

CHURCH HISTORY VOL. 03

BLOOD OF THE MARTYRS



Perpetua and Felicitas

FAITHFUL UNTIL
DEATH

**MARTYRDOM IN
THE EARLY CHURCH**

**“AND I TELL YOU THAT YOU ARE PETER,
AND ON THIS ROCK I WILL BUILD MY
CHURCH, AND THE GATES OF HELL WILL
NOT PREVAIL AGAINST IT.”**

Matthew 16:18, ESV



Jesus being scourged

REMEMBER THE WORD THAT I SAID TO YOU: 'A SERVANT IS NOT GREATER THAN HIS MASTER.' IF THEY PERSECUTED ME, THEY WILL ALSO PERSECUTE YOU. IF THEY KEPT MY WORD, THEY WILL ALSO KEEP YOURS.

John 15:20, ESV

THEREFORE, SINCE WE ARE SURROUNDED BY SO GREAT A CLOUD OF WITNESSES, LET US ALSO LAY ASIDE EVERY WEIGHT, AND SIN WHICH CLINGS SO CLOSELY, AND LET US RUN WITH ENDURANCE THE RACE THAT IS SET BEFORE US...

Hebrews 12:1, ESV

A great cloud of witnesses



Ansgar the Scandinavian missionary

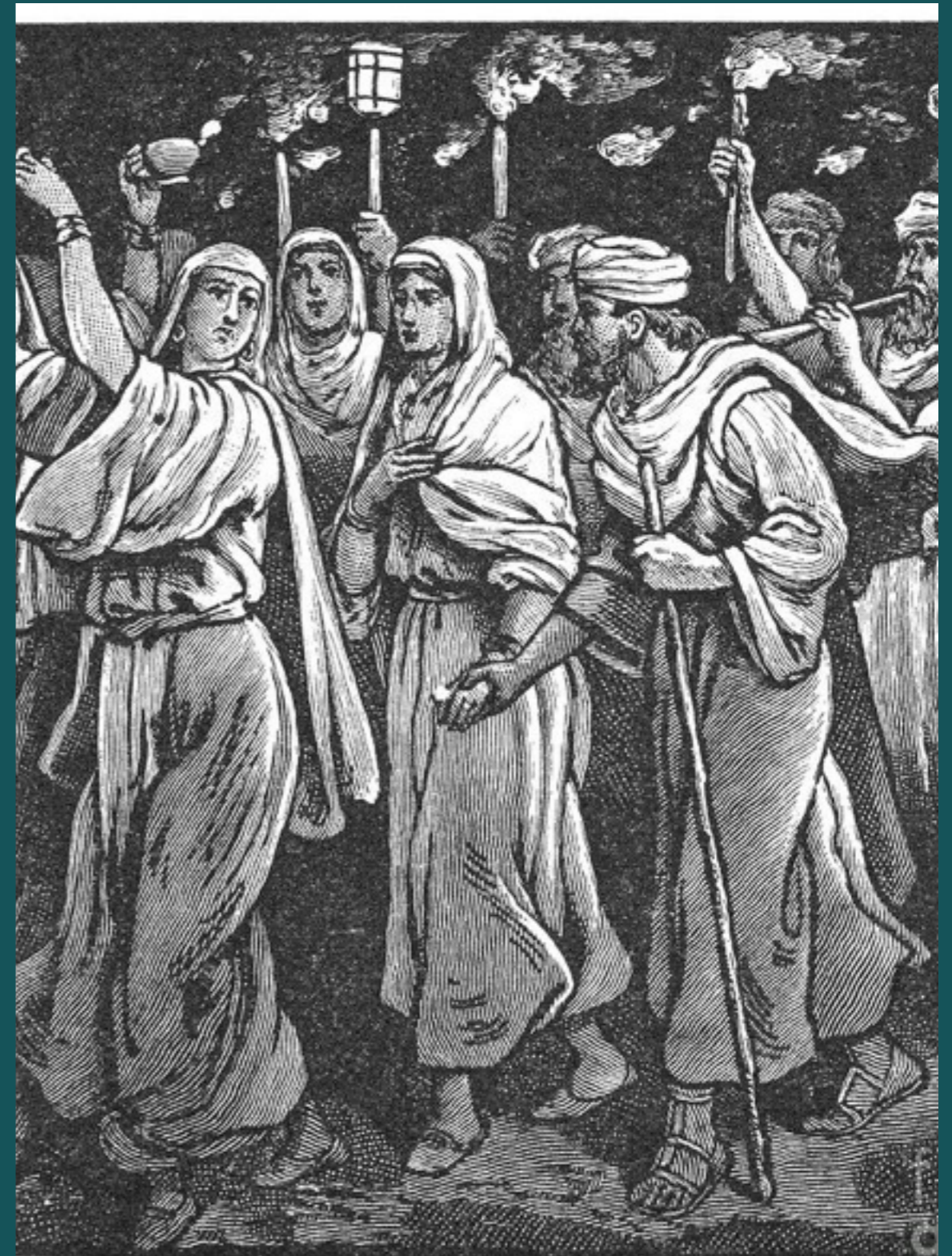
CATEGORIES OF CHURCH HISTORY

- ▶ HISTORY OF MISSIONS
 - ▶ Where did the church go (and grow) and how did it get there?
- ▶ HISTORY OF PERSECUTIONS
 - ▶ Who are the active enemies of the church?
- ▶ HISTORY OF CHURCH GOVERNMENT
 - ▶ Who's in the charge of the church and how does it relate to the state?



CATEGORIES OF CHURCH HISTORY

- ▶ HISTORY OF WORSHIP
 - ▶ Preaching, liturgy, catechisms, rites & ceremonies, religious art
- ▶ HISTORY OF CHRISTIAN LIFE
 - ▶ Religious & Civil freedoms
 - ▶ Domestic Christian Life
 - ▶ Virtues & Vices of a given particular age



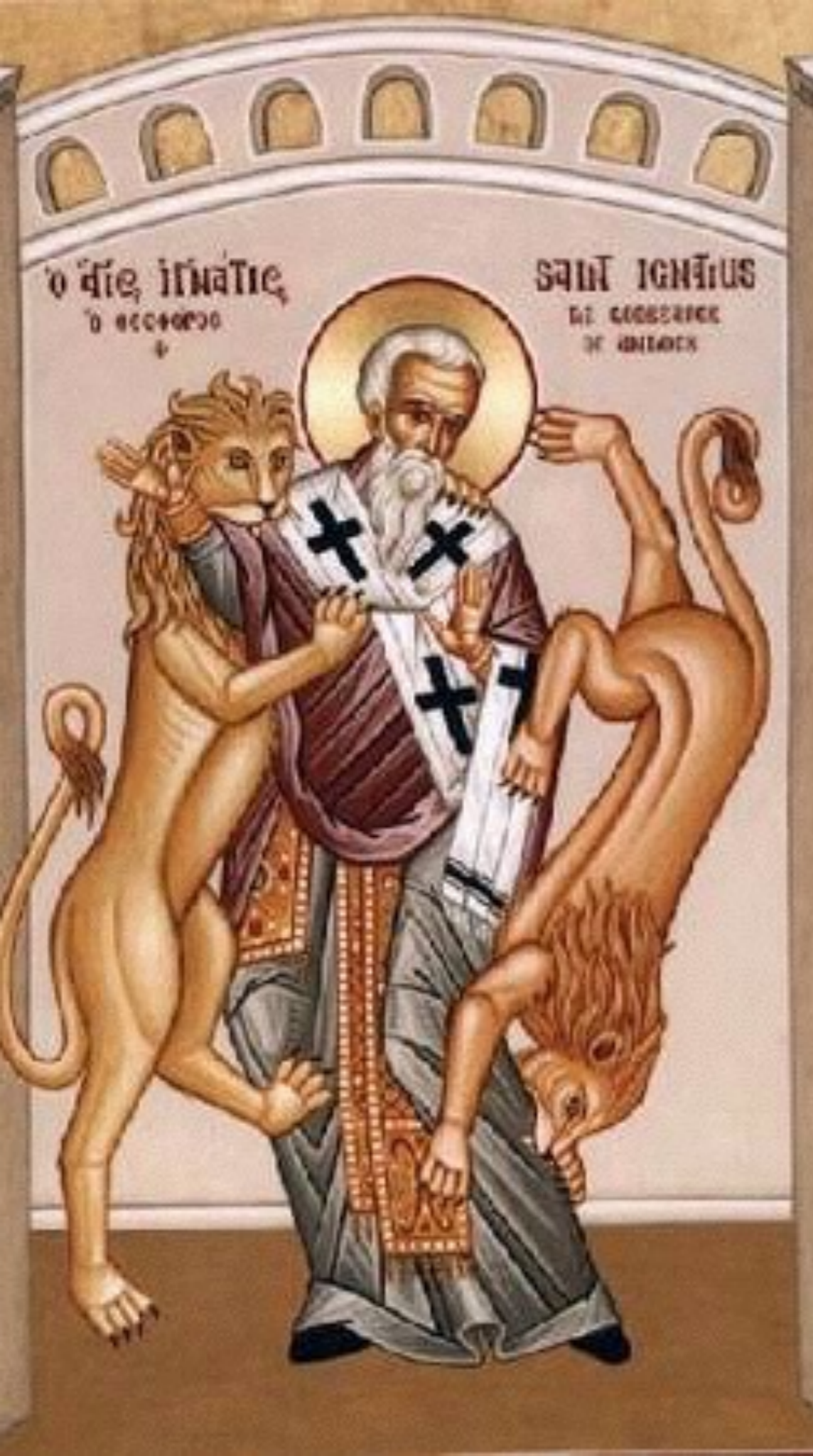
EASTERN MARRIAGE PROCESSION.

CATEGORIES OF CHURCH HISTORY

- ▶ HISTORY OF THEOLOGY
 - ▶ A struggle against error, misbelief & unbelief
 - ▶ How does the church apprehend and unfold divine truth?



Augustine of Hippo



THE AGE OF THE
WITNESSES!

THE AGE OF THE
MARTYRS!



**NO LIVING CREATURE
EXCEPT FOR A MAN IS
ABLE TO TAKE A RISK, AND
EVEN THE RISK OF DEATH,
FOR THE SAKE OF TRUTH.
THOUSANDS OF MARTYRS
WHO HAVE LIVED ARE A
UNIQUE PHENOMENON IN
THE HISTORY OF ALL OUR
SOLAR SYSTEM.**

-Aleksander Menn

WHAT IS A MARTYR?

- ▶ the NT definition of the word **μάρτυρας** is more often translated “witness” than martyr
- ▶ Martyrs were witnesses for their faith and the truth of their beliefs

Christians in the colosseum

1ST 300 YEARS

- ▶ This is a unique time in the history of the church
 - ▶ Not because of the ferocity of the martyrdom
 - ▶ Not because of the number of martyrs
- ▶ These martyrs lived and died in the formative years of the church



PERSECUTION OVERVIEW (60-320 AD)

JEWISH PERSECUTION

- ▶ The persecutors of the church were initially the Jews
- ▶ Paul appealed to his Roman citizenship to save him from Jewish Persecution
- ▶ The Jews were the persecutors/Rome was the protectors

ACTS 25: 1-4

- ▶ Now three days after Festus had arrived in the province, he went up to Jerusalem from Caesarea. ²And the chief priests and the principal men of the Jews laid out their case against Paul, and they urged him, ³asking as a favor against Paul that he summon him to Jerusalem—because they were **planning an ambush to kill him on the way.** ⁴Festus replied that Paul was being kept at Caesarea and that he himself intended to go there shortly.



ACTS 25: 10-12

- ▶ But Paul said, "I am standing before **Caesar's** tribunal, where I ought to be tried. To the Jews I have done no wrong, as you yourself know very well.
¹¹If then I am a wrongdoer and have committed anything for which I deserve to die, I do not seek to escape death. But if there is nothing to their charges against me, no one can give me up to them. **I appeal to Caesar.**"
¹²Then Festus, when he had conferred with his council, answered, "**To Caesar you have appealed; to Caesar you shall go.**"



Paul before Festus

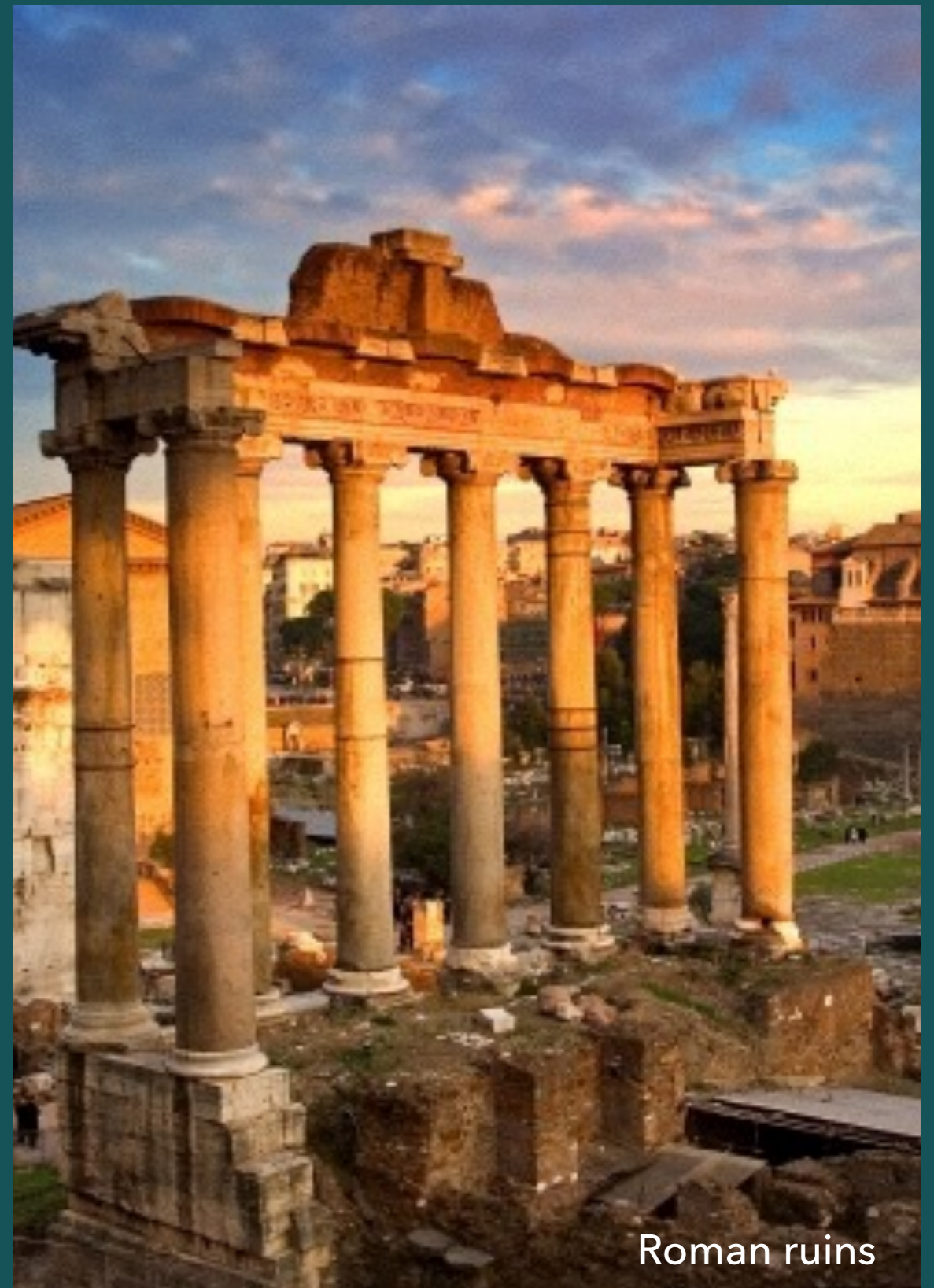
PERSECUTION OVERVIEW (60–320 AD)

ROMAN PERSECUTION

- ▶ Rome becomes the great **Babylon** in the book of Revelation
- ▶ From the violent persecutions of **Nero** to the final and worst persecution under **Diocletian**

I PETER 5:12-14

- ▶ By Silvanus, a faithful brother as I regard him, I have written briefly to you, exhorting and declaring that this is the true grace of God. Stand firm in it. ¹³She who is at Babylon, who is likewise chosen, sends you greetings, and so does Mark, my son. ¹⁴Greet one another with the kiss of love. Peace to all of you who are in Christ.



Roman ruins

REVELATION 17

- ▶ ³And he carried me away in the Spirit into a wilderness, and I saw a woman sitting on a scarlet beast that was full of blasphemous names, and it had seven heads and ten horns. ⁴The woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet, and adorned with gold and jewels and pearls, holding in her hand a golden cup full of abominations and the impurities of her sexual immorality. ⁵And on her forehead was written a name of mystery: "**Babylon the great**, mother of prostitutes and of earth's abominations." ⁶And I saw the woman, drunk with the blood of the saints, the **blood of the martyrs of Jesus**.



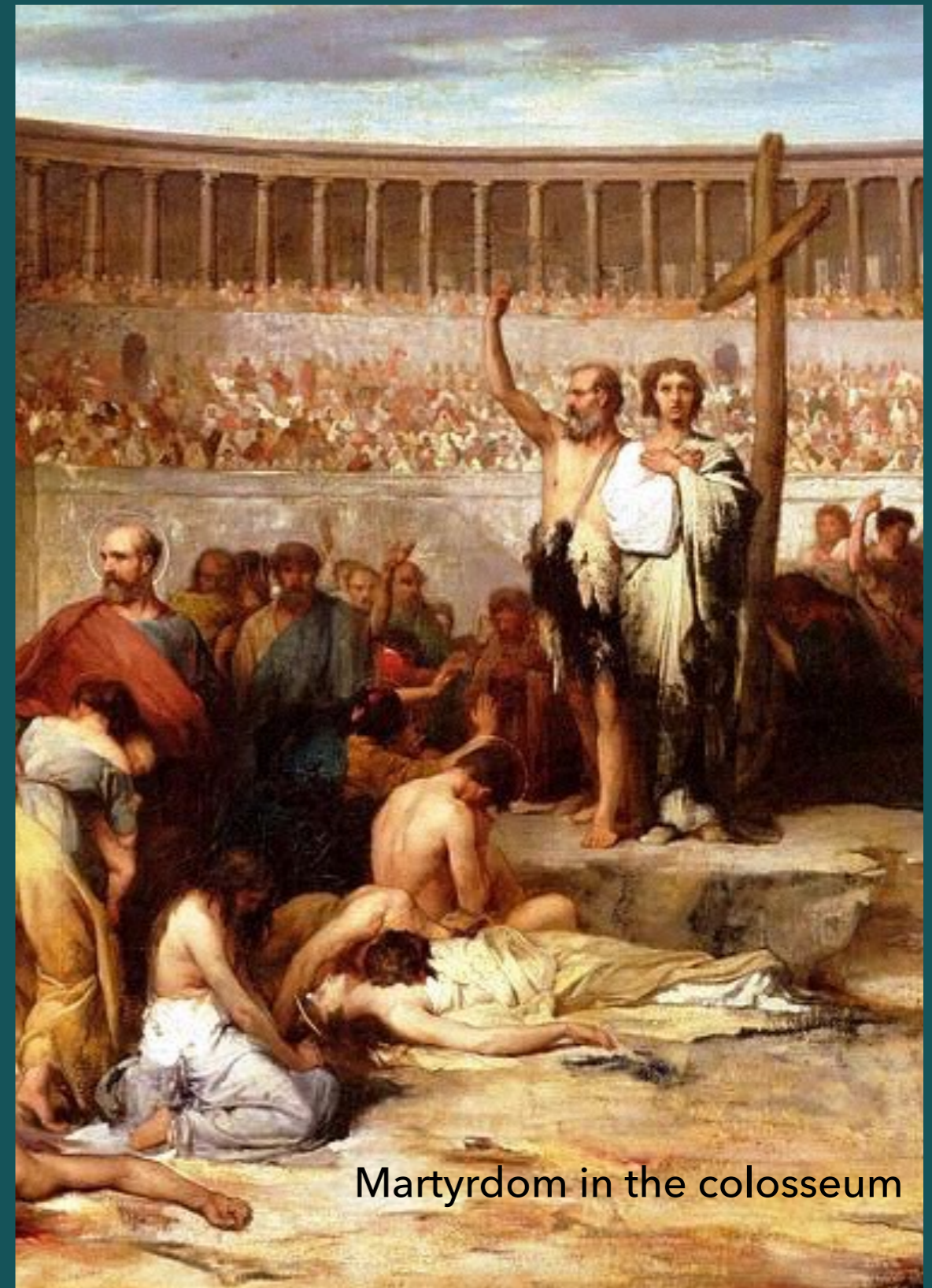
Babylon, in Revelation

HOW SHOULD YOU CONSIDER EARLY CHURCH PERSECUTIONS? MOSTLY SPORADIC

- ▶ There were not 250 years of intense, consistent, and persistent persecutions
- ▶ Most of the time, Christians were not actively persecuted
- ▶ Always the threat of persecution, but not always active persecutions

SYSTEMATIC & EMPIRE-WIDE

- ▶ There were only two empire wide systematic persecutions
 - ▶ Most persecutions until 250 were localized
- ▶ Decian persecution in 250 AD
- ▶ Diocletian persecution in 303 AD



Martyrdom in the colosseum

LOCAL PERSECUTIONS (EXAMPLES)

- ▶ Lyon, AD 177 (during the reign of Septimus Severus)
 - ▶ Conversion to Christianity was forbidden under penalty of death
- ▶ Asia Minor (during the reign of Domitian [90-96] & others)
 - ▶ refusal to offer incense to the Emperor and association with the Jews



Blandina, martyr of Lyon

LOCAL PERSECUTIONS (CONT.)

- ▶ Rome (continual persecution under Nero, Marcus Aurelius, & most other emperors)
- ▶ Rome was the center of the Empire
- ▶ If you were a Roman Christian you faced a consistent threat of persecution



CHRISTIAN EXAMPLES POLYCARP OF SMYRNA

- ▶ Asia Minor, ~160 AD
- ▶ 86 year old man
- ▶ disciple of the Apostle John
- ▶ converted many from Gnosticism
- ▶ uneducated, humble, direct



Polycarp of Smyrna

**“BE STRONG, POLYCARP
AND PLAY THE MAN!”**

As Polycarp was being taken into the arena, a voice came to him from heaven.



REPENT, AND SAY, ‘DOWN WITH THE ATHEISTS!’” POLYCARP LOOKED GRIMLY AT THE WICKED HEATHEN MULTITUDE IN THE STADIUM, AND GESTURING TOWARDS THEM, HE SAID, “DOWN WITH THE ATHEISTS!” “SWEAR,” URGED THE PROCONSUL, “REPROACH CHRIST, AND I WILL SET YOU FREE.” “86 YEARS HAVE I HAVE SERVED HIM,” POLYCARP DECLARED, “AND HE HAS DONE ME NO WRONG. HOW CAN I BLASPHEME MY KING AND MY SAVIOR?”

The death of Polycarp

CHRISTIAN EXAMPLES

PERPETUA & FELICITAS

- ▶ Carthage, 203 AD
- ▶ Part of a group of catechumens
 - ▶ being prepared for baptism
 - ▶ catechized
- ▶ Perpetua had a nursing infant, Felicitas was 7 months pregnant
- ▶ 22 years old, well-educated



Perpetua & Felicitas



Statue of Perpetua

PEPERPETUA'S ANSWER WAS SIMPLE AND CLEAR. POINTING TO A WATER JUG, SHE ASKED HER FATHER, "SEE THAT POT **LYING** THERE? CAN YOU CALL IT BY ANY OTHER NAME THAN WHAT IT IS?"

HER FATHER ANSWERED, "OF COURSE NOT." PERPETUA RESPONDED, "**NEITHER CAN I CALL MYSELF BY ANY OTHER NAME THAN WHAT I AM -- A CHRISTIAN.**"

CHRISTIAN EXAMPLES

40 MARTYRS OF SEBASTE

- ▶ Sebaste, Armenia 320 AD
- ▶ An elite group of soldiers
- ▶ Agricola, a military commander tried to convert them to paganism
- ▶ Forced onto a frozen lake, with a bath house set near them
- ▶ One of the 40 could no longer take it, and left and went to the bath house





AGGIAS THEN WOKE UP THE OTHER GUARDS, TOOK OFF HIS UNIFORM AND SAID TO THEM, "I TOO AM A CHRISTIAN," AND HE JOINED THE MARTYRS. STANDING IN THE WATER HE PRAYED, "LORD GOD, I BELIEVE IN YOU, IN WHOM THESE SOLDIERS BELIEVE. ADD ME TO THEIR NUMBER, AND MAKE ME WORTHY TO SUFFER WITH YOUR SERVANTS."

Detail of the 40 martyrs of Sebaste



Ignatius torn by lions

WHY WERE THE
CHRISTIANS

PERSECUTED?

WHY WERE THE CHRISTIANS PERSECUTED?

THE CHARGES

- ▶ Various charges were brought against Christians
- ▶ Some were easily refuted
- ▶ Some were not so easily refuted

CHARGES AGAINST THE CHRISTIANS

CANNIBALISM

- ▶ Christians spoke about *eating Jesus' body* and *drinking Jesus' blood* in their worship service
- ▶ They met in secret places before dawn
- ▶ Pliny the governor wrote to Emperor Trajan about this

The bread and wine of the Lord's Supper



**“...THEY EAT ONLY
ORDINARY AND HARMLESS
KINDS OF FOOD.”**

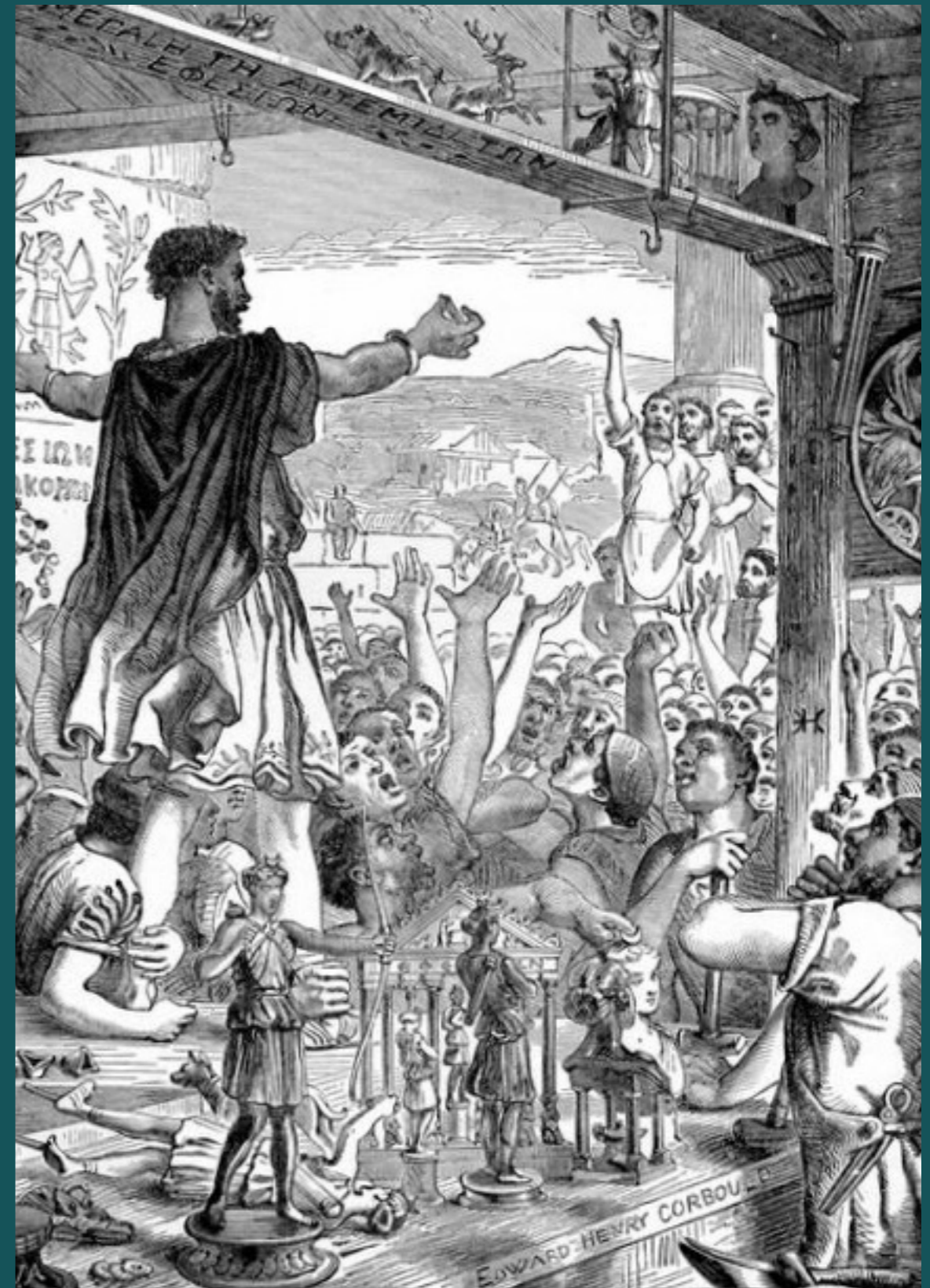
Governor Pliny to Emperor Trajan

Demetrius incites a riot

CHARGES AGAINST THE CHRISTIANS

DISRUPTION OF BUSINESS

- ▶ Christians stopped buying sacrificial items
- ▶ Did not buy idols or items used in false worship



DISRUPTION OF BUSINESS

ACTS 19: 23–27

- ▶ ²³About that time there arose no little disturbance concerning the Way. ²⁴For a man named Demetrius, a silversmith, who made silver shrines of Artemis, **brought no little business to the craftsmen.** ²⁵These he gathered together, with the workmen in similar trades, and said, “Men, you know that from this business we have our wealth. ²⁶And you see and hear that not only in Ephesus but in almost all of Asia this Paul has persuaded and turned away a great many people, saying that gods made with hands are not gods. ²⁷And there is danger **not only that this trade of ours may come into disrepute** but also that the temple of the great goddess Artemis may be counted as nothing, and that she may even be deposed from her magnificence, she whom all Asia and the world worship.”

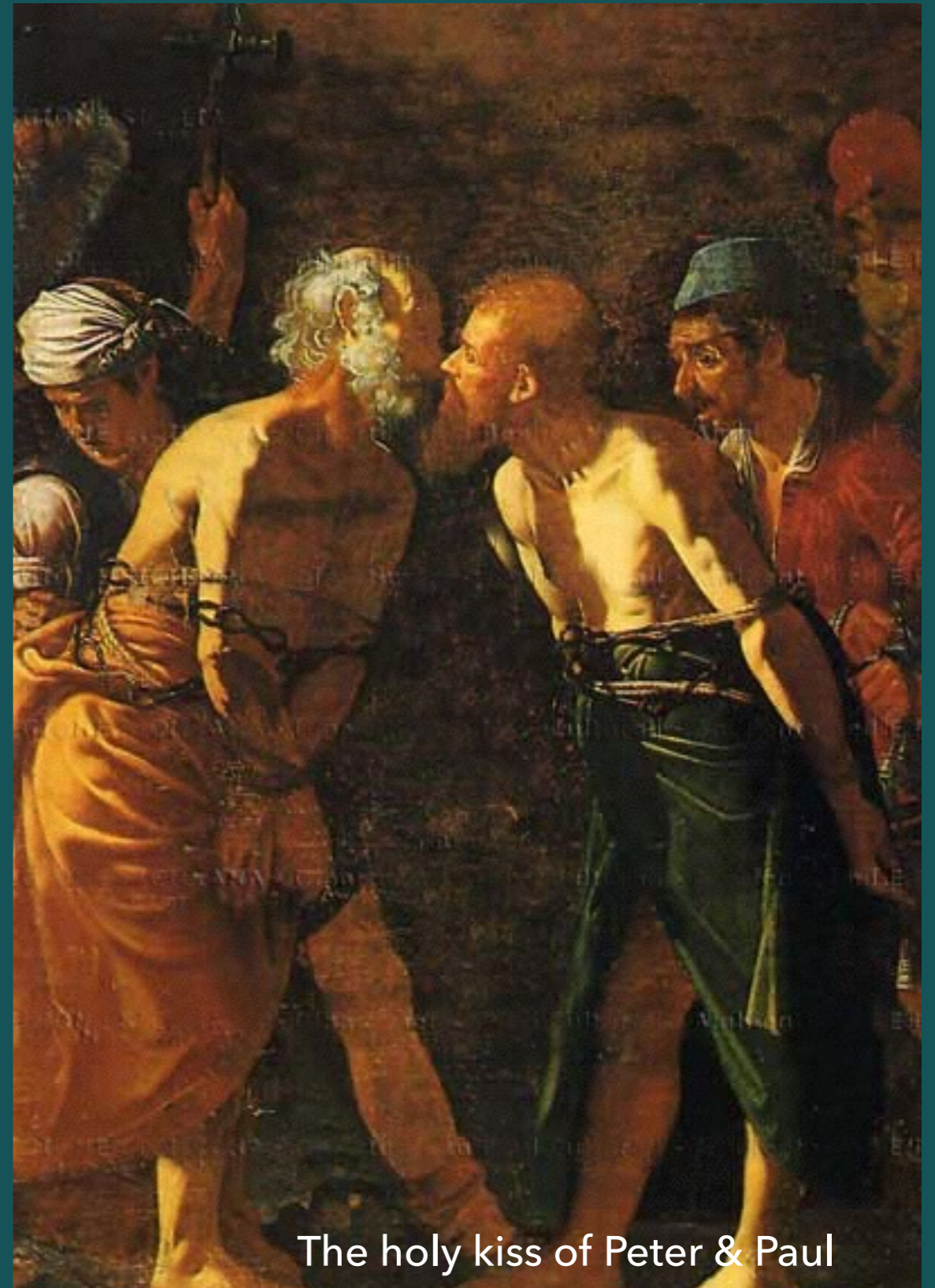


Paul being mobbed

CHARGES AGAINST THE CHRISTIANS

GROSS IMMORALITY, INCEST

- ▶ Christians call one another 'brother' or 'sister'
 - ▶ This includes husbands and wives
- ▶ They greeted one another with a holy kiss
- ▶ Love for one another was transposed to sexual love

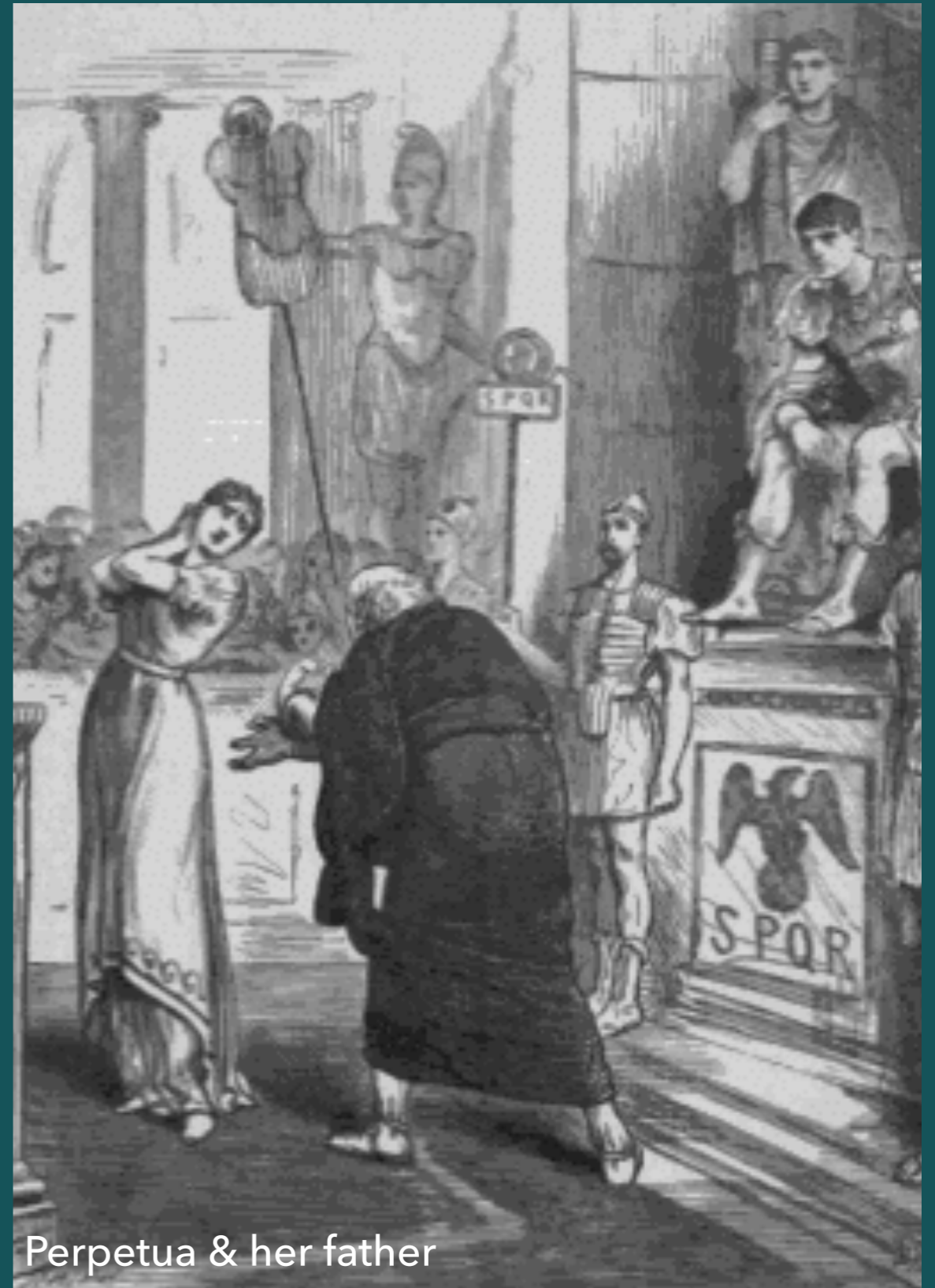


The holy kiss of Peter & Paul

CHARGES AGAINST THE CHRISTIANS

ANTI-FAMILY

- ▶ Christians did not give their immediate family priority
- ▶ Often left unbelieving family for the sake of the gospel

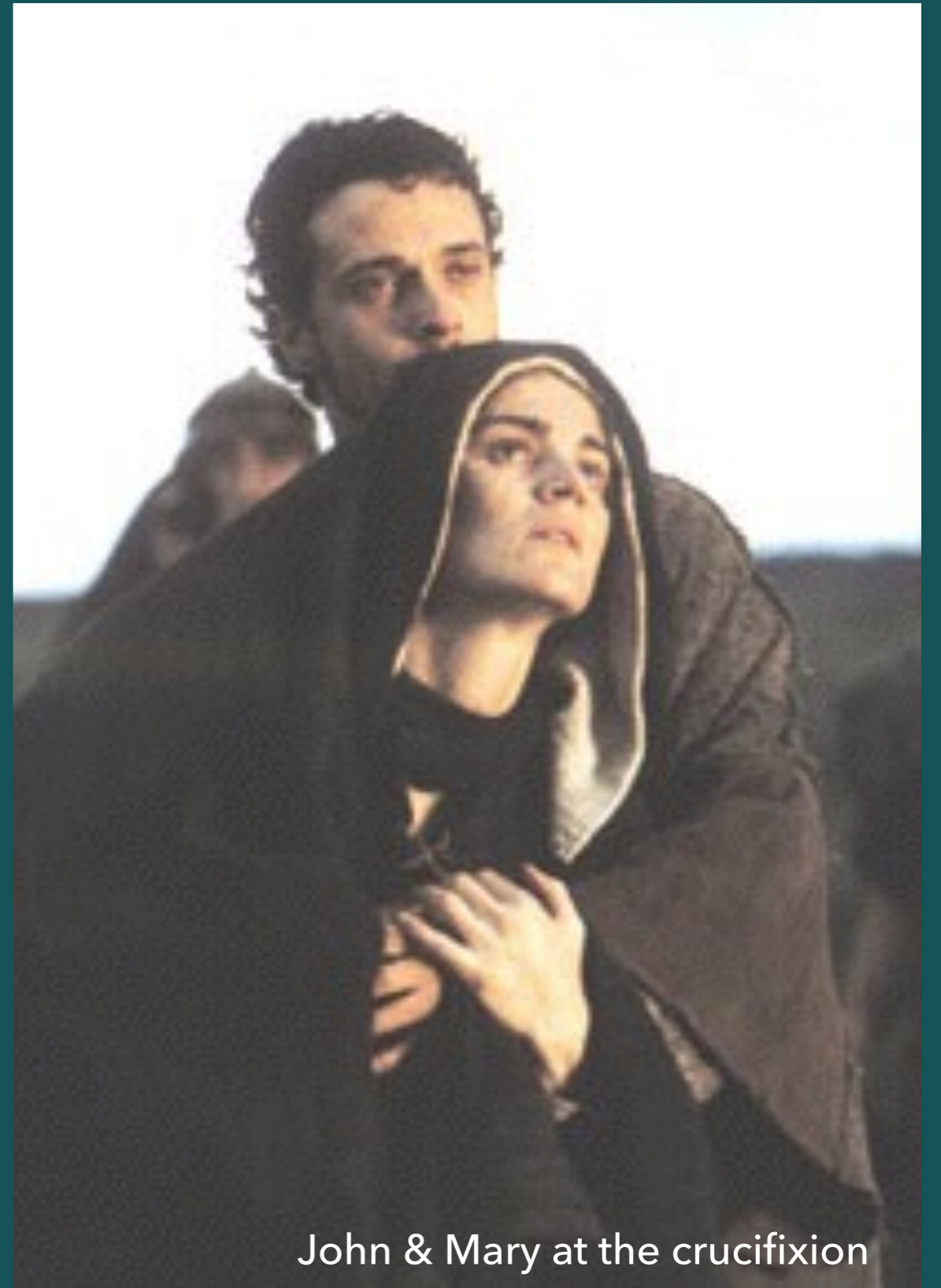


Perpetua & her father

ANTI-FAMILY

MATTHEW 10:37

- ▶ “Whoever loves father or mother more than me is not worthy of me, and whoever loves son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me.”



John & Mary at the crucifixion

ANTI-FAMILY

“THEY WILL BE DIVIDED, FATHER AGAINST SON AND SON AGAINST FATHER, MOTHER AGAINST DAUGHTER AND DAUGHTER AGAINST MOTHER, MOTHER-IN-LAW AGAINST HER DAUGHTER-IN-LAW AND DAUGHTER-IN-LAW AGAINST MOTHER-IN-LAW.”

LUKE 12:54

CHARGES AGAINST THE CHRISTIANS ANTI-FAMILY

- ▶ Perpetua the Martyr
- ▶ Her Father comes to visit her in prison and pleads with her saying, " **Do not forget me! Do not forget your mother! Do not forsake your sisters! What about your infant child?**

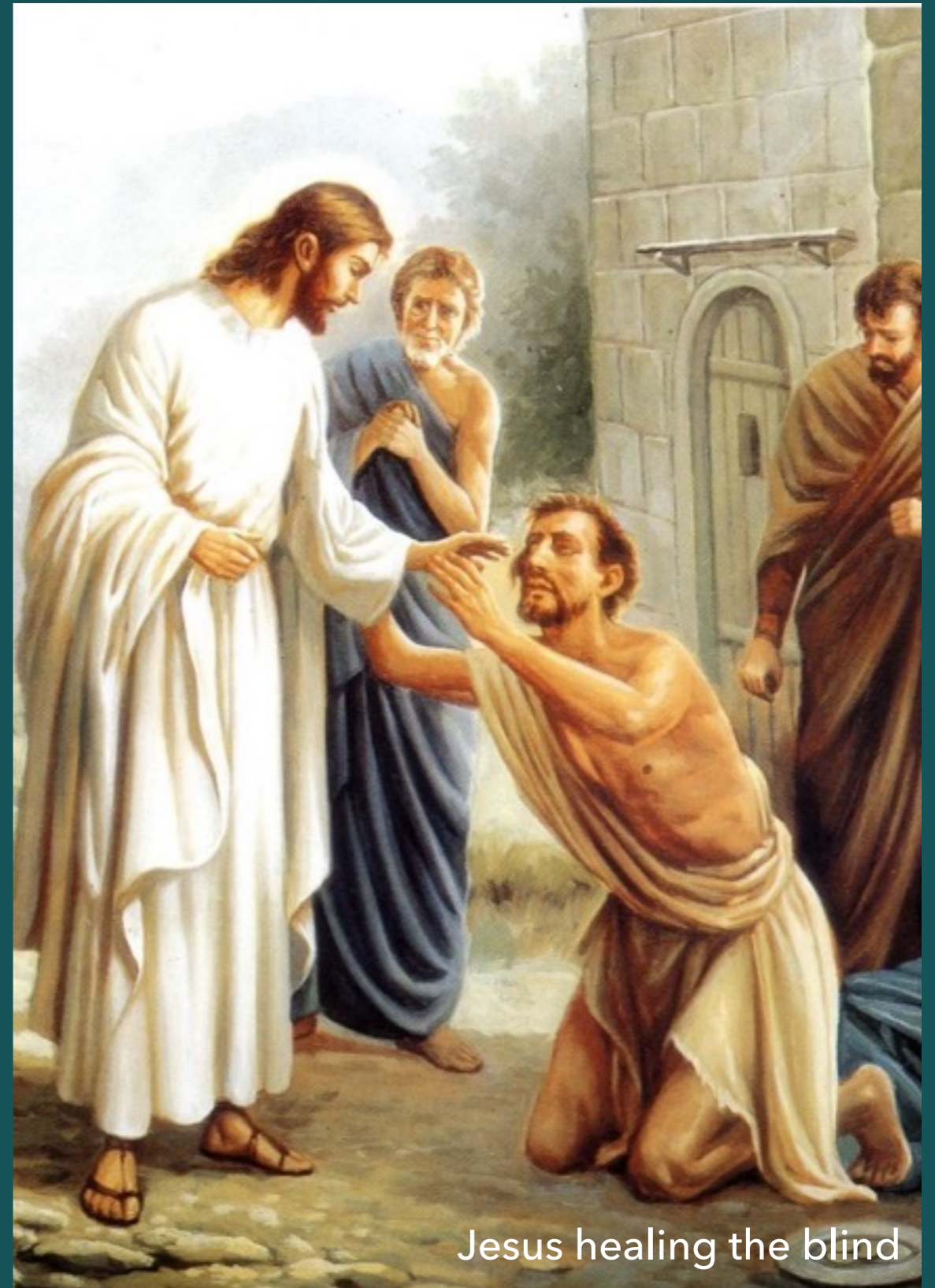


Perpetua & her father

CHARGES AGAINST THE CHRISTIANS

POVERTY

- ▶ This was often a source of ridicule rather than persecution
- ▶ Minucius Felix, said,
 - ▶ “that many of us are poor is not our disgrace but our glory.”



Jesus healing the blind

CHARGES AGAINST THE CHRISTIANS ATHEISM

- ▶ They did not worship ALL the gods
- ▶ They worshipped one invisible god



Statue of Mithras



REPENT, AND SAY, 'DOWN WITH THE ATHEISTS!'"
POLYCARP LOOKED GRIMLY AT THE WICKED HEATHEN MULTITUDE IN THE STADIUM, AND GESTURING TOWARDS THEM, HE SAID, "DOWN WITH THE ATHEISTS!"

Polycarp, in answer to the charge of being atheist

CHARGES AGAINST THE CHRISTIANS UNPATRIOTIC

- ▶ Christians did not participate in city festivals for three reasons:
 - ▶ Gross Immorality
 - ▶ Pagan Worship
 - ▶ Emperor Worship



CHARGES AGAINST THE CHRISTIANS UNPATRIOTIC (FESTIVALS, ETC.)

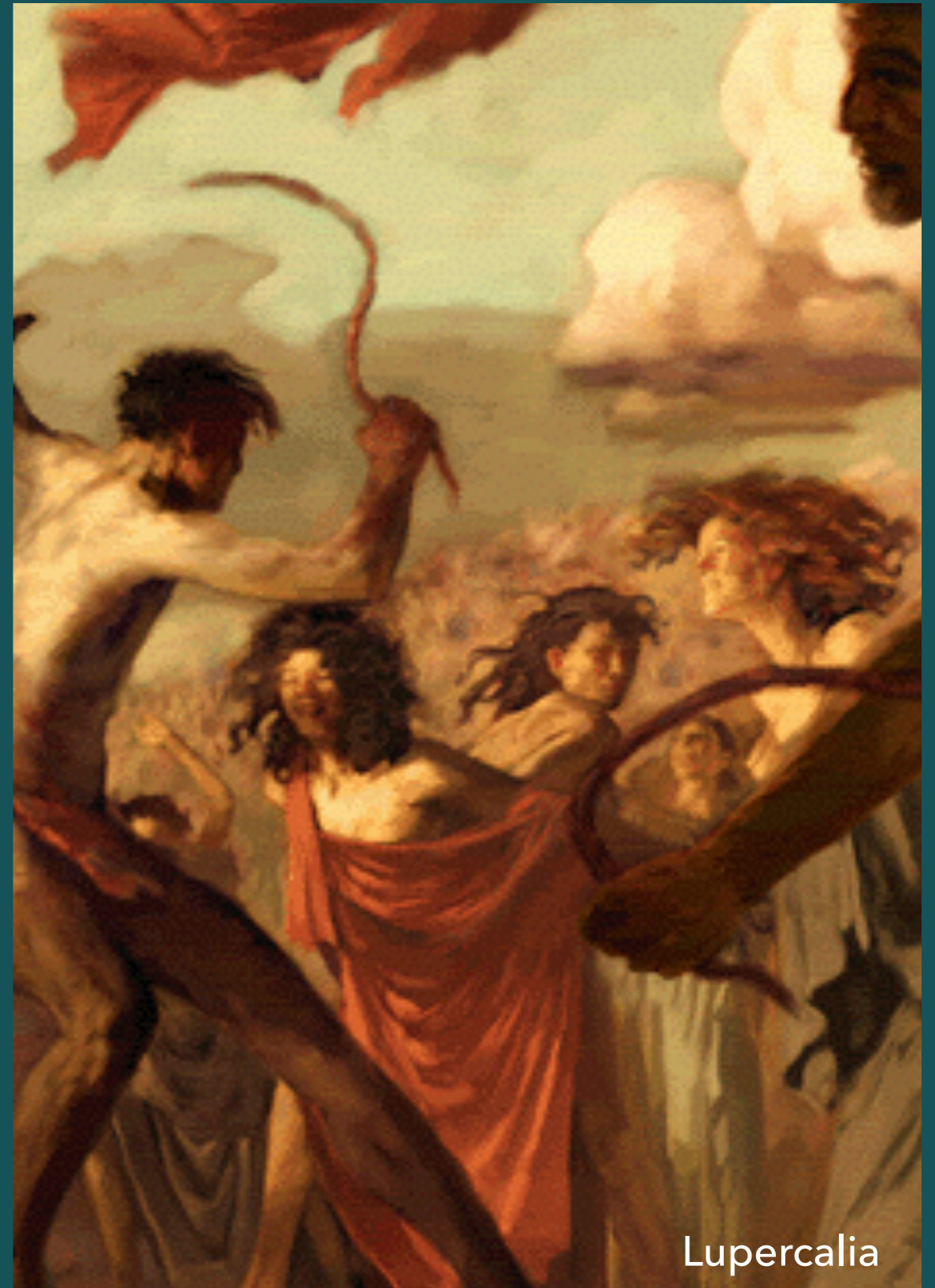
- ▶ In any given month, there were between 6-12 festivals or sacred days
- ▶ There were also 7 flexible festivals/ games days that occurred throughout the year
- ▶ Saturnalia, Lupercalia, Rosalia, etc.



Rosalia

CHARGES AGAINST THE CHRISTIANS UNPATRIOTIC (PARTICIPATION)

- ▶ Christian Behavior was considered anti-social
- ▶ Christians were separate and different, but they still lived among them



Lupercalia

UNPATRIOTIC

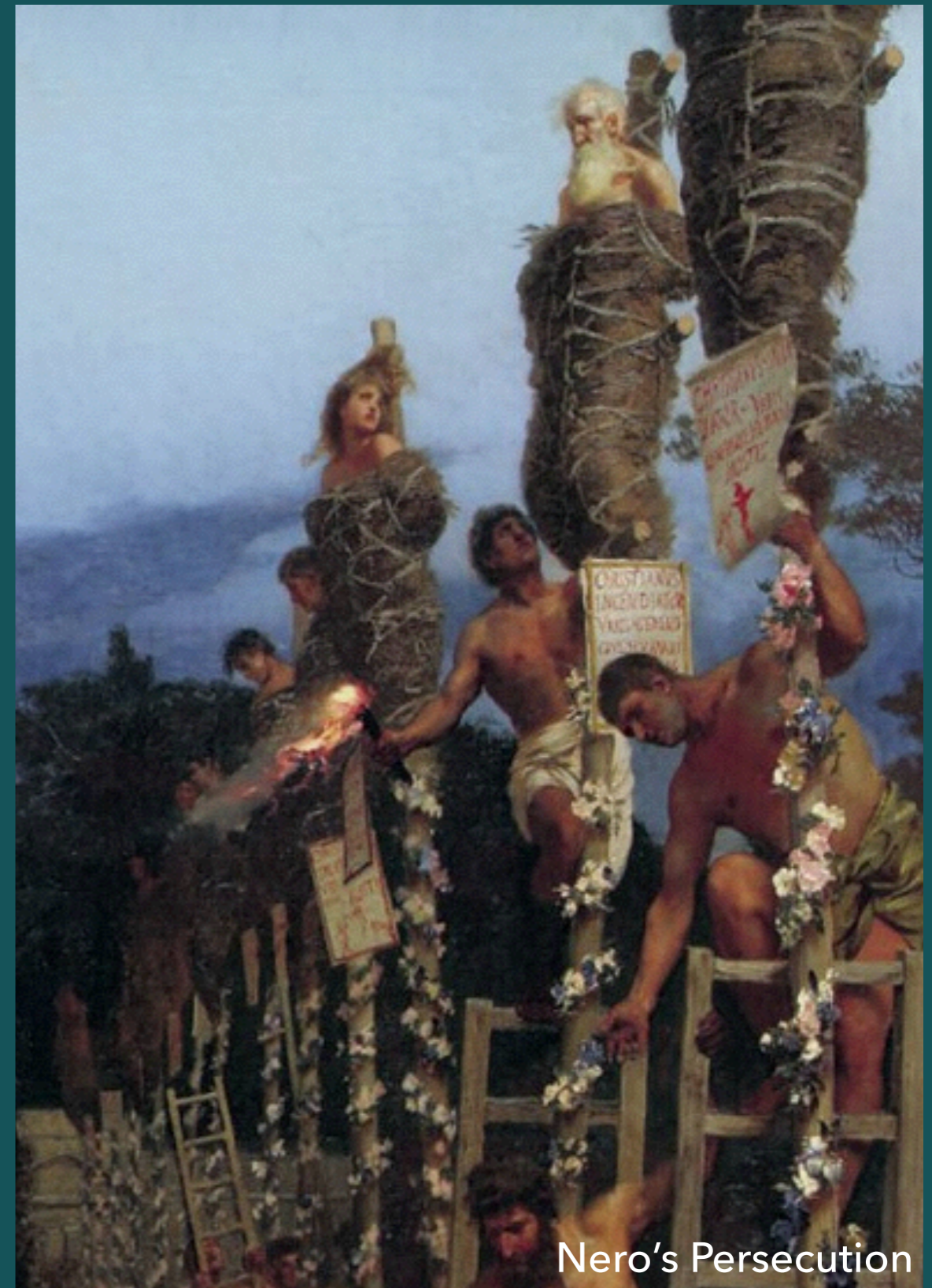
**“THESE CHRISTIANS WERE
LOATHED FOR THEIR HATRED OF
THE HUMAN RACE.”**

TACITUS

CHARGES AGAINST THE CHRISTIANS

CHRISTIANS CAUSE DISASTERS

- ▶ Rome suffered a fire that burned for 6 days and 7 nights
- ▶ The people claimed Nero set the fire for his own amusement
- ▶ Nero blamed the fire on the Christians
 - ▶ nailed to crosses
 - ▶ covered in wild beast skins
 - ▶ burned in Nero's garden



Nero's Persecution

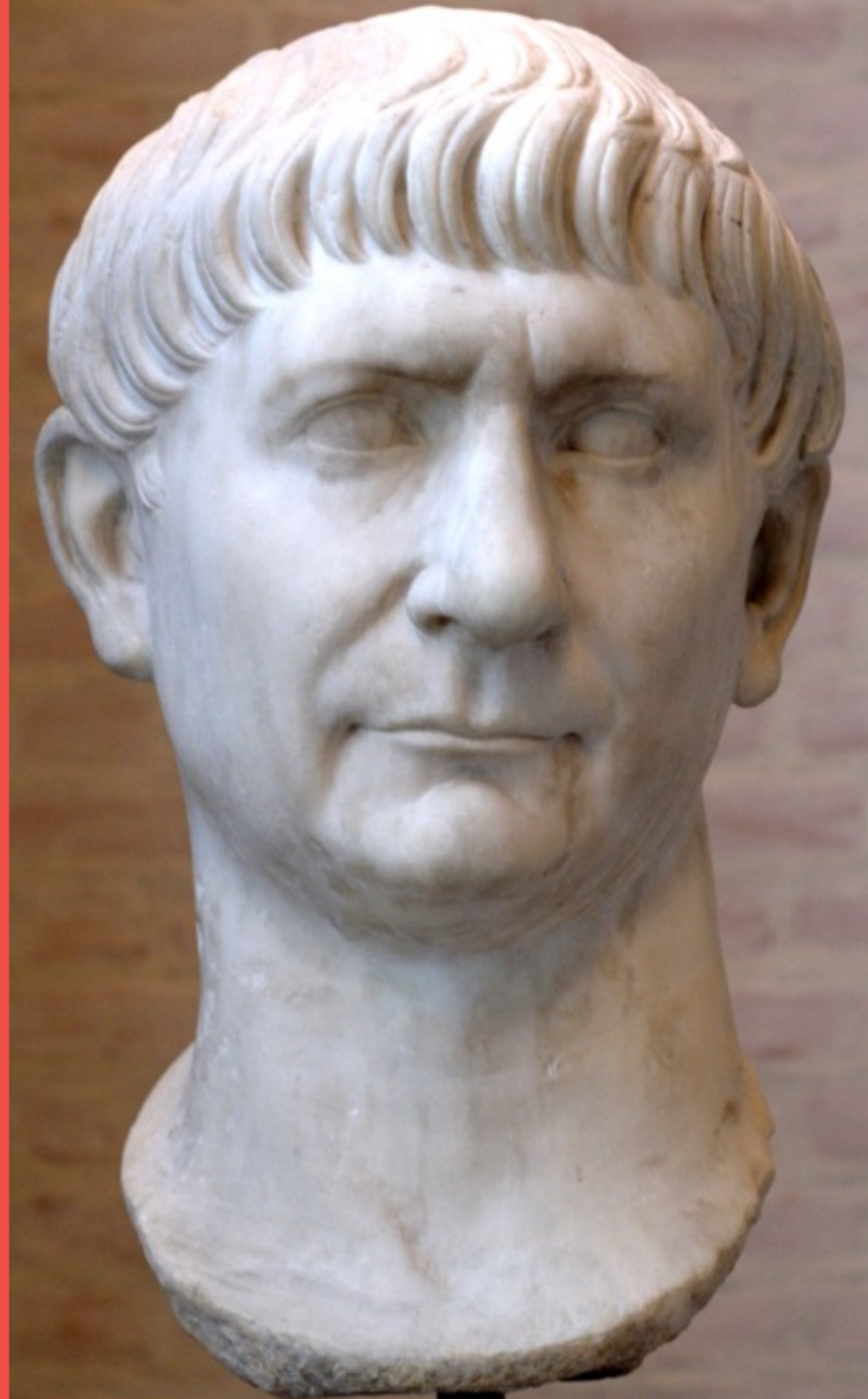


“IF THE TIBER REACHES THE WALLS, IF THE NILE DOES NOT RISE TO THE FIELDS, IF THE SKY DOES NOT MOVE SO THAT THERE IS DROUGHT, OR IF THE EARTH DOES MOVE SO THAT THERE IS AN EARTHQUAKE, IF THERE IS A FAMINE, IF THERE IS A PLAGUE, THE CRY IS AT ONCE, ‘THE CHRISTIANS TO THE LIONS!’”

-Tertullian of Carthage

“CHRISTIANS ARE NOT TO BE SOUGHT OUT. DO NOT GO LOOKING FOR THEM. BUT IF SOMEONE DENOUNCES SOMEONE AS A CHRISTIAN, THEN BRING THAT PERSON IN AND QUESTION THEM. AND IF THAT PERSON REFUSES TO RECANT AND WORSHIP OUR GODS, THEN THEY SHOULD BE PUNISHED.”

-Trajan's letter to Pliny the Younger



CHARGES AGAINST THE CHRISTIANS

CHRISTIANS CAUSE DISASTERS

- ▶ Trajan's policy stood until the first Empire wide persecution under Decius in 250 AD
- ▶ Christians could be turned in by a jealous neighbor or an envious associate or business partner



Emperor Decius

CHARGES AGAINST THE CHRISTIANS REFUSAL TO WORSHIP THE EMPEROR

- ▶ Christians refused to worship the Emperor, but so did the Jews
 - ▶ The Jews were a nation, a people with a place and a history
 - ▶ They had a religious exemption from Claudius
- ▶ Christians were from every place, nationality, & culture

Emperor Claudius



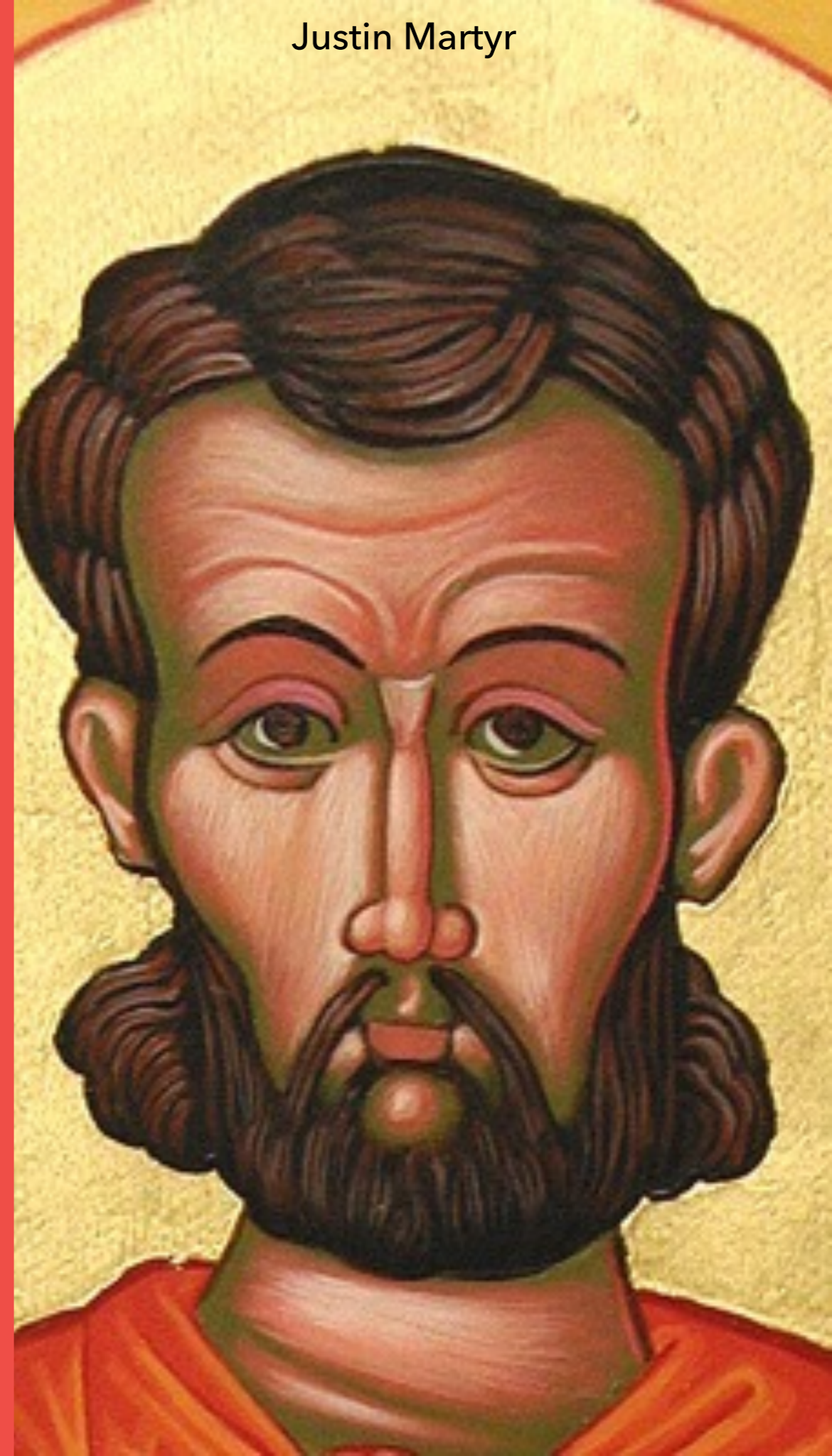
CHARGES AGAINST THE CHRISTIANS BECAUSE THEY WERE CHRISTIANS

- ▶ Ptolemaus was accused of being a Christian and executed
- ▶ Perpetua the martyr was executed because she was a Christian



THE JUDGE SAID TO PTOLEMAEUS, “ARE YOU A CHRISTIAN?” HE SAID, “YES,” AND THEY TOOK HIM OUT AND EXECUTED HIM. LUCIAN OBJECTED TO THIS AND SAID, “THIS IS NOT RIGHT, TO BE EXECUTING THESE PEOPLE SIMPLY BECAUSE THEY ARE CHRISTIANS!” THE JUDGE ASKED, “ARE YOU A CHRISTIAN?” HE SAID, “YES,” SO HE WAS EXECUTED. A THIRD PERSON CAME FORWARD AND OBJECTED, AND HE WAS EXECUTED.

**synopsis of Justin Martyr’s account
of the deaths of Ptolemaeus &
Lucian**





Statue of Perpetua

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Julian the Apostate

WHAT WAS THE GOAL OF

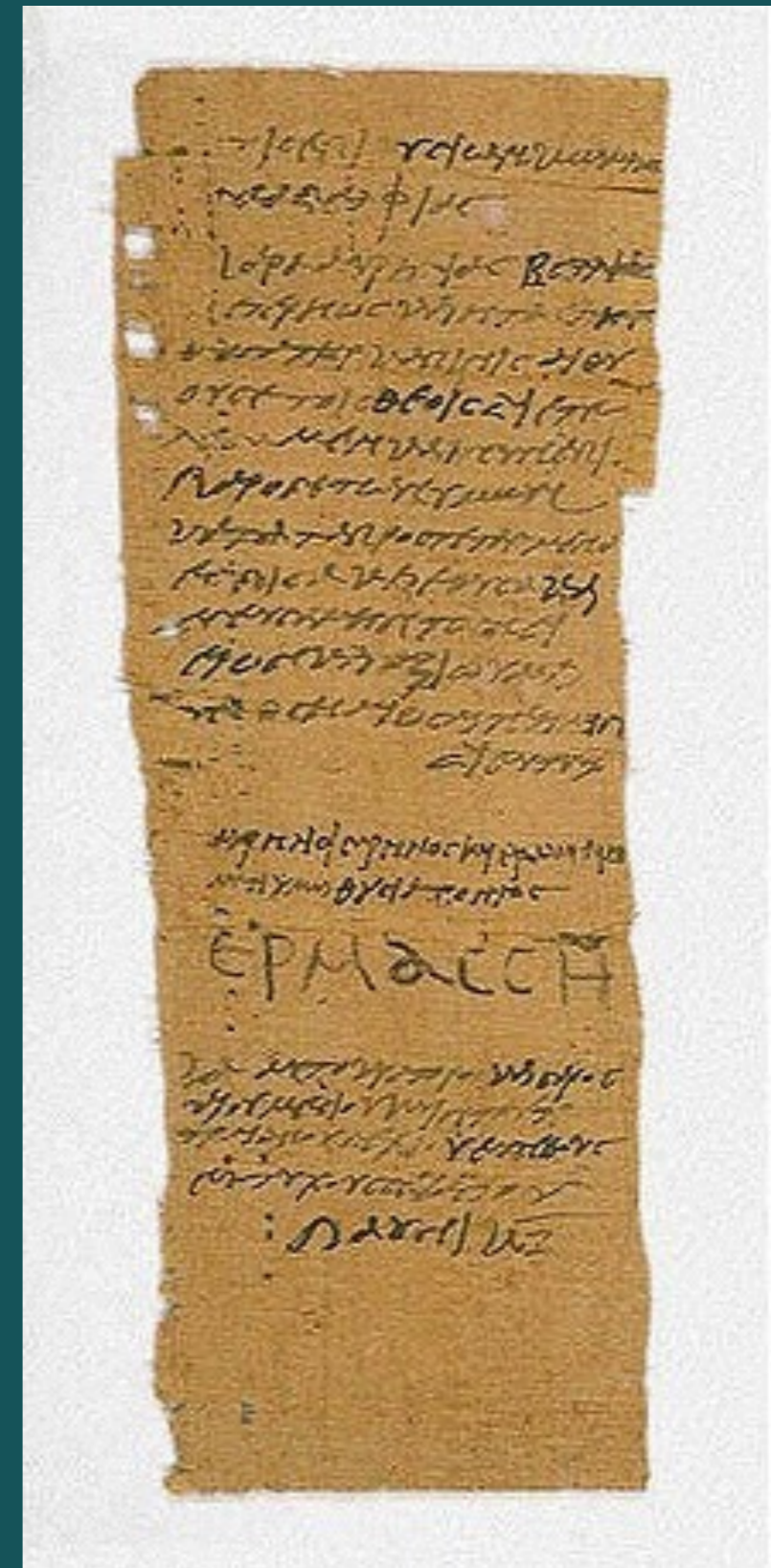
**THE
PERSECUTIONS?**

WHAT WAS THE GOAL OF THE PERSECUTIONS?

APOSTASY

- ▶ The goal was not to kill them, but rather to keep them from remaining Christians
- ▶ Magistrates were pressured to produce apostates
- ▶ To get through the empire wide persecutions, you were required to have a **libellus**, a certificate of Emperor Worship

Libellus from the time of Decius



Offering Sacrifice to the Emperor

WHAT WAS THE GOAL OF THE PERSECUTIONS?**APOSTASY**

- ▶ When you worship the Emperor
 - ▶ Burn Incense
 - ▶ Bow your head to the image
- ▶ Some Christians did, this led to the Novatian and Donatist controversy
- ▶ The obstinate were killed



RESULTS OF THE PERSECUTIONS? WHAT HAPPENED TO THE CHURCH

- ▶ Christianity was organized for catastrophe
 - ▶ No national or cultural ties, emphasis on persecution
- ▶ Purified the church
 - ▶ One did not become a Christian lightly

Winnowing, Millet



ANTI-FAMILY

**“PERSECUTION IS GOD’S
WINNOWING FAN, WHICH EVEN
NOW CLEANSSES THE LORD’S
THRESHING FLOOR.”**

TERTULLIAN OF CARTHAGE

Catacomb Painting, 4th Century

RESULTS OF THE PERSECUTIONS? WHAT HAPPENED TO THE CHURCH

- ▶ At the end of the Persecutions, the problem in the the church is now Nominalism



RESULTS OF THE PERSECUTIONS? EXTENDING THE CHURCH

- ▶ 40 martyrs of Sebaste
 - ▶ 40 soldiers put out on a frozen lake to die, one left (making it 39)
 - ▶ a jailer saw the event, and then joined the 39 to make them 40 again

40 martyrs of Sebaste, relief



RESULTS OF THE PERSECUTIONS? DID NOT ALWAYS EXTEND THE CHURCH

- ▶ Some persecutions in Asia lasted very long
 - ▶ they did not let up
 - ▶ In parts of Asia the church was destroyed entirely
- ▶ Persecution still happens today
 - ▶ Voice of the Martyrs

Christian Martyrs of Nagasaki



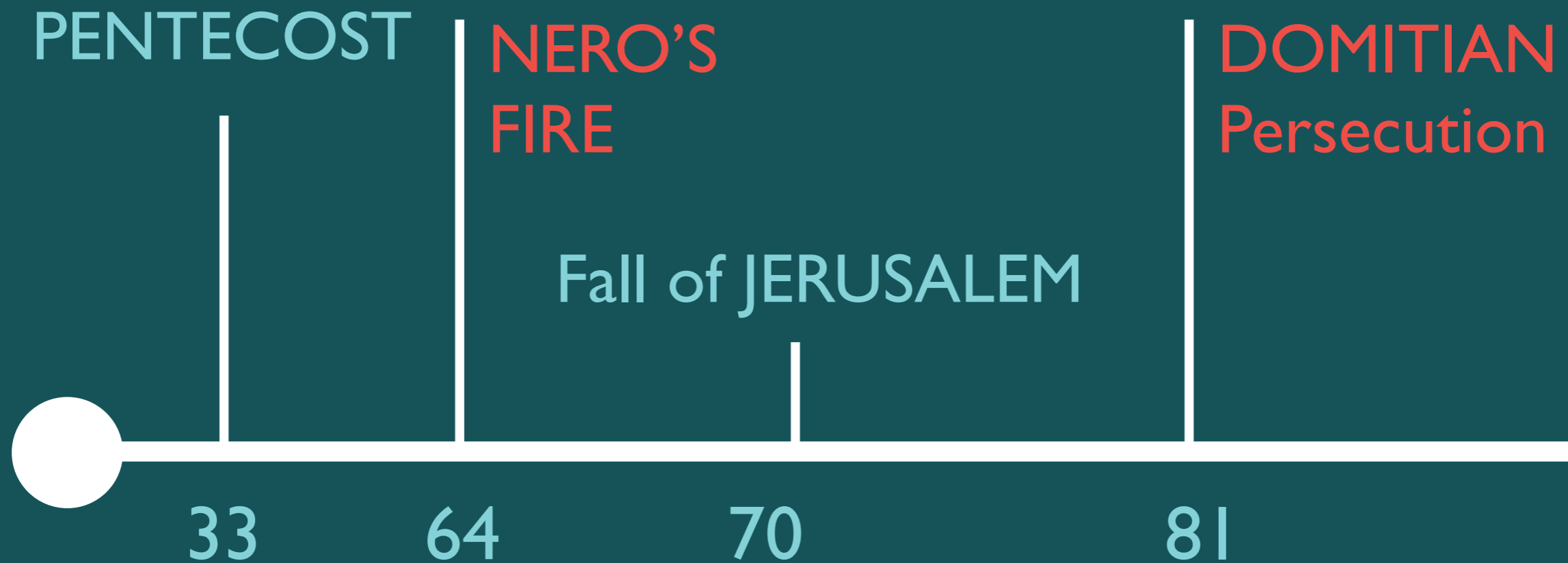


Julian the Apostate

PERSECUTION RESULTS

**APOSTATES,
PERSECUTION &
CHURCH ORGANIZATION**

PERSECUTION TIMELINE (33 AD–313 AD)



PERSECUTION TIMELINE (33 AD-313 AD)

TRAJAN
Persecution

IGNATIUS
is martyred

JUSTIN
MARTYR
converted

POLYCARP
is martyred
MONTANISM
begins
TERTULLIAN born

MARCUS AURELIUS
Persecution

98

108

130

155

161

PERSECUTION TIMELINE (33 AD-313 AD)

ORIGEN
born

CYPRIAN
born

CYPRIAN
Bishop of
Carthage

SEPTIMIUS
SEVERUS
persecution

1st Era of
PEACE

185

193

200

218

248

PERSECUTION TIMELINE (33 AD–313 AD)

DECIUS
persecution
Empire-Wide

VALERIUS
persecution

DIOCLETIAN
The Great Persecution

NOVATIANIST
controversy

2nd Era of
PEACE

249

251

257

260

303



PERSECUTION TIMELINE (33 AD–313 AD)





The 2nd coming of Christ

A NEW MORAL EMPHASIS

**THE RETURN OF
CHRIST**

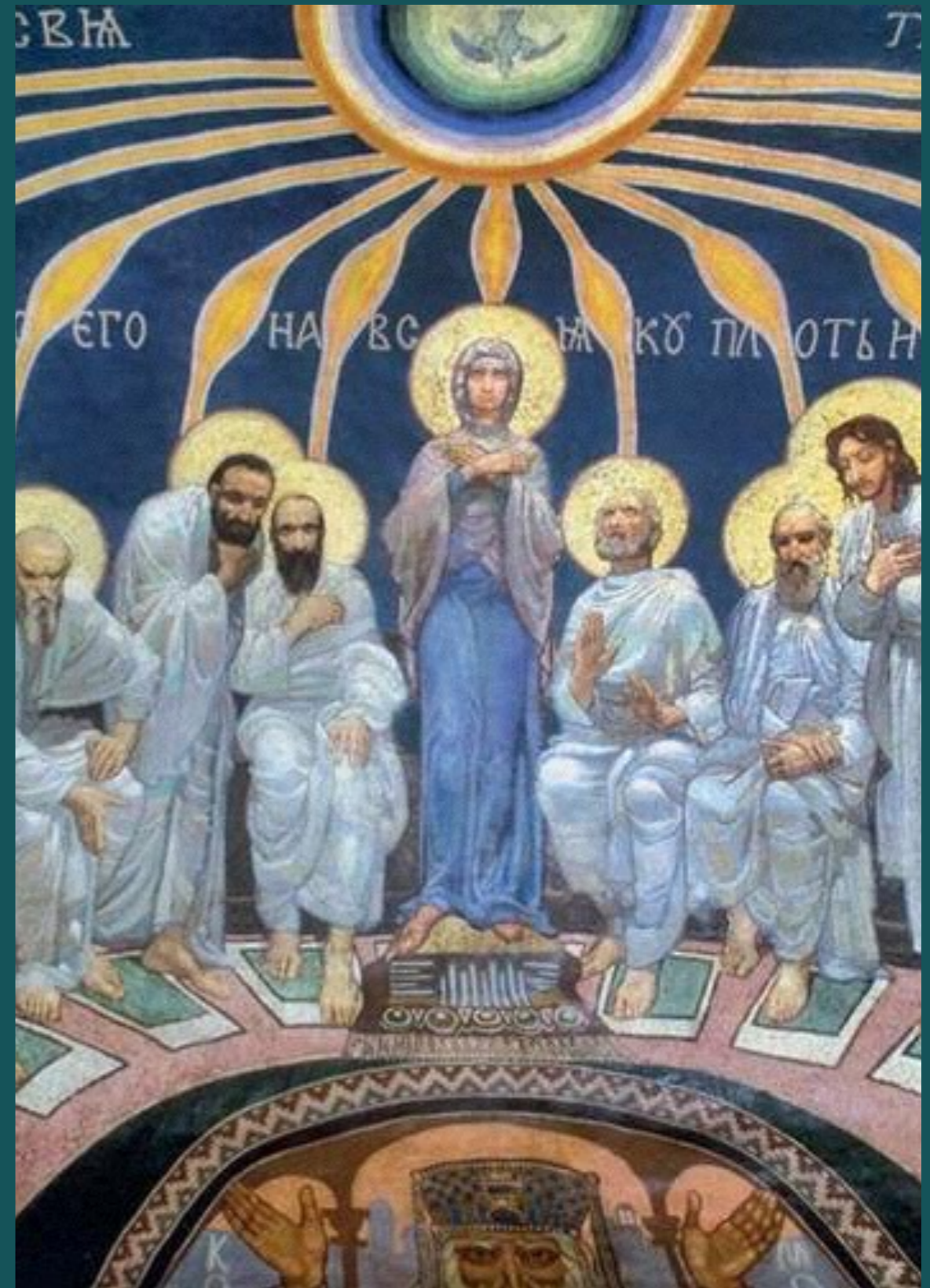
THE SECOND COMING

“THEREFORE YOU ALSO MUST BE READY, FOR THE SON OF MAN IS COMING AT AN HOUR YOU DO NOT EXPECT.”

MATTHEW 24:44

MONTANISM, 155 AD MONTANUS THE PRIEST

- ▶ Converted Pagan Priest
- ▶ “Filled with the Holy Spirit”
- ▶ began prophesying

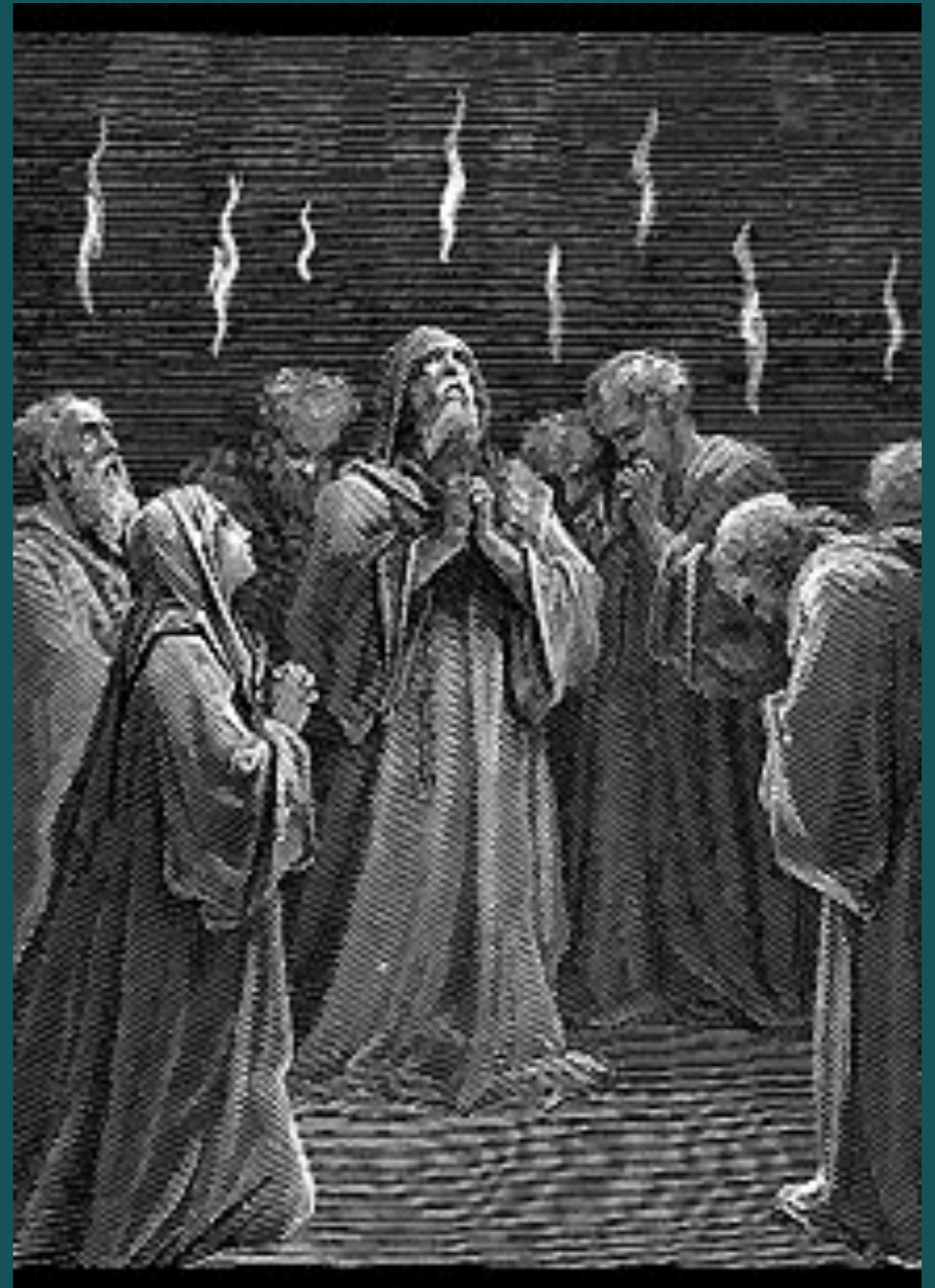


Pentecost, the first advent of the Spirit

MONTANIST PROBLEMS

MORAL LAXITY AND THE CHURCH

- ▶ Church is growing exponentially
- ▶ Seems to be a moral laxity entering the church
- ▶ There is no longer a focus on the imminent return of the Lord



WHY HASN'T HE RETURNED?

THEY WILL SAY, "WHERE IS THE PROMISE OF HIS COMING? FOR EVER SINCE THE FATHERS FELL ASLEEP, ALL THINGS ARE CONTINUING AS THEY WERE FROM THE BEGINNING OF CREATION."

2 PETER 3:4

MONTANISM'S MORALS

WHAT SHOULD THE CHURCH DO?

- ▶ Montanus and his followers promoted a more rigid moral life
- ▶ The church must be Holy like the Lord is Holy
- ▶ The church should focus on the imminent return
- ▶ Tertullian became a Montanist

Tertullian of Carthage



MONTANIST TIMELINE

THE AGE OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

- ▶ There was an era of the Father
 - ▶ (corresponding with the OT)
- ▶ An era of the Son
 - ▶ (corresponding with the gospels)
- ▶ The final era of the Spirit (the true last days)
 - ▶ (corresponding with the present Montanist period)

Holy Spirit as a Dove





Julian the Apostate

A NEW PROBLEM

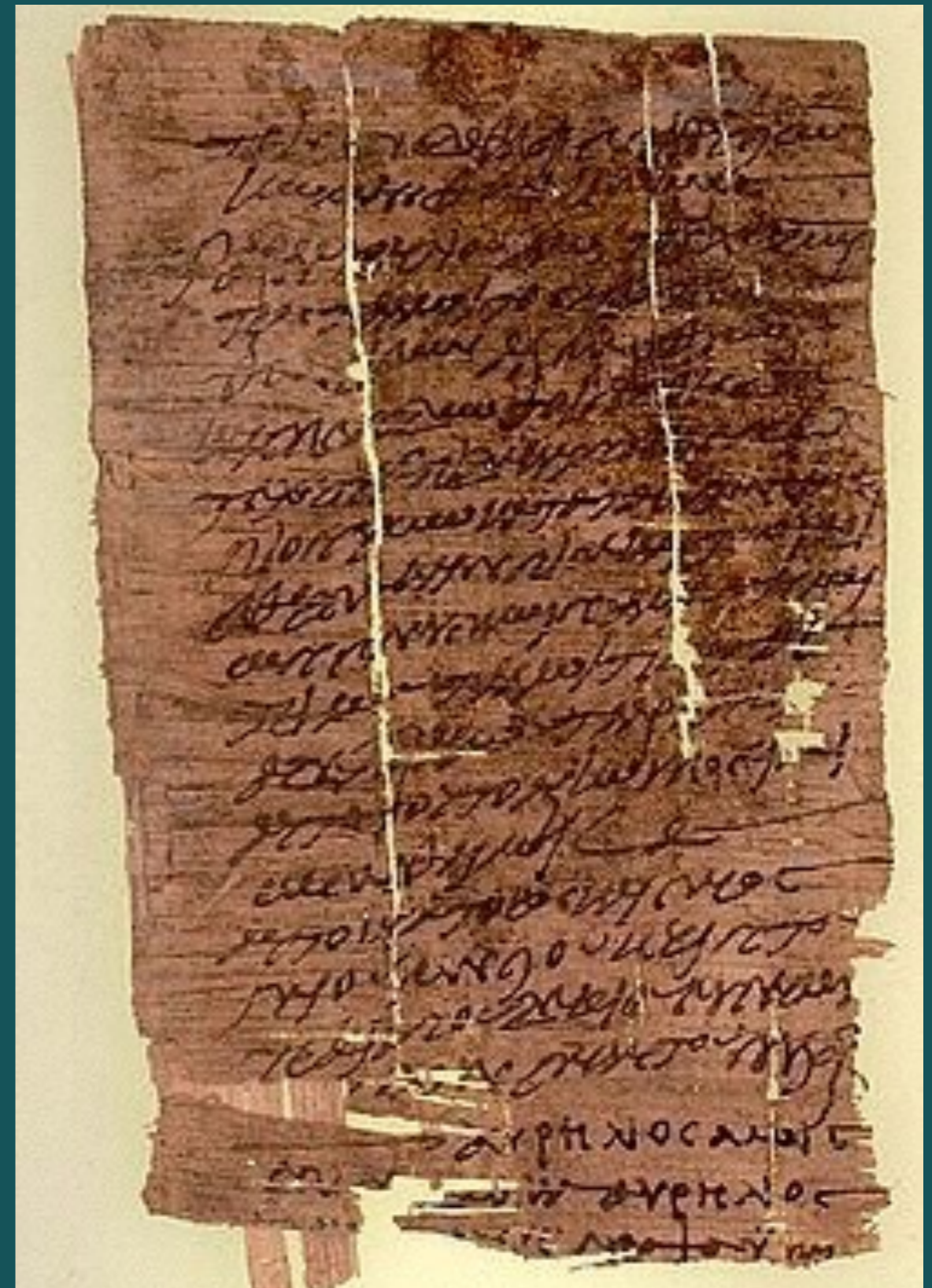
IN THE CHURCH

EMPIRE-WIDE PERSECUTIONS

WHAT HAPPENED

- ▶ The goal was not to kill them, but rather to keep them from remaining Christians
- ▶ Magistrates were pressured to produce apostates
- ▶ To get through the empire wide persecutions, you were required to have a **libellus**, a certificate of Emperor Worship

Libellus from the time of Decius



Shadrach, Meshach, & Abednego before the statue of Nebuchadnezzar

A ROMAN CITIZEN'S DUTY EMPEROR WORSHIP

- ▶ When you worship the Emperor
 - ▶ Must have a magistrate and eyewitness present
 - ▶ Burn Incense
 - ▶ Bow your head to the image
- ▶ The obstinate were thrown in prison, tortured, and/or killed
- ▶ Church property was seized



Shadrach, Meshach, & Abednego

THE CONFESSORS WAS EVERY CHRISTIAN FAITHFUL?

- ▶ Those who did not weaken in the face of trial were called "Confessors"
- ▶ "Confessors" were tortured, but not martyred
- ▶ "Confessors" were accorded a special honor within the church



Order of Penitents

THE 'LAPSI' OR LAPSED WAS EVERY CHRISTIAN FAITHFUL?

- ▶ Many Christians recanted
 - ▶ (1 in 10 according to the Lyon Persecution author)
- ▶ Many were not faithful
 - ▶ Some evaded persecution entirely
 - ▶ Some bought a false *libellus*
 - ▶ Some made sacrifices and repented
 - ▶ Some sacrificed and did not repent



HOW DO YOU RESTORE THE 'LAPSI' WHO HAS THE FINAL AUTHORITY

- ▶ How do you let the lapsed back into the church?
- ▶ Do you let the lapsed back into the church?
- ▶ Is the church made up of saints?
 - ▶ or is it made up of sinners?

Saints around the throne, *Fra Angelico*



WHY HASN'T HE RETURNED?

...THE ISSUE WAS WHETHER PURITY OR FORGIVING LOVE SHOULD BE THE CHARACTERISTIC NOTE OF THE CHURCH.

JUSTO GONZALEZ, STORY OF CHRISTIANITY

Cyprian of Carthage

CYPRIAN OF CARTHAGE

BISHOP OF CARTHAGE, 248 AD

- ▶ Cyprian fled during the Decian Persecution
- ▶ Some other leaders considered him a coward
- ▶ Cyprian and other bishops met to decide who had the authority to re-admit the lapsed into the church
- ▶ Cyprian was martyred in 258 AD



BISHOPS VS. THE CONFESSORS

CYPRIAN'S COUNCIL

- ▶ Who had the authority to decide on the 'Lapsi'?
 - ▶ The survivors of the event, those who suffered the most...
 - ▶ or the leaders of the church
- ▶ The Bishops eventually won out
 - ▶ Lapsi should be readmitted after a statement of repentance
 - ▶ How do you know if it's real?

Nicholas (a confessor) sparing a prisoner



A penitent weeper

THE 'LAPSI' WHO CAN RETURN TO THE CHURCH?

- ▶ Purchasers of a libellus would be immediately admitted to communion
- ▶ Sacrificers would only be readmitted on their deathbed, or with a new persecution and faithfulness
- ▶ Non-repentant sacrificers would never be readmitted



CYPRIAN AND THE CHURCH

“NO ONE CAN HAVE GOD AS A FATHER WITHOUT THE CHURCH AS HIS MOTHER.”

CYPRIAN OF CARTHAGE

Current Pope, Francis on his throne

LONG-TERM RESULTS CYPRIAN'S RESPONSE

- ▶ The *Papacy* or the succession of the authority of the bishop of Rome
- ▶ The development of the Penitential system
- ▶ Eventually the Protestant Reformation
 - ▶ All built on and against the developments of this time period



PERSECUTION TIMELINE (33 AD–313 AD)

DECIUS
persecution
Empire-Wide

VALERIUS
persecution

DIOCLETIAN
The Great Persecution

NOVATIANIST
controversy

2nd Era of
PEACE

249

251

257

260

303



NOVATIANISM SPLIT ABSOLUTION REFUSED

- ▶ Novation was a Roman priest
- ▶ He opposed the election of Cornelius as bishop of Rome
 - ▶ Cornelius re-admitted 'lapsi' into the church
- ▶ elected as 2nd anti-pope, or bishop of Rome
- ▶ Refused to admit any 'lapsi' back into the church

Cornelius of Rome



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PERSECUTION TIMELINE (33 AD-313 AD)



DIOCLETIAN PERSECUTION TRADITORES

- ▶ Some N. African Magistrates were lenient
 - ▶ Allowed Christians to turn over 'Holy Books' instead of being martyred
 - ▶ Some Christians turned over other Christians
- ▶ These were called 'traditores' or 'hander-overs'

Cornelius of Rome



Cornelius of Rome

DONATISM & BAPTISM TRADITORES

- ▶ Donatus Magnus was a bishop in N. Africa
 - ▶ Began re-baptizing church leaders who had been baptized by the 'Traditores'
 - ▶ Did not see the 'traditores' as having any standing within the church
- ▶ Eventually split with church and formed a separate church

