

Historical Valentine's Day straight from the Roman Empire

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There is one day a year that everyone either celebrates or dreads; a day dedicated to couples and their love for each other. This tradition became known as Valentine's Day. However, Valentine's Day is not a recent holiday; it started a very long time ago.

Back in the days of the Roman Empire, festival in February called the Lupercian Festival was celebrated. The purpose of this festival was to celebrate and give gratitude to the god of fertility. Men would also choose their wives during the festivities. However, when Claudius II became Emperor, he thought that single men made more efficient soldiers. They wouldn't worry about leaving someone they dearly loved behind. Therefore, he banned all marriages.

Catholic Bishop Valentine despised Claudius, however, and when young couples who had fallen in love and are longed to get married come to the church, St. Valentine married them anyway. The word spread rapidly about St. Valentine and it eventually spread to the ears of Claudius. The emperor had St. Valentine imprisoned. While confined, he met a young girl. He was not certain as to who she was or where she came from, but he fell madly in love. St. Valentine would write her poems and love letters, expressing his emotions toward her, and he would sign them, "From, Your Valentine."

Eventually, St. Valentine was sentenced to death on February 14 in 270 A.D, but it wasn't until 496 A.D. that Pope Geleasius officially declared February 14 as St. Valentine's Day.