

Saint Valentine's Day

The Roman Empire under Emperor Claudius II was involved in many bloody wars and was unpopular with its people. According to legend, Claudius II claimed that difficulties in getting young men to join the army were due to Roman men not wanting to leave their families or lovers and that marriage only weakened them. He therefore ordered a ban on weddings or engagements for men of fighting age so they could focus on war.

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In Rome, the story says, Father Valentine resisted the emperor's decree and continued to celebrate weddings for young couples in secret. When discovered, he was arrested and sentenced to death. The evening before he was to be executed, he sent the first "Valentine card" to Julia, the daughter of his jailer – a young girl whose blindness he had miraculously healed – which he signed "From your Valentine."

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Since then, February 14th – the anniversary of Valentine's death – has been a day to honour the love of couples and for them to express their affection by sending Valentine cards, roses, and chocolate, and the tradition of signing with the phrase "From your Valentine" is still preserved today.

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What was Valentine's profession?

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Why was Valentine sentenced to death?

Why is Valentine's Day celebrated on February 14th?