

I. The Apostles: in Christian tradition, all but John are martyred.

1. Peter, crucified upside-down c. A.D. 67.
2. Andrew, brother of Peter, martyred by crucifixion in Greece (mid- to late-first century)
3. James “the Greater,” brother of John, traditionally first apostle to be martyred in Jerusalem, A.D. 44
4. Bartholomew, preached through near Middle East (possibly India), martyred in first century in Armenia—either behead or flayed alive and crucified
5. Matthew, preached in Ethiopia, Macedonia, Persia, also India, tradition holds he was martyred
6. James “the Lesser,” either martyred in persecution by Herod described in Acts 12, or martyred in Egypt at a later time
7. Phillip, preached in Greece, Phrygia, Syria, crucified c. AD 80

II. Ten Major Persecutions by Rome

1. Under Nero, blamed for great fire in Rome in A.D. 64, systematic use of capital punishment
2. Under Domitian (89-96), renewed declaration of illegality of religion, equated with “atheism” and charged with, e.g., cannibalism
3. Under Trajan (98-117), directed Christians to be sought out and directed to accept state religion
4. Under Marcus Aurelius (161-169), passes law mandating exile for those who attempt to “instill fear of the Divinity”
5. Under Septimius Severus (193-211): Clement of Alexandria said, “Many martyrs are daily burned, confined, or beheaded, before our eyes.”
6. Under Maximinus the Thracian (235-238), directed state power against leaders of the church, i.e. the bishops
7. Under Decius (249-251), systematic persecution of Christians across the Empire, in 250, issued an edict requiring all citizens to sacrifice to the emperor in the presence of a Roman official and obtain a certificate proving they had done so. According to Gregory of Tours: “Under the emperor Decius many persecutions arose against the name of Christ, and there was such a slaughter of believers that they could not be numbered.”
8. Under Valerian (253-260), all Christian clergy required to sacrifice to Roman gods, Christians forbidden to visit their cemeteries
9. Under Diocletian (304-306) and Galerius, generally regarded as the most severe persecution by the state, issued a series of edicts rescinding the legal rights of Christians and demanding that they comply with traditional Roman religious practices. Later edicts targeted the clergy and demanded universal sacrifice, ordering all inhabitants to sacrifice to the gods.
10. Under Julian the Apostate (360-363), last pagan emperor of Rome, followed Constantine the Great (or one or two after him), attempted to restore paganism to state religion. Generally unsuccessful. Also tried to rebuild the Temple in Jerusalem.

III. The Early Popes

- St. Militades (311-4) is pope is thirty-second pope at time of Edit of Milan in A.D. 313
- Of these 32 only 2 or 3 have been established as having died natural deaths
- About 6 to 8 of these popes, there is no record of their deaths
- The rest are martyred, i.e. state ordered execution or due to hardship in exile