of associates prior to his martyrdom, but nothing further is known of this particular personage and it is doubtful that he is associated in any manner with the modern day celebration of Saint Valentine's Day.

In 496 A.D., Pope Gelasius declared February 14 to be the Feast Day of Saint Valentine...Patron Saint of Lovers and Engaged Couples, with particular jurisdiction over the quarrels which arise between sweethearts. The patronage of Saint Valentine also extends to epilepsy (from which he is believed to have suffered), bee-keepers, plague, greetings, travellers and young people. His representations include: birds, roses, a bishop with a crippled or epileptic child at his feet; a bishop with a rooster nearby; a bishop refusing to adore an idol; a bishop being beheaded; a priest bearing a sword; a priest holding a sun; and a priest bestowing sight upon a blind girl. Throughout the world, there are several special resorts that exhibit a romantic year-round theme (but particularly on February 14 with elaborate celebrations) and which are named in honor of Saint Valentine...Saint-Valentin in France (also known as "le village pour les Amoureux"), Saint-Valentin in Austria, Saint-Valentin in Quebec, Canada (founded in 1835 and granted the unique distinction of being the only location in the world with permission to use a heart-shaped date stamp on outgoing mail) and Sakuto Cho in Japan, for example.



Saint Valentine: Holy Priest of Rome: The date of this Saint Valentine's birth is not known. Along with Saint Marius and his family, Saint Valentine assisted the martyrs during the persecution they suffered under the rule of Claudius II (also known as Claudius the Goth and Claudius the Cruel). In addition, since Rome was at the time involved in many bloody and unpopular campaigns, the emperor found it difficult to recruit the male populace into joining his military leagues. Believing this to be because Roman men were adverse to leaving their loved ones or their families, Claudius cancelled all marriages and engagements within the City of Rome. Saint Valentine and Saint Marius, however, continued to perform wedding ceremonies in secret. When it was discovered that Saint Valentine was defying the emperor's decree, he was apprehended and dispatched by Claudius to the Prefect of Rome who, being unable to force the saint to renounce Christianity, ordered that Valentine be clubbed, stoned and then beheaded. According to tradition, while Valentine waited in prison for his execution, he corresponded with those under his care by sending letters and love notes to his parishioners. It is also believed that while incarcerated, the Bishop fell in love with a young woman who visited him during his confinement. According to some sources, this was the blind daughter (whose name may have been Julia) of Asterius, the jailer. It is said that God enabled Valentine to miraculously restore the girl's sight. Popular belief indicates that Valentine's farewell message to his love contained a closing that has now transcended time: "From Your Valentine." The saint was executed on February 14 in either 269 A.D. or 270 A.D. In 270 A.D., Pope Julius I is said to have built a church near Ponte Mole in the saint's memory at a location once known as *Porta Valentini* and now called *Porta del Popolo*. The relic bones of this Saint Valentine, who may also have been a physician, are now housed within the Church of Saint Praxed in Rome.

Saint Valentine: Bishop of Interamna: This Saint Valentine is said to have been scourged, imprisoned and beheaded by Placidus, Prefect of Interamna. The relic bones of this Saint Valentine are housed in a basilica in Terni, a town in Italy which hails Saint Valentine as its Patron Saint. It is believed that the saint, who lived in the Third Century, dedicated his life to the Christian community of Terni, becoming the first Bishop of the town. Adored by the populace, the fame of Saint Valentine's holiness and miracles reached Rome, his name being linked with love because, according to legend, he was the first religious personage to oversee the celebration of marriage between a pagan man and a Christian woman. Sentenced to death in Rome, he was martyred on February 14 along the Via Flaminia and swiftly buried in order to prevent rioting by the Christians. It is said that three of Saint Valentine's disciples managed to find the body, transferring it to Terni, where the remains were interred within a sacred place. The Basilica of Saint Valentino was later erected in the same location to honor the saint and invoke his protection and blessing. Every year on February 14, the town of Terni now hosts exhibitions, fairs and cultural events which attract many tourists to the area.



While there are no definitive written accounts of any of the aforementioned Saint Valentines, all of whom lived in the Third Century and apparently died on exactly the same day, there is a more recent and documented connection to Ireland. In 1836, Pope Gregory XVI sent a gift to the Carmelite Church in Dublin...recognition of the work carried out by the former prior of the Church, Father John Spratt, widely-known as a very holy man. The gift was a relic of a Christian martyr...a small gold-bound casket which contained the earthly remains of one Saint Valentine (which it might have been if indeed, there is more than one, is not clear). The relic had been exhumed from the Cemetery of Saint Hyppolytus on the Tibertine Way in Rome, placed into a golden casket and transported to Dublin, where it was enshrined with great ceremony in the little Carmelite Church. Every year, on February 14, the casket is

carried in solemn procession to the high altar for a special Mass dedicated to young people and all those in love.

There has been some speculation in modern times that the name of Valentine was originally "Galantine," signifying "gallant," which is a word with obvious associations to courtship. The shift in consonant to "V" is explained by the way Medieval French peasants pronounced the letter "G."



ref.: <http://www.novareinna.com/festive/saintval.html>

Look more here www.Saints.CatholicChurch.ph and www.Valentines.FilipinoTraditions.ph