

## 10. Roman Persecutions of Christians

DATES	EMPEROR	NATURE AND EXTENT OF PERSECUTION	NOTABLE MARTYRS
64	Nero	Took place in Rome and vicinity only. Christians were made scapegoats for burning Rome. Sadistic measures included burning Christians alive to illuminate Nero's gardens.	Paul Peter
c.90-96	Domitian	Was capricious, sporadic, centered in Rome and Asia Minor. Christians were persecuted for refusal to offer incense to the genius of the emperor.	Clement of Rome John (exiled to Patmos)
98-117	Trajan	Was sporadically enforced. Christians were lumped with other groups whose patriotism was considered suspect. Christians were to be executed when found, but not sought out.	Ignatius Symeon Zozimus Rufus
117-138	Hadrian	Was sporadically enforced. Policies of Trajan were continued. Any who brought false witness against Christians were to be punished.	Telesphorus
161-180	Marcus Aurelius	Emperor was a Stoic who opposed Christianity on philosophical grounds. Christians were blamed for natural disasters.	Justin Martyr Pothinus Blandina
202-211	Septimus Severus	Conversion to Christianity was forbidden.	Leonidas Irenaeus Perpetua
235-236	Maximinus the Thracian	Christian clergy were ordered executed. Christians were opposed because they had supported emperor's predecessor, whom he had assassinated.	Ursula Hippolytus
249-251	Decius	Was first empire-wide persecution. Offering of incense to genius of emperor was demanded. Enthusiastic return to paganism required utter extermination of Christianity.	Fabianus Alexander of Jerusalem
257-260	Valerian	Christians' property was confiscated Christians were prohibited right of assembly	Origen Cyprian Sixtus II
303-311	Diocletian Galerius	This was worst persecution of all. Churches were destroyed, Bibles burned. All civil rights of Christians were suspended. Sacrifice to gods was required.	Mauritius Alban