

Saint Juvenal of Narni

Saint Juvenal (d. May 3, 369 or 377) is venerated as the first Bishop of Narni in Umbria. Historical details regarding Juvenal's life are limited. A biography of Juvenal of little historical value was written after the seventh century; it states that Juvenal was born in Africa and was ordained by Pope Damasus I and was the first bishop of Narni and was buried in the Porta Superiore on the Via Flaminia on August 7, though his feast day is celebrated on May 3. This *Vita* does not call him a martyr but calls him a confessor. The martyrologies of Florus of Lyon and Ado describe Juvenal as a bishop and confessor rather than as a martyr.

In the *Gelasian Sacramentary* there is a prayer in honor of the saint under May 3. The *Codex Bernense of the Martyrologium Hieronymianum* records his name under May 3 with those of three martyrs of the Via Nomentana: Eventius, Alexander I, and Theodulus. Saint Juvenal appears as a bishop and confessor, in the Tridentine Calendar, which allots him a commemoration, shared with the three martyrs, within the feast of the finding of the Cross on 3 May. When this feast was abolished in 1960, the four saints continued to be merely commemorated jointly within the celebration of the weekday. The same day continues to be Saint Juvenal's feast day, as indicated in the Roman Martyrology. His legend suggests that he saved Narni from both Ligurian and Sarmatian invaders by calling down a divine thunderstorm. *(excerpted from: //en.wikipedia.org; www.aquinasandmore.com)

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SS. Alexander, Eventius, and Theodulus Martyrs And Saint Juvenal of Narni



Feast Day May 3

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*A Roman who was named after his father, Alexander, was reportedly born at "Caput Tauri," thought to refer to the area of the Esquiline hill, one of the Seven Hills of Rome. Nothing is known of his life before he took office. He was the bishop of Rome for between seven to ten years in the early second century. According to Catholic tradition, the dates of his episcopacy are estimated from as early as 106-115 and as late as 109-119 A.D. Tradition holds that Alexander I converted the Roman governor Hermes and 1,500 members of his family, servants, and government officials to Christianity. Like all the early popes, he is honored as a saint and a martyr. He was formerly credited with instituting several church traditions, but much of this is now doubted by secular and catholic scholars alike.

According to the *Liber Pontificalis*, it was Alexander I who inserted the narration of the Last Supper (the *Qui pridie*) into the Catholic mass. However, in the article on Saint Alexander I in the 1907 Catholic Encyclopedia, Thomas Shahan judges this tradition to be inaccurate. Both Catholic and non-Catholic experts regards this tradition as inaccurate. It is viewed as a product of the agenda of *Liber Pontificalis*--this section of the book was probably written in the late fifth century--to show an ancient pattern of the earliest bishops of Rome ruling the church by papal decree.

Pope Alexander I is also said to have introduced the use of blessing water mixed with salt for the purification of Christian

homes from evil influences, and the custom of mixing water with the sacramental wine. This too is considered unlikely. Duchesne (*Lib. Pont.*, I, 127) calls attention to the persistence of this early Roman custom by way of a blessing in the Gelasian Sacramentary that recalls very forcibly the actual Asperges prayer at the beginning of Mass. However, it is certainly possible that Alexander, whether acting singly or part of a collective leadership of Rome, played an important part in the governance of the church and the evolution of its emerging liturgical and administrative tradition.

Alexander is cited as having seen a vision of the infant Jesus. In some editions of the Roman Missal the Saint Alexander commemorated on 3 May is identified with Pope Alexander I. This identification is not found in the Tridentine Missal promulgated by Pope Pius V in 1570. Since nothing is known of the Saints Alexander, Eventius and Theodulus of 3 May other than their names and the fact that they were martyred and were buried at the seventh milestone of the Via Nomentana on that day, the one whose name coincided with that of a pope was identified as Pope Alexander I.

Both SS. Eventius and Theodulus, were priests in Rome, Italy. They were both imprisoned and martyred with St. Alexander of Rome. Both were burned and beheaded c. 113 on the Via Nomentana in Rome, Italy; their relics are interred in the Dominican Church of Santa Sabina, Rome. In 1855, a semi--subterranean cemetery of the holy martyrs was discovered near Rome, at the spot where tradition declares the Pope to have been martyred. Archaeologists identified this Alexander as that of the Pope noted above.