

MORE ABOUT ST. BONIFACE—3RD CENTURY MARTYR

Boniface was one of Aglaida's slaves. The name Aglaida is sometimes given as Aglae. Both were pagans and lived in debauchery together, some legends say they were even lovers. Tiring of their way of life, both discover Christianity as a meaningful way. Aglaida decides to send him on an errand to collect holy relics. Finding upon arrival at Tarsus that the authorities were torturing Christians, he openly declared himself to be a Christian. His own body constituted the relics that were brought back to Aglaida, who in turn became a Christian.

In his memory she constructed a church, which today is the Church of Santi Bonifacio e Alessio. She distributed her wealth to the poor and lived in a monastery for 18 years. She apparently received the divine gift to exorcise evil spirits.

The Eastern Orthodox Church celebrates both of them on December 19 as the *"Martyr Boniface at Tarsus in Cilicia and Righteous Aglaida of Rome."*

In the 12th century the name of Boniface (without Aglaida) was included on 14 May in the General Roman Calendar with the lowest rank of feast ("simple").

In 1955, Pope Pius XII reduced the celebration to a commemoration within the ferial Mass (see General Roman Calendar of Pope Pius XII). Because of the totally fabulous character of the story, the 1969 revision of the General Roman Calendar removed entirely the mention of this Boniface, who also is not among the nine saints of this name that the Roman Martyrology recognizes.

Because of the date of his feast, Boniface of Tarsus was one of three who, because a cold spell was believed to be common on 12–14 May, were called the Ice Saints in Poland, Bohemia and eastern Germany, a tradition known also to Martin Luther.

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Saint Boniface - 3rd Century Martyr

Feast Day: May 14th



Martyr of the Early Church

Saint Boniface - 3rd Century Martyr

from the 1962 Roman Missal

Arrested at Tarsus, Boniface “bore himself with much fortitude in the presence of his tortures” (Epistle).

They tore his body with iron hooks, they thrust pointed reeds under his nails, and poured molten lead into his mouth.

He was beheaded at Tarsus on May 14th, towards the year 275 AD, under the reign of the Emperor Galerius.

His remains were brought to Rome and deposited on Mount Aventine, in the church which took first his name, and later on that of Saint Alexius.

Commemoration of S. Boniface, Martyr -

from the Divine Office at Lauds

Ant: Come forth, daughters of Jerusalem, and behold the Martyrs and the crown with which the Lord crowned them, on this solemn, joyous day, alleluia, alleluia.

V. Precious in the sight of the Lord, alleluia.

R. Is the death of His Saints, alleluia.

Collect: We celebrate each year the memory of Your holy Martyr Boniface. May we be helped, O God all-powerful, by his intercession. This we ask of You through our Lord Jesus Christ, Your Son, who lives and reigns with You in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, forever. Amen.

From the Roman Martyrology: At Tarsus (a historic city in south-central Turkey) located in Cilicia (on the southern Mediterranean coast of Turkey), the birthday (death) of S. Boniface, Martyr, who suffered under the Emperor Diocletian and Maximian, and was afterwards translated (his remains were moved) to Rome and buried on the Via Latina.