

## Saint Caius

Pope Saint Caius, born in Dalmatia, was a relative of the emperor Diocletian. The cruel emperor did not for that reason spare him or his family during the bloody persecution of the years 283 to 296, during which the Christians of Rome were obliged to conceal themselves in caverns and cemeteries. Early in his papacy, he decreed that a man must be a priest before he could be ordained a bishop.

Caius counseled a patrician named Chromatius to receive the tracked disciples of Christ in his country residence. He himself went to visit them on a Sunday, and said to the faithful assembled there that Our Lord Jesus Christ, knowing the fragility of human nature, established two degrees in the practice of Christianity, confession and martyrdom. Our Savior did so, he said, "so that those who do not believe they could stand up under torment, may nonetheless conserve the grace of the faith by their confession." Our Lord had indeed specified, "*When you are persecuted in one city, flee to another...*" Then he said, "Those who wish to stay in the house of Chromatius remain with Toburtius, while those who prefer to return with me to the city, come." Several followed him back to Rome, among them are the martyrs of the same persecution, the brothers Saints Marcus, Marcellinus and Sebastian. Saint Caius himself received the crown of martyrdom in the final year of the persecution, 296, and was buried in the cemetery of Callixtus, where his body was found in 1622, with an inscription identifying him as Vicar of Christ.

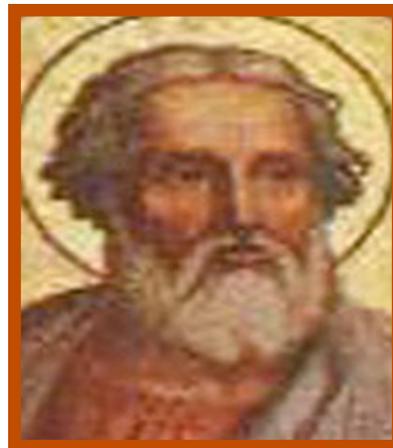
\*(excerpted from: [www.newadvent.org](http://www.newadvent.org); [www.catholicnewsagency.com](http://www.catholicnewsagency.com); [//magnificat.ca](http://magnificat.ca))

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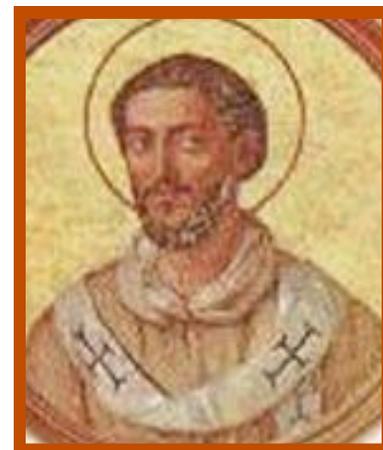
## Saints Soter and Caius

### *Popes and Martyrs*

Feast Day: April 22



**Saint Soter**



**Saint Caius**

## **Saints Soter and Caius**

\*These two saints have their feast together on 22 April, on which day they appear in most of the martyrologies. Notker and a few others give Sotor on the 21st and Caius on the 19th or 21st. Popes of the early Church, both Soter and Caius are venerated in the tradition of martyrs. However, there is no reliable account of their martyrdom that survives today.

### **Saint Soter**

Saint Sotor was born in Fundi, in Italy. The date of his birth is unknown but we do know that he was Pope for eight years from 166 until his death in 174.

His papacy was an example of what seems to have been the remarkable tradition of generosity exercised by the bishop of Rome. This tradition and Soter's personal charity and paternal love for the universal flock can be evidences from a letter to Pope Soter by Bishop Saint Dionysus of Corinth, quoted in the fourth century "Ecclesiastical History of Eusebius."

Saint Dionysis writes: "This has been your custom from the beginning to do good in manifold ways to all Christians, and to send contributions to the many churches in every city, in some places relieving the poverty of the needy and ministering to the Christians in the mines, by the contribution which you have sent from the beginning, preserving the ancestral custom of the Romans, true Romans as you are. Your blessed bishop Soter has not only carried on the habit but has even increased it, by administering the bounty distributed to the saints and by

exhorting with his blessed words the brethren who come to Rome, as a loving father would his children."

In the same letter of Dionysius we learn that Pope Soter had written a letter to the Corinthians which was read in the Church alongside the epistle of Saint Clement and was held in high esteem. "Today, therefore, we have kept the holy Lord's day, on which we have read your letter, which we shall always have to read and be admonished, even as the former letter which was written to us by the ministry of Clement." (Eusebius, Church History IV. 24)

The letter which Soter had written in the name of his church is lost, though Harnack and others have attempted to identify it with the so-called "Second Epistle of Clement" (see Clement of Rome). The reverence of the pope's paternal letter is to be noticed. The traditional generosity of the Roman Church, as already noted, continued even during the time of Eusebius.

Although his kindness extended to all persons, Saint Soter was a fierce opponent of heresy. He is said to have written an encyclical against Montanism -- the teachings of a heretical sect which believed that a Christian who had sinned gravely could never be redeemed. One of his ordinances required all Christians except those in public penance to receive Communion on Holy Thursday. He was martyred on April 22, 170, under the emperor Marcus Aurelius, and buried on the Appian Way in the cemetery of Callixtus.